



ARMENIA AND THE  
NEAR EAST



Kurgenian

Engineer

Engineer

Ersingian

Quisling  
Nansen

Dupuis

Lo Savio

Carle

THE COMMISSION WORKING WITH THE ARMENIAN GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

ARMENIA AND THE  
NEAR EAST

BY

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## FOREWORD

AFTER the Council of the League of Nations had repeatedly discussed whether something could not be done for the Armenian refugees, who were living in great destitution in various countries, it requested the author of this book, as the League's High Commissioner for Refugees, to take up this case with the rest. Realizing the burden of responsibility that such an arduous task would involve, I declined ; but was ultimately persuaded to try what I could do in co-operation with the International Labour Bureau. The Assembly of the League placed at our disposal a sum to defray our expenditure in making the necessary investigations and doing other preparatory work.

The representatives of the Armenian refugees had submitted to the Council of the League a project for transferring fifty thousand refugees to the so-called Sardarabad desert, in the Republic of Armenia, which was to be irrigated and cultivated ; and they had asked the League to try to raise the necessary money, estimated at one million pounds sterling. It was obvious that before forming any well-founded opinion on this or any other plan for transferring refugees to Armenia and settling them there, the details would have to be studied on the spot by our own experts. It seemed highly desirable to find some such solution ; for by so doing one might hope to do something, at least, to procure for the Armenians that "national home" which the Western Powers of Europe and the United States of America had pledged themselves to give to the Armenian nation, and of which the League of Nations had repeatedly held out a prospect.

We decided to send a commission to Armenia. The mem-

bers were : Mr. C. E. DUPUIS, an English engineer, formerly adviser to the Egyptian Ministry of Labour, and a first-rate hydraulic expert ; Monsieur G. CARLE, who was recommended by the French Ministry for Agriculture, and had had much experience, particularly of subtropical agriculture ; and the Italian engineer, Signor Pio Lo SAVIO, an expert in hydraulic constructional work, who was recommended by the Italian Commissioner for Emigration. Captain V. QUISLING, a Norwegian, was the secretary of the commission, and the present writer was its head. I avail myself of this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to my kind and indefatigable colleagues for their efficient and self-sacrificing work throughout our journey, and for their invaluable collaboration.

In a letter to M. Tchitcherin, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs under the Soviet Government in Moscow, I asked leave for the commission to go to Erivan and make the necessary investigations in Armenia. The answer was very courteous, but laid down two conditions. First, we must not come as representatives of the League of Nations, which the Soviet Government did not recognize. In the second place, our investigations must be carried on in co-operation with a committee appointed by the Armenian Government. To these conditions we agreed. We were cordially and hospitably received by the Government at Erivan ; and its committee of able engineers facilitated our work in every way, making our interesting stay in Armenia even more profitable than we had expected. I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all our friends in that country for their many kindnesses.

Accounts of the investigations made by our commission, and the proposals based upon them, will be found in our various reports to the League of Nations. They have been collected in a little book published by the Secretariat at Geneva

and entitled *A Scheme for the Settlement of Armenian Refugees. General Survey and Principal Documents*, Geneva, 1927.

In the following pages I have endeavoured to give some idea of our journey, our work, our impressions of the country and its people, and our proposals. If these proposals can be carried out I am convinced that they will be the beginning of a new era of development in Armenia, and will do a great deal to make the future happier for its gifted people and its numerous refugees.

The last two chapters give a brief summary of the history of the Armenian nation. I feel sure that no one can study the story of this remarkable people without being profoundly moved by their tragic fate. In spite of a disheartening consciousness of the defects in my presentation of their case, I hope that the facts themselves will speak from these pages to the conscience of Europe and America.

FRIDTJOF NANSEN.

LYSAKER,

July 1927.



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## ARMENIA AND THE NEAR EAST

### I

#### TO CONSTANTINOPLE

SOUTHWARD bound. Behind us, the wild ramparts of the Alps, marking the northernmost frontier of the world the ancients knew; in front, the basin of the Po, sunny and summerlike and serene as the smile of a woman. Endless fields of maize, wheat, and rice; rows of vines and mulberry-trees; harvesters in bright-red shirts; and Verona like a mediæval poem, with her time-honoured amphitheatre. Then out to Venice and back again—Venice, like a sleeping seabird with damaged wings, rocking on the Lido, and dreaming of strange bygone happenings in the lands of the East. And so from Trieste in the afternoon, southward over the Adriatic on board the Italian steamer *Semiramis*.

On the following afternoon (Friday, June 5th) we called at Brindisi, the old Roman harbour of Brindisium at the end of the Via Appia, the way to the East, the artery of the great world-empire. Here, in the year 19 B.C., Rome's greatest poet ended his days, at the age of fifty, on his way back from

1925

Greece ; and here, as he lay on his deathbed, with the true artist's dissatisfaction with his own achievements, he would have burnt the manuscript of the *Aeneid*, his life-work and the greatest poem of Roman culture. Here, too, the Crusaders used to concentrate their fleets on their way to the East. Then, in 1458, the town was destroyed by an earthquake ; most of the inhabitants were buried beneath the ruins, and the harbour was choked with sand. Only in recent times has it been cleared, and the town has once more come to life. *Tempora mutantur.*

On we steam. . . . The evening is very still, the vault of heaven high and spacious ; a myriad stars glitter there, and the moon floods the Mediterranean with her gentle radiance. During thousands of years this was " the sea " of the ancients, surrounded by their *oikoumene*, the inhabited earth. Along its shores cultures and world-empires grew up, flourished, and fell into decay. . . . And what has brought us here ? We are steaming east across these immemorial waters in order to try to lend a helping hand to a small people struggling for existence—one of the little nations that has suffered most in the course of ages from the conflicts between those great empires.

Why is a night like this so beautiful ? An illimitable void with far-away star-globes, a disk of burnished copper, a black stretch of water, a glittering path of light and sparkling silver streaks, a roving human eye seeking to penetrate the distance—can that be all ? And this sea ? Nothing but a wide depression in the earth's crust filled with water. And the *Semiramis* is cleaving its smooth surface, driven onward through the night by the measured stroke of the pistons.

From the world whither we are bound a name floats down to us upon the tide of the ages ; its real significance is unknown, but its sound suggests Eastern tales of wonder, sunk in the silent depths of the ages. Semiramis, or Shammuramat ! Daughter of Babylon, wise and beautiful, queen of Nineveh, the favourite wife of Samsi-Adad. She ruled the mighty kingdom for her son Adadnirari. When, according to the legend, Adadnirari tried to rid himself of her by the agency of a eunuch—doubtless because he alone could resist her charms—she forgave her son, commanded the satraps to

obey him, died by her own hand, and ascending to heaven in the form of a dove was enrolled among the gods. But an Armenian popular legend tells us that this warm-blooded woman was consumed by so burning a love of Armenia's handsome and noble-minded king, Ara, that in spite of his refusal to marry her she determined to conquer both himself and his kingdom, and marched against him with a great army. The virtuous Ara fell in the battle; but in despair at her loss Semiramis reawakened him to life by her passionate kisses. This is said to have happened at Aralesk,<sup>1</sup> near the present Van, the capital of old Armenia, or Urartu, and, according to the legend, she built this city, with its canals and beautiful gardens, which was subsequently called Shamiramakert (i.e. Semiramis' work), although she never was there. In the one legend we have the apotheosis of sexual, in the other that of motherly love, the two basic instincts of all created life. How many legends arise from the depths of the past—the Mediterranean and all these eastern lands teem with myths and legends about the strange and wonderful things that happened among peoples that came, and had their day, and passed away. Fortune's wheel. . . .

When I woke up next day (June 6th) an arid brown mountain-island lay just inside us. Was it Ithaca? Could it have been this naked rocky holm (94 square kilometres in area) that Odysseus dreamed of and laboured to reach for so many long years? But after all it was his home. On the other side of us was a larger and loftier island, Cephalonia (Kephallenia). It looked equally barren. These shores and bluffs seem strangely dry and scorched; it is owing to the absence of green turf, which cannot live under the fiery heat of the southern sun. Are these, then, the lovely Ionian Isles? They are certainly high and rugged, Ithaca rising to 600 metres, and Cephalonia to double as many. They cannot always have been so bare. Probably the cause is man's usual lack of foresight in cutting down the woods which once shaded these rocks, in the days when demigods chased laughing

<sup>1</sup> The legend obviously derives from this place-name, which popular etymology has interpreted as consisting of the personal name *Ara* and a derivative of *lezet* (= lick); cf. Lehmann-Haupt, *Armenien Einst und Jetzt*, 1926, vol. ii, p. 186 and note.

nymphs through the tangled thickets. But even now, if you land on these islands, there are doubtless shady spots where a homeless wanderer can stop and rest.

To the east the fairway goes on to Corinth. Just ahead of us, on the north side of the entrance, are the Oxia Islands, where the naval battle of Lepanto took place on October 6, 1571, and the Turkish fleet of 250 galleys was defeated by the Venetian-Spanish fleet. Two hundred Turkish ships were destroyed, and the author of *Don Quixote*, who took part in the engagement, lost his left hand. Farther on, in the bay behind, is Missolongi, with its memories of the heroic defence from 1822 to 1826 in the Greek war of liberation, and of the author of *Don Juan*, whose heart is buried there. One is haunted by the picture of that ghastly night, the 22nd of April, 1826, when at least nine thousand combatants, women and children, sallied forth against the Turkish lines and only 1,500 fought their way through, the rest being cut down or blown up by the powder magazines fired by themselves. This is Greece—the isles of Greece of which Byron sang :

Eternal summer gilds them yet,  
But all, except their sun, is set.

That was true once, but times change. The Turkish oppressors are gone. New generations, new possibilities, new disappointments, new hopes have followed ; but what they will lead to in the future, no one can tell. So the world goes on.

We steer southwards inside Zakynthos (Zante), which Homer called "rich in woods," an epithet no longer appropriate. Inland from the coast to the east lies the land of Arcadia, where Fortune was said to dwell—but very, very far away. Farther to the south at the foot of the mountainous coast is the Bay of Navarino, the ancient Pylos, memorable for one of the bloodiest naval battles in history, which was fought on October 20, 1827, and decided the Greek war of liberation. In the course of a few hours the whole Turkish fleet, consisting of 120 warships and transports, was destroyed by the Anglo-French-Russian fleet under Admiral Codrington.

In the evening we passed south of the land. Far in there,





Dupuis      Lo Savio                      Nansen      Quisling                      Carle

THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION AT ERIVAN



IRRIGATION CANAL IN AN ARMENIAN VILLAGE ON THE ARAX PLAIN

back of the Gulf of Messenia, are the wide plains of the valley of Pamisos, once the most fertile country in Greece, with Makaria, the ancient "Land of the Blessed." On the north-east loom threatening mountain bulwarks—the Taygetus range, which bounds the inland plain by Sparta, and whose loftiest peak, rising 2,400 metres above sea-level, nearly equals Galhøpiggen, the highest mountain in Norway. We rounded Cape Matapan, with a lighthouse on a shelving promontory running far out into the sea, which reminds one not a little of Lindesnes (the Naze). On a peaceful evening, with a full moon, we steamed across the Gulf of Laconia and inside Kythera, where the Phœnicians long ago fished for the purple snail, which was found in large quantities along the coast of Aphrodite's sacred island, where she first stepped ashore from the sea in all her seductive loveliness to drive mankind to despair. And so round the wind-swept and much-feared Cape Malea, after which we headed northward across the Ægean.

## ATHENS.

At dawn (Sunday, June 7th) we entered the Saronic Gulf. Attica, the most remarkable peninsula in the world, rose before us in the north, a low hilly country above the blue sea. Hither the Greek seamen steered their triremes on the way home from their expeditions; from afar they could see Athene's golden helmet, and the gold point of her glittering spear, shining on the Acropolis in the sunshine above the horizon. The island which rears its long mountain pyramid over the sea on the left is Ægina, and farther in, with steep flanks, is Salamis. The flat country, with a yellowish tinge, at the foot of the mountains of Attica, must be the Kephissian plain near Athens. The dark peak above the plain, with a speck of white on it, is Mount Lycabettos with its monastery. And the hill farther to the left, with precipitous sides and buildings on its flat top, must be the Acropolis, with the Parthenon—the world's Sacred Mount. One seems to hear the rush of wings from the days when the human spirit soared to such unrivalled heights; and as one's eyes scan the bright

blue water in the direction of Salamis one seems even now to feel the tension of that mighty shock of conflict, when the two great civilized powers of the East and the West met, and the future form of the world's civilization depended on the sword of Greece.

Early the same morning we dropped anchor in the harbour of Piræus. An official of the Greek Foreign Office and Mr. Zwerner, the representative of the League of Nations in charge of the work for refugees in Greece, came on board to fetch us ashore with military honours in a naval motor-launch. Two motor-cars carried us past the sandy beach of Phaleron Bay, the ancient port with its up-to-date seaside hotels, and on across the Attic plain towards Athens by an abominable road which threatened to jolt our insides out and made us envy the Stoics who studied life's wisdom walking.

High above the plain rises the Acropolis. What a wonderful symbol of the rise, greatness, and decline of the Greeks! First, some five thousand years ago, those steep hillsides sheltered the cave-dwellers of the Stone Age; then, one or two thousand years later, it was the site of the king's castle; then, in the Golden Age, when it became the centre of the world's culture, the mighty temple was erected in honour of the Greeks' virgin goddess Athene. Again, after eight hundred years, the Parthenon became a church for the Christians' Blessed Virgin Mary; then, after upwards of a thousand years, a mosque for the Allah of the Turks; and finally a Turkish gunpowder magazine, which exploded during the Venetian siege (1687). Now there are only the ruins of its former greatness.

We had not many hours to spare in Athens, but we had to find time to climb the hill and look down on the immortal city. The marble masses of the Propylæa and the Parthenon shone reddish-yellow against the deep blue of the sky. Below us lay that ancient and unrivalled workshop of the human mind, on the wide plain which extends, in tones of yellowish-brown and red, to Phaleron Bay and the blue sea, with Salamis across the straits to the west, the summit of Ægina and the Argolic Mountains behind the Saronic Gulf to the south-west, and the open sea to the south and south-east. In the east

Mount Hymettos reared its bare, yellowish-brown ridge—where the sun still glowed as Socrates lifted the cup of poison to his lips. In the north-east, behind the cone of Lycabettos and its monastery, rose the top of Pentelicon, with its ancient marble quarry. In the north long ridges of hills undulated across the plain, backed by the jagged crest of Mount Parnes. Towards the west ran the “sacred way” through an old olive grove north of the hill of Daphne and Mount Skaramanga, between low eminences and past the temple of Aphrodite to the Eleusinian Fields. Nearer to us lay the Hill of the Nymphs and the observatory. A truly wonderful panorama! There is none like it.

This, then, was the Athens of the Greeks! How many inhabitants had the little Attic republic—how many, after deducting the slaves? Compared with the great cities of to-day it was hardly more than a village. But think how many of mankind’s greatest minds this little town contained, simultaneously or within a short period. Has any people in the whole history of the human race been able to rise to such heights? The Sumerians—the ancient Egyptians—who can tell? But at any rate this Attic miracle is more germane to ourselves. For well-nigh two thousand years the white race has built upon this foundation, returning again and again to the same treasure-house. But its glory vanished as strangely as it had arisen; and afterwards? . . .

Gone—glimmering through the dream of things that were:  
First in the race that led to Glory’s goal,  
They won, and pass’d away—is this the whole?

Ruins—the only sure fruits of victory. . . . The peoples mutually consuming one another.

Looking out across the country one is constantly struck by its aridity, treelessness, and dearth of green. It gives a curious impression of sterility, which probably accounts for its peculiarly warm, chequered tones of yellow, golden brown, and red. Some say that the country has become drier and warmer than it was in the days of the ancient Greeks. But there is no sufficient ground for accepting this theory. The river Kephissos can hardly have contained more water than

than now ; and we know from old descriptions that it could be pretty dry in those days, too, when the Marathon runners reached Athens covered with dust. There does not seem to have been much difference. But man can bring about considerable changes, for instance by cutting down or burning the woods. And we know all too well how war may transform fertile lands into a comparative desert. Moreover, the Greeks, especially in Attica, were not primarily dependent upon agriculture, but, if anything, more upon the trade in their many good harbours, upon shipping, mining, and handicrafts. That the wonderful culture of Greece declined so rapidly cannot possibly be accounted for by any changes in the climate ; it must have been due first to the debilitating effect of the civil wars, then to the enormous expansion under and after Alexander, and lastly to the gradual transformation of the race, brought about by various outside influences and by the constant loss, through emigration, of the best stocks, which became mixed with foreign elements and largely disappeared.

#### THE WORK FOR THE REFUGEES IN GREECE.

Our business, however, was to attend a meeting at the Foreign Office. Unfortunately the Minister for Foreign Affairs was not in Athens ; but we met Mr. Howland, an American, who is chairman of the committee appointed by the League of Nations for the settlement of Greek refugees. After the Greek defeat in the war against the Turks in Asia Minor, in the autumn of 1922, upwards of a million Greek refugees from Asia Minor and Eastern Thrace poured into Greece. Seeing that they had no opportunity of returning to their homes, there was no alternative but to find some means of subsistence for the exiles in the country. Fortunately there was a large amount of unused or badly exploited land, especially in Macedonia and Western Thrace. By bringing these areas under cultivation large numbers of the refugees could be provided with a livelihood. And in addition new industries could be started for them, such as carpet-weaving or silkworm culture.

Under the direction of the League of Nations High Commission for Refugees, an attempt was made to settle ten thousand refugees in Western Thrace as workers on the land and in other occupations. Thanks to Colonel Procter's energetic and exceptionally able direction of this experiment it succeeded beyond all anticipations, and in less than a year the whole ten thousand were turned into self-supporting and productive members of the community. Based upon this experience, we proceeded to draw up a plan for settling all the refugees in Greece, estimated to number over a million. But this needed capital, which the Greek State did not possess. Accordingly, as the League's High Commissioner for Refugees I proposed that the League should assist the Greek Government by raising a loan for this work. After a good deal of opposition the proposal was adopted, and a committee of three nominated by the League to be responsible for seeing that the loan was properly used. The chairman was, first, Mr. Morgenthau, the former American ambassador in Constantinople, and afterwards Mr. Howland.

He told us that the work of settling the refugees was progressing remarkably well. The loan obtained by the Greek Government for the purpose amounted to 12 million pounds, which was rather more than the sum of 10 millions that we originally proposed, and double the amount that the financial experts of the League had thought it possible to raise. It was hoped that even more could be obtained. The number of Greek refugees had risen to a million and a half, but the majority were already provided for. One thing which had helped considerably was that more than 400,000 Turkish Muhammedans had been evacuated from the country in accordance with the agreement with Turkey regarding the exchange of Greek and Turkish minorities. A large number of Greek refugees could at once move into the houses left by the Turks and take over their agricultural work, including a considerable amount of lucrative tobacco culture.

In working out the plans for the settlement of the refugees I had also attached great importance to the carpet-weaving industry of Asia Minor, hoping that, as it was largely carried on by Greeks, it could be transplanted to Greece, where it

would be particularly valuable as an occupation for many of the women, who formed a large majority of the refugees. But Mr. Howland thought that the future of this industry was doubtful; the people engaged in it made too little profit, and gave it up as soon as they could get better-paid work.

Mr. Howland was further of the opinion that the view we had urged so strongly when trying to negotiate the Greek loan would prove correct—namely, that the alarming influx of refugees would ultimately, if their skill and labour were properly utilized, contribute greatly to the prosperity of the whole country and inaugurate a new era. Already new enterprise had been evoked, large areas of new land had been cultivated, marshy land was being drained, and the whole population was showing a different and more vigorous spirit. But it has been an enormous undertaking. A nation of rather over four and a half million people has had to provide subsistence, housing, and work for a million and a half immigrants—one for every third individual. It has meant a national migration on a vast scale. Imagine transporting half the population of Norway at one blow to another country!

Within a brief space of time we have witnessed two truly gigantic undertakings: here the removal and settling of a whole nation of refugees, and in Anatolia the Turkish destruction of the Armenian nation and extermination of a million people. It gives one a vivid picture of the many migrations and vast upheavals that have taken place in these regions in past ages; but hardly ever on such a big scale.

Together with the refugees of Greek origin and speaking the Greek tongue were many Armenians who had fled from the Turkish massacres. As they had no fellow-countrymen with whom to take refuge, and no one to befriend them, the Greek Government decided to admit them within the country's frontiers, making no difference between them and the Greeks. But when it came to the question of settling them, the Government naturally felt that their first duty was to look after those who were of Greek origin; while it seemed best that the Armenians should leave the country, where the re

was not too much room for them. This was just the problem that we had to solve. I was glad to find that the Armenian refugees in Greece only amounted to about 45,000, and that if we could evacuate some 9,000 of them from the country at an early date the Greek Government would be satisfied, at least for the present. We were told that about 11,000 Armenians had expressed their desire to go to Russian Armenia.

The above-mentioned agreement between Greece and Turkey regarding the exchange of Greek and Turkish minorities has been severely criticized as brutal, and it may be appropriate to say a few words on this subject, seeing that the measure was partly due to a proposal originally put forward by the present writer. After the Greek army was defeated in Asia Minor in the autumn of 1922, the Turks drove the Greeks and the Armenians by thousands and hundreds of thousands out of Anatolia, while keeping back the Greek men, whom they herded together in "labour battalions." This was the state of affairs when I arrived in Constantinople as the League's High Commissioner to try to find some way of helping the refugees. I received a letter from Venizelos, in which he pointed out that if the Turks continued to expel the Greeks from Turkish territory in this barbarous fashion, Greece would be forced against her will to take reprisals by driving the Turks out of Greek territory. The Greek Government concurred in this view, and empowered me to act on their behalf. It seemed to me that if there was to be any chance of saving the Greek men, estimated at 100,000 in number, who had been kept back in the "labour battalions," and some part, at any rate, of the very valuable fixed and movable property left behind by the refugees, this could only be done by means of an agreement providing for an exchange of populations. Accordingly I made a proposal to Mustapha Kemal Pasha and his Government along the following lines: the Turkish Government were to have the right to send to Greece all Greeks in Anatolia and Eastern Thrace, and the Greek Government were likewise to be entitled to send all Turks on Greek territory to Turkey. All property left behind by the emigrants was, however, to be carefully inventoried

by the authorities on the spot, so that the owners might obtain full compensation in abandoned property of the same value in the country they went to. A detailed inventory was further to be made of all the property abandoned by the Greeks who had already left Asia Minor and Eastern Thrace, in order that the refugees might receive proper compensation.

Kemal Pasha wired back that he agreed to the proposal in principle, but that the details must be discussed with the Government at Angora. It quickly transpired in the course of the negotiations with the representative of this Government that the Turks laid it down as a primary condition that on the one hand Western Thrace should be excepted from the agreement, and that on the other hand Constantinople should be included in it. The intention was obvious: though the Greeks would doubtless keep Western Thrace when peace was concluded, the Turks nevertheless wished the Turkish population to stay there—for some day the country might become Turkish again. At the same time, they wished to take the opportunity of getting rid of the whole of the large Greek population of Constantinople for the benefit of the Turks. I saw at once that the latter condition would certainly be unacceptable, not least to the Great Powers. To remove the whole of the industrious Greek population of Constantinople would mean paralysing the trade of this important centre; the banks, for instance, were largely in Greek hands or had Greek employees. It would be incompatible with the great economic interests the West European Powers had in Turkey. Indeed, at a conference of the High Commissioners of the Powers, convened immediately afterwards at Constantinople, complete agreement reigned on this point.

Finding that I could make no impression upon the Turkish negotiator who represented the Angora Government in Constantinople, I proceeded at once, in November 1922, to lay the proposals outlined above before the peace conference at Lausanne, emphasizing the necessity of adopting them and bringing them into operation immediately, without waiting for the final treaty of peace. In my view this agreement, enforced by prompt action, would enable us in the first place to demand the surrender of the Greek men in the "labour

battalions" while the majority of them were still alive, thus saving them from destruction; and, secondly, to save at any rate part of the value of the abandoned property in Anatolia and Eastern Thrace for the Greek refugees.

It may be objected that it was hard for the Turkish population in Greek territory to be compelled to leave their peaceful homes, where they had not been interfered with; and there is no denying that they had to suffer for the sins of their kinsmen in Turkey. But the intention was that they should receive full compensation, and they should get plenty of fertile land that had been left untenanted in Eastern Thrace and Asia Minor, where they could settle among people of the same race and faith. There appeared to be no doubt that this plan would give good results in the future, by creating more homogeneous populations and removing one chief cause of the endless conflicts, often attended by massacres, in the Near East.

On the Turkish side it has been argued that the Turkish population in Greece left their houses and other property intact, so that their homes were ready to receive the Greek refugees; whereas the Turks arriving in Asia Minor found no homes—the Greek villages being nothing but ruins—and therefore suffered far greater hardships. It is forgotten that the work of destruction was partly effected by the Turks themselves; the fertile land, moreover, was still there, enough of it to furnish more than ample compensation in a form that would mean permanent wealth; while it would not take long to put up houses of sufficient substance to give the shelter necessary in that climate. Further, the Greek houses in Eastern Thrace were left intact. On the whole, the property abandoned by the Greeks was far more valuable than what they would receive in return; so the Turks gained largely by the exchange.

It has been said that the plan was unjust to the Christians in Asia Minor, but that is not correct. The proposal concerned the Greek population only; most of these Greeks had already been expelled, and there could be no question that the Turks intended to expel the few who remained. Surely it was all to the good that this should be done in a

legal manner with proper safeguards, thereby, *inter alia*, securing their economic interests.

The proposal was adopted, in the main, by the Lausanne Conference, but with the important difference that the Greeks who had already fled, or been expelled, from Asia Minor and Eastern Thrace were deprived of all right to the property they had abandoned; according to "Turkish law," the Turks declared, it fell to the State because the owners had abandoned it without leave (to escape being murdered!). Furthermore the plan was adopted so late that only a portion of the men in the "labour battalions" were saved.

The expulsion of the Armenians from Anatolia has also been attributed to the agreement regarding the exchange of Greek and Turkish populations, but this is due to a misunderstanding. The Armenians could not be included, for they were not Greeks, and besides there was no population with whom they could be exchanged, and they had no Armenian country to go to except Russian Armenia.

I discussed, in fact, with the Turks the possibility of being assigned an area in Asiatic Turkey, where the Armenians—including both the refugees and those who were still in Anatolia—could be concentrated. This would prevent future collisions between the Armenian and Turkish inhabitants. The Turks listened with their customary polished courtesy to this proposal and my explanations, which they pronounced extremely interesting; but it always ended in the same way: the Armenians were best off where they were in Anatolia, and there was no danger of any trouble between the Turks and Armenians, who got on well enough with one another so long as the Armenians were not egged on by the Europeans.

#### FROM ATHENS TO CONSTANTINOPLE.

In the afternoon we left Piræus again in the *Semiramis* and steamed round the south of the Attic peninsula over a blue sea beneath sunny skies. On the outermost point of Cape Colonna, the ancient Sunion, still shine the lofty marble pillars of Athene's splendid temple. This, the most easterly promontory on the Greek mainland, which was feared by

seafarers on account of its changing currents and winds, became at an early date a place of sacrifice to Poseidon, the god of the sea, and afterwards also to Athene, the goddess of the land.

Our course lay between the southern end of Eubœa and the island of Andros, towards the Dardanelles. Far to the north was the island of Skyros, where Thetis hid her son Achilles disguised as a young girl among the daughters of Lykomedes.

With its mountains and valleys, and its numerous bays, headlands, and islands, Greece, as well as the west coast of Asia Minor, has a certain resemblance to Norway. But in this case it is not the glaciers of the ice ages that have chiselled out the land, but other forces of nature—water and the fires of the underworld, rivers and volcanoes; and consequently the surface formations are different. But it was the long indented coast with its wealth of harbours, and the numerous islands, that made the Greeks of old into bold seafarers and clever traders, capable of founding flourishing colonies and creating a highly developed culture.

In the afternoon I made the acquaintance of two Swiss business men on board, who were going to Constantinople to buy Oriental carpets. They were accompanied by an expert in this trade—a Jew from Constantinople whom they had met at Zurich. But they had begun to entertain misgivings about him. It appeared that he had left Constantinople after the town was occupied by the Allies, and that he had only a passport issued by their authorities. But this was not recognized by the Turks, and Turkish subjects who had left without a Turkish passport were not allowed to return—at any rate, if they were not Turks. The Jew had not said a word about all this when the journey was being arranged. Now he was getting more and more nervous as we approached our destination; indeed, he seemed on the verge of tears. However, he pulled himself together: it would be all right, he had his father and mother and brothers and sisters in Constantinople, and the Turkish authorities would never be so harsh as to refuse him permission to land and visit his parents, whom he had not seen for several years.

His handsome wife, a Spanish Jewess from Constantinople, was flirting on deck with a Frenchman; the evening was delightful, with a full moon and a sea of glass. But the Jew sat huddled up in a corner moping. Why so down in the mouth? If he could not go ashore at Constantinople the little episode would come to an end to-morrow when the Frenchman landed; and if he were allowed to go ashore there was good business to look forward to. Either alternative had its bright side.

That night we passed the island of Lemnos on the north. It was there that Hephæstos, the god of fire, fell when hurled down from heaven by the wrath of Father Zeus. It was there, too, that the Greek heroes assembled before setting out against Troy, in the days when it was an international affair if a lady of high birth eloped with another man. The inhabitants remained neutral during these wars, and arranged the exchange of war-prisoners in a remarkably simple fashion by buying and reselling them. During the World War the naval forces of the Western Powers assembled there, using the island as a base for the attempts to capture the Straits.

At three o'clock in the morning of Monday, June 8th, we entered the Dardanelles. The low, hilly country on either side looked strangely deserted and still in the grey dawn, without any people or boats; one has no feeling of being on the thoroughfare between two continents, where the great routes from the sea and the fertile lands meet. South of the entrance lay Troy, in bygone days the guardian of the straits, commanding the traffic and the valuable trade that passed through them, as Byzantium and Constantinople did afterwards. Yonder, on the plain by windy Troy, Homer's heroes fought their battles in sight of the gods.

The skies became roseate as we glided in through the curving Hellespont. How strangely nature has formed this strait, with the long Gallipoli peninsula on the north stretching out to the south-west from Europe, and laying itself along the coast of Asia to make this long, narrow waterway; whereas it would have been an infinitely shorter way for the channel to have cut through the root of the tongue farther to the north.

There, on the spit, was Leander's Abydos ; and across the strait on the north shore was Sestos, and Aphrodite's temple, where the priestess Hero waited in the tower. When the dawn reddened, as now, her watching eyes saw the beloved swimmer's body being washed towards the strand, and she cast herself into the waves—

That tale is old, but love anew  
May nerve young hearts to prove as true.

Byron swam across this strait, though no priestess awaited him. And it was near this shore that the bride of Abydos, the lovely Zuleika, "soft as the memory of buried love," broke her heart.

Here, on the same shore, the Persian king, impatient to bring Hellas under his yoke, flew into a rage and commanded his soldiers to beat the sea with three hundred strokes and to put it in chains, because his bridge from Abydos to Sestos had been destroyed by a storm.

It was past midday when the slender minarets and broad domes of the mosques on the Stamboul peninsula showed above the blue waters of the Sea of Marmara. To the south, on the other side of the strait, were the white masses of houses at Scutari, in long rows like barracks, rather unpicturesque for Asia. Then we entered the mouth of the Bosphorus and slid in between the ships in the harbour outside the Golden Horn. On our left lay Stamboul, with huge mosques and minarets against a deep blue sky ; in front and to the right were Galata and Pera, the Greek and Armenian quarters of the city, their houses perched in groups up the steep slopes. The harbour and the Golden Horn were thronged with ships and masts.

As we neared land several boats came out to meet us. Suddenly our Jewish friend came to life ; he began to gesticulate vigorously, waved, and pointed to a boat, crying, "Look, there's my father! And there's my brother, too!" He beamed with delight, and for the moment all his sorrows seemed to be forgotten.

Then the Turkish officials came on board and our passports were examined in the saloon. Most of the passengers got

through pretty quickly, and were allowed to go ashore. Only the Jew and his wife were detained and had to remain on board. He was even refused permission to speak to his father, and could only shout to him from the deck. It was a sad spectacle to see these two left forlornly behind as we went ashore. True, they hoped to get permission to land, but there were big tears in the lovely Jewess's dark eyes. Why these unfortunate people, who presumably could do no harm whatever, were refused permission to land, it is difficult to understand; but it shows how the Turks avail themselves of every pretext to keep all who are not Turks out of Turkey.

#### CONSTANTINOPLE AND REFUGEES.

An Armenian deputation arrived punctually at the hotel in the afternoon. In addition to Armenians resident in Constantinople, who had not fled when the Turks took over the city in 1922, there were now 5,000 Armenian refugees. These lived in camps outside the city, but many of them had work. The problem of the moment was to send some eight hundred of them to Armenia. The necessary visas had been promised by the Armeno-Russian Government. The first contingent, to the number of 350, was to go as soon as these promised visas had been obtained. Nearly 11,000 dollars had been received from American sources to transport and otherwise assist these 800 refugees. The deputation wanted me to help to get the whole matter arranged. And, of course, it would be a good thing if the remainder of the 5,000 refugees could be transferred to Armenia as soon as possible.

*Tuesday, June 9th.*—The French boat we were going by was not to leave till the following day, so I had time to see the Russian refugees who had come from Varna in Bulgaria. This affair is a tragedy. There are many Russian refugees in Bulgaria, mostly from Wrangel's defeated army, who first came to Constantinople, some of them being afterwards transferred by us to Bulgaria, where they could more easily get work. Some of them had returned thence to Russia.

As the League's High Commissioner for Russian Refugees it fell to my lot to try to help them.

The present Bulgarian Government feared that some of the Russian refugees were Communists, who might prove a source of dangerous infection, and accordingly desired to get rid of them. Those who were considered doubtful were segregated in a camp near Varna, and last spring, at the beginning of March, 250 of them were crowded on board a small, crazy vessel, the *Triton*, barely large enough to carry fifty people. With the barest rations for a short time, they were launched on the Black Sea to sail to Odessa. But no agreement had been made with the Russian Government for their reception, and the Russian authorities had not even been informed that they were coming. Accordingly, on their arrival at Odessa they were refused permission to land. The frail *Triton* had to put to sea again; but whither bound? It was useless to go anywhere in Russia, and equally useless to return to Bulgaria; there was nothing for it but to try Turkey. It was a long voyage, and one can hardly imagine the sufferings of all these people, short of food and water, and herded together in that miserable little boat, so leaky that she could barely keep afloat. At last, after a voyage of twenty-six days, she reached Constantinople in April in a sinking condition. Salvation was at hand, and great was the joy on board. But no, not even the Turkish authorities would allow these unfortunates to land; so they had to remain on board.

Next a tug was dispatched to tow the *Triton* back through the Bosphorus and out into the Black Sea again; but when the towing commenced the despair of those on board turned to fury. The *Triton* was sinking—was half full of water—and the Russians screamed, shouting for help, and threatening to jump overboard. Luckily an English ship lay alongside. The captain heard their shouts, and grasping the situation, got hold of the Turkish police and warned them that they would be held responsible for the loss of life if they dared to carry through this act of inhumanity. The attempt to tow the sinking ship had to be given up, and the Russians were allowed to leave her. They were permitted to stay in a small enclosed area on the shore opposite where the *Triton* sank;

but they were given nothing to eat, though they had been short of food for days past.

Immediately I received, on May 2nd, a telegraphic account of this incident, I wired to the Government in Moscow asking permission for these refugees to return to Russia. But the Government replied that they had no knowledge of these refugees or what sort of people they were, and therefore felt obliged to refuse. They regarded this as a matter solely for the Bulgarian Government, which had sent no communication to Moscow on the subject.

Meanwhile these unfortunate refugees carried on a wretched existence on the unsheltered beach, with very little clothing and no provisions; many of them would have succumbed but for the work of Miss Anna Mitchell at the League's office for refugees at Constantinople. Collecting money from kind-hearted persons in the American-European colony in the town, and from various institutions, she managed to keep them alive from day to day. When I arrived she had only enough for a few more days, and did not know where to turn next. She was very anxious for me to pay them a visit, however, and I did so.

What misery! They had only a small plot of ground at their disposal close to the beach. Part of it was covered by a sort of roof, probably an old roof erected to cover some boats. An oblong bit of ground, six feet by two for each person, marked out by a few bricks, did duty for a bed. A heap of earth or stones was the pillow, and a few rags on the bare earth served as a kind of "mattress" under the upper part of the body. That was all. Children had come into the world here, and one or two people had left it, and the wonder is that more had not succumbed. There was not room for all under the roof, so some had to sleep on the ground outside, still colder than the others at night, and soaked to the skin in rainy weather. The daily ration was a little bread and a cup of thin soup. But now, as we have seen, the money collected to pay for this was used up.

The refugees had had a little money when they came, about seven hundred Turkish pounds in all. But the Turkish police had confiscated this, and refused to return it because, so far

as I could understand, it was to be used to meet the cost of transporting the refugees elsewhere—presumably to the churchyard. It could hardly be taken as rent for their present accommodation!

For the rest, many of these poor creatures looked remarkably well, in spite of all they had been through; some of the women looked healthy and strong, though others were gaunt and haggard; and some of the men were tall, strong, and able-bodied. With Mr. Quisling as interpreter I talked with some of them. Their one wish was to get to some place where they could work and support themselves, for their present life was intolerable. They wanted to go to Russia, but were willing to go practically anywhere, except back to Bulgaria. Several of them were well educated and could talk a certain amount of French; but they were ready to do any kind of work.

What was to be done? The difficulty was, that in order to get away from the isolation camp in Bulgaria they had declared themselves willing to return to Russia, with the result that they were regarded as Bolsheviks, and no country would have them. I spoke to Mr. Radeff, the Bulgarian Minister in Constantinople, but he assured me that his Government would not allow them to return on any conditions, while the Turkish Government were equally determined that they should not remain in Constantinople. It looked pretty hopeless; but we have had many similar and even greater dilemmas to unravel in connection with our work for the refugees in Europe.

In the end the solution of this particular difficulty was that we were able, by means of the money placed at my disposal by Mr. Chr. Erichsen, of Copenhagen, to arrange for the temporary maintenance of the refugees. Afterwards the big American Near East Relief organization supported them for a couple of months on condition that a definitive settlement could be guaranteed within that time; and I gave the guarantees asked for. Finally, France was induced to take a small number of the refugees who were good workers; and on my earnest representations the Soviet Government in Moscow kindly agreed to take the rest on condition the

Bulgarian Government abstained in future from sending Russian refugees to Russia without making the necessary arrangements with Moscow.

Of the unfortunate Turco-Jewish "refugees" on board the *Semiramis* we received sad tidings; in spite of all efforts to obtain permission to land they would have to return by the next boat. Every day the aged father and mother sat on the quay looking up at their son and daughter-in-law, who looked down on them from the deck and wept. The Jew told his Swiss friends, who paid him a visit on board, that he could not understand why he was prevented from going ashore; perhaps his brother was working against him in order to take his place in the undertaking and pocket the profits.

In the afternoon I went to have a look at St. Sophia. I wanted to see the wonderful interior again—that vast oval hall, so complete and harmonious, so uniquely proportioned with its enormous dome floating above it, a triumph of the human mind over ponderous matter. It is and will remain one of the most remarkable creations of architecture, and even if Byzantine culture had produced nothing but this building it would hold a high place. The most amazing thing about this edifice, built by the Emperor Justinian in A.D. 532-537, is the fact that it appeared so early, and seemingly without any preparation, with no known precursors of anything like the same size. It cannot have been related to the architecture of Western lands, which was highly undeveloped at that time; and the art which raised the dome of the Pantheon in Rome had long been forgotten. It is a creation of the East. The master-builders Anthemius of Tralles and Isidorus of Miletus were Greeks from Asia Minor, who relied on the science of the Greeks, and especially of Archimedes, in solving the mechanical problems involved in constructions of such unusual magnitude. But whence came the idea? This great hall, with its four vast piers arranged in a square to support the lofty central dome, and with the semi-domes on each side that give the building its remarkable rounded completeness, has surely no connection with Greece.

The more one considers this riddle, and the more one sees

of Armenian and Georgian churches, the more likely does it seem that Strzygowski<sup>1</sup> is right in holding that the basic idea of the cathedral of St. Sophia came from Armenia or Georgia. The original fundamental type of Armenian church must have been a square with large piers at the four corners; these, with small assisting niches over the corners, supported the central dome, with which were connected the semi-domes above the semicircular apses at the sides. Just as Leonardo and Bramante probably derived the idea of their dome constructions from the Armenians, Anthemius may also have obtained the basic idea for his great work from the same source. Byzantium had a lively connection with Armenia at that date. If this assumption is correct, it is very remarkable that the creative idea of St. Sophia at Byzantium and of St. Peter's at Rome, the two greatest cathedrals of the Roman Churches of the East and the West, should have originated in the Armenian mind, in the heretical Gregorian Church, with its despised monophysite teaching that Christ had one nature only, the divine, and yet became perfect Man.

The Muhammedans cared nothing for the fine-drawn distinctions of Christian dogmatists; they converted their church into Allah's by covering the beautiful mosaics and frescoes with a little plaster and by arranging the carpets on the floor so that they faced towards Mecca. And now, when Christians want to enter their ancient churches, they must put orthodox slippers on their dirty feet and keep their hats on their heretical heads.

But in order to do Allah due honour, Muhammed II, the conqueror of Constantinople, had a large new mosque built (in 1471-1473) by Christodulus, who was probably also a Greek. It was a copy of St. Sophia, but strange to say, kept still closer to the square ground-plan of the Armenian churches. In this connection it is curious to notice how the fanatical sons of Allah have adopted Christian and even heathen elements; even the crescent and the star are not their own, having been the emblem of Byzantium from the earliest times, found on the ancient Byzantine coins and on the statues of the moon-

<sup>1</sup> Josef Strzygowski, *Die Baukunst der Armenier in Europa*, vol. ii, pp. 777 ff. Vienna, 1918.

goddess Hecate, daughter of the starry night sky, whom the semi-barbarian Thracians worshipped.

Afterwards I took a walk in the Sultan's beautiful park, with its shady trees and quiet paths, so far from the noise of the city; and enjoyed the view from the terrace overlooking the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus while the sun sank in the west. But the Sultan is no more, and Constantinople is no longer the seat of the Khalif, the centre of power in Islam, as once it was. A new generation is trying to make Asiatic Turkey into a European state, while at the same time it wants to retain the warlike customs of a conquering race. *Tempora mutantur.*

In the evening I saw a very different, modern aspect of this world. We went to the restaurant Maxim, started and run by a Russian negro from Moscow. There was music and singing and dancing; another feature was the striking proportion of Russian waitresses and, where suitable, ladies who kept the guests company at table; in the latter case they were often very loud-voiced and merry. Many were of good family. They had escaped and come here with Wrangel's army in 1921, and I had seen several of them when visiting Constantinople three years ago. At that time they were trying their best to get away before the Turkish Government returned, but now they seemed quite settled down.

## II

### FROM CONSTANTINOPLE TO BATUM

IN the afternoon of Wednesday, June 10th, we were to go on by the French steamer into the Black Sea. An Armenian deputation came on board with a splendid basket of flowers as a parting gift. Such touching gratitude is almost painful when one has done nothing for them yet, and all one can say is that the will is there, without knowing how far the deed will follow suit.

At length we cast off and moved away from the land. Outside us lay a big Orient liner surrounded by a swarm of boats, and she weighed anchor at the same time on her way to Eastern lands. On the inner side the houses rose one above another up the steep slopes of Galata to the old Genoese tower, now used as a fire station, at the top. On the other side we could see Stamboul's chequered masses of houses with the broad mosque-cupolas above. And between the two parts of the town a forest of masts and funnels in the Golden Horn. Outside lay the strait glittering in the sun, with the long line of the Sea of Marmara behind. We turned in the cramped space between ships lying at anchor, and steamed north-east through the Bosphorus, while the cupolas of the mosques over Stamboul and the slender masts of the minarets stood out dark for a long time against the sunny western sky, and Constantinople slowly sank behind us.

What a wonderfully intricate nest of dissimilar elements is this noisy ant-hill by the Bosphorus, swarming with friends and enemies, but chiefly enemies! A great centre of power where two worlds meet by this narrow waterway between two seas. A wistful lyric of bygone days under an alien yoke.

During all the changes of a thousand years the Byzantine empire, in spite of all its failings and weaknesses, formed a remarkable centre of civilization here, with contributions both from the East and the West. Up to its last stubborn

death-struggle in the fifteenth century it successfully stemmed the tide of the advancing hordes of uncivilized barbarians. Do we realize its services to the white race?

First came the Persians, though these had a culture of their own. Then followed the Arabs, whose impetuous onset, continuing for four hundred years, broke again and again against this massive bulwark. For seven consecutive years (672-679) they besieged Constantinople by land and by water. The Bosphorus was full of their ships, but they could not withstand the Greek fire, and the greater part of their forces were destroyed. They returned again in 718 with new armies of fanatics, but were repulsed and beaten once more.

Imagine what it would have meant for our own civilization if this dam had given way, letting the Arab hordes overflow Europe without any obstacle, at the time when their power was at its zenith and was extending with irresistible might from India to the Atlantic. It is true that they were one of the civilized peoples of the East, and some say that it was actually a loss to Europe that they were stopped, inasmuch as they were far more civilized than the Europeans of that epoch. But the subsequent line of development would certainly have been another, and Europe would have looked very different from what it does to-day.

Far greater was the menace of the next invaders, the Seljuk Turks and Ottomans, nomads and savages whose sole aim was plunder, and whose war policy was to stamp out the tillers of the soil and lay the country waste for their uncivilized tribesfolk and nomadic herdsmen.

And all the time this invincible stronghold must have been an unrivalled arena for political intrigues, pursued with all the cruelty and faithlessness of those days, while the birds of prey gathered over and over again in fresh flocks in the neighbouring lands to the east, south, and north, often to hurl themselves against the very gates of the city.

It was here, moreover, in "Miklegard," that our forefathers the Verings, sometimes together with Armenian brothers in arms, formed the emperor's bodyguard and a separate force which fought and made raids in the countries round, against Turks, Saracens, West-Romans, and Bulgarians. Here, too,

the Norwegian chieftain and warrior-champion, Harald Haardraade, strong, astute, and cunning, performed his deeds of valour and destruction.

Acts of cruelty and violence were by no means only on the side of the enemies of civilization. Can we imagine a more incredible atrocity than that perpetrated by the able Christian emperor Basil II, who, after defeating the Bulgarians in 1014, sent 15,000 prisoners home with their eyes put out, some of them, however, being allowed to keep one eye in order to guide the rest! The prince of the barbarians, more sensitive than the Christian conquerors, died of a broken heart at the sight of his men.

Take another picture. When through treachery the brave emperor Romanus IV lost the battle of Manazkert in Armenia in 1071, and was taken prisoner by the Seljuks, the blood-thirsty sultan Alp Arslan first put his foot on the captive monarch's neck and then granted him life and liberty, and treated him as an honoured guest. But on returning to his own people he was attacked by his treacherous courtiers, deposed, blinded as usual, and finally murdered. Thus ended the golden age of Byzantium.

Then we come to the fifteenth century, when the once mighty Byzantine empire had shrunk into an insignificant little state. The Turks had torn away one piece after another, so that little remained of it save Constantinople, the Bosphorus peninsula and a few scattered lands: Thessalonika, the province of Misithra in Peloponnesus, the islands of Lemnos and Thasos, and the towns of Varna and Mesembria in Bulgaria. But the stronghold of Constantinople still held out for a long time, and Sultan Murad II failed to take the city by storm in 1422, when cannons were used for the first time in the East, and, curiously enough, it was the Turks who made use of this Western invention. Within the walls of the city life went on as usual, undisturbed by defeats outside; apparently unconscious of danger and impending fate the citizens revelled in splendid processions, dramatic performances in St. Sophia, and much beside; and from time to time found leisure to receive some foreign envoy with regal pomp.

But the city was attacked and besieged again by Muham-

med II and an army of 165,000 in April 1453; and to this force the courageous emperor Constantine XI could oppose no more than 7,000 men. The Turks, moreover, had artillery; fourteen batteries and twelve large pieces bombarded the town night and day with stone cannon-balls weighing up to 500 lb., and it was difficult to close the breaches they made in the strong walls. It was a desperate struggle; and the bravest and most indefatigable combatant was the emperor himself.

Then came the final tragic battle on Tuesday, May 29, 1453. The emperor took his last ride round the defences on the evening before the great Turkish attack, and spoke words of encouragement to his troops. Then, after attending service in St. Sophia, and having said farewell to the members of his household and begged the forgiveness of any whom he might have wronged, he took up his position in the great breach where the main attack was expected.

At two o'clock the storm broke out, and when the young victor, Muhammed II, rode into the town next morning he passed close to the emperor's dead body, buried beneath a heap of his faithful followers. He had fought to the last. A Turk found the blood-stained corpse, and cutting off the head, brought it to Muhammed, who in the flush of victory directed it to be placed on the top of Justinian's metal column. Afterwards it was sent round to be exhibited to the governors of the Asiatic provinces. The Byzantine empire was no more.

Our steamer was gliding steadily onwards through the curious, narrow strait. Its Greek name, *Bosporos*, might possibly mean "a place where oxen wade"—equivalent to Oxford.<sup>1</sup> Although this is very uncertain, it is not at all impossible that the men of the past crossed over here with their cattle. The strait is like a large winding river, which has cut its channel with steep sides through the comparatively low, rocky land which connects Asia and Europe. How can a channel like this have been formed? In several places

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Emil Smith informs me, however, that one would expect a Greek word with this meaning to have the form *Buporos*, or *Boosporos* (from the gen. sing. *boos*).

there seemed to be indications, in the form of flat terraces on the hillside, of a time when the sea-level was higher than it is now. And there seemed to me to be similar indications in the Dardanelles and on several promontories and islands on the Greek coast. In those bygone days, when the sea was rather higher, this ridge of land which dammed up the Black Sea, making it into a lake cut off from the Mediterranean, would be gradually eroded down to approximately the level of the sea. But later on the sea sank, the Black Sea became a lake again, and a big, strongly-flowing river poured out again across this ridge, cutting its channel deeper and deeper. Then the sea sank still more, far below the present sea-level, while the river became in consequence of this still more rapid, and accordingly cut its channel deeper, until the bottom almost corresponded with the level of the sea. After that the sea rose; and it continued sinking and rising several times until it finally came to rest at the present height, while the channel of the river became the strait we navigate to-day.

The process must have been more or less as outlined above if the sea varied in volume, as it must have done in the ice ages. In the long periods when the climates of the earth were so warm that there were no large glaciers either in Greenland or the Antarctic, the sea was higher than now, possibly by twenty metres or more. But in the ice ages, when vast ice-caps covered Europe, parts of Siberia, North America, South America, the Antarctic, and elsewhere, so much water was held fast in these glaciers that the sea sank far below its present level. It was only when they melted again that the water flowed back and the sea again rose. In the time of the lower sea-level—not so very long ago—the Black Sea was a lake, and a mighty river flowed through the Bosphorus Valley. Already in those days there were men dwelling in the great forests.

We steamed on past the lovely shores with their many palaces peacefully mirrored in the water below and showing no traces of the bloody days gone by. Higher up, the luxuriant green hillsides were richly wooded. Fortunate landscape, which the sultan's edict had saved up to now from factories, smoking chimneys, oil-tanks, rattling cranes and other dis-

figurements of modernity ! The sultan preferred to keep his Eden, his gardens, his harems, his beautiful daughters of Eve in peace—untarnished by the prosaic vulgarity of the age. Even a blood-stained monster like Abdul Hamid, who enjoyed having the Armenians massacred by the thousand, must have had a softer sentimental side which sought peace and repose in the bosom of nature. But Turkey's hour has come at last, and the new age of factory-chimneys and oil-tanks will soon invade the picturesque shores of the Bosphorus.

The climate of the strait is not as warm as the latitude would lead one to expect ; even the ancients knew the chilly Boreas which blew south through the Bosphorus from the Black Sea and unexplored Scythia.

We sailed past ruins of the old fortifications near Constantinople—the Norman towers and walls which kept the Turks so long at bay.

In the evening we reached the mouth, and the Black Sea opened out before us as the sun sank close to the outermost spit with its lighthouse in the west. It was as if we were sailing into a new world. Through this very strait sailed the legendary Argonauts on their way to wealthy Colchis ; here they met the blind old king Phineus who knew the way thither and was willing to tell them how to steer if they could set him free from the disgusting harpies who befouled the food, so that he could never eat in peace. The winged sons of Boreas easily made short work of them, and Phineus accordingly gave the Argonauts useful information as to the course they should follow. We met no blind old king or harpies ; but a modern aeroplane and its machine-gun would have been a still more efficient help to him than the sons of Boreas.

We glided out into the Black Sea and headed eastward along the north coast of Asia Minor. Next morning (June 11th) we arrived at Songuldak, where the ship was to coal. This place is a little to the north-east of the ancient Greek colony of Heraclea (now Eregli), the last port the Argonauts came to before Colchis, and the place where their steersman, Tiphys, died.

Coaling is horribly dull, even in Asia Minor. While it was going on, therefore, some of us went for a stroll ashore.

There are extensive coal-seams here, some of them right on the surface, mostly in limestone rock on a slope. Recently coal of moderate quality has been worked in quite a number of mines, which are chiefly French undertakings. On landing our passports were taken away from us, and only returned when we went on board again. This was doubtless to prevent us from escaping into the interior of Anatolia. The Turks regard all foreigners with suspicious eyes, and notwithstanding all modern tendencies their authorities keep a close watch to prevent foreigners from penetrating into their country, whence, in accordance with their traditions, they have now expelled such alien races as the Armenians and Greeks, though Jews, and to some extent Frenchmen, are treated with more tolerance.

I went for a walk on the heights above the town. There were no woods and few bushes, the vegetation consisting mainly of the bracken which everywhere covered the ground, a few rhododendrons, here and there some stunted oaks and other foliaceous trees, and a few fruit trees. We saw a little maize and a small field of oats; otherwise there was a strange absence of cultivated land. Farther inland the country was high and mountainous, ridge upon ridge with valleys between and rich green valley-slopes. But curiously little sign of any inhabitants. It seemed to be a beautiful and fertile country of neglected possibilities, devastated, no doubt, by the scourge of war.

The inhabitants are Muhammedans, and the women are still veiled, like wandering black spectres of the night, although new customs are supposed to be in vogue. It is strange that the notion can be so ingrained that they must not show their fair countenances, however old and lined, to any strange man—least of all to a heretic. On one little plot some half-grown children were at work with a woman who looked like their mother. We stopped on the path above to watch them at work, but as soon as we drew near the woman, who had left behind her veil, got up and obstinately turned so as to keep her face away from us. Wherever we moved she turned her back to us, although there were no witnesses near. When we passed on we saw from a distance that she was

hard at work again. Similarly, down in the town, if at a bend of a narrow street we came unexpectedly upon an old woman talking to a child, the black veil was at once raised in front of her wrinkled face, though we had no eyes save for the child, who was a perfect vision of loveliness.

The means of transport here was the human back, and we stood for a long time watching the various powerful types of carriers on the beach. They carried up big sacks of flour, ground from American wheat in Constantinople and now discharged at this place. To think that this fertile country, with room and soil enough, if tilled, to support many times its present population, should import corn and flour from America, and send back in exchange the American tobacco plant! We live in a strange world.

A number of passengers, mostly men, came on board to go with us to Trebizond. They were said to be mostly Kurds. It was quite touching to see them taking leave of their relations who came to see them off—at parting the men kissed each other on both sides of the mouth. Some were fine, powerful fellows, obviously of the same stock as many of the carriers on shore. Strange people these Kurds, who are supposed to be partly of Aryan—some even say of Nordic—origin. Their language is akin to Iranian. I cannot say that the majority of these looked much like our people at home. A few had brown hair, it is true, and possibly bluish eyes; but most of their faces struck me as foreign and Oriental—some Semitic with long hooked noses and swarthy complexions, others more like Russian Tartars with prominent cheek-bones and long beards, black, grey or white, while one was as dark-complexioned as a Hindu.

It was, indeed, a motley crowd of different nationalities that swarmed on our deck. The solemn Turks sitting for'ard in a circle were seemingly merchants discussing their business. Amidships we had a throng of all sorts of people: Persians with their white robes with fluttering ends, looking as if they had put their shirts on outside; stoical Kurds with big beards sitting motionless on their chattels; Semitic types with long grey wisdom-beards, hooked noses and white turbans—as though the patriarchs Abraham and Isaac had

descended upon our deck. And then those female spectres swathed in black veils—evidently not of the family of Sarah, who laughed in the tent; while in and out among them all the children—the eternal spring of life—played with indefatigable spirit and energy.

At sundown two good Musalmans performed their prayers and penances on the main hatch. Sitting cross-legged on their mats, with their faces towards Mecca, which was practically south of us, they went through all their remarkable exercises. First they would prostrate themselves with the palms of their hands on the ground before them, then they would sit up, and so on, over and over again. Then they would rise to their feet, bend right down to the deck—a remarkable feat for an old man—then stand upright again, repeating this three times. After that they would sit down cross-legged and prostrate themselves as before. This went on for a very long time—I cannot say how long. It seemed wonderful that these two old men should have such supple and untiring limbs; but such exercises must be extremely healthy, and were presumably intended by the wise Prophet to keep his people in health, like the frequent ablutions that he also prescribed.

Next morning, Friday, June 12th, we arrived at Samsun, where we anchored outside in the roads, and I was able to send off some letters by a Frenchman who went ashore. From this town a railway runs inland to Sivas. Seen from the sea the town looked far from impressive; I estimated the population at "not more than ten thousand, probably much less," but learnt subsequently that its inhabitants now number over thirty-five thousand, and that it is important as a centre for the excellent tobacco cultivated in these parts, and as a tobacco mart. I learnt also that the Americans, among others, were fully aware of this; an American tobacco trust had bought up the whole of the last tobacco harvest in this part of the world, and in due course we should see some of it again, I was told, in the form of "Virginia" cigarettes.

We steamed on at once. In the afternoon we had a sudden shower, and it was amusing to see all these solemn Kurds and Turks, the aged Semitic patriarchs, and the Persians with

their waving shirt-tails make a dash for the main hatch and take refuge in the hold, over which a tarpaulin was stretched to keep them dry. One of them had a gramophone, but it evidently had only one record with a monotonous Persian tune, which we heard over and over again without respite. An easily satisfied musical taste.

In the evening I saw all the families turn in down there in the roomy hold. The veiled ladies were there, too, only without their veils; how they survived it was a puzzle to me. Each family had a small area to itself 'tween decks, where they made their nest of mats and clothing and could sleep the sleep of the just in warmth and comfort. A little Persian girl was playing with a Kurdish girl, while her fat Persian father sat by, genial and rotund, talking to some other Persians, and occasionally throwing in a word of encouragement to the two children. When they had to go to bed the Persian told his daughter to say good-night nicely to the Kurdish girl, who stood there looking shy, and seemed to be of a poorer and less respected class. The little Persian maiden ran to her and gave her a kiss: then began playing with her father and danced off to bed in front of her stout, genial parent, while the Kurdish girl slipped away in silence.

Next day, Saturday, June 13th, we dropped anchor in the roads outside Trebizond, the old Greek colony which used to be the busy terminus and port of the caravan-route from Persia and the East, but has recently lost much of its importance since the flight of the Greeks and Armenians. Clearly the rainfall is greater here than farther west on the coast, for the vegetation is richer and the hills more thickly wooded. The country rises in ridges behind the town towards high mountain ranges far inland. Across these mountains the road runs south and south-east to Erzerum and the Armenian highlands. But as communications across these rough mountainous regions have always been precarious, Armenia naturally came to form her chief connections with the east and south, and to a less extent with the Black Sea.

At Trebizond most of the passengers left the ship, the Kurds with their property in big boxes and baskets on their shoulders, the Persians tripping along with their white shirt-

tails fluttering, while the grave Semites, putting on their most solemn mien, stepped in Indian file down the gangway and into the boat below, which was rising and falling in such a lively fashion on the swell that several fell into the water. One felt particularly sorry for an unfortunate sick woman who had to be carried down on a man's back ; there was very nearly a catastrophe, but her bearer managed at the last moment to secure a safe foothold in the boat without falling overboard.

We were to remain here the whole day and leave in the evening, so as not to arrive at Batum at night ; the voyage only takes ten hours. Accordingly we got a boat and went ashore. We were lying at anchor off the east and newest part of the town, as there is a bay there which affords a little shelter from westerly winds, and also a custom-house on the promontory, which is surmounted by a little fort. On its southern side this part of the town is shut in by a mountain, 250 metres high, which the Turks call Boz Tepe, or the grey cliff, flat-topped and with steep slopes facing the town. The Greeks called it Mount Mithrios, because on the top of it there was a statue of Mithras, the Indian and Iranian sun-god, whose cult was widespread during the first centuries A.D.

On landing at the custom-house our passports were taken by the Turkish customs officials, together with our cameras, because there are fortifications which must not be photographed. The town nestles picturesquely on the slopes surrounding the bay. There are small gardens everywhere among the houses, with vegetables, mulberry-trees, cypresses, laurels, figs, walnuts, vines, etc. One of the most important exports is said to be hazel-nuts, and the figs of Trebizond are also a well-known commodity.

After proceeding some way up the narrow, steep streets we met a young man who stopped and asked in English whether I was Dr. N. ; on my answering that I was, he informed me that the British consul wished to place himself at our disposal if we needed any help. I thanked him and said I would call on the consul a little later.

On the way up we passed several big houses which appeared to be standing empty. On one of them we saw a Greek inscription, and surmised that it was a deserted Greek

school, which afterwards proved to be correct. Another large building standing high up and with walls round it was an abandoned Greek monastery. We noticed that the names at the street-corners were painted in Russian characters. This is a memento of the Russian occupation of the town for two years (March 1916 to February 1918), during the War. The Russians had administered the place on completely Russian lines, and among other things had constructed good roads from the coast to the interior, especially one to Kars. The Turks do not do that sort of thing, and even the Turkish inhabitants wished the Russians could have kept the town a year longer, or occupied it a year earlier, so that they might have made still more roads.

We ascended to a height where we could look down on the town. The older and larger part of it lies to the west of the bay where we anchored, and it was here that the oldest Greek colony was situated. On a rocky ridge with narrow gorges on two of its sides a little below us we could see the ruins of an old castle and walls with towers and battlements. These were the old fortifications of Trebizond, and the castle with the imperial palace—relics of its past grandeur. On a height a little beyond the town we saw a number of imposing houses with fine gardens. Rich Greeks used to live in them, but they had to leave when the Turks returned, all except a few who were Russian subjects. The houses of these refugee Greeks were then taken over by Turks, in accordance with the convenient law mentioned on p. 26. However, they do not understand how to keep them in repair, and they are rapidly deteriorating. The best house was that in which the Russian consul lived.

During the Russian occupation of the town, after the departure of the Turks, the Greeks, and to some extent the Armenians also, plundered the Turkish houses by way of reprisals for past massacres. On their return the Turks, finding that their houses had been plundered, revenged themselves by massacring Greeks and Armenians, and all of these who were not killed fled from Trebizond in the same way as they did from Samsun and the other coast towns. This, however, had a disastrous effect on the trade of these

towns, as the business and export-trade had been mainly in Greek and Armenian hands.

Mr. Dupuis and I called upon Mr. Knight, the British consul, who received us very kindly. He was living in a pretty little house on the hillside, with a wide view over the town, and a flourishing little garden in front where the birds were singing, and I recognized the familiar notes of a chaffinch.

We went for a walk with him through the old quarter of the town and saw the time-honoured walls which encircled the first fortified town. This town was situated on a level ridge, a couple of hundred metres across, and bounded by two deep gorges with precipitous sides on the east and west, and by the sea on the north. By means of a wall across the ridge on the south it could be easily converted into a strong fortress, and it was obviously from the form of this ridge that the town received its original Greek name Trapezos. The deep gorges on either side are crossed by bridges.

Within the old walls is now the Turkish quarter, where none but Moslems have lived since they took the town in 1461, eight years after the fall of Constantinople. No doubt they immediately killed or drove out the Christian Greeks and appropriated their houses. It is said that only a third of the whole population remained, and these were probably the dregs.

But Islam is by no means coupled with any particular distinctions of race in these parts. As Lynch observes,<sup>1</sup> there are whole villages on this coast where all the inhabitants are Muhammedans; and these would vigorously protest against being called anything but Osmanlis, though their Greek Christian origin is beyond question. It is characteristic, moreover, of these Greeks that they are still as famous for their theological prowess as they were under the Greek empire; in those days they provided the Church with bishops, and now they furnish Islam with mullahs. But for all their Moslem fanaticism and hatred of the Christians they have retained many Christian customs and superstitions. When sickness lays them low the Madonna comes into her

<sup>1</sup> H. T. B. Lynch, *Armenia*, vol. i, p. 11. London, 1901.

own, her picture being hung above the sick-bed; and the invalid drinks forbidden wine from the old chalice which is preserved and looked upon as a holy relic by the entire community, probably without knowing why. This may be compared with the old charms and other witchcraft and magic that many Christian people still retain from the religions and superstitions of the past.

We had a look at the west side of the old castle and imperial palace. With its lofty battlemented walls and towers it rose high above the deep western gorge, which lay beneath us in its luxuriant richness as we stood on the bridge, making one think of some mysterious wonderland of shady thickets and glades, with all kinds of southern trees, laurels, myrtles, vines, and ivy climbing far up the face of the cliff. It is a perfect site for a mediæval castle, and one can well understand that it was able to hold out for a long time against the besieging Turks.

The empire in Trebizond was founded by Alexius—a descendant of the imperial house of Comnenus, and a nephew of Queen Tamara of Georgia, when Constantinople fell in 1204 during the miserable fourth crusade, and the feeble Latin empire was set up there. Even after the Greek empire was restored in Constantinople sixty years later, the empire in Trebizond remained independent until the town was taken by the Turks under Muhammed II. The last emperor was taken as a prisoner to Europe, and on his refusing to renounce the Christian faith was murdered along with the princes who attended him, their bodies being thrown to the dogs outside the walls of Constantinople.

Right down to the shore the walls were remarkably well preserved. In this lower part of the town we also came upon a massive, castle-like old warehouse, built by the Genoese, who up to the time the Turks took the country controlled the trade of these coasts of the Black Sea and threatened even the supremacy of Trebizond. That they could build such a stronghold right in the middle of the town is a tangible sign of their power. But the armed protection of commerce was naturally necessary in those days, when the coasts of the Black Sea were infested with pirates.

In the evening we weighed anchor and continued our voyage to Batum. The country beyond the coast rises in one ridge after another. The blue mountains inland showed higher towards the east, and white peaks shone faintly far off against the dim eastern sky where the bluish-purple segment of the earth's shadow was rising up and up, as the darkness quietly enveloped us. Soon, under a blue-black vault with a myriad worlds glittering in its night, we were cleaving the Black Sea on our way to *Æea*, the mist-born land of the red dawn—Colchis.

### III

#### BATUM TO TIFLIS

At half-past seven in the morning we slid into the roads outside Batum. The town was all smiling in the quivering sunlight, encircled by its green wooded hills and mountains. We had arrived at the entrance to the Union of Soviet Republics. The first business was an examination of the whole crew. A Russian doctor came on board, in white medical dress, with high Russian boots, and a white blouse cut in the Soviet fashion, with a belt round the waist. He kept on pulling down his blouse under the belt, while he straightened his shoulders and expanded his chest. The crew had all to stand in a row on deck while he walked to and fro in front of them, tugged at his blouse, and counted them. Two short. Then one came up from the engine-room; and presently another; now all were present. The doctor proceeded to examine each man to make sure that there were no signs of infectious disease. Eventually all were passed and dismissed. But this tedious ceremony seemed rather superfluous, as the whole crew were going back at once with the ship. The passengers, on the other hand, who were going on into the country and might spread infection, were not examined at all. Instead, our passports were looked at, which took a considerable time; but in the end this formality was safely got through, too.

Next a large deputation representing the various Governments arrived on board to welcome our commission; there was the Government of the local republic of Acharistan, and the Government of the republic of Georgia, to which this autonomous republic belongs, and the Government of Transcaucasian Federated Republics, to which Georgia belongs, and finally the Government in Moscow of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, to which the Federation belongs. Here we were under the benevolent protection of all these Governments, which seemed very reassuring.

An American representative of the Near East Relief was also present, who hospitably invited us to stay at the house of that organization while we were in Batum; but we were informed that the Government of the Transcaucasian republics had sent a special railway carriage which was to be at our disposal for the entire journey through Georgia and Armenia, and we decided to move into it at once with our luggage and take up our quarters there, after which we could have a look at the town. The train to Tiflis was to leave at 6 p.m.

We went ashore. A crowd was waiting there to see the strange new arrivals; there were several photographers on the spot, and even a cinematographer who turned the handle all the time we were leaving the boat and getting into the waiting cars. So far it did not feel much as if we were in another continent. We drove to our carriage, which was waiting for us on the railway-line, and were met there by an Armenian named Narriman Ter Kasarian, an official of the Transcaucasian Government, who was to be our companion and adjutant during the whole journey through the Transcaucasian republics. As he had some likeness to Napoleon III we generally called him Napoleon, which was easier to remember.

When we entered the roomy saloon of our carriage he made a short, neatly expressed speech in Russian, welcoming us cordially on behalf of his Government and the Transcaucasian republics. Several other speeches followed; we, and especially my unworthy self, were lauded to the skies as friends and benefactors of the Soviet republics, of whom they expected great things. It made us feel rather anxious, to hear that so much was expected of us. I said a few words in reply in English, which was translated into Russian by Captain Quisling, assuring them that we had come with excellent intentions to do our best for the Armenian refugees and the Armenians generally, but that we anticipated great difficulties and did not as yet know what could be done.

Our carriage was convenient and spacious in the Russian style, with a large saloon and sleeping compartments; and we proceeded to settle in, treating it as our permanent home. Then we had to make up our minds as to what we wanted to

see in the short time before one o'clock, when the Government of Batum had invited us to lunch. My companions, headed by our keen botanist, M. Carle, motored to the botanical gardens a little way outside the town. These gardens are noted for their beauty, with a wealth of sub-tropical plants and trees which thrive particularly well in this warm, damp climate.

Meanwhile I called upon the representative of the local Government. And there was one other thing I particularly wanted to see in Batum; the pipe-line which carries the petroleum all the way overland from Baku to the Black Sea. I was taken in a motor-car to the terminus of this pipe-line. On the way we passed the large tea factory and plantations which were established here by the Tsar and are now managed by the State. Besides these plantations there is a good deal of private tea-growing in this neighbourhood, tea being planted on many hillsides where maize and corn will not grow. This tea-growing seems to pay well. The tea is not particularly good, I was told, being rather devoid of flavour, but it is blended with Ceylon tea (10 per cent.) and sells as well as the latter. Among other things cultivated here are oranges, tangerines, large quantities of tobacco, bamboos, maize, millet, and a kind of rice which they told me does not have to be grown under water and can therefore be cultivated without interfering with the measures against malaria.

We caught sight of some large tanks rising above the plain in front of us. By these we stopped. I went in to call on the chief engineer in his office; then threaded my way among various buildings and tanks, across railway-lines, and out into a field, with the engineer as my pilot.

At length I saw the pipe-line, that remarkable artery which, since it was completed in 1906, has conveyed so much power and light to Europe. It looked like an ordinary water-main laid alongside a row of poplars, and stretching away across the plain to the heights in the distance. The iron pipe has an inner diameter of about 20 cm., and according to the engineer the line was now conveying 10 million *poods* (164,000 tons) of petroleum a year. He stated, however, that it could convey up to 30 million *poods* (492,000 tons)

annually. Baedeker, published before the war, says that 70 million *poods* of oil flow through the pipe-line in the course of a year. There would seem to be a mistake somewhere.

This pipe-line, which runs along the railway for the whole distance, is nearly 900 kilometres long; it rises from the Caspian Sea, the surface of which is 26 metres below the level of the ocean, to a height of 950 metres above it, and then descends again to the Black Sea. The oil has to be raised by a series of pumping stations on the way. Only refined petroleum can pass through the pipe-line, for the crude oil runs too slowly and would soon clog and stop up the pipe. At the terminus the petroleum is pumped up into the big tanks. Besides this, long railway trains come to Batum every day with big tank-wagons full of crude oil and other kinds of oil, which are subjected to various processes and refined before being stored in the large tanks. From these latter the different sorts of oil—there are some twenty odd kinds—are conducted by special pipes down to the harbour and thence by huge hose-pipes into the tanks of the ships, which are quickly loaded.

The engineer told me that more oil was being obtained in the Baku region than before the war. I objected that as late as last year the production had not been much more than half of what it was previously, but he explained that it had doubled since last year owing to the large number of new wells which had been sunk. From other sources I received information which confirmed the fact that the production had really risen considerably over the pre-war average, though the latest statistics I have seen put the whole production (in 1925) at 90 per cent. of the yield before the war.

During the recent exceptionally cold winter such an enormous quantity of snow had fallen in this damp climate that its weight had crushed in the tops of the petroleum tanks, and those which had not yet been repaired looked sadly out of shape, like battered tin cans.

At one o'clock, or as much after that hour as is considered proper in this fortunate part of the world where time is not in a hurry, there was a grand lunch with a characteristic Russian menu. First *sakuska* (cold dishes) with quantities

of delicious caviare, smoked sturgeon, and other dainties, accompanied by vodka; then boiled sturgeon, chicken, and many other dishes, with delectable Caucasian wine. Notwithstanding prohibition in the Soviet republics, wine has always been drunk in Transcaucasia—even by Muhammedans; now, however, the Soviet Government in Moscow has not only abolished the prohibition on spirits, but has set up a State monopoly for their manufacture and sale, as in pre-war days; vodka is on sale everywhere, much to the advantage of the Treasury, no doubt, if less to the advantage of the people.

The courteous president of the local republic took me in to lunch. He talked French fluently, and was very entertaining. Like most of the people here he was a Moslem. He began the speech-making by giving us a fresh welcome, outlining with enthusiasm all that they expected of our visit to the Transcaucasian Soviet Republics. The ball was now rolling, and one speech after another followed, chiefly in Russian. It was a pity we could only follow what was said in a translation, as the flow of eloquence seemed remarkable. This was our first experience of Caucasian hospitality, which is famous.

After lunch we returned to our railway carriage. While I sat writing in my compartment the attendant brought me a beautiful bouquet from a lady. I wanted to go and thank her at once; but she had left immediately, he said, and it was too late to stop her. There was no name, only a verbal message that she had read my book and sent me these flowers. Her lovely roses brightened up my compartment for several days; let me take this opportunity to convey my grateful thanks to the beautiful unknown.

Batum and the whole country round was Christian for centuries, and formed part of Georgia when the latter was a united kingdom. Relics of those days are still to be found in the neighbourhood. At a few kilometres distance from the town there are some ruins called Zamok Tamari, i.e. Tamara's castle, supposed to have been erected by the Queen of Georgia. There are also ruins of old churches in several places. In the sixteenth century the country was taken by

the Turks, who kept it till 1878, when it was ceded to Russia, together with the whole Kars region, after the Russo-Turkish war. During the three hundred years under Turkish rule the Christian population had gone over to Islam—partly compelled by force to do so—and the Christian churches had been turned into mosques. We had one of these mosques just opposite us. If heretics like ourselves wanted to enter it we had to put slippers on our dirty feet. On the other side of the place, facing the sea, were fortifications with ramparts and trenches; and there we were not allowed to set foot, even with slippers on.

The great difficulty about using churches as mosques is that they are orientated west-east, towards the setting and rising sun, whereas a mosque must point towards Mecca, which is here to the south. The problem was solved by putting the costly carpets along the floor of the transepts, i.e. from north to south. The inhabitants had forgotten their traditions so completely by 1878, when the country again came under Christian rule, that they looked upon the Christians as enemies.

The town still shows signs of the centuries of decay under Turkish rule; but it has developed into something like a European port in the forty years it has been under Russian administration. A large Russian cathedral was built in 1906, and one could see little in the streets to remind one of the Orient or Islam, not even the black-veiled female spectres. The women we saw there looked for the most part like attractive Russians in their Sunday best. There was a striking and welcome difference between their free and open comradeship with the men and all the veiled mystery of the Turkish seaports we had come from.

I went for a walk through the town. Though there is nothing very remarkable about it, it has a fine situation on the fertile plain, close to the blue sea, and with its snug little petroleum harbour sheltered by a long jetty; while the plain itself is encircled by verdant slopes, rising in ridges and backed by the blue mountains beyond. The rainfall is unusually great at all times of year. In Batum the annual rainfall is about 2·37 m.—rather more than that of Bergen in

Norway. The average temperature in August is  $23.3^{\circ}$  Centigrade; and the winter is comparatively mild, with an average temperature in January of  $6^{\circ}$  Centigrade, or a couple of degrees warmer than April in Oslo.

In this mild, damp climate sub-tropical vegetation flourishes luxuriantly. There are rich woods of oak and beech, besides taxus, laurel, edible chestnut, walnut, tamarisk, box, and magnolia. The trunks are festooned with vines, ivy, and honeysuckle, and the ground is thickly covered with rhododendrons, azaleas, various kinds of ilex, nuts, camellias, tall ferns and much beside, while in the glades, where the sun has access, there are the most glorious, brilliantly coloured flowers. In the low-lying country there are tall poplars, mulberry-trees, mimosas, acacias, plane-trees, and other foliaceous trees, richly blended with cypresses, cedars and palms; and in marshy places one notices the shining yellow trunks of the eucalyptus. It is easy to feel that one is near the land of the wondrous Garden of Eden and the cradle of the human race. But there is a serpent even here in the form of malaria, decidedly prevalent in the marshy plain, which would be the better for draining.

On either side of the boulevard leading from the open space by the railway were rows of tall, fan-shaped palms, but they were looking shabby, with only a few brown and decrepit leaves left on them. The last winter, which had been unusually mild in North-west Europe, had been the coldest in living memory down here; it had greatly damaged the palm-leaves, and had also done much harm to other vegetation, especially to the eucalyptus and pine trees, which had suffered very badly, many having turned quite brown. The snowfall had been exceptionally heavy too, as already mentioned.

Apropos of these palms, I could not help wondering as I walked past them whether such trees can be compared with ordinary rich foliaceous trees as a means of beautifying a street. Certainly not in their present condition; with their battered tufts on the tall poles they looked like nothing so much as long-handled brooms. But even when the tops are at their best, with the fan-like leaves open beneath the blue sky on their tall, straight stems? They remind one of oases in the

desert, no doubt, but also of the parched earth under a fierce tropical sun, and they give no protection against the scorching rays. How much more satisfying and refreshing it is to look at an avenue of luxuriant plane-trees, maples or limes with ample shade beneath their leafy crowns!

But there are considerations of architecture and style, you say. The trees with rich foliage have round, irregular forms, which are unarchitectural and go badly with the severe perpendicular and horizontal lines of stone buildings. For this reason the best foliaceous tree from an architectural standpoint is the poplar, with its perpendicular lines and no shadows, or, still better, the dry, branchless palm, which may have furnished the motif for the characteristic Eastern columns and capital, though it supports no weight itself. Granted; palms do look well between rows of Greek or Eastern marble temples, where the style should be austere and ungenial; but unfortunately there are no temples in this petroleum port. . . .

“Verzeihen Sie, darf ich fragen, sind Sie Herr Doktor N.?” Two sunburnt young men were standing before me, with fair, unmistakably German faces and most original costumes—something between Tyrolese national dress and a bathing-suit. They had on shirts with broad turnover collars open at the throat; incredibly abbreviated, wide shorts reaching only half down the thigh, bare knees, long stockings, and gymnasium shoes, with field-glasses slung over their shoulders, and cameras.

“Wie famos! wollen Sie uns ein Autograf in unserem Tagebuch geben?” I was handed a notebook, and gave them the desired autograph. They had come on foot all the way from Syria, and intended to continue eastward into Asia, with no luggage, so far as I could make out, except what they were carrying; not too much money; and, what was worse, without the usually indispensable passport and *visa*. How they had got so far was a puzzle, but at any rate they had managed it, and seemed in excellent form.

I walked on. At the end of the street looking out over the sea was a beautiful park, with rich vegetation and a charming little lake. On the way back we were again overtaken by the

two Germans, who asked leave to take a photograph. They assured us that it was a very interesting experience for them to meet us in this part of the world. They had just come to Batum, and seeing me in the street had thought they recognized my face. After taking the photograph they departed in the best of spirits, followed by our good wishes. Of their further adventures I know nothing.

In the afternoon we had tea at the Near East Relief, the great American organization which for many years past has done such splendid work for the Armenians in Asia Minor and Russian Armenia, and has rescued and supported thousands of Armenian orphans in its various children's homes. Our hosts told us that in the towns we were going to—Tiflis, Leninakan (Alexandropol), and Erivan—their houses would be at our disposal; and their staff would always be glad to assist us in any way, with advice, motor-cars, or whatever we might require. We also met Miss Coe, an English lady who had waited several days to meet us. She had been to Armenia on behalf of the Lord Mayor's Fund, and was now intent upon lecturing in England and America in support of our work for the Armenian refugees. She spoke enthusiastically of Armenia, and felt profound sympathy with its clever and hard-working people, who had suffered such incredible tribulations.

At 6 p.m. our train left, and a large company, headed by the courteous President of Batum, came to the station to see us off.

#### THROUGH GEORGIA.

The line runs north along the coast. What a beautiful world! On one side, blue waters beneath a brilliant sky, in which the sun was sinking towards the rim of the sea. On the other, green wooded mountain-slopes rising up steeply from the narrow seaboard towards the dark-blue vault above.

The luxuriance of all kinds of shrubs and trees was wonderful. Their heavy foliage hung out over us, with deep, dark shadows in the densest places. The rich green undergrowth formed an impenetrable jungle of plants and bushes of every

imaginable kind, and the tall trunks of the trees were swathed right up to their leafy crowns with creepers which hung in swaying garlands from the boughs.

But here and there this idyllic beauty was marred by brown patches of death—tall eucalyptus and pine trees stricken by the devastating frosts of the past winter.

Now and then we saw tea-plantations cultivated in terraces ; and down on the level, tall dense-growing thickets of bamboos.

The bold notes of the reed-warbler reached us as we sped past sedgy marshes, and we heard nightingales singing in the woods. Occasionally, too, an insistent chorus of frogs from some pool.

At the stations we passed there were throngs of merry holiday-makers who had come out for the day from Batum. Handsome women in light summer dresses made patches of bright colour against the dark overhanging foliage as they waved to us—very different from the secluded women of the Moslem world. Everywhere Nature's abundant horn of plenty overflowed with summer and mirthful joy of life.

By and by we left the coast and entered a wide plain where the woods had been destroyed and the ground was entirely covered by bracken and low bushes. Not a soul to be seen anywhere, and no sign of cultivation ; yet from the train it looked as if all this country could be cultivated and support thousands of refugees, even if the soil was rather poor and sandy. Fancy if all this vast area of ground could be tilled in peace. There would be room for thousands of happy homes on it.

The sun had gone down over the rim of the Black Sea. Far away to the north lay a range of blue mountains with white peaks floating above them. It was the Caucasus—where the Titan of the human mind, who stole the fire from the gods, is chained to the rock while an eagle tears at his heart-strings. An allegory of the mind's never-ending struggle to cast off its earthly fetters.

We were approaching the wide plain in which the river Rion flows—the ancient Phasis which watered the wealthy country of Colchis, the land of Aurora, whither the legendary ram fled and was sacrificed on the strand in the fire of sunrise,

its fleece being hung from the tree of the nocturnal sky and guarded by the dragon of jealousy. Hither came the Argonauts on their adventurous voyage, sailing up the river Phasis to find the Sun-king Æetes of Colchis. Here the Sun-hero Jason met in the forest the king's lovely daughter, Medea the sorceress, with whose help he tamed the fire-breathing iron oxen; here he slew the dragon, sowed dragon-seed, dispelled the darkness, and obtained the golden fleece.

It is a fertile green land with rich vegetation and plenty of rain; but the low-lying ground is marshy and inadequately drained, unhealthy and malarial. Long ago Hippocrates noted that it was hot and damp.

We travelled on. We, too, had a dragon of jealousy to slay, and a golden fleece, the friendship of the people, to win; but we could not hope to find a sorceress waiting to help us tame the fire-breathing oxen. The night closed in about us as we rushed through forests and across cultivated plains, up the broad valley of Rion and through Imeretia, famous for its rich loveliness, its roses, and its dark-eyed daughters; but all these beauties were hidden by the night: we could only just make out the contours of the mountains beneath the starry vault. There is a side-line here to Kutais, the ancient capital of Imeretia.

What a sight met my eyes when I pulled up the blind next morning (June 15th)! A vast blue mountain rampart in the north, with snowy peaks like sun-clouds hovering high above them, as if the crust of the earth had been raised on end during the Titans' assault on the heavens, at the boundary where two continents meet. The mountain giants stand there still, guarding the gateway from Asia to disunited Europe. Against this wall the spasmodic migrations of the human race have broken again and again in the world's history, and numerous remnants of the many wandering tribes who passed that way survive in its narrow valleys.

Crossing the Suram ridge, which divides the valley of Rion from that of Kura, and Imeretia in the west from Karthalinia or Karthlia in the east, we were past the highest point on the railway. We now entered the broad, deep valley of the Kura, shut off on the north by the imposing array of

the Caucasus mountains, with the snow-white volcanic glacier of Mkimvari or Kasbek, which is over 5,000 metres high, towering above the rest, and on the south by the mountain ranges of the Little Caucasus, in the direction of the Armenian highlands. Along the flat bottom of the valley the turbid golden-brown waters of the river flowed in ample bends. Of this river it is said that if once you drink of its water you will always long to return to it. It flows peacefully and innocently enough past its fertile banks, but when in spate it changes its course, demolishes bridges, and makes the country round impassable.

The Kura is the largest of the four great rivers of the Caucasus, being more than a thousand kilometres long. Unlike the others, it does not come from the great Caucasus range, but from the mountainous country in the south-west, its source being at a height of about 2,500 metres above sea-level, about 25 kilometres west of Kars. In a mighty curve it thrusts its way through the mountains, first north and north-east down to this region; then through the flat valley east and south-eastwards past Tiflis; and finally through the wide plains of Azerbaijan to the Caspian Sea, after picking up the Arax, Armenia's great river in the south. The Greeks called it *Kyros* (the Latin *Cyrus*), and the name was taken to be connected with the Persian king; but later etymologists have been inclined to derive it from the difficult Georgian word *mtkvari* (Old Georgian *mtkeur*), said to mean sweet, delectable water.

It flows through three large countries: the Kars region—which is now Turkish—Georgia, and Azerbaijan. In its upper reaches the Kura now hurtles down wild narrow gorges, now glides more gently through wonderfully beautiful glens full of oaks, beeches, and dark spruce firs, overlooked by high mountains, then again rushes foaming through deep-cut ravines until it reaches the great wide valley below.

It is said that the Georgians originally came to Georgia from the country near the sources of the Kura. Though this is perhaps doubtful, the upper reaches of the river pass by many remarkable monuments of primeval history. Near the narrow gorge by Khertvis, a good 80 kilometres above the

great valley, there is an ancient cave-town, Vardzia, hewn out of the face of the cliff. Probably this dwelling-place was originally inhabited by a primitive race who lived in caves. Later on, in the Middle Ages, a famous monastery was established here, with numerous cells and big chapels cut out of the rock. According to popular belief this lonely place was Queen Tamara's favourite resort; she had the cave-monastery enlarged, and a large church hewn for the Mother of God, where several frescoes can still be seen, one of them being said to represent the great queen herself. In the fourteenth century this inaccessible place was sacked and destroyed by Timur Lenk and his Mongol followers, who got into the caves by means of ladders let down from the top of the cliffs. Two hundred years later the monastery was pillaged again, this time by the Persians.

Georgia is a small country, and the great plain around the Kura occupies a large part of it; nevertheless, this remarkable country has every kind of natural beauty—fertile plains, large solitary forests, wild glens with luxuriant vegetation, high rugged mountains, white glaciers, and picturesque seaports. One important feature only is lacking: lakes. Strange to say, there was never any fully developed glacial period, with an extensive and continuous sheet of ice, in the countries of the Caucasus. Consequently the valleys have escaped being hollowed out by glaciers, and instead of being U-shaped, are usually of a narrow V-shape, excavated by water; there are not a few deep canyons or gorges with perpendicular sides; whereas lake-basins, like those that were hollowed out in Norway or Switzerland, do not exist. The Georgian landscape has no blue lakes to reflect the immensity of the mountains. There is only one small district with some lakes, situated in the Little Caucasus mountains in the south-west.

Originally, however, the Kura must have flowed through a series of large lakes, the bottoms of which now form extensive fertile plains, narrowing at the end where the valley contracted and the river gradually cut deep gorges, thereby emptying the lakes. There is one cutting of this kind at Mtskhetha and another at Tiflis. The wide plain we were travelling through was a characteristic example of what once was the bottom of

a great lake. Here and there one saw a clump of tall, slender poplars; otherwise all was green fields devoid of trees. The surrounding slopes looked for the most part dry; they were brown, with only a few green patches and no trees. We were now in the heart of Georgia, in ancient times called Karthalinia, the land of the Karthlians, or Karthvelians (i.e. Georgians).

Maize and various kinds of corn are grown on these plains, also vines and fruit-trees; in recent years tobacco has been cultivated to some extent, as well as cotton, which used to be grown in remote times in the Kura Valley.

Now and then we saw a village: low stone cottages with flat roofs. But these cottages looked uncommonly like roofless ruins, being half-buried underground to keep them warmer during the cold Caucasian winter. The villages were surrounded by leafy orchards and vineyards which rest and refresh the eye in this treeless plain. We noticed vegetables and cherries.

The train stopped at a station above the town of Gori, which is situated on the opposite side of the Kura and has an old castle on a steep cliff. Most of the inhabitants are Armenians, descendants of those who are said to have been brought here in the twelfth century by the Georgian king, David the Renovator. They now talk Georgian, but with true Armenian obstinacy have refused to give up their Gregorian faith. The town has often been sacked and destroyed by Persians and Turks, and here, as everywhere, there are ruins of bygone times.

A little way to the east of Gori is the old cave-town or fortress of Uplis-zikhe (i.e. the castle of lords), likewise on the north side of the Kura. In the upper part of the sloping face of the cliff large and small rooms have been hewn out at different levels above each other, some of them connected by passages. A good deal of the work is so rough that it may well date from very remote times; but there are also attempts at architecture of a more developed kind, with vaulted roofs, rounded arches, and decorations which Lehmann-Haupt<sup>1</sup> believes to date from the fourth century A.D. The rooms appear to be part of a fortress. According

<sup>1</sup> C. F. Lehmann-Haupt, *Armenien Einst und Jetzt*, vol. i, pp. 101 ff., 1910.

to a still current tradition no less a person than Alexander the Great once besieged it in vain.

There are several places in these parts with similar remains of ancient rock-dwellings in the mountain-sides. Vardzia has already been mentioned. It suggests that there must once have been a primitive cave-dweller civilization here, such as we find traces of in many other countries. Remains of similar old caves are to be seen in the hillsides of the Acropolis and Areopagus at Athens. In Crete the earliest Stone Age people were cave-dwellers. In the country round the Upper Tigris, too, there are many caves resembling the oldest ones at Vardzia and Uplis-zikhe. The Khaldians, the pre-Armenian people who lived in the region of Lake Van, had caves also, but of a more developed kind. Probably caves were used as dwellings from the very first. Subsequently they were used in the religious cult of the great goddess of the earth—the goddess of fertility. They became sanctuaries of the earth-mother, or cliff-mother, whom it was easiest to approach in her own dwelling, the rock. And later on they naturally came to be used for the religious observances of the Christian Church.<sup>1</sup>

At the foot of the mountain-slope at Uplis-zikhe there is a little village. The inhabitants no longer live in caves, but instead they often embed the back of their houses in the earthy slopes as a protection against the cold winters. The village church is a very old one built of brick.

The plain we were crossing seemed to be decidedly dry in many places, though portions of it were watered by artificial irrigation. The soil was obviously rich, and could unquestionably be cultivated much better. In several places we saw the people farming. They were ploughing with as many as twelve oxen yoked to the plough, so the earth must be heavy to turn, probably clayey and liable to be sun-baked into a hard crust.

But what was yonder old castle perched on the top of a sheer crag, like an eagle's nest? Queen Thamara's castle. Thamara—the name haunts one like a magic word. We heard it first at Batum; at Kutais there were the ruins of a

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Lehmann-Haupt, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 617 f, 1927.

palace; then again at Vardzia—wherever there was anything beautiful, wonderful, reminiscent of past glories, it was *Thamara's*! Puissant Queen of Georgia—the very sound of your name breathes the romance of the East and epitomizes Georgia's golden age. Under the sunshine of your glance it unfolded and blossomed, while with your doughty knights you extended the frontiers and built up the nation. To a Georgian this proud-spirited woman stands as the embodiment of the past glories of his country.

On the other side of the Kura, where the river Aragva joins it, is Mtskhetha, the ancient capital, where the Georgian kings resided until the end of the fifth century A.D. The town is not an impressive one to-day, consisting of a cluster of mean houses without orchards, trees, or anything green, on the tongue of land formed by the confluence of the two rivers; but high above the houses towers the stately old cathedral which for nearly fifteen hundred years was the ecclesiastical and spiritual centre of the Georgian nation. Many of the kings of East Georgia lie buried there.

Through the Aragva Valley, between steep mountains, we caught a glimpse of another world to the north, the richly wooded Saguramo Valley, with the blue and snow-capped mountains of the Caucasus beyond. On the high, steep mountain-top opposite Mtskhetha, on the other side of Aragva, was the old church of the Holy Cross, with ruined walls round it like an impregnable fortress, giving the landscape a still more mediæval and old-world appearance. Down on the level below this cliff a great work was in progress. An enormous dam was being built across the river in connection with a new power-station which was to supply Tiflis with about 20,000 h.p. Here the past and the coming age met.

#### TIFLIS.

We were approaching Tiflis, a bare treeless valley with stony slopes on either side—not exactly one's idea of the capital of such a picturesque country as Georgia. Far away on a level piece of ground under the mountain-side on the

left we could see a number of white specks that looked like tents. It turned out to be a parade-ground for the Red army of Georgia, which was camped outside the town.

At ten o'clock in the morning we arrived at the station. Here we were met by a number of consuls, the Italian, Persian, Turkish, German and others, also by Mr. Yarrow, the American representative of the Near East Relief, who invited us to stay at its house while we were in Tiflis. Mr. V. Wehrlin, representative in Moscow of the International Red Cross, was likewise present, having just arrived from Russia to collect information about the health measures in Transcaucasia.

We left the station in motor-cars. As usual it was on the outskirts of the town, so we had to drive for a couple of kilometres through suburbs—the so-called German quarter, formerly inhabited by immigrants from Würtemberg who settled here more than a century ago (in 1818). Then we drove over a bridge and an island in the Kura called the Madatovski Island, then over another bridge, and up an incline from the river, and found ourselves in the main street of the modern town—a broad, stately promenade called Golovinski Prospekt. On the left side was the opera, and on the right, occupying the most conspicuous site, a big Russian church with round domes. This was formerly known as the garrison cathedral, in the days when the Russian garrison stationed in the town used to attend service there. The large impressive edifice farther on to the right was the Government building, once the Russian viceroy's palace. And farther on again was a big building, not yet completed, which was to be the great museum.

There were other buildings, too; but all that we saw here was rather commonplace, the usual colourless architecture of Europe, except the Russian church and some churches in the old Georgian or Armenian style, with towers rising above the surrounding houses. There was little else that struck one as Oriental, or set one's imagination to work. Nor was there much of the Eastern richness of colour about the people one saw on the promenade; the men chiefly wore the usual simple Soviet blouses and soft Soviet caps, while the women—the renowned Georgian beauties—did not seem to differ

much from their sisters in Europe, at any rate in their dress. But the streets were busy and noisy.

A hospitable welcome awaited us at our American friends' spacious house. The large airy rooms were very pleasant in the heat, which was extremely oppressive in the daytime.

The first visit we paid was to the President of the Federation of Transcaucasian Republics, in the Government building. He was a fine-looking man; a powerfully built, swarthy Georgian with a strong, clever face. He welcomed us and expressed many kind wishes, hoping we would help them and give them the benefit of our expert knowledge in their endeavours to develop the country and exploit its possibilities. I replied that it had given us great pleasure to travel through his beautiful country, and that we hoped that our work, whether its results were small or great, would at least do something to bring Transcaucasia a little nearer to Europe, and perhaps help it on a little.

In front of a fine large map on the wall we discussed where the Armenian refugees could be settled if the Sardarabad plan should prove impracticable. The President pointed out that in Azerbaijan there was a large plain which could be irrigated and could accommodate a good many thousands; moreover, there were quite a lot of Armenians there already. Further, there was still room for one or two thousands in Abkhasia, the north-western autonomous republic in Georgia, situated near the Black Sea, where several thousand Armenian refugees had settled previously. And there would also be room for a number of refugees in other mountain districts of Georgia.

Afterwards we went for a walk in the garden in which the former viceroy's palace stands. It was most luxuriant, with all sorts of sub-tropical trees, and beautifully kept, with well-tended walks of red gravel between the green lawns, and flower-beds glowing with colour. One could have imagined it like this under the black double-eagle of the Tsardom, with a regiment of servants and humble serfs, but not so much under the red star of the proletariat. Having seen the garden, I paid my respects to the Georgian Government and met the Vice-President.

In the afternoon I motored up the big causeway which

winds up the high, steep mountain-side on the south-west of the town. On our left as we drove up there was an almost sheer precipice down into a narrow, deep gorge or canyon, with a little half-dried-up stream far below us. A deep and narrow canyon like this, with such precipitous sides, bears witness to a comparatively dry climate, varied by occasional violent deluges of rain in the mountains, which would swell the river to a foaming torrent that would dig deeper and deeper down into the loose rock of the mountain-side.

Arrived at the top, we enjoyed a wide prospect over the valley and the town. Long and narrow, it extends on both sides of the Kura, which winds peacefully along the bottom of the valley. The situation would be fine, were it not for the fact that the mountain slopes on either side are completely bare and treeless, presenting a dry and stony appearance. How different it would look if the slopes were clothed with shady woods, vineyards, and orchards. The town may have been founded as long ago as the fourth century A.D., perhaps even earlier. Its Georgian name, Tbilis, comes from the hot sulphur springs (*tbili* = warm), which are still used for baths.

North of us lay Mount Ploskaya (1,000 metres); a funicular railway goes from the town to its summit, where there is a restaurant with a wide view over the town and towards the mountains. Half-way up this funicular railway is the Georgian monastery of St. David.

Considering Tiflis has pretensions to being a large town, with a population of about 275,000 according to the last census, it covers remarkably little ground. Judging from its appearance as seen from above, I should say that it hardly stretches farther along the river than, for instance, Drammen in Norway, a town of only 26,000 inhabitants. No doubt the explanation is that the houses are very close together, especially in the old part of the town, and that the streets and alleys are narrow. Further, there is now a house famine there, as in all large towns, and the inhabitants are packed together in comparatively few rooms. Most of the houses are low, but for all that they contain a surprising number of people.

There was plenty of traffic on the road, chiefly peasants with

bullock-carts, though some had horses. Evidently they were returning from market in the town ; they had sold their produce and were now on their way back to their own towns or villages in the country to the west. There are several resorts in the same direction, frequented by the citizens of Tiflis in the hottest months of the summer.

Some buffaloes passed by, black beasts with their horns laid back, such as one often sees in these parts. I took a photograph of them, and the two boys in charge of them came to the car and looked into my camera, wanting to see the picture of their buffaloes. I took another snap of their faces ; they laughed, but were disappointed when they found there was still no picture to be seen.

Coming down, we drove round the town, especially through the old southern part : the Georgian quarter on the left bank of the Kura, and the Armenian and Persian bazaars on the right bank. The streets there are narrow and crooked, often with narrow flights of steps between the houses up the slopes. The houses are low, one storey or two, of the typical Georgian kind, with a balcony or open gallery in front of the upper storey, where the family spend a large part of the day, unless they sit in the street in front of the house. The façade of the house is often decorated with handsome carvings.

From morning till night the life in these confined streets is intensely varied and gay ; donkey-drivers hawk their fruit and other wares, and now and again a bullock-cart or a horse-drawn wagon rumbles noisily past over the cobbles. Liveliest of all are the crowds round the bazaars and in the market-place, where goods of every sort are on sale and all kinds of nationalities are in evidence : Georgians, Armenians, Jews, Russians, Persians, Turks, and Tatars, buying and selling. On the ground in front of the houses sit whole families working, and handicraftsmen generally have their workshops in the street. The furniture of their few rooms indoors is simple in the extreme ; as a rule it is little more than four walls and a floor. But everywhere there are bright-coloured, costly rugs ; they are to sit on, and take the place of furniture.

As one looks at these alleys with their motley crowd of light-hearted people, one cannot help thinking of all the

horrors, the inhuman looting and cruel massacres that these selfsame streets have witnessed time and again in the past—at the hands of Persians, Arabs, Turks, Mongols, Tatars, and, not so long ago, of the Georgians themselves. But the stream of life fills up the gaps and flows indifferently on.

In and out through the town the brownish-yellow waters of the Kura wind along their deep valley. In the upper part of the town the river is fairly wide; but it contracts towards the south-east, and forces its way through a narrow gorge with steep sides, where the balconies of the houses overhang the swift stream, while above them again, on the east side, the old castle of the Georgian kings with its church-tower rears its massive lines against the sunny sky, a messenger from greater days gone by. At present the castle is used as a prison. From a king's palace to a gaol! What will its next use be?

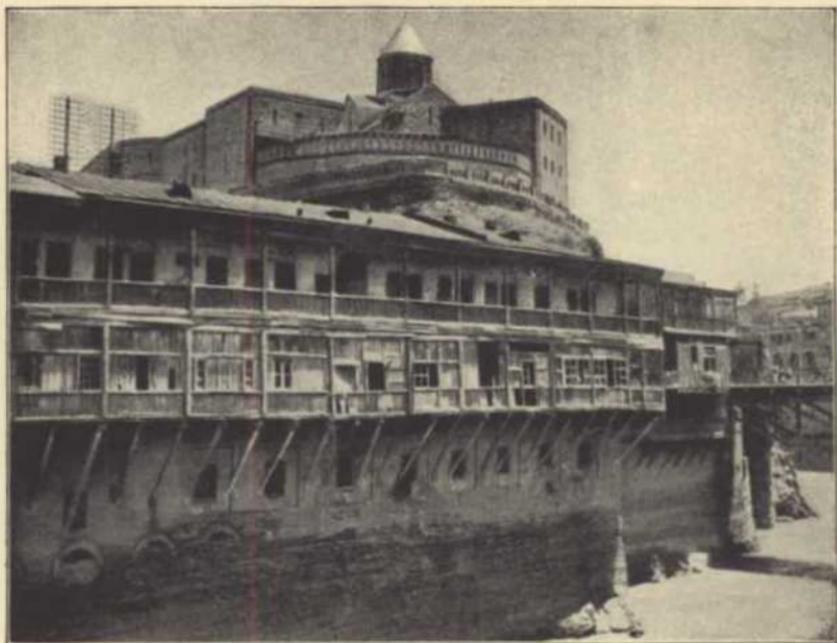
High above the old part of the town, on the west side of the river, the mountain supports the proud mediæval ruins of the "Persian" fortress, with its ramparts and towers. To the south of this, the luxuriant botanical garden follows the rising slope of its narrow ravine. A beautiful country. It was here that Bodenstedt's Mirza-Schaffy sang:

Gelb rollt mir zu Füßen der brausende Kur  
Im tanzenden Wellengetriebe;  
Hell lächelt die Sonne, mein Herz und die Flur—  
O, wenn es doch immer so bliebe!

Then came the evening, and our friend Napoleon gave a dinner, with caviare from the Kura, and wines from the Caucasus—red wines of good body and a splendid golden-yellow one.

What a still night! Kura's stream ripples slowly past its banks, and the black hillsides rise steeply towards the dark vault above, spangled with innumerable stars that glitter with all the brilliance of southern lands and are reflected in the wavelets of the river. Dark against the stars looms the ancient royal castle on its lofty cliff. The prisoners there are pining in locked cells. . . . A changing pageant passes by in the night. Warrior hosts, the ring of chargers' hoofs,





TIFLIS. THE ANCIENT ROYAL FORTRESS OF METEKH, NOW A PRISON, OVERLOOKING THE KURA (p. 72)



A TYPE OF BOAT ON THE BLACK SEA (SAMSUN) WHICH RESEMBLES THE NORSE VIKING SHIPS

waving plumes, forests of swaying lances, rearing war-horses, and shrill bugle-notes as the victors return from their distant conquests in the east or the west. By this very river, beneath the selfsame stars, Shot'ha Rust'haveli dreamed and wrote poems to his queen. They are banqueting in the castle; the lights glitter on polished arms and cuirasses, shine on gay silks and pearls; the hall is crowded with courtly knights and lovely dames. But look, there she stands, tall and queenly. Her peerless head is set proudly on her majestic shoulders, her deep eyes shine wondrously in the torchlight; and like a flourish of trumpets in the night her name resounds: Thamara!

Alas for us mortals, shut out from these things by the gulf of ages.

#### TO MTSKHETHA.

It had been arranged that on Thursday morning (June 16th) we were to drive out and see the work that was being done on the new Kura power-station, about fifteen kilometres north of Tiflis. It was solemnly decided that the cars were to fetch us at nine o'clock sharp; and with Oriental punctuality they appeared at eleven. In roasting sunshine we drove northward along the west side of the Kura Valley by a good, wide road, which is the commencement of Georgia's big military road through the Caucasus to Vladikavkas.

We had a look at the great dam which was in course of construction for the power-station. Here, by the ancient town of Mtskhetha, the Kura Valley narrows, as already mentioned; the mountains on either side close in, and at an earlier period this must have been the outlet of a large lake, through which the Kura flowed. The river gradually excavated its bed deeper and deeper down in the rock, while the big lake dried up, and its bottom, where the mud deposited by the river had turned in course of time into a deep layer of earth, became the present wide and fertile plain above, stretching westward past Gori in the direction of Suram. Even now the river drops sharply down its comparatively narrow bed after joining the river Aragva. It is here that the dam is being built.

The first attempt to construct a dam quickly revealed the fact that the dammed-up pool became full of mud and sand, deposited more especially by the brown waters of the Kura; sinking to the bottom, this mud formed banks which would rapidly stop the water from running through a pool of this kind. It became necessary, therefore, to build a special clearing pool, from which the accumulated mud could be washed away and passed out through a side-canal and returned to the Kura below the falls, by occasionally allowing the whole mass of water to run through this clearing pool with its full force. It is to be hoped that this solution will prove satisfactory; but our expert adviser, Mr. Dupuis, felt convinced that this mass of mud, constantly added to, would always give trouble.

As a rule, the rivers in the Caucasus do not flow through lakes where the mud can settle, thus clearing the water. Moreover, these rivers, at least in their upper reaches, usually fall sharply and dash headlong through narrow canyons and gorges, carrying with them, if the rocky bottom is loose, large quantities of mud and gravel. Another important factor is the rain, which often falls in violent showers, with the result that these rapid rivers without lakes are apt to overflow and carry away the surrounding soil. It should be remembered that a river's power of transporting mud and gravel increases so enormously with its velocity that if, for instance, the latter is doubled owing to a flood, the water can transport stones sixty-four times as large as it could carry before. It is no wonder, therefore, that these Caucasian rivers carry along with them large quantities of mud and sand, and assume different colours—brown, yellow, whitish, or dark grey—according to the rock or soil they travel over. But the amount of mud varies greatly; in the water of the Aragva, for instance, there is very little mud compared with that in the Kura.

Since the first unsuccessful attempt to construct a dam the work has been placed in the hands of a German firm. It is calculated that, to begin with, 18,000 h.p. can be developed; but with the power exploited to the full it should be possible to go up to 30,000.

I took the opportunity to slip off quietly up the road leading to the church of the Holy Cross, which stands all alone high up above the valley on the steep mountain. Dupuis and Quisling followed, and presently the fat journalist who had accompanied us from Tiflis came hurrying after, and also another man who was said to be particularly well up in the history of the church. It was a stiff climb, and the day was uncommonly warm. On reaching a ridge somewhat below the church we were surprised to see a small lake in front of us, covered all round the shore by a white, shining crust. It looked like ice, but could only be precipitated salt. The lake occupied a depression with no outlet; but the rain-water flowing into it from the surrounding slopes was evidently not greater than the amount which evaporated in this dry climate from its small open surface, which, indeed, was further reduced by the deposit of salt round the margin.

We resumed our climb up to the church. By this time our amiable friend the fat journalist, who had put a handkerchief on his round bald head, seemed to be almost melting from the heat; but he still toiled on bravely behind us up the steep ascent.

The church stands at the very edge of an almost perpendicular precipice which drops down to the banks of the Aragva and the Kura far below. Where it is accessible from the mountain behind it was once surrounded by a high wall with watch-towers, a common protection in this country, and one which was highly necessary against the robber bands who used to descend like a whirlwind from the mountains, plundering and destroying wherever they came. The wall is now in ruins, and only remnants of it are still standing. The church itself is fairly well preserved, and the scaffolding we saw round its dome-tower suggested that it is kept in repair. A couple of rooms in the ruins of the old wall are tenanted by a monk, who acts as the caretaker of the church, and probably at certain prescribed times rings the big church bells hanging under a frame of huge gnarled tree-trunks on the green outside it.

According to Georgian historians the building was commenced by Mthavar (i.e. ruler) Stephan I after A.D. 590, and

completed by Mthavar Adernerseh I (604/07-620); while the latter's son Mthavar Stephan II (after A.D. 620) built the surrounding wall with rooms in it.<sup>1</sup>

The legend is that it stands on the spot where St. Nino, who brought Christianity to Georgia under King Mirian at the beginning of the fourth century, first raised the sign of the cross, a cross made of vine-branches. In the middle of the floor of the church is a tall stone erection, which the monk told us was originally an altar built by the fire-worshippers. If so, this cliff must have been a holy place in ancient times, which would explain why the cross was raised exactly here. And the next step would be that Christianity took over the sacred site and built a church there. This sounds quite probable; but even if it is merely a legend it shows how tradition in these parts takes it for granted that the holy places of one religion are naturally taken over by another. The sides of the altar are now hung with icons and crucifixes.

The ground-plan of the church is quadratic, with semi-circular recesses or apses on each of the four sides. On the east and west these apses project somewhat, being twice as deep as those on the north and south, and this has the effect of making the interior rather longer from west to east than from north to south.

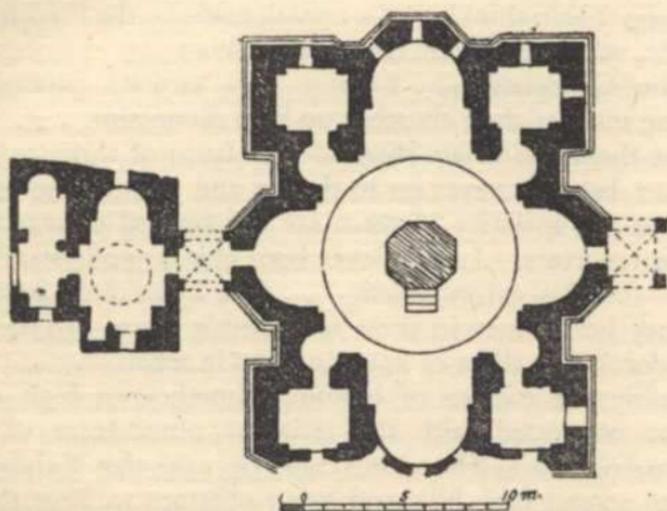
In the corners of the inner square are small, cylindrical cavities. Above the square rises the dome in its tower, octangular outside, with a pointed roof. Beyond the main hall of the church are four little square rooms, which fill out the four corners, in order that the exterior of the church may be rectangular, while from the walls of the square the apses project with five, or three, sides on the outside (see the sketch of the ground-plan, p. 77).

It is precisely this kind of inwardly square, domed building with apses or supporting niches that is characteristic of Georgia and Armenia, where there are many churches of the same type. This architectural feature has already been mentioned in connection with St. Sophia at Constantinople. It

<sup>1</sup> See J. Strzygowski, *Die Baukunst der Armenier und Europa*, vol. i, p. 84, vol. ii, p. 765, Vienna, 1918. Cf. also O. G. v. Wesendonk, *Archäologischer Anzeiger*, 1925, col. 70.

seems to have been a regular form adopted for Armenian and Georgian church buildings as early as the fourth or fifth century.

Up in the dome are four narrow windows which admit a dim light. A little light comes in also through the narrow windows in the apses; but it is not sufficient to illuminate the lofty interior, wrapped in the mysterious twilight of centuries. The stone walls of the church inside are quite bare and simple, without any decoration, except that the recess at the east end has some remnants of frescoes which we



THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS NEAR MTSKHEHA.

The west end is the lower edge of the plan, and this side is next to the precipice. (After J. Strzygowski, *op. cit.*)

could not see properly in the semi-darkness. On the outside there are some stone reliefs above the windows of the apses which show a certain amount of decorative taste. The subject and arrangement of the figures in one of these reliefs bears a striking resemblance to the well-known Ruthwell Cross in Northumberland.<sup>1</sup>

One peculiarity of this church, which is a common feature of the Armenian churches, is the base with a couple of steps

<sup>1</sup> Strzygowski, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 719 f.

which runs round the church wall outside. It must be derived from heathen temples, as will be seen later. There is a remarkable likeness between the church we are considering and that of Hripsime at Echmiadzin, mentioned elsewhere (in Chapter IX).

The bareness of the interior gives one the impression that the church has never been used, or possibly it was never made properly ready for use. It is strange, too, that the churches in Georgia were so often built on high inaccessible cliffs, where no doubt they could easily be seen by the people and the Deity, but where it was not so easy to visit them. One cannot help thinking of a remark made by the Frenchman Chardin, who travelled in Georgia in 1672 :

“The Georgians . . . have a very curious custom of building most of their churches on high mountains. . . . You look at them and salute them at a distance of three or four leagues ; but you never go to them ; and you may be pretty sure that the majority of them are not opened oftener than once in ten years. I have never been able to understand the motive for this extravagance. . . . But I can only suppose that they build them in these inaccessible places in order to avoid decorating them or keeping them in repair.”

Possibly the custom of building churches on high cliffs may be connected with the religious observances of the Persians, of whom Herodotus says (I, 131) that “they are wont to ascend high hills and bring offerings to Zeus there, Zeus being the name they give to the whole heavenly sphere.” This would also agree with the supposition that there was a place of sacrifice on this mountain in olden days.

Beside this large church is quite a small, long-shaped one with a dome (see the sketch on p. 77), said to have been built by Mthavar Guaram I between A.D. 545 and 586. We were conducted into a little room with an apse, and here we saw a stone seat which, according to our informant, was the throne of the ancient kings. At last in the same room with *Thamara* ! And I stood reverently before the time-honoured stones where perhaps she once sat in all her dazzling beauty. But on second thoughts it seemed less likely. The Georgian rulers left *Mtskhetha* as long ago as the beginning of the

sixth century, before this church was built, and it is rather improbable that they should have come all the way from Tiflis to sit on this stone seat.

In the vault under the west side of the building, just above the precipice down to the Aragva, is a dark cell, almost completely walled-up, where a holy hermit is said to have lived for several years. His food was brought to him there every day until he died, and then the cell was walled up and his holy bones are said to be there still. The remarkable thing about these men of old was that their holiness increased in proportion to the idleness, and uselessness to the rest of mankind, of their secluded lives—a trait that mediæval Christianity shared with Hinduism. Presumably it was meant to be a life of contemplation; but the more the hermit was cut off from his fellows, thereby lessening the chances of the latter to derive any benefit from his meditations, the holier he became; and the climax was reached when he could be walled up in a cell like this. Why? Not to help anybody else, but simply to make sure of his own escape into eternity. A strangely poverty-stricken, egocentric aim in life.

On leaving the church I went and stood on the brink of the precipice, where I had a wide view of the Aragva and Kura far below, of the town of Mtskhetha with its cathedral on the tongue of land between them, and of the valleys of both rivers; while in the distance I saw the blue mountains of the Caucasus with the white peaks behind. At this juncture our friend the journalist advanced in a genial and ingratiating manner with pencil and paper, and asked me to write down my impressions and send a message to the Georgian nation from this historic spot. It was some time before he could realize that I preferred not to use this opportunity of conveying my valuable impressions to the people of Georgia.

On descending to the road we motored up to Mtskhetha. The ancient capital has lapsed into a village, with squalid dwellings closely jostling one another, and without any orchards or trees planted between the houses to enliven the scene. None the less we are here upon historic ground—ground that has been holy to the Georgians ever since heathen and fire-worshipping days; it is the immemorial heart of the

country, and no other district enshrines so many memories of its earliest history. At this place, where the valleys of the Kura and the Aragva meet, the main routes meet also; from the south-east, coming from the Caspian Sea and Persia, from the north, coming from the pass through the Caucasus and the Saguramo Valley, and from the west, coming from the Black Sea, Colchis and Imeretia; naturally, therefore, it was an important hub of traffic and trade, and a centre of culture, from very remote times. There are many caves which were once inhabited in the distant past, and subsequently acquired a religious significance. Here, on holy hills and in holy groves, were the places of sacrifice and shrines of heathenism thousands of years ago; here resided the ancient kings of Georgia; here Christianity was first confessed and the national Christian temple, Mtskhetha cathedral, erected; and here, for hundreds of years, lived the Katholikos of the Georgian Church.

The fine cathedral still towers high above all the low groups of houses. We stopped by a gate which might well have been the entrance to a fortress. The church is surrounded by a high wall with loopholes and massive round and square bastions, looking like the strongly fortified castle of a mediæval knight. No doubt this protection was extremely necessary, as I have said, on account of the frequent attacks of marauders and the interminable wars. It aptly symbolizes the history of this people. The peaceful centre of its intellectual life had to be guarded by strong fortifications; and here, if anywhere, even the labours of peace had always to be carried on with one's sword ready to hand. Within these walls, too, the townsfolk found shelter in times of danger.

We rang a bell, and the gate was opened. We stepped into a wide square, in the middle of which rose the cathedral with its arches and gables and its high dome-tower, while to the left of us, nestling against the wall, was the bishop's house. The bishop himself advanced in dignified fashion to meet us—a tall stately man, more than six feet high, with handsome regular features, and a long, glossy, coal-black beard, wearing a black gown that reached to his feet, and a tall black mitre. Accompanied by a monk in a cowl and another official of the





CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS ON THE CLIFF OPPOSITE MTSKHETHA (*p.* 75)



MTSKHETHA SEEN FROM THE CLIFF WHERE THE CHURCH IS (*p.* 79)

church he bade us welcome, and conducted us into his cathedral.

With its simple Georgian circular style, high dome, massive piers and thick walls, it produces an impression of austere dignity. A little church which stands at one side, within the larger one, was the original church, the bishop said, erected towards the end of the fifth century, and containing the relics of a man who had seen the Crucifixion. According to another version it was raised on the spot where Christ's coat was found, having been brought thither from Golgotha by the above-mentioned Jew; though some assert that it was the virgin St. Nino who brought the coat from Jerusalem.

The church has been destroyed over and over again by ruthless enemies, and its fortunes reflect the history of Georgia. In 1318 it was wrecked by an earthquake. King George VI rebuilt it, but it soon fell a prey to the fierce Mongols. King Alexander raised it again from its ruins, but even then it was several times wrecked in the constant attacks of Lesghian marauders, and had to be restored twice.

Many kings of Georgia are buried in the church, and their tombs are covered by flat gravestones; but these ancient graves have been partially destroyed by plundering enemies. The king who built the church had been buried in the middle of the floor, and we saw his flat tombstone; but it had been left nameless for fear it should be discovered and destroyed by Persians or Turks next time they fell upon the town. The last king but one, Heraklius II, lies buried on the right in front of the altar. We were told that he died at the age of eighty-nine in 1798, after taking part in sixty different wars. It was with this king in mind that Frederick the Great of Prussia said to his soldiers that they must try and fight as bravely as the Georgians. The bishop's eyes shone with pride as he told us this. Beside King Heraklius lies his daughter Thekla, who died in the first half of last century. On the left of the altar lies the last king, George XIII, who at his death in 1801 gave his country to the Russian Tsar to save it from the Persians.

An interesting feature of the churches in Mtskhetha is the use of different coloured stones in ornamental patterns, which

was more frequently employed in Armenian churches, and spread at a later date to Italy, especially to Genoa and Florence. As Lehmann-Haupt and Belch have shown, this form of decoration was used at an even earlier date in the old Khaldian buildings by Lake Van, before the time of the Armenians.

In the north of Mtskhetha is the convent of Samtavro, with a large church where the first Christian king, Mirian, and his queen are said to be buried. There is an old chapel in the churchyard on the west side, where St. Nino, who brought Christianity to the country, is supposed to have lived in her cell. Of the ancient royal palaces and other buildings there are no certain traces, except possibly some remains of ruins in the ground, and there is nothing in the little hamlet to give one any idea of the life of the ancient knights or of the pomp which must have characterized the annual Church festivals. Even to-day the Georgian peasants assemble here every October from all parts of the country to celebrate their national Church festival, and this gathering is said to be a remarkably interesting one.

## IV

## CHAPTERS IN THE HISTORY OF GEORGIA \*

THE country of the Georgians is situated on the southern side of the great Caucasus range, and its northern boundary approximately follows the highest ridge of these mountains. On the east it is bounded by the mountainous country of Daghestan and the plains of Azerbaijan, on the south by Armenia and the Kars region, which is now Turkish, and on the west by the Black Sea. It consists in the main of the two broad and fertile valleys of the Kura and Rion rivers, and of the mountain slopes, with numerous narrower valleys running down to them from the Caucasus in the north and the Little Caucasus and the Armenian highlands in the south. The republic is about 73,000 square kilometres in area, and has a population of about three millions.

The land inhabited by the Georgian tribes was divided in early times into a number of separate parts. The most important were: Kakhetia, farthest to the east towards the southern slopes of the Caucasus, celebrated for its wine; Karthalinia, the heart of the country, with the Kura Valley and Tiflis, and Aragva, comprising the Aragva Valley, in the north; Imeretia, west of the Suram ridge, with Kutais on the river Rion as its capital; Mingrelia to the north of the Rion, between Imeretia and the Black Sea; Svanetia, north of this, up among the Caucasus mountains; and farthest to the west Abkhazia facing the Black Sea. By the sea south of the Rion was Guria, and in the mountains behind were Meshia and Samzkhe.

It is a land of striking contrasts, with wide fertile valleys,

\* A good survey of the history of Georgia will be found in Arthur Leist, *Das georgische Volk*, Dresden, 1903. See further, W. E. D. Allen, *The Caucasus*, in "The Nations of To-day" series (edited by John Buchan), in the volume entitled *The Baltic and Caucasian States*, London, 1923. Compare also the article on "Georgia" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 11th edit., 1910; M. F. Brosset, *Histoire de la Georgie*, St. Petersburg, 1849-1858; O. G. v. Wesendonck, *Ueber georgisches Heidentum*, Leipzig, 1924.

lovely wooded glens, rugged gorges, and titanic mountains. It is the wonderland of Eastern Chivalry, famous for its dauntless warriors, its courtly men, and its beautiful, stately women.

The history of the Georgian nation is as remarkable as the country. Although it has had to fight almost incessantly for its liberty and independence against far more powerful neighbours, it nevertheless ranks, among the nations of our time, as one of those with the longest line of kings—a line continuing more or less unbroken for two thousand years. A warrior-nation this, preferring war to peace, whose greeting when two men meet is: "May victory attend thee," with the response: "And thee also."

Whence the Georgians<sup>1</sup> came, and when they came to the country, is uncertain. The Greeks called them Iberians, and the first mention of them is in Strabo (*b.* about 63 B.C.).<sup>2</sup> Herodotus<sup>3</sup> mentions several other peoples in this region; thus there were the Colchians, Tibareni, and Moshi; and probably further to the south the Saspire and Alarodii; while in the south-west were the Macrones, Mossynoeci, and Mares. Several of these peoples unquestionably helped to form the Georgian nation. The Moshi had previously dwelt in Asia Minor—probably they preceded the Phrygians in Phrygia, and by them were driven farther to the north-east, together with the Tibareni; after which they settled in a considerable part of what is now Georgia. In the time of Darius Hystaspes the Moshi commanded the southern exits of the passes through the Caucasus—in other words, they inhabited the country of the Aragva and Kura. We find their name again in the country-name Meshia and in the Meshian Mountains (with the Suram ridge), and possibly also in the town-name Mtskhetha; it may have been there, or near there, that they had their temple of the white goddess "Leucothea" (Cybele or Anahit?), and an oracle (*cf.* Strabo, XI, 2, 17).

<sup>1</sup> The name Georgia is of late origin. It may possibly come from the name *Jorzan*, borne by a tribe in the upper valley of the Kura; and it was apparently the Arabs who first used this name for the whole country. According to another explanation Georgia may possibly come from the Old Iranian *Karku*, which changed into *Gorga*, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Strabo, XI, 3, 1-6.

<sup>3</sup> III, 94; I, 104; II, 104; VII, 78-79.

The Georgians, i.e. the Iberians of the Greeks, may have forced their way in from the south, and to some extent ousted the Moshi, or intermingled with them.

The Georgians call themselves Karthvelians or K'art'uli (from K'art'u), whence the name of the part of the country known as Karthlia, or Karthalinia (Kharthulia). As Lehmann-Haupt<sup>1</sup> observes, K'art'u resembles Kardukh (i.e. the Carduchi), a people mentioned by Xenophon (401 B.C.)<sup>2</sup> as inhabiting the country by the eastern sources of the Tigris, south of Lake Van. Kardukh may be an Armenian plural of Kardu (compare Haïkh from Haï), which may be the same word as K'art'u, as the Georgian *r'* in this word is very like a *d*. The usual assumption that the Kardukh tribesmen were the same as the Kurds of later times is untenable, as it was not until very late that the Kurds migrated to these parts from Persia. It is of interest in this connection that the Kardukh country is full of ancient cave-dwellings of the same primitive kind as those found in Georgia, especially at Vardzia. The facts suggest that this may have been a tribe of the same race as the Georgians, some of whom migrated to the north. This would agree with the Georgian tradition, according to which their forefathers came from the south.

As probable ancestors of the later Georgian tribes—Karthlians, Imeretians, Mingrelians, Svanetians, Lazis and others—we may perhaps point to the Kharthulians, Moshi, Tibareni, Colchians and Tsani (Lazis); and in the case of the Kakhetians partly to Albanian tribes.

The Georgian or South-Caucasian languages are not Indo-European like the Armenian tongue, and linguistic experts have not yet succeeded in elucidating their relationships. Lehmann-Haupt (op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 467, 497) believes that both the language and the customs of the people exhibit peculiarities which seem to point to an original affinity with the pre-Armenian Khaldian people in Armenia.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> C. F. Lehmann-Haupt, *Armenia Einst und Jetzt*, vol. ii, p. 104 f, 1910.

<sup>2</sup> *Anabasis*, iv, 1-3.

<sup>3</sup> In that case we may perhaps ask whether there is any connection between these names as such, viz., Khaldi and Khaldu, and the above-mentioned Kardu and Kharthu. It depends upon whether the permutations in these languages will admit of *l* becoming *r*. If the names were originally identical, it is not impossible that the three races came of the same stock.

Their language may also be related to Mitannic and Protohittitic.

The finds in graves indicate that the country was inhabited in prehistoric times by a long-skulled people entirely different from the modern Georgians, who are for the most part conspicuously short-skulled. In the numerous stone cist graves of the Bronze Age, found near the convent of Samtavro at Mtskhetha, F. Bayern has discovered nothing but long-skulls. Whether one, or rather several short-skulled peoples entered the country at a later date is uncertain, and we are similarly unable to say who introduced the Georgian language. In addition to the predominating short-skulls of the Armenoid type there was evidently some admixture of the short-skulled alpine race with its lower, broader cranium and broader face. And further, an element of fair long-skulls entered into the composition of these peoples, probably at a rather later time. Moreover, there seems to have been an older element of dark long-skulls, possibly the earlier inhabitants of the country. In historical times there has been a large immigration of Armenians, with a certain number of Jews.

The typical Georgian may be described as slim and tall of stature. He has a short-skulled head, the face being generally of medium width, with a high nasal ridge fairly narrow, with a somewhat fleshy, rather turned-down tip of the Armenoid type; his hair is brownish-black, and he has a vigorous, luxuriant growth of hair and beard; his eyes are dark. Both the men and the women are frequently handsome.

Mentally the race is well endowed: honourable, gay, frank, careless, rather inclined to be frivolous and happy-go-lucky, but dignified and chivalrous, brave, and extremely hospitable. Somewhat wearied, perhaps, by long, arduous ages of incessant warfare, and with a certain lack of enterprise—preferring to live on the memories of its glorious past rather than take an interest in modern progress and development. It is characteristic, in a way, of the manner in which this race still lives in the Middle Ages, that several of the Georgian mountain tribes, for instance the Khevsurs, still preserve ancient chain-mail, shields, and swords from the time of the Crusades, and use them on great occasions.

From the very first, the Georgians have evidently been split up into different tribes, with separate chieftains (*tavadi*), which may have been composed of various racial elements. It seems that the chief at Mtskhetha was recognized from early times as paramount in East Georgia. This town was fortunately situated at the place where two important trade-routes crossed: one from India and Persia, passing south of the Caspian Sea, up the course of the Kura and down along the Rion to the Black Sea; and the other from Armenia up the Aragva Valley, across the Caucasus to the Sea of Azov and beyond.

Even in the days of Darius and Xerxes the country was under Persian suzerainty and influence. After Alexander the Great's alleged conquest of the country and appointment of a satrap at Mtskhetha, East Georgia is said to have regained its freedom under the leadership of Pharnavaz, who became the first king of the country about the year 302 B.C.; but this is not certain. In the first century B.C. the country was under Mithridates, the powerful king of Pontus, until he was defeated by Lucullus in 72 B.C., and by Pompey in 65 B.C., when the nation came into touch with the Roman world. Its civilization, however, especially that of East Georgia, continued to be influenced by Persia, whence also came some of its kings.

Of the religion of the Georgians we know little. In remote times they seem to have worshipped the sun and moon and five stars (the planets). Strabo (XI, 4, 7) says of the Iberians' neighbours on the east, the Albanians, whose country also included the eastern part of what was later Georgia (Kakhetia), that they worshipped the sun, moon, and Zeus, but chiefly the moon, of which there was a temple not far from Iberia. This may well have been a temple of the goddess Anahit, who, like the corresponding goddess Ma of Cappadocia<sup>1</sup> was generally associated with the moon, and by the Greeks with Artemis. No doubt she was the same goddess as the Leucothea of the Moshi in the Kura Valley, who is mentioned by Strabo. It is a striking fact, moreover, that at no great distance from these, at Phasis in Colchis, there was

<sup>1</sup> Strabo, XII, 2, 3.

a temple of the goddess Rhea,<sup>1</sup> who comes within the same primitive category of divinity. She is, in fact, the goddess of fertility, the Great Mother, the God Mother, often called radiantly golden or spotless (cf. *Leucothea*), who was worshipped all over Asia Minor, in Armenia (as described later), and in the parts adjoining the Black Sea (cf. *Hecate among the Thracians*, p. 19); and she must have belonged to the early religion of the tribes in Georgia.

But the chief god of the Georgians at a later time was called by the Iranian name of Armaz—the Persian Ahura Mazda (lord of wisdom) or Ormuzd. His holy place was at Mtskhetha, where there was a copper statue of him with breast-plate, helmet, and shoulder-armor of gold, and eyes of beryl and emerald. His worship was connected with human sacrifices. Beside him stood two other statues, representing the old divinities Ga and Gatzi. It is a triad of gods such as is often found among Eastern peoples (cf. also the Christian Trinity). Moreover, other deities—Zaden, Aïnina (= Anahit?), Danana (= Nane?), and "Aphrodite"—are stated to have had holy places in the same neighbourhood. Adding these gods together we obtain the holy number seven, corresponding to the previously mentioned heavenly bodies, viz., sun, moon, and five stars.

In addition to this cult, with temples and images of the gods, which was the state religion proper, fire-worship evidently spread widely as time went on, especially among the upper classes. There was also a certain amount of Jahve-worship, introduced by the numerous Jewish immigrants.

The Georgian nation gradually evolved a form of social organization which was to some extent its own, and was retained throughout the succeeding ages. The state was based on a feudal system with a number of superior chieftains and a king as the supreme feudal lord. All land was in the hands of the powerful nobles, the king, and the Church. Strabo's account (XI, 3, 6 and 4, 7) shows that even in heathen times both Iberia and Albania had a wealthy and influential priesthood. After the nobility and the Church came the peasants and labourers, some of whom were serfs, while

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Arian, *Periplus II.*

others were more independent. Besides these, there were slaves. And in the towns a class of merchants and artisans gradually grew up.

Strabo tells us (XI, 3, 6) that among the Iberians all property was jointly owned by the family, which was ruled and governed by the eldest. Evidently this refers to "great families," such as are still to be found in certain remote mountain districts, especially in Kakhetia and Karthlia, embracing several closely related families comprising as many as fifty, or in bygone days even a hundred, members. At the head of each "great family" were a father and mother, who were chosen for life, and preferably were the eldest. The "great family" is a highly ancient patriarchal institution among Indo-Europeans, especially the Southern Slavs, but found also among Asiatic peoples.

This remarkable people was constantly at war in defence of its nationality; its beautiful country served as a continual bone of contention between its mighty neighbours in the south-east and south-west, in the south, and eventually in the north as well. It could not, indeed, be otherwise with a country occupying the bridge between the Caspian and Black Seas. Across this bridge the Caucasus forms a massive mountain barrier, upon which successive waves of invasion from the south, south-east, and west broke again and again. In the north lay in old days the steppes of the Scythian nomads; in the south-east was the powerful kingdom of Persia; in the south, nearest Armenia, the kingdoms of the Euphrates and Tigris, and later the Arabs and Turks; in the south-west and west the peoples of Asia Minor, the Greek and Roman world-empires, and later on the Turks.

There were only a few ways through, or past, the Caucasian mountain rampart, by which the nomad hordes of the north could attack; one was the narrow, marshy seaboard plain by the Caspian; another was the narrow gorge called the Daryal Pass (i.e. Dar-i-Alan, the "Alan road"), or the "Iberian gate" of the ancients, which traverses the mighty ridge of mountains below the lofty volcanic glacier of Mkimvari or Kasbek; a third ran somewhat farther west up the Ardon Valley from the north, through the Khasar Gorge to

the valley of the Rion and Kutais, or through the Roki Pass and down the valley of the Liakhva to Gori by the Kura; and a fourth way from the north followed the coast of the Black Sea.

For the rulers of the lands in the south it was always a matter of vital importance to control these approaches. The valley of the Kura along the southern side of the mountain rampart would also allow a hostile army to march through from the Black Sea on the west; it was a borderland of great importance, and as such a continual occasion of war between the rulers of Persia and the nations by the Black Sea. Not only so, but the country was always open to sudden attacks by robber bands from the mountains, chiefly Avars and other Lesghian tribesmen, but also Chechens, Circassians, Kabardians and Ossetes. In addition to all this there were internal quarrels and jealousies between the different local chiefs.

It is really astonishing that this people, harassed in so many ways for two thousand years, has been able to preserve its distinct nationality and culture right up to our own time, and not only so, but has more or less preserved its independence, without being swallowed up or blotted out by the great invading waves of stronger nations which have flowed backwards and forwards over this bridge of land between the two seas. One would suppose that constant war, pillage and turmoil would have prevented all development, yet the Georgians have at all times maintained a high level of culture, as the importance of their literature testifies.

For many centuries Mtskhetha was the capital of the country, until about A.D. 500, when the capital was transferred to Tiflis, where King Vakhtang Gurgaslan (the wolf-lion) had apparently taken up his residence in about A.D. 469. Tiflis was farther away from the valleys of the Caucasus, and less exposed to the sudden incursions of the mountain tribes.

Christianity is said to have been introduced into East Georgia by the virgin St. Nino and King Mirian (or Mihran), who was converted by her, between A.D. 317 and 332, soon after its introduction into Armenia; but it was doubtless long before the flames were extinguished on the last of Georgia's fire-altars, and relics of the fire-worshippers'

religion survive in legend and custom. The Church here, as in Armenia, adhered at first to the Monophysite doctrine; but subsequently, in the sixth century, it adopted the creed of Chalcedon, thus approaching more closely to the Byzantine Church. The foundation of the first monasteries in the sixth century must have played an important part in spreading the Christian Faith among the people.

The see of the Katholikos, or primate of the Church, was at Mtskhetha, where the first cathedral is said to have been founded by King Vakhtang Gurgaslan (A.D. 446-499). He had an independent position in the state, with dignity and rights almost equal to those of the king. Clearly he inherited his authority from the High Priest of the heathen state, of whom Strabo speaks (XI, 4, 7) in writing of the Albanians. Among the latter he was "the most highly honoured man next to the king, and governed not only the sacred lands, which were extensive and populous, but also the ministers of the temple." He could direct that some of the priests should be imprisoned in "sacred fetters," and after they had been well fed for a year could have them sacrificed to the gods "with their sacrificial animals."

The Katholikos had unrestricted power to administer not only the Church, but his own and the Church's extensive lands, with numerous (about 237) villages, peasants, stewards, officials, soldiers, and not a few noble vassals, besides thousands of priests and monks. He furnished his own military force under its own leader, appointed by himself. He and his bishops owned a large number of slaves. The Church was literally an *imperium in imperio*. But in spite of these great powers the Georgian Church and its Katholikos never exceeded the bounds, and throughout the centuries it has remained the loyal supporter and ally of the Georgian state. This is accounted for by the constant menace of other religions from without, especially Islam after it spread to the countries round.

About the middle of the sixth century Guaram became the ruler of East Georgia. He was its first prince of the noble Armenian family of the Bagratids, who in subsequent centuries gave to the country many gifted kings. Persia and Byzan-

tium, which dominated West Georgia, were continually in conflict over East Georgia, until the Emperor Heraclius crushed the power of the Persian Sasanids on Nineveh's plain of ruins in A.D. 627. This, however, only opened the way for a more dangerous enemy, the Arabs, who overran East Georgia from the south fifteen years later, and penetrated as far as the mountain valleys of the Caucasus, though they never succeeded in establishing a foothold in West Georgia.

Their suzerainty over East Georgia lasted with interruptions for about four hundred years, but did not always embrace the whole country. The kings were more or less vassals of the Arabs. In spite of the difference of religion the Arabs helped to raise the standard of Georgian civilization in more ways than one.

Under King Bagrat III (985-1014), who first was king of Abkhasia, East Georgia was united, by succession, with Abkhasia and Meshia, and more or less with Imeretia and Mingrelia as well. In 1048 the Seljuk Turks made several incursions into the country, until at length they were defeated by the powerful chief Liparit Orbuk (Orbeliani). They returned again in 1064 under the leadership of Alp Arslan, overran Georgia, and destroyed Tiflis, putting its inhabitants to the sword. In 1072 the town was destroyed again, and the country pillaged, by the Seljuk Turks; and many of the inhabitants were killed.

In 1089 Georgia passed under the rule of its most powerful and notable monarch, David III (1089-1125), known as the "Renovator" (Daviti Aghmashenebeli). He gathered together the country which came into his hands as a blasted wilderness, torn asunder by the Arabs, Turks, and Byzantines, and left it thirty-six years later a flourishing kingdom. After the conquest of Jerusalem by the Crusaders, he expelled the last Arab garrison from Tiflis in the year 1100. This ascetic philosopher-king was a man of high religious culture, yet at the same time an eminent general who led his troops to victory in wars of conquest. He introduced discipline, order, and respect for morality, and was the first to give his people a good example. He was economical, a wise administrator, and conspicuously tolerant to people of another faith; he

gave his help both to Moslems and to Armenians. Under him Georgia's power increased as never before, and the wealth of the country was largely augmented by the rich plunder he constantly won in war and by the measures he took to promote trade. The standard of culture was raised also: higher-grade schools were established, with able and well-educated teachers. At Gelati, near Kutais, where he erected a splendid cathedral, a monastery was founded, which soon developed into an important centre of culture.

At this epoch there was much intercourse with Byzantium. Several kings, including Bagrat IV (1027-1072) and David the Renovator, married Byzantine princesses, and the daughters of Georgian kings married Byzantine emperors and princes. The most famous of these was Bagrat IV's daughter Martha, who became empress under the name of Maria, and was the most beautiful woman of her time.

After King David the country increased in prosperity until it reached its climax of power and culture under Queen Tamara (1184-1212). When she ascended the throne of the Bagratids the frontiers of the land extended far beyond the limits of the Georgian language, and the people were decidedly well-to-do, thanks to the long period of settled rule. This sagacious queen's personal characteristics exercised a good influence on her subjects. She was beautiful and gracious, and must have possessed an irresistible charm. Her contemporaries had hardly words strong enough in which to sing her praises; she was praised for her energy, her warlike prowess on horseback or on foot, for her utterances, which breathed peace, leniency, and moderation, and for her wise answers. Without sternness or anger, calmly and without involving herself in difficulties, she was able to manage the most obstinate and wilful men.

She ruled her people with a mildness and humanity which were unknown in those days. No one was condemned to be flogged by her command, and she was still more sparing of sterner punishments, so that she even pardoned the rebels who rose against her at the instigation of her first husband, whom she had repudiated. The nobles and the peasants were alike her faithful adherents; armies marched enthusiastically

to battle at her command, and generally returned victorious ; all her campaigns ended successfully, the frontiers of the country being extended to the Caspian Sea in the east and the Black Sea in the west ; and the political prestige of the kingdom was greatly increased, so that the neighbouring peoples in the mountain valleys of the Caucasus had to acknowledge her suzerainty and pay tribute. She conquered parts of Armenia, Kars, and Erzerum. In 1204 she helped her nephew, Alexius Comnenus, to found an empire in Trebizond, and thereby strengthened the frontier of her country towards the Turks in the west.

Under Tamara's rule Georgia—state and Church alike—had a remarkable succession of prominent men and leaders. Several of these were Armenians. The commander-in-chief was an Armenian named Sarkis Mkhargdsele ; and he was supported by three relations, one of whom was the queen's second husband, David Soslan. The superior clergy and some of the nobles must have been comparatively well educated, and the latter, who won a great deal of booty in the wars, must largely have lived a life of refinement and luxury. The brilliant centre of all this was Tamara's splendid court, which constantly received visits from princes and other distinguished men. The beautiful queen was not one to hoard the riches which mounted up in her treasuries. She was exceptionally liberal, and loved to be surrounded by gaiety and lavish amusements. She gave magnificent entertainments with banquets, tournaments, and performances by dancing-girls and tight-rope dancers. Above all, there were great hunting expeditions, for she was a passionate devotee of the chase ; it must have been a pageant worth seeing when she rode forth into the woods and fields with her falcons and her hounds, at the head of a train of knights mounted on fiery steeds with gorgeous trappings. On their return they would be regaled at a sumptuous banquet with singing and music, and the ring of drinking-cups, and endless hunting talk.

Hunting was at all times the favourite sport of the Georgian kings and knights when they were not engaged in warfare. Jackals, foxes, wild boars, and stags were hunted with hounds ; but falconry was still more popular, the chief

quarries being cranes, herons, and pheasants, the last indigenous to Georgia. Marco Polo (1275) says that Georgia "provides the best hawks in the world."

Besides hunting they delighted in various kinds of contests and games, especially those that called for strength and suppleness of body: ball-games, archery, horse-racing, ball-games on horseback, and wrestling, which is still a usual accompaniment of Church festivals and other occasions. They were happy, light-hearted people, living a life rich in adventure.

A basis for intellectual culture was furnished in Georgia by the coming of Christianity. How early the nation got its own script is uncertain; probably it was at approximately the same time as the Armenians got theirs, at the beginning of the fifth century A.D. The alphabet is doubtless to a large extent derived from the Greek. Their literature was at first wholly ecclesiastical, an offshoot of the Syrian and Byzantine-Greek literature; but in course of time a more general culture spread from the numerous monasteries to the leading classes; and the Arabs, who among other things introduced the art of versifying, also exercised an important influence. Alongside of the religious literature there gradually came into existence a more worldly and light-hearted form of writing. In Thamara's time it attained a high standard, and there seem to have been several really noteworthy lyric poets. At every banquet there were songs to the accompaniment of lutes and the ring of goblets, celebrating love, joy, suffering, and chivalrous deeds.

The most celebrated poet is Shot'ha Rust'haveli, who lived in Thamara's time. In his great epic "The Man in the Panther's Skin" (*Ve shviss theassani*) he gave his countrymen a truly remarkable national poem of exceptional value. One of the heroines is the adored queen herself, whose name in the poem is T'hinat'hin:

The shining light of the world; whoever  
Looked at her, she bereft him of heart, mind, and soul.

The hero is a typical knight *sans peur et sans reproche*, who faces life confidently and cultivates friendship, altruism, and

charity on all occasions. The poem is inspired by lofty ethical ideals ; but there is an undertone of wistfulness :

Their tale is ended like a dream of night,  
They are passed away, gone beyond the world.  
Behold the treachery of time ;  
To him who thinks it long, even for him it is of a moment.

Nevertheless this harp has thrilled ever since ; through all the tribulations of seven hundred years this poem has lived, and still lives, on the lips of the Georgian people, sustaining the national spirit of a wounded and bleeding race.

So long ago as the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. we may suppose that churches were built, partially modelled on the temples that preceded them. A great deal of building was done during the following centuries. In style the churches were very much like those in Armenia, and some of the master-builders may have been Armenians, who were noted for their skill as artisans. One interesting building is the cathedral at Kutais, commenced in A.D. 1003 by King Bagrat III, the ruins of which still survive. The builder's name was Maisa. Its ground-plan is very like the celebrated church of St. Gregory at Dvin in Armenia, of which, though it was destroyed in the ninth century, the foundations have since been found. With its long, three-aisled shape, and its great height in proportion to the width, the cathedral at Kutais must have presented a soaring aspect similar to that of the much later Gothic churches in Europe. Several of the arches were pointed ; indeed, it would seem that this was the case with the main arches which supported the dome. There were also rudimentary compound pillars resembling those seen in Gothic architecture, and these are found in a more developed form in the cathedral at Ani in Armenia, completed a few years before the cathedral at Kutais was begun. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries a large number of churches, monasteries, and castles were built in Georgia ; every great feudal lord had his castle. New towns were founded also ; for instance, Akhaltzikh and Akhalkalaki.

The architectural achievements under Thamara were so notable that popular tradition nowadays, as I have said,

ascribes to her all the more impressive castles and other buildings whose ruins survive, in the same way that she is made the heroine of all the great legendary exploits of past days.

In this connection it is a strange feature of the history of the Georgian people that its two most striking personalities are women: St. Nino the apostle of Christianity, and the great queen. The fact testifies to a mentality utterly different from Islam's doctrine that women have no souls. Even among the Persians, by whom the Georgians were influenced in so many ways, woman was not held in such high esteem as this.

After the decease of *Thamara*, the era of Georgia's greatness soon came to an end. Eight years later, in 1220 and 1222, the savage warrior-hosts of the Mongols invaded the country from Persia. In 1223 they returned again, laying waste the south. Then the Persians attacked, storming and sacking Tiflis, and a few years later the Mongolians reappeared and occupied the whole country. In 1247 it was entirely subject to them, paying oppressive tribute, and forced to send its young men to serve in the Mongolian armies.

Civilization, intellectual life, morality, declined in the devastated country. *Thamara's* own daughter, the beautiful Queen *Russudan*, gave by her dissolute life an example very different from her mother's. In 1318 an able king, *George V*, "the Illustrious" (1318-1346), succeeded to the throne, and the country recovered; but the betterment was of brief duration. In the middle of the fourteenth century the Black Death carried off thousands of the inhabitants, while an even more sinister guest was the lame Mongolian *Timur Lenk* (*Tamerlane*). Between 1387 and 1403 his savage hordes overran and sacked the country six times; and when at length they drew off into Turkestan they left it in a truly pitiful condition; Tiflis and other towns and villages had been reduced to mere heaps of ruins, churches and castles had been destroyed, and large numbers of people had perished or been carried away into captivity.

Followed three dark centuries. When the failing Byzantine power finally collapsed in 1453 and the empire of Trebizond

came to an end a few years after, Georgia lost its only Christian support, and together with Armenia lay isolated, a small Christian community wedged in between hostile Moslem races on every side.

At this very time, moreover, in the middle of the fifteenth century, when unity was so necessary, the Georgia of the Bagratids was divided between the three sons of King Alexander I into the kingdoms of Karthlia, Kakhetia, and Imeretia, with five principalities: Mingrelia, Guria, Abkhasia, Svanetia, and Samzkhé (Meshia). The strength of the country was thereby seriously reduced, and its divisions and internal feuds gave its external enemies, especially the Persians and the Turks, ample opportunities for intrigue.

The history of these centuries is unutterably grim, with its monotonous, blood-stained chronicles of continual wars, battles, and destruction, feuds and treacheries, murder and rapine, and incursions of Turks, Persians, Tatars, and mountain tribes, attended by the most inhuman massacres. At the same time the people were crushed by innumerable taxes which had to be paid to the kings and feudal lords, and which cut away all chance of prosperity—apart from the ruthless exactions whenever foreign armies overran the country.

The chief external enemies were three in number: the Turks in the south-west, the Persians in the south-east, and the mountain tribes in the north. The Turks occupied the Chorokh Valley and seized, in the middle of the sixteenth century, the towns of Akhaltsikh, Ardahan, and Ardanuch; the Georgian, i.e. the old Meshian (Moshian) mountain tribes in those parts, were compelled to embrace the faith of Islam, and the Turkish language gained a foothold. Guria, Mingrelia, and Imeretia also became more or less dependent on the Turks. The Persians exercised suzerainty over Karthlia and Kakhetia, whose kings were satraps under the Shah. In order to please their overlord several of the kings went over to Islam and introduced the Persian alongside of the Georgian language.

On the other hand, the northern divisions of the country, Aragva, Svanetia, and Abkhasia, retained their independence. The mountain tribes in the north acknowledged no masters,

and Cherkesses, Kabardians, Ossets, Chechens, and Lesghians (Avars) alternately invaded and pillaged the dominions of the three Bagratid kings, or entered into alliance with them. The proximity of these mountain tribes always rendered life insecure, especially in Kakhetia and Karthlia; accordingly every village had one or more strongholds, with towers and surrounding walls, where the inhabitants often took refuge for weeks at a time with their belongings and their animals, without being able to look after their homes and their land.

It seems extraordinary that the Georgian nation could live through this long distressful period without being utterly disintegrated; but it goes without saying that the intellectual and moral state of the country was deplorable, and it was chiefly among the peasantry, handicraftsmen, and working classes generally that a kind of religion and morality survived, largely mingled with superstition. The clergy sank into ignorance and immorality, while the nobles were demoralized by the humiliating political conditions, which frequently compelled them to send their sons as hostages to be brought up as mullahs in Isfahan, and to surrender their daughters for Persian or Turkish harems. They became indifferent to their own religion, and combined Muhammedan polygamy with Christian drunkenness, their interest in religion being confined to "celebrating with admirable impartiality the feast-days of either religion."

Notwithstanding that it was strictly forbidden by the Church to sell Christian souls to infidels, the slave-trade flourished; the nobles, especially in Mingrelia and Guria, exported numbers of their female and male serfs to the slave-markets of Tabriz, Akhaltsikh, and Trebizond, to be sold to Turkish or Persian masters. The French traveller and jewel-merchant Chardin, writing in the second half of the seventeenth century, estimates that 12,000 peasants of both sexes were sold to Turkey annually; and he tells of a poor but enterprising nobleman who had recently sold twelve priests and his own wife to a Turkish sea-captain at Trebizond. But we must not too readily assume that the customs of Georgia were much worse than those of Europe at the same epoch—for instance, at the French or English court, or in Russia.

The lot of the serf was certainly no better in Russia and Europe.

Chardin has a good deal to say in praise of East Georgia ; he found the food excellent, with the best bread and fruit in the world, and an ample variety of fish, meat, and any amount of game ; the wine, too, was splendid, the women still more so. Of the latter he says : " To see them without loving them I consider impossible. One cannot imagine more entrancing faces or more beautiful limbs than those of the Georgian women. They are tall and slim, without being disfigured by fat. The only thing that spoils them is the paint on their faces."

Many Georgians, especially of the leading families, had to go into exile in hard times, and they went by preference to Russia. But the Georgians never became a migratory people, and in this respect were strikingly different from their neighbours the Armenians. The Georgians were too fond of their homes—of their valleys and mountains—to be happy long away from them, and this affection for the soil has found beautiful expression in the descriptions of nature in their poetry. Moreover, the Georgians were mostly farmers, and had not the skill in trade and handicrafts which enabled the Armenians to thrive in foreign surroundings.

In the seventeenth century Kakhetia and Karthlia had several able and patriotic kings who endeavoured to invigorate the national life and civilization of the people, to raise the Church from the depths to which it had sunk, and to resist the power and influence of Persia. Teymuras I of Kakhetia (1605–1663), a type of poet-adventurer, was a man of parts and a brave commander, with the best traits of the old-fashioned Georgian knight. He fought against the powerful and cruel Shah Abbas of Persia, who devastated the country several times, and punished the Georgians ruthlessly for trying to shake off the Persian yoke. Teymuras was the first of a series of notable authors and authoresses of the royal house of the Bagratids, who participated vigorously for nearly two hundred years in the revival of intellectual life in Georgia, which gradually evolved a distinctive and interesting national literature, with several poets of real eminence. The most

remarkable of these in the eighteenth century was, perhaps, David Guramishvili (*b.* 1705), who when only nineteen was taken from his estate by Lesghian bandits and kept in cruel confinement for four years until he escaped to Russia, where he afterwards lived and took part in several campaigns, in the course of which he was taken prisoner by the Prussians. He paints the wretched conditions in his country in sombre colours, but the intense warmth of his love for Georgia and its people glows beneath his pessimism. It is in their beautiful lyrics that the poets of Georgia are at their best.

Among a number of prominent men in East Georgia who attempted to unite the forces, and raise the civilization and life of the nation to a higher level in its struggle against the Persians, Tatars, and Turks, special mention must be made of the Katholikos Anton (1744-1887). He was successful in reuniting Kakhetia and Karthlia, and he augmented the power of the crown by giving it his strong support against the feudal lords. He tried to establish order in public life, strengthened the Church, raised the standard of education and intellectual culture, and showed no little versatility as a writer of educational works and books on philosophy and history. His whole life was inspired by a tireless, burning zeal for his people and country.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries a new influence began slowly, but none the less surely, to come into play—the influence of Christian Russia in the north, which had extended southward to the plains north of the Caucasus. Under the crushing pressure of their Muhammedan enemies the kings of East Georgia naturally looked for help to the Christian Tsar. For a long time, however, they sought in vain, for the lands of Caucasia had not yet come within Russia's "sphere of interest"; but the change was to come when the time was ripe for it.

In 1744 Karthlia again came under the rule of a national king, Teymuras II (1744-1762), after being governed for twenty years by Persian satraps. He was a brave leader; and assisted by his son, Heraklius or Erekle II, who had succeeded to the throne of Kakhetia, he defended his country against the neighbouring nations with stubborn courage.

On his death his son, powerfully aided by the Katholikos Anton, became king of Karthlia as well (1762-1798); and the whole of East Georgia was thus reunited.

Then came the last tragic but noble chapter in the Georgian nation's long and heroic fight for freedom. With all the vigour at his command this remarkable monarch, firmly supported by the Katholikos, laboured to restore his unhappy country by introducing a stable government, encouraging trade, cultivating and rebuilding depopulated districts, stimulating industry and mining operations, and promoting education and civilization generally. Above all, he laboured to set it free from its external enemies.

He was a splendid general, one of the greatest, perhaps, in that century. From east to west the lion-hearted leader swept like a whirlwind, annihilating the armies of his enemies. His victories over the Turks, Persians, and Lesghians often came with the suddenness of a thunderbolt. But his many foes returned with fresh hosts, and his own little force of faithful adherents dwindled away till the preponderance of the enemy became too great. The enormous sacrifices necessitated by continual wars against many different foes, and the impossibility of securing peace, were crushing the life out of the people; and as if the burden were not heavy enough, there were the exactions of the nobles, and their never-ending dissensions, to paralyse the national power of resistance. Other disasters supervened also, such as the fearful pestilence of 1779, which carried off five thousand people in Tiflis alone.

The king applied to Russia for help. In 1769 the Russian general Todleben marched through the Daryal Pass to Tiflis with four hundred men and four guns, and fought side by side with the Georgians against the Turks. In 1783 Heraklius signed a treaty with Catherine of Russia, by which he acknowledged her suzerainty in return for Russian military assistance. The Russians now began to construct a military road through the Daryal Pass, and in the autumn of the same year two Russian battalions and four guns arrived at Tiflis, but were soon withdrawn again, leaving the dauntless king wholly dependent once more upon himself and his own followers.

In 1795 Georgia was attacked by the new Persian shah, the

terrible eunuch Agha Mohamed Khan. Owing to the fatal internal feuds Heraklius, now well over eighty, could not collect more than a few thousand men to oppose him, and could not prevent the capture of Tiflis, which was mercilessly pillaged for six days. Deserted by his many sons, the heroic old man fled to Ananur in Aragva. Here, in spite of his advanced age, he raised a small army, and took Tiflis in the following year. But the town and the country had been completely devastated for a long time to come.

Crushed with grief and pity for his country, the aged King Heraklius died in 1798 at Telav in Kakhetia. A life of wonderful exploits was at an end, and the whole nation mourned his loss. Georgia had lost its last support and protector.

And still, in spite of all these sorrows, the inner dissensions continued! The king's intriguing widow Daria and his numerous sons by three marriages were chiefly interested in dividing the inheritance. One of the sons became King George XIII, but found himself in a very difficult position and applied to Russia for help; meanwhile his brother Alexander also laid claim to the throne and applied to the Persians. These latter, with a horde of Lesghians, invaded the country, but were driven back on the arrival of the Russians. For the moment the danger was averted; but not long after King George, lying on his deathbed at Tiflis, sent a message to the Tsar Paul of Russia to offer him the throne of Georgia. In 1801, therefore, East Georgia was united to Russia; some years later Imeretia became a Russian province, and gradually the other Georgian territories were also absorbed by the Russian Empire.

Georgia was thus saved from the Muhammedan menace. Under Russia the exhausted nation enjoyed a military protection it had never had before, and material prosperity followed in due course. But on the other hand the Russian Government was accompanied by its usual defects: excessive centralization of all administration, with the ruthless suppression of every sign of independence in the management of Georgian affairs, except in a strictly limited sphere of municipal local government; a paralysing absence of all

political liberty ; and, above all, a general Russianizing policy, which began at once with the subordination of the hitherto independent Georgian Church to the Holy Synod (as early as 1811), and continued as time went on with the suppression of the national language and system of education. In 1884 the hitherto separate Georgian army was incorporated in the general military organization of the Russian Empire, and with it disappeared the last shred of the independence of the Georgian kingdom. All this aroused increasing discontent, especially among the nobles and the upper classes, and led to several insurrections. It also gave birth to a revival of the national literature in the second half of last century, when a number of prominent poets and other writers appeared.

This national romantic movement, which emanated from the aristocracy, was not so dangerous to the Russian Government and the existing social organization as the revolutionary socialist agitation which spread, at the end of last century and the beginning of this, from European Russia to the working classes in Transcaucasia. A number of important industries had now come into existence there, the chief being petroleum, with its main centres at Baku, Maikop, and Grozni, while in addition there was manganese, copper, silk, cotton, timber, and wine. This sudden industrial development soon gave rise to very grave and intricate problems, with class and racial antagonisms, in a country where foreign capital considered itself entitled to exploit the primitive labour of the natives to the utmost, and where the abrupt transition from feudalism to industrialism had produced a class of workers all the more dangerous because they would swallow without criticism any of the latest doctrines, however raw and undigested, of West European Labour, and propagate them in their own villages. The anti-national measures of the Imperial Government were also responsible for driving many into the arms of the Socialists. In 1904-1906 serious disturbances broke out in various parts of Transcaucasia. Ultimately they were suppressed after a good deal of bloodshed, but they were a serious warning of coming events.

Then came the Great War of 1914, and the Russian Duma revolution of March 1917 was greeted with enthusiasm in

Transcaucasia. In place of the Viceroy in Tiflis Kerenski appointed a committee of four—a Georgian, an Armenian, a Tatar, and a Russian—to administer the internal affairs of Transcaucasia; but most of the power was in the hands of the newly formed and virtually Socialistic workmen's and soldiers' councils. Very soon acute racial animosities and serious conflicts broke out, especially between the Armenian Christians and the Tatar Moslems, who acted partly in collusion with the Turks.

After the Bolshevik revolution of November 1917 in Petrograd the state of things became even more complicated. The committee of four at Tiflis was replaced by a Transcaucasian Social-Democratic "commissariat" consisting of three Georgians, three Armenians, three Tatars, and two Russians, with a Georgian named Gegechkori as chairman. This "commissariat" was backed by a "Transcaucasian Assembly" or *Seim*, which met at Tiflis on February 23, 1918. The commissariat and the *Seim* worked hand in hand with various workers', soldiers', and municipal councils, and with the Georgian, Armenian, and Tatar "national committees." They could not join the Russian Communists, but desired to collaborate with the non-Bolshevik parties in Russia, and to maintain the unity of the empire.

On the 18th of December 1917, the Russian general who was nominally in command of the Russo-Caucasian troops signed an armistice with the Turks; but his troops were gradually disintegrated by Communist propaganda and returned to their homes, and the Transcaucasian peoples were left to defend their frontiers unaided, while the Turks advanced from the west and became more and more aggressive.

On April 14, 1918, they took Batum. On April 22nd the *Seim* declared the independence of the Transcaucasian Republic. On May 26th it decided to dissolve the republic after an existence of five weeks. Georgia now declared itself independent, and formed an alliance with the Germans, whereupon the country was occupied by German troops, and thus saved from the Turks.

Then came the complete defeat of Turkey and Germany, and the Turkish armistice was signed on October 30, 1918.

This completely altered the position in Transcaucasia, as the Germans and Turks had to withdraw from Georgia, Batum, Russian Armenia, and Azerbaijan. Although the independent Transcaucasian republics were in opposition to the Bolshevik Government in Russia, the anti-revolutionary leaders in Ekaterinodar treated them as enemies who wished to dismember the Russian Empire. In March 1919 Denikin attacked the Georgians, but this was stopped by the Allies, who appeared to favour the independent border-states.

Meanwhile the Georgian Government were trying to negotiate an alliance between the Transcaucasian republics, which they attempted again after Denikin's army broke up at the beginning of 1920. But the attempt failed, as the relations between the Armenians and the Tatars were still too strained. Various negotiations followed between the Georgian Government and Moscow, and in June 1920, when the Polish war was occupying the attention of the Soviet Government, a treaty was signed by which the Soviet Government recognized the independence of Georgia and relinquished all right to interfere in its internal affairs. Georgia was to have Batum when it was evacuated by the British, who had occupied the town after the Turks, and left it on July 9th.

At this time the state of affairs in Georgia and Armenia was critical, for both peoples were demoralized by years of insecurity, repeated upheavals, and interrupted trade connections, while the distress was great. Several Bolshevik disturbances occurred in Georgia. Finally, when the war with Poland came to an end (November 1920), and the White Army in the Crimea had been destroyed, the Bolsheviks attacked Georgia in February 1921. They were aided by a Bolshevik rising, chiefly of Russian and Armenian elements, in Tiflis, and in the end the Georgian Government, headed by Jordania, had to seek safety in flight.

A Soviet Government was now established in Georgia under Georgian Bolshevik leaders. At the Kars Conference, held in October-November 1921, the position *vis-à-vis* the Angora Government was defined, and the three Transcaucasian Soviet republics—Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan—were united in a federation, which in turn was united to the great

Russian Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, whose central government is in Moscow. In this way Transcaucasia was really incorporated once more in the great Russian State. This outcome of so many untoward events was doubtless inevitable, and necessary for the sake of stability. Standing alone, these republics could not have held their own against their more powerful neighbours.

As things are, it seems probable that the future both of the Georgians and the Armenians will best be safeguarded by adherence to the Russian State, but with a free and independent Government, which will administer the internal affairs of these nations, watch over and promote the development of their characteristic civilizations, and permit them to live their own life, with their own language and institutions, unhampered by restrictive measures like the unfortunate attempts of the Tsarist Government to Russianize them.

TO ERIVAN. THE PHYSICAL FEATURES OF  
ARMENIA

At seven in the evening of June 16th our train left Tiflis for Armenia. The station was packed, and people had to fight for their lives to get into the train. It looked quite hopeless for the crowds of men and women, with huge trunks and boxes and baskets, who swarmed in front of every carriage, pushing and struggling forward in serried ranks, amid a pandemonium of shrieks and curses. But it is wonderful what one of these carriages can digest, and little by little the passengers squeezed in. How they were bestowed, goodness knows; but the train rolled out of the station at last without leaving anybody behind on the platform.

After crossing the Kura, a little south of Tiflis, and traversing a plain with a small salt lake near Kodi, the ascent began, at about 500 metres above sea-level, up narrow valleys and wild gorges along the River Debeda-chai or Borchalinka; but the darkness closed in and prevented us from seeing the beautiful mountain scenery.

Towards daybreak we crossed the watershed between the valleys of the Kura and the Arax at a height of 1,952 metres above the sea. When I drew up the blind I saw the Armenian plateau, and in the distance the immense volcanic bulk of Mount Alagöz, with its white summit glittering in the morning sunshine. The country was bare and treeless; nothing green in sight, and no wooded slopes. Was this parched, dun-coloured land to be cultivated for the refugees? It did not look very promising from the window.

We were drawing near to Alexandropol, in early times called Gumri, and now renamed Leninakan. But there was little to show that we were in the neighbourhood of a large town. We steamed into the station at 7.30 (Wednesday, June 17th). In spite of the early hour quite a large gathering

was there to meet us. The people's commissar for Armenian agriculture, Mr. Ersingian, welcomed us to the country in the name of the Government. He was a tall, spare, stately-looking man, a typical Armenian, with prominent intellectual features, something between a better-looking Abraham Lincoln and an amiable Mephistopheles. His high, short-skulled head, remarkable for its height from the ears to the crown, his long, narrow face, lofty domed forehead, sharply chiselled, slightly turned-down nose, and thin-lipped, determined mouth, impressed one at once as thoroughbred. He was to accompany us to Erivan. Later on we constantly worked together.

There was also a deputation from the town, headed by its chief man, to invite us to be present, as guests of honour, at the opening of a new irrigation canal on the following Sunday. Mr. Beach, the American head of the Near East Relief orphanages near the town, further asked us to stay a few days at this big institution after the ceremonies in connection with the opening of the canal were over. We accepted both invitations with pleasure. The inauguration of this canal would give us an admirable opportunity to study the latest irrigation works, which would be useful for our own undertaking; and at the big Armenian institution we should have an opportunity of seeing what was being done there to accommodate and educate thousands of Armenian children.

Here we parted from our pleasant acquaintance the American journalist with the appropriate name of Mr. America, who had travelled with us from Constantinople, and was going to write an account of the work of the Near East Relief. Our train went on.

It was the same bare landscape, an undulating, dun-coloured steppe without any noticeable vegetation. We were past the watershed by now, and ought to be able to go ahead again, but for all that the panting engine found some of the gradients so steep that it went no faster than one could walk alongside; at last it stopped altogether, and the railway-men began to run along the line, shouting and screaming a lot of things that we could not understand, and turning all the brakes.

Evidently the idea was that some of the brakes were on by mistake.

Meanwhile tea was ready, and breakfast was served in the saloon. Then the train began to move on again; and before long we were on a steady decline where it could go full speed. We were going southward along the east side of the river Arpa-chai, which was rushing along the bottom of a deep channel beneath us, excavated out of the undulating plain. This channel has high, steep sides cut out of horizontal layers of basalt and lava, which may have overflowed from the surrounding volcanoes. On our left, in the east, was the vast mountain named Alagöz, 4,095 metres above sea-level, or 2,500 metres above ourselves; and on the opposite side of the plain, in the west, rose the volcanic cones of the Alaja Mountains against the blue sky.

The river seemed to contain enough water, at any rate now, to irrigate large areas; there was a tributary, too, coming from the north-west in another cutting through the plain; and farther to the south was quite a large river, very much like the Arpa-chai, which turned out to be the Kars-chai, that flows past the fortress of Kars in the west and receives a tributary from the Chaldir Göl Lake (1,988 metres above sea-level) up in the mountains to the north-west, near the high peak Kisir Dagh (3,192 metres). The sources of the Kars river are in the same mountain district as those of the Kura.

The country looked stony and none too promising on our side of the Arpa-chai. On the other side it was greener, but that was Turkey; for the river forms the boundary. There were some villages over there, but these seemed to be largely deserted. They used to be Armenian, but the inhabitants fled to this side during the war, when the country fell into the hands of the Turks. It is a pity that such fertile lands should lie unused.

Beneath a mountain-ridge to the west, on the other side of the river, we could make out some ruins. These were Ani, "the town of a thousand and one churches," once the magnificent capital of Armenia in the tenth and eleventh centuries, where the Armenian Bagratid kings resided during the most glorious period of Armenia's history in the Middle Ages. In

spite of incessant wars against superior forces, against the Moslem Arabs, Turks, Tatars, and Kurds on one side, and Christian Byzantium on the other, they surrounded themselves here with remarkable magnificence, building churches, monasteries, palaces, and fortifications which still testify to a remarkably high standard of culture, and form interesting memorials of one stage in the history of architecture.

Wrecked and plundered by Seljuk-Turks, Mongolians, and others, devastated by earthquakes, the place is now a dead city of ruins in a barren wilderness. The old city wall with nearly thirty towers is still partly intact. One can ride through the city gate into the empty streets. Remains of the royal palace, the remarkable cathedral, and other churches dating from about A.D. 1000 are still standing. The peculiarity of this town is, that as nobody has lived there since, the walls have not been pulled down for the stones to be used for other buildings; it has been left to the desert, and lies there as it lay after its destruction more than five hundred years ago.

Its site is on a small mountain plateau between two ravines, about a hundred or two hundred feet in depth. These ravines have been formed by two rivers which meet here, the Arpa-chai on one side and the Alaja-chai on the other. Formerly an Armenian monk lived in the ruins; also a single Armenian peasant family. But no doubt they, too, departed when the country became Turkish, and now the place is left wholly deserted and solitary in the brown desert.

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep  
The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep:  
And Bahram, that great Hunter—the Wild Ass  
Stamps o'er his Head, but cannot break his sleep.

How many ruins of past glories there are in these Eastern lands! Inferior races who could pillage and lay waste, but could never rebuild, have had a free hand here to squander the lives and works of men.

Farther south we had a view of the wide Sardarabad plain, or desert, which particularly interested us, because of the proposal that it should be cultivated by the refugees and irrigated with water brought from the Arpa-chai. From where we

were, at a height of about 1,500 metres above sea-level, it appeared to be a stony, undulating plain of lava which flowed down from Alagöz. The country sloped southward towards an extensive lower plain stretching eastward on the northern side of the historic river Arax. On the other side of the river, towards the south-east, rose an enormous mountain with a shining white dome of snow disappearing among white clouds. This was Mount Ararat—the dominating feature of the landscape wherever we went from now onward. From its base on the plain, about 900 metres above the sea, this volcano rears itself up to an altitude of 5,156 metres—as if the whole height of Mont Blanc above sea-level were lifted bodily on to this high plateau. The sight was overwhelming. One can well understand how this mountain came to occupy such a prominent place in the Bible legend, and to be one of the main landmarks in the history of the Armenians. It is only natural that they have adopted it as the central symbol of the national arms, notwithstanding the fact that it is now situated in Turkey. There is a story that the Turks once complained of this to Tchitcherin, the Commissar of Foreign Affairs, who responded by inquiring if it was not a fact that the Turks had the crescent moon on their arms, and whether they considered that to be under the sway of Turkey.

In the south we could see other mountains with patches of snow on them, and in the north-east Mount Alagöz stretched upward its broad cone topped with snow.

The railway now turned in a south-easterly direction. The surface of the plain we were crossing was yellowish-brown and terribly dry; the only visible vegetation was an occasional thistle; it seemed thoroughly to deserve its name: the Sardarabad *desert*. Could it really be true that so soon as water was brought to this soil it would yield rich crops; and that the bare, parched hills to the north of us towards Alagöz could be clothed with luxuriant vineyards and orchards, bearing the finest grapes and peaches in the world? Our friend, Mr. Ersingian, the Minister of Agriculture, assured us that this volcanic land was extraordinarily fertile the moment it was given water; there was no limit to its potentialities after all the centuries in which it had lain fallow and stored

up wealth. Farther on we should see how the same soil could be transformed by irrigation. Our expert, M. Carle, agreed that in all probability this volcanic earth was unusually rich, and in need of nothing but water.

We passed one ruined station after another, wrecked by the Turks or by the refugees, thousands of whom overran the country during the war, and suffered so much from the severe winter cold that they took the woodwork of the roofs and floors for fuel. It was strange to think that there had actually been stations in this wilderness, where not a soul could be seen; but it seemed to show that there were people living somewhere not very far away.

At Arax station we saw a few houses, but the plain looked as dry as ever, except for a faint greenness away to the south. On reaching Sardarabad station, however, we suddenly found ourselves among green fields. A new canal had been dug which brought water from the Arax to irrigate this part of the plain. It was almost incredible what a difference this made at once: here were tilled fields sown with cotton which was just coming up. Near the station were factory buildings—a big cotton-cleansing works where 80,000 poods (1,310,000 kilos) of cotton were cleaned annually, and the amount was constantly increasing.

Continuing our journey, we had green fertile fields on both sides of the line; chiefly cotton-fields, where we saw women at work weeding. There was not a trace of desert now; the canal and its branches reached every part of the land with sufficient water for its irrigation, and the brown water of the Arax is celebrated for its fertilizing properties. Here and there were also rice-fields, square and surrounded by low earthen walls; some of them were flooded, and we saw men squatting in the water, weeding and thinning out the plants. Mr. Ersingian told us, however, that the Government had just forbidden the cultivation of rice in this particular region, as it increased the danger of malaria, a dangerous enemy in this part of the country.

We passed village after village of which nothing remained but hideous heaps of ruins; they had been destroyed by the Turks a few years before. What strikes one about these parts

is that the people seem to have no wish to tidy up the ruins or use the materials for new houses. They just leave them lying there, and build new habitations somewhere else. Presumably it is because the houses, being made of sun-dried clay and sun-dried clay blocks, are so easily constructed that it does not pay to use the old materials. But the result is that these lands are full of ruins.

As we got farther east the amount of cultivated land suddenly decreased, and it was curious to see large stretches of swampy ground, often with high sedge, forming a striking contrast to the arid desert in the west. But this water-logged country was just as infertile. Strange how too much or too little—even if it is only a matter of water—will spoil anything. Obviously what was needed first and foremost in order to make the soil fertile was drainage, with control both of the ingress and the egress of the water. Mr. Ersingian told us that the Government were considering plans for this.

We were now approaching Erivan. Once more we saw great arid wastes on either side, which could unquestionably be cultivated if only they could be irrigated. But to the north-east, on the far side of a valley, the hillside appeared to be covered with trees—the famous orchards and vineyards of Erivan.

At one o'clock in the afternoon we reached the station, which, as usual, was a long way outside the town. We had a hearty reception from a number of people, representatives of the Government and others, including Miss Flora Vardanian, a remarkable woman who has shown great devotion in succouring the refugees in Armenia.

Then we motored to the town. Erivan does not produce the impression of an important city, with its low, almost squalid houses; but it has a picturesque situation at the edge of the plain by the deep gorge of the river Zanga, and with steep mountain slopes behind it to the north. Our hotel was close to the central park. Here each of us had a large airy room; and one could get a shower-bath, which was very refreshing in the intense heat.

At two o'clock sharp we called upon and were welcomed by the assembled people's commissars. The programme of

work was at once drawn up, and we agreed to have a meeting at six the same afternoon with the large committee that the Government had appointed to collaborate with us. The various problems and plans had to be discussed without delay.

We went for a stroll along the main street in the blazing, dazzling sunshine. The pavements were crowded, and we were constantly surrounded—chiefly by child beggars. Some of these were in rags, but they looked healthy enough, and not at all necessitous. Many were good-looking; in particular, one frank, merry girl was quite a beauty.

It was curious, however, to notice that the great majority of those who were walking the streets at this time of day were men. Nearly all wore brown, grey or white Soviet blouses with a belt round the waist, and soft, prosaic-looking Bolshevik caps on their heads; so it cannot be said that the streets presented a scene of Oriental life and colour. Most of them seemed to be fairly well dressed, which did not suggest that there was much poverty.

On either side of the street was a row of small trees. The houses were for the most part low, generally only one storey, but sometimes two, and all had flat roofs. As a rule they stood in luxuriant orchards, watered by a network of channels. Erivan is famous for its gardens. High stone walls surrounded each garden, so we could not see in, except here and there through an open door. There were a few large public buildings made of brick. The pavements were laid with big, flat paving-stones, and the streets with good-sized, moderately even setts; there were few horse-drawn vehicles, only an overburdened donkey here and there, or a slow, heavily laden bullock-cart. Now and then a motor-car would tear along the street with some public official in it.

Near the top of the main street stands the university in its fine garden, and above that again the hospital in another large garden. Farther up, the town and the gardens abruptly come to an end, and the road goes in a wide curve up the bare mountain-side and on across the mountainous country north of the town, following the east side of the deep ravine formed by the river Zanga. This road continues all the way to Tiflis.

At the bottom of the main street is the town park, with tall trees, shady walks, and a tea-pavilion where a band plays in the evening. Adjoining the lower end of the park is a large Russian church with an open square in front of it. No doubt it was built originally for the Russian garrison that was quartered in the town, and was never much used by the residents, who, like the Armenians everywhere, keep pertinaciously to the Gregorian Church of Armenia. Nowadays a big red Soviet star ostentatiously surmounts the highest dome in place of the gold cross which used to be there. But its colour does not go well with the blue sky.

Now that Erivan has become the capital of the Armenian republic, and an asylum for multitudes of refugees, the town is very much over-populated. Formerly the estimated population was 30,000; indeed, Lynch puts the figure for 1898 at 15,000; but the total is now 60-70,000. Seeing that a large number of buildings have been demolished and no new ones built, while a great deal of accommodation has been taken for Government purposes, there is a serious shortage of houses, and the inhabitants have to live in very crowded conditions. There is a regulation now to the effect that no one has a legal right to more than two square metres of floor-space, which, as somebody observed at a soviet or municipal meeting, is the usual churchyard allowance.

It seldom rains at Erivan in the summer, and the climate is therefore rather monotonous. As a rule the first part of the day is still and stiflingly hot, then in the afternoon there is a breeze which would be refreshing were it not for the clouds of dust it whirles up. Dark clouds often gather from Ararat in the south, or the mountains in the north; they produce fine light effects, but hardly ever break in rain over the town.

Our meeting with the Government committee in the evening lasted two and a half hours. Mr. Muravian, the Vice-President of the Government, took the chair. Dr. Kurgenian, an engineer and chemist who could speak good English and German, acted as interpreter, as the Armenian members of the committee did not know any West European language.

We began with general questions. I was first asked to

give an account of the object of our mission and why we had come. After that I asked whether the Armenian Government would be willing to receive any more refugees, and whether it would be possible to accommodate them. The Vice-President replied that there was not much room left in their little country now that they had received so many refugees—some hundred thousands—already, but that the Government nevertheless wished to do everything in their power to assist their kinsmen, if these could be brought to Armenia without cost to the country, and if outside help could be obtained to make possible the irrigation and cultivation of new land.

We said that in that case we should very much like to study on the spot, so far as we could do it in the short time at our disposal, any plans that had been prepared for irrigating new land. The Government and the committee promised that they would aid us in every way and let us examine all their plans, maps, and estimates. We thereupon agreed to begin next morning with the important plan for irrigating the Sardarabad plain, which had been represented to us as particularly desirable. To a question as to when we wished to start, we answered as soon as possible—bearing in mind the idiosyncrasies of Oriental punctuality. They suggested five o'clock next morning. Very good.

Later in the evening we were entertained at a big dinner with sakuska and caviare, Armenian cognac, etc., and many different courses accompanied by good Armenian wines, both red and white. They certainly live well in this country! It was late before we got back to our hotel.

Outside the corner room that I occupied was a balcony. As the wall towards the south had been heated up all day by the sweltering sun, the room was stifling, so I threw the balcony doors wide open. Outside, the night was cool and fresh. I could well understand the Oriental custom of going up on to the roof at sundown and sleeping under the starry vault. Supper and breakfast are eaten there, too.

It was a clear night, with the immeasurably deep, almost black, sky of southern lands, and a flickering, flashing maze of stars of which we have no idea in the north. Opposite the

hotel was the park, with its fine old trees and the tea-pavilion under them. Singing and the music of stringed instruments came up to me, and now and then, at a pause in the singing, the sound of many people clapping. I could see lights glimmering among the trees. There was also music in a café next door to the hotel. Most of the tunes seemed to be some sort of monotonous dance, but in a minor key.

On the square to the right in front of the hotel I could just make out in the dark a number of strange, ghostly shapes. On closer inspection they proved to be a whole caravan of camels standing quite motionless and silent in the street; apparently they would stand like that for hours on end, with uplifted, inquiring heads, a picture of the imperturbable resignation of the East.

#### ARMENIA AND THE ARAX PLAIN.

Armenia is a concept which has varied widely in the course of the ages. In the remote past it was a powerful kingdom which embraced fertile lands stretching from the Urmia and Van Lakes, the Taurus Mountains, and the sources of the Tigris in the south-east and south, to the Sevan Lake and Georgia in the north, and Erzingian and the Western Euphrates in the west. Afterwards it was torn asunder, divided and cut up, until it has finally dwindled into the little republic of Armenia, only about 30,000 square kilometres in area, and with a population of nearly one million, which, however, is rapidly increasing.

Nevertheless this little country is full of striking contrasts: wooded, fertile valleys; scorched, arid wastes; high volcanoes; rugged mountain districts; and wide, level plains. Its present boundaries are the Arax river on the south, the Arpa-chai along part of the border on the west, the Georgian frontier behind the range of mountains on the north, and the Azerbaijan frontier on the north-east and east, following a line which curves from the far side of the Sevan Lake towards the Arax in the south-east. Along the latter river, in the south-eastern part of the country, is the autonomous Tatar

republic, which embraces part of the mountainous country called Karabagh, and its capital Nakhichevan.

This present-day Armenia is divided into three, or perhaps four, parts by a number of high mountain ranges which stretch from its north-western corner—north-east of Leninakan—westward and southward towards the great Sevan or Gökcha Lake, and then curve round west of it in a southerly direction. North of this range of mountains lies a mountainous region where the rainfall in parts is plentiful, and where the valleys are green and fertile, the slopes often well wooded, and the hills rich in pasturage. Round the Sevan Lake there is a small district shaped like a punchbowl, and surrounded on all sides by high mountains. To the south and south-west of this lake is another mountainous region, part of which is called Karabagh, where there are fertile valleys and high, wild stretches of mountain with rich pasturage. Then there is the south-western part of the country, formed by the wide plain of the Arax Valley.

Near the eastern edge of this plain is Erivan. The scenery is remarkable, utterly different from what a northerner usually considers beautiful, accustomed as he is to the mountains, valleys, fjords, forests, and lakes of his own country. For here there have been giants of an altogether different world at work—the dimensions, the great masses which have been lifted up or pressed down are of quite another magnitude.

Look at Mount Ararat in the south. From the plain down by the Arax it rears itself up with its vast snowy dome 4,300 metres into the air. Surely there is no mountain like it anywhere in the world. And on the north of the same plain a second Titan, the volcano of Alagöz, stretches up to 4,095 metres above sea-level, or about 3,200 metres above the plain; and between the crests of these Titans the distance is 87 kilometres. Yet the slopes are so gradual and continuous, and the proportions so well balanced, that one does not realize the immense height of these mountains; and the clearness of the atmosphere prevents one from seeing that the distances are so great.

This region is a world of its own, and has a distinctive character of its own. It is one of the central features of the

ancient legend of the origins of the human race. Here, or at any rate somewhere near, was the site of the Garden of Eden with the four river-heads, two of them being the Euphrates and the Tigris, which come from the ancient mountains of Armenia, while the other two may have been the Arax and the Kura. Here, too, was the second home of humanity where Noah descended from the mountain, planted vineyards, and taught mankind the joys of the grape. One objection to the story of the dove and the olive-leaf has been raised by a shrewd traveller, who noticed that olive-trees do not grow in these parts. But we may console ourselves with the thought that Noah may not have been a particularly good botanist; or the dove might have flown very far, for she only returned to him "at eventide." At no great distance from here would also have been the plain in the land of Shinar, where the Tower of Babel was built.

Through the Arax Valley passed the natural route from the east to the west, between the Caspian Sea and Persia on one side and Asia Minor on the other, traversing a succession of valleys and plains, along the Arax and through the Erivan plain and the Pasin plain to Erzerum, whence it continued either in a north-westerly direction to Trebizond, or in a westerly direction along the Upper Euphrates to Erzingian, and so on into Asia Minor.

The wide plain in the Arax Valley is surrounded on all sides by high ridges of mountains, so that it forms, as it were, the flat bottom of a wide cauldron. In the south, running from west-north-west to east-south-east, is a high mountain rampart called Aghri Dagh, having as its huge south-eastern bastion Mount Ararat, with Little Ararat's pyramid as the extreme corner tower. The passes through this range of mountains are at a height of 2,097 and 2,543 metres respectively. Along the crest, to the west of the slopes of Ararat, the peaks rise to 3,243 metres (Chengel Dagh), 3,358 metres (Khama Dagh) and 3,245 metres (Perli Dagh). This western part of the range forms the watershed of the Arax in the north, and of the sources of the Euphrates in the south. By Perli Dagh a lower ridge branches off towards the plain in a north-north-easterly direction, ending in the sharp, prominent peak

of Takhtialu (Takjaltu Dagh), 2,563 metres high, opposite the place where the Arpa-chai flows into the Arax.

In the east and north-east, behind Erivan, the plain is hemmed in by high mountains, stretching in a curve from the Arax east of Ararat towards the north and north-west. In the region between Erivan and Lake Sevan the mountains form the high plateau of Akhmangan, with a number of peaks up to 3,600 metres (Akh Dagh) in height. Then, to the north-east of Erivan, they sink towards the river Zanga, which comes from Lake Sevan, until they are lower than 2,000 metres (the level of the lake being 1,925 metres); but on the other side of this river valley they rise again to an undulating mountainous region, Darachichak and the Pambak Mountains, with peaks as high as 3,100 metres (Maimakh Dagh) and 3,109 metres (Sheikh Akhmet Dagh), stretching in a north-westerly direction to a point east of Leninakan (Alexandropol), and continuing towards the north.

In front of these more or less continuous mountains, and quite apart from them, stands the volcano Alagöz, raising its mighty bulk of lava high above all the mountains behind. With its even slopes stretching far out on every side it completely dominates the northern part of the Arax plain. This plain is bounded on the west by the mountainous country of Shuragel, with the Arpa-chai on the other side. Here the volcanic peaks reach the height of 2,961 metres (Jagluja Dagh) and 2,691 metres (Alaja Dagh, west of Ani).

The snow-line on the south slope of Ararat is about 3,700 metres above sea-level; this and Alagöz are the only mountains in the region which are capped with permanent snow all the summer.

From west to east the plain of the Arax Valley is nearly 100 kilometres long, and its breadth from north to south may be put at 40 or 50 kilometres; it is difficult, however, to know exactly where the plain ends and the gradual, at first almost imperceptible, rise of the volcanic slopes on each side begins.

Not long ago, geologically speaking, the lower portions of this plain were covered by a wide lake formed by the Arax, which emptied when the river cut its bed deeper in the mountains closing the outlet of the lake at its south-eastern

end. The lake deposited on its level bottom a layer of loose, fertile soil from the muddy waters of the Arax, and it is this soil that now covers the layers of lava. Curiously enough Strabo (XI, 14, 13) records a legend that the Arax once spread over the whole plain because it could find no outlet, until Jason opened the gorge in the mountains by which it was able to flow out into the Caspian Sea.

Otherwise the upper parts of the plain are chiefly covered with slightly shelving layers of lava which must have flowed down from Mount Alagöz, or from the smaller craters on its sides. Here and there on the even slopes may be seen ridges of lava, and many deep channels and clefts have been cut in the lava strata by streams which swell to the size of rivers in spring, but dry up in summer.

The height of the plain along the Arax is between 860 and 880 metres above sea-level. It rises gradually towards the north to a height of 1,000 metres near Erivan, and to 1,200 metres where the ascent to the slopes of Alagöz becomes more marked.

The climate there is, of course, largely determined by the relative heights mentioned above. It has long, cold winters with snow, and very hot, dry summers. At Erivan the average temperature is about  $-6.4^{\circ}$  C. in January, and about  $25^{\circ}$  C. in July; while the average temperature for the year is  $11^{\circ}$  C. At Echmiadzin, farther out on the plain, the temperature is a little higher both in winter and in summer.

The mountainous country in the northern part of Armenia has an ample rainfall, as already stated, and artificial irrigation is not needed there. The valleys are fertile, and there are large forests which supply wood for the southern part of the country.

On the other hand, the moisture in the air which moves towards the plain of the Arax Valley is largely condensed and precipitated as rain (or snow), often in violent showers, up in the mountains; comparatively little rain reaches the plain, although the sky above the high mountains in the north and south is often heavy and dark with threatening clouds, which lend to the atmospheric conditions a certain charm.

The mean annual rainfall at Echmiadzin is about 280

millimetres, while at Erivan, 18 kilometres nearer the mountains to the east, it is 315 millimetres.<sup>1</sup> There is most rain as a rule in the spring months, April and May, whereas there is usually very little later on in the summer, in July, August, and September. The following table gives the mean temperature in degrees Centigrade and the mean rainfall in millimetres at Erivan :

			Temperature, °C.	Rainfall, mm.
January	..	..	- 6.4	22
February	..	..	- 3.3	25
March	..	..	4.7	28
April	..	..	12.2	47
May	..	..	17.5	54
June	..	..	22.3	21
July	..	..	25.3	16
August	..	..	25.2	8
September	..	..	20.1	12
October	..	..	14.1	23
November	..	..	6.0	30
December	..	..	0.2	29
Yearly	..	(average)	11	(total) 315

At Echmiadzin it rains rather less in summer, and still less farther out on the plain ; but it may vary a good deal from one year to another. In 1922, for instance, a great deal of rain fell all through the summer ; at Erivan the rainfall in June was 68 millimetres, in July 35 millimetres, in August 58 millimetres, and in September 25 millimetres. None the less there is generally too little rain throughout this region for the land to be cultivated without artificial irrigation ; indeed, it is impossible even with crops like wheat, which one would expect to ripen in the early summer, while there is still, as a rule, a good deal of rain. What is still more remarkable is that not only the plain, but all the mountain slopes around are naked and treeless ; there is not a tree to be seen except in places reached by the irrigation canals. The rainfall is not so insignificant, however, that it alone

<sup>1</sup> The annual rainfall in Novo-Bayazet, near the Gökcha Lake, is 451 millimetres ; in Delijan, to the north among the mountains, it is 521 millimetres, and in Leninakan 408 millimetres.

can explain this state of things ; especially as there must be more rain on the slopes than on the plain, and presumably enough for some trees to grow there, if the conditions were favourable in other ways.

The soil on the mountain slopes consists chiefly of lava, tuff, and volcanic ashes ; it is so porous that the water sinks in and disappears from the surface. A remarkable illustration of this is the fact that, although the summit of Mount Ararat is covered by an enormous snowcap which melts rapidly all through the summer, not a single river flows down from that mighty mountain. Only a few streams come from the snowy peak of Mount Alagöz in summer, for there, too, most of the water sinks into the porous ground. In some places it reappears at the foot of the mountain in the form of springs of pure clear water ; and certain rivers, such as Kara Su on the plain south-west and south of Echmiadzin, obviously come from such springs, and carry a considerable volume of clear water which is not so good for irrigation purposes as the muddy water of the Arax. The name Kara Su—the dark river—alludes to the fact that its water is clear, and that the river thus looks dark.

One reason why such rain as there is does not foster the growth of trees or other permanent vegetation is, no doubt, that it often falls in brief, violent showers ; one can see traces of these in the deeply furrowed courses of the streams on the mountain-sides, with great quantities of gravel and stones that have been swept down by the foaming torrents. Between these downpours there may be long periods of drought.

But this does not seem to offer a complete explanation of the absence of trees. Were there never trees and a richer vegetation in these parts ? We have very little evidence to go upon. High up on the sides of Ararat there are some stunted birches and shrubs which may possibly be remnants of former woods ; and on the other mountain slopes there may also have been woods, which were cut down in earlier times and could not grow up again. Another reason accounting for the destruction of the vegetation is that the inhabitants usually burn the dry grass and stubble on the fields every spring to improve the grazing for their animals ; very likely

the nomads who used to roam about these parts in by-gone days did the same, in which case it would naturally be impossible for the trees to grow again, and practically only plants with roots deep down in the ground would survive.

As one travels through these desert-like tracts one often lights upon traces of former dwellings, although the ground is completely parched in the late summer, with nothing growing on it but a few desert thistles. There are ruins of big churches and houses in places where not a soul lives now; and one's thoughts turn to the legends of great towns which flourished in the fertile Arax Valley in remote historical times, especially Armavir, which was built on this plain as long ago as the eighth century B.C.

The question naturally occurs: Can the climate have become drier since those days? It has been quite a fashion for the last few decades for geographers to explain all such cases—with which we are familiar in Mesopotamia, Palestine, and other places—by supposing that the climate of large areas, especially in Asia, has become drier; and they speak of a general desiccation of the country and of former lakes. The American writer, Mr. Ellsworth Huntington, has been a particularly vigorous champion of such theories; and he is of the opinion that these changes in climate account for the great migrations, the military expeditions of the Mongolians, and so forth.

Although some such hypothesis offers a plausible explanation of many vicissitudes in the history of the human race, I cannot help thinking that the majority of these theories of climatic changes have been too superficial, and based upon very unstable foundations. In the case we are considering in the Arax Valley there is no need for such an explanation. On the whole people appear to be too ready to forget how largely the human race and their deeds or misdeeds may have influenced the conditions.

No doubt it is to flatter our own superiority that we are so prone to underestimate the cleverness of mankind in past ages, and believe that they were so far inferior to ourselves in their capacity to conquer and exploit Nature, especially if they

could not write and keep records ; for we are apt to estimate civilization by book-learning. But it may very well be that just because they did not spend all the time that we do on books, they were our superiors in other ways. Certainly the men of our day could not build pyramids with the limited means that the ancient Egyptians had at their disposal ; and artificial irrigation was evidently an old and highly developed art which must have flourished in the regions near the Euphrates and the Tigris, and have fallen into decay later, when these countries were laid waste by the devastating barbarian hordes.

Without a doubt the Arax plain was cultivated by the help of artificial irrigation, even in the Stone Age, thousands of years B.C. At Sardarabad, where the country lying to the west is now an utter desert, an ancient cuneiform inscription of much later date has been found in which a ruler states that he has built "this canal," and invokes the direst penalties of the gods upon anyone who may destroy it. The country was subsequently laid waste, however, by fierce warrior hosts, and the canal was destroyed and disappeared.

On the whole these regions open one's eyes to the radical changes that war may make in the character of wide areas of country, especially when it is carried on in the brutal fashion that was usual in this part of the world. Hordes of Mongolians and Turks and others, whose civilization was utterly sterile, would fall upon towns and villages, put the inhabitants to the sword, set fire to the houses, and decamp with the spoil, the cattle, and the women. The towns and villages were left in ruins, and the survivors of these massacres could not organize a community strong enough to rebuild and repair the canals and the irrigating system generally, especially as they were constantly ground down by the persecutions and exactions of the conquerors, who never did any work themselves. Besides this, their existence was embittered by the marauding incursions of the nomad tribes in the mountains, whose attacks they were too weak to resist. Ultimately the regions thus harried would be deserted altogether, and the land lapse into a wilderness. Clearly that has been the fate of many stretches of country in this part of the world. War,

not fluctuations of climate, has brought about these great changes and turned the land into a desert.

Furthermore, we have reliable evidence that the general rainfall cannot have been appreciably less during historical times. If the rainfall in earlier ages had been noticeably greater than it is now, we should expect the water-level in salt lakes with no outlet, such as Lake Van and Lake Urmia south of the Arax river, to have been noticeably higher than it is now. This argument assumes that the lakes have not got variable subterranean outlets.

The water-level of a lake of this kind is, of course, dependent upon whether the supply of water from the sources of the lake is equal to the evaporation from its surface. If equilibrium has been reached, and the supply of water is then increased by a heavier rainfall, without a corresponding increase in evaporation, the water in the lake is bound to rise, enlarging its surface by overflowing its banks. It will continue to rise thus until the evaporation from the enlarged surface of the lake is equal to the increased supply of water. If, on the other hand, the climate becomes drier, with a decreased rainfall, and possibly an increase of evaporation, the water in the lake will sink and the surface become smaller.

Now we have decisive evidence that the water in the Van and Urmia Lakes cannot have been higher, on an average, in historic times than it is now. On Lake Van there are several old fortresses (Akhlut, Adeljivas, and Arjish) whose walls are now being destroyed by the water; but the water-level cannot possibly have been higher when they were built, and probably it was a good deal lower. One of these towns has had to be evacuated. Moreover, several villages are so near the edge of the lake that they are threatened by the water. A big mulberry-tree on the margin of Lake Van (in the Sheikh Ora crater), which might have been five hundred years old, stood in 1898 with half its root under water and was dying, while an old walnut-tree in Akhalt had had a large part of its foothold washed away.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. H. F. B. Lynch, *Armenia*, vol. ii, p. 52, London, 1901. Lynch also mentions variations in the height of Lake Sevan; but they are not of the same interest in this connection, as this lake has an outlet.

These and other signs indicate that, far from being higher at an earlier historical epoch, the water in these lakes appears, if anything, to have risen in recent times.

The cause of this rise might be, as Lynch suggests, the continual deposit of mud on the bottom of these lakes, which should have the effect of slowly raising the surface; but the fact that, during the past century, the water-level has varied, falling as well as rising, simultaneously in the Van and Urmia Lakes, shows that other factors have been at work which are more important for these changes in level than the deposit of sediment; and it seems most likely that they have something to do with the relation between rainfall and evaporation.

I have not taken into account here the possibility that the water might percolate through the rock below the lakes, with possible variations in the rate at which it escaped. But it is an improbable hypothesis. For if the rock below the lakes was originally porous, the pores would very quickly be almost closed by the mud from the water; and the same thing would doubtless happen if any cracks formed. It may therefore be assumed that the loss of water by underground drainage is fairly constant. Moreover, the circumstance that the changes in the water-level take place simultaneously in both lakes seems to show that they are not due to any such cause.

All the evidence seems to indicate, therefore, that the average water-level of these lakes has not been higher within historical times than it is now, and consequently that the climate has not become generally drier in recent times. But that does not mean that there may not have been variations in the height of the water, both upwards and downwards, dependent, in turn, upon periodic or unperiodic oscillations in the rainfall. Such oscillations, presumably occurring over a large area, would probably affect the level of the Caspian Sea, which is fed, *inter alia*, by the waters of the Arax and the Kura. Facts have been adduced which make it probable that there have been considerable fluctuations in the level of this sea, with a difference of 16 metres between the highest point (in 1306-1307) and the lowest point (in the twelfth century A.D.); and these fluctuations would doubtless be due





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RUINS OF THE FORTRESS AT SARDARABAD (*p.* 138)

to variations in the dampness of the climate. Thus we find that the climatic conditions were probably as follows :

<i>Period.</i>	<i>Climate.</i>
<i>Circa</i> 915-921 ..	Comparatively <i>damp</i> and <i>cold</i> .
In the twelfth century	<i>Dry</i> and probably <i>warm</i> .
<i>Circa</i> 1306-1307 ..	Very <i>damp</i> and probably <i>cold</i> .
In 1638 .. ..	<i>Damper</i> and probably <i>colder</i> than now.
Since 1715 .. ..	<i>Much as now</i> , except for minor periodical variations. <sup>1</sup>

But there is nothing to show that the climate in these regions has, on the whole, become drier during the last thousand years. Accordingly there is no reason to suppose that climatic changes are responsible for the removal of populations.

The ruined settlements or villages that we find in desert country may, of course, have been inhabited by herdsmen who kept their animals on the mountain slopes in summer, but had sufficient pasturage round their subsequently abandoned dwellings during the damper times of year, especially in spring.

As previously stated, the winter is cold in this country, but the summer is all the warmer. As night frosts often occur in April, the period in which agriculture can be carried on is only five and a half months, from the middle of April to the first few days of October. Night frosts are unusual in October. The mean temperature for the whole season is 21.4° C., and for the warmest months, July and August, 25.3° C., at Erivan.

*Agriculture.*—Armenia is an agricultural country; more than 90 per cent. of its people are tillers of the soil. There are possibilities for industrial development, no doubt, but little has been done in that line.

This little country has been devastated by war and revolution, and several thousand refugees have sought a home in it, in addition to the population already resident there.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ed. Brückner, *Klima-Schwankungen seit 1700*. Geographische Abhandlungen herausgeg. von A. Penck, Wien, vol. iv, No. 2, 1890.

F. Nansen, *Klima-vekslinger i historisk og postglacial tid* (*Climatic Variations in Historical and Post-glacial Times*), in papers published by the Norske Videnskaps-Akademi, Oslo; Mathem.—Natural Science Section, 1926, No. 3, p. 19.

Probably no other country suffered so much in the Great War; but as a result of the energetic and efficient work done during five years of peace an enormous improvement has taken place, and in some parts of the country the conditions may even be said to be better than they were before the war.

In 1925 there were in round figures about 800,000 hectares, or 2,000,000 acres, of cultivated land, 4,250,000 acres of pasture, and 875,000 acres of forest, chiefly beech (50 per cent.), and oak (20 per cent.), used for timber and other woodwork. Of the cultivated land about 250,000 acres were then artificially irrigated ploughland; but with the exception of the works constructed in recent years the irrigation systems were primitive. They were partially destroyed during the war, but have been repaired. In reality there is now too little cultivated land in proportion to the number of inhabitants, and the country is over-populated. The remedy is an increase of artificial irrigation and a more intensive method of agriculture. There are still about 250,000 acres of unused land which can be brought under cultivation by irrigation; and the agricultural methods admit of much improvement. Wooden ploughs are still in general use, and the earth is not manured—the dung being used as fuel. Further, the uplands can be better utilized for growing root-crops, and for increased grazing and dairy farming. And in addition to all this the country's industries can be developed.

As things are, the land gives a relatively poor return. The average yield of all wheat-land is only 650 kilos per hectare (2.471 acres), while the yield on irrigated land is estimated at from 1,300 to 1,400 kilos per hectare. But even that is not much. The average for the whole of Norway is 1,900 kilos for every hectare of winter wheat, or 2,010 kilos of rye. Unquestionably the crops in Armenia can be materially increased by the use of manure and by better tillage.

Although, as we have seen, the summer is very short, it is so hot, with such forcing sunshine, that it is quite long enough for the cultivation of *cotton* when the ground is irrigated; and great efforts are being made to increase this very profitable crop. The cotton grown is short, but of excellent quality. The price of cleaned Armenian cotton was 1'37

roubles the kilo in 1924, and 1'24 in 1925, while the price of American cotton delivered in Moscow was 1'18 roubles.

In 1925 cotton was grown on 45,000 acres, giving a total crop of 15,000 tons of raw cotton, which was 12 per cent. more than the previous year and 50 per cent. more than before the war. The comparatively small crop is due to inadequate irrigation, lack of draught animals and implements, and primitive methods. In general the average yield of irrigated land is reckoned at about 1,040 kilos of raw cotton per hectare; and as the farmer gets about 0'31 of a rouble per kilo, the gross income from a hectare is about 320 roubles.

With the help of the Armenian refugees from Turkey very encouraging attempts have been made since 1921 to grow *tobacco*. In 1925 there were 375 acres planted, and this was to be increased to 1,250 acres in the following year.

*Silk culture* has also proved lucrative, and is being further developed. A nursery has been established, from which in a few years' time it is hoped to deliver 5,000,000 mulberry-trees per annum.

*Vine culture* has great possibilities; the grapes are exceptionally good and prolific, and Armenian wine is noted for its excellence, especially that which is made by the Government-owned company "Ararat," which purchases the grapes from the peasants. But the methods of culture are still primitive, and great pains are being taken to improve them. In all there must be some 25,000 acres of vineyards, all artificially irrigated; the vintage does not exceed from 5,000 to 6,000 kilos of grapes per 2½ acres, and is sold to the State company at 0'17 rouble per kilo. This means a gross income, per 2½ acres, amounting to between 900 and 1,000 roubles. Up to the present phylloxera has not appeared in Armenia. This may be because it is killed by the severity of the winter. But on the other hand these winters may do a great deal of harm to the vines themselves; the severe winter of 1924-1925 made havoc of a number of vineyards.

The *orchards* yield a rich harvest of splendid fruit, chiefly apricots, peaches, plums, and cherries. The fruit is either boiled into *compote* or canned and exported to Russia; but this industry could be greatly developed.

In addition to the foregoing, irrigated land may be very profitably used for growing vegetables, sunflower, alfalfa, and the like. The following comparative table shows the average yield which may be expected from various crops per hectare ( $2\frac{1}{2}$  acres) of ordinary irrigated land :

	Average Number of Kilos grown per Acre	Price in Roubles per Kilo.	Gross Value in Roubles of Crop per Hectare	Net Value in Roubles of Crop per Hectare after Subtracting Cost of Labour, etc.
Winter wheat ..	1,340	0.17	228	80
Cotton .. ..	1,040	0.31	322	209
Vegetables ..	17,900	0.05	895	537
Fruit .. ..	9,700	0.18	1,746	786
Vineyards ..	5,200	0.15	780	351
Alfalfa .. ..	6,000	0.12	720	360

All land is owned by the State, which, however, is bound to provide every working peasant with the land he needs. Land may not be bought or sold, but houses, gardens, and anything built or made on the land may be bought and sold. A farm and its land may be handed on from father to son, and may also be rented out in certain conditions.

There are about 160,000 farms of between seven and fifteen acres of cultivated land. The land is allotted on a system by which a certain area is allowed per head in each family; its size varies somewhat in different districts, but averages one *dessiatin* (= 1.1 hectares). In some places, for instance the Arax plain, it is reduced to half, or even a quarter of a *dessiatin*, but in such cases it is well-irrigated land which gives a good yield.

The land is divided up among the families of the different villages at intervals of not less than nine years, and gardens and vineyards may not be re-allotted unless the tenant himself so desires. There is now a regulation that the portions of ground allotted to each farm must be as near one another as possible, and must not be in more than six different places. Formerly a farm might consist of as many as forty-five different patches. The peasants are now permitted to employ hired

labour. The State institutions have to purchase the peasants' produce at fixed prices ; but the peasants may also sell their goods in the open market at the best price they can secure there. In return for the use of the land they pay a tax on it, but they are not taxed in any other way.

## VI

### ACROSS THE ARAX PLAIN AND IN ERIVAN

WITH our experience of Oriental punctuality we did not expect to see the motor-cars very early on the following morning (Thursday, June 18th), and thought there was no particular hurry about getting ready. Great was my surprise, therefore, when on looking down from the balcony at 5 a.m. I saw two cars waiting below in front of the entrance to the hotel. We hastily dressed, and before six o'clock set off, in company with the Armenian engineers, in four different cars. First we drove through the town, then down the ravine of the Zanga between steep crags with the town and its fortifications built on the edge above our heads. An ancient stone bridge takes one across the river, after which the road ascends again on the other side. We drove past a number of luxuriant green orchards and vineyards, surrounded by high stone walls which prevented us from seeing much of them from the road. These were the celebrated gardens of Erivan, conjured up from this stony volcanic soil by artificial irrigation. Now and then one of the channels of running water passed underneath the roadway.

We motored on westwards across the plain. It was a bright, cloudless morning, and from the sunny sky we could hear the familiar sound of several larks joyously trilling. The land on the left of the road was mostly cultivated and irrigated; but all the land on our right, which rose in undulating slopes towards the north, looked like an arid, scorched desert. And this close to the capital! We passed Echmiadzin, where there are several fine churches. This place has been the intellectual capital of Armenia for many centuries, and the seat of the Katholikos, or primate of the Church. We were to return to it later on.

The road now went southwards, continuing across the flat plain towards the Arax. Mount Ararat reared its vast bulk

above it, with Little Ararat's cone farther to the east. The mighty mountain became more and more dominating the nearer we came to it; the summit, with its great glacier, was, as usual, hidden in a hood of clouds beneath which one could glimpse the shining surface of the snow. Here most of the country was cultivated and green from being irrigated; but we saw some dry, desert-like stretches which had not yet been brought under cultivation.

Farther to the south we passed through some of the swampy, sour land which we had previously seen from the train, and which would have to be drained before it could be cultivated. We shall have more to say about this district later.

We reached the Arax at a point where a modern iron bridge crosses the river, which now serves, since the war, as the frontier between Armenia and Turkey. The river is wide but rather shallow, and its brownish-yellow water flows sluggishly along the flat river-bed, with low banks, which it has made through the plain. On the Turkish side we could see long rows of trees, which suggested that the country over there was fertile.

Outside the village of Markara, close to the road, a crowd gathered at once—as usual only men—staring curiously at ourselves and our cars, and, of course, bent upon knowing our business. It is particularly noticeable in Armenia, as, indeed, elsewhere in the East, that the *men* always flock together to find out the latest news, whereas with us it is generally the women. This can hardly be because the Armenian women are less inquisitive than their sisters in the West. Presumably the explanation is that the men have most leisure there, and can idle about in the village streets while the women are busy in the house, garden, or field.

The facial types among these men varied a good deal. Many had the long, narrow Armenian face with a high-bridged nose slightly turned down at the tip, low cheek-bones, and rather receding chin; but there were others with rounder faces, more prominent cheek-bones, and often firmer chins. Some of them reminded one of the East Russian or Tatar types.

Their clothing was varied in the extreme, and sometimes ragged; not particularly Oriental, except for a sheepskin

cap here and there, which looked anything but Occidental in such burning sunshine; otherwise they had on the dull, "wholesale" Bolsheviki caps of soft, drab cloth, with here and there a white cotton blouse, but chiefly European coats and long trousers and dilapidated foot-gear.

After we had had a look at the Arax and its banks, we motored back for some way and took a turning which went westward. Here some of the land needed water, and could then be cultivated; but much of it was already irrigated by an old canal from the Arax, which, however, the engineers told us, needed improvement. The road we were travelling along was rather difficult and uneven. Our chauffeur was a reckless driver, who went full speed over the roughest places, so that we were jolted high in the air and had our livers well shaken up; several times we hovered on the edge of the road, and at last we landed in the ditch and had a good deal of trouble in getting out again. After that we got another car and a better driver.

We passed a great many villages. The houses in these parts are quite plain, with flat roofs. They are built of clay cut in blocks and dried in the sun. Such houses are easy to build, but soon deteriorate unless they are kept in repair. We saw a church built in the same way; it looked uncommonly like a big, square brown box with a flat lid and a few holes cut in the sides for windows. A small wooden cross at one end of the roof was the only sign that it was a church.

The fittings of these houses are simple in the extreme—chiefly walls and a floor; there is little furniture, and the inmates sleep on mats on the floor. They do most of their work outside, in front of the house. We saw one man sifting corn on the pavement, where he had spread a piece of cloth; on this he was now kneeling and sifting it.

The irrigation canals flowed through the villages; here the black buffaloes lay with only their heads visible above the water, partly, no doubt, to cool themselves in the heat, but partly also to evade the attacks of insects. Naked children were bathing in company with the buffaloes.

We saw several villages which had been destroyed by the Turks, probably for the most part during their last invasion





IN THE SARDARABAD DESERT (p. 139)

in 1920, and which were now mere heaps of ruins. It is lamentable to see all this destruction, old and new. War, never-ending war! And the people have too little inclination to rebuild; it is easier, as I have said, to build afresh.

At one place where there was a little waterfall a stone mill had been constructed over the canal, to which the peasants drove their corn to be ground.

At Tapa Dibi, a village five or six kilometres north of the Arax, a small round hill rises in the middle of the otherwise level plain. On the top of it are signs of an old castle, and at the foot are the remains of an ancient town. Cuneiform inscriptions on stone that have been found there show that it is the site of Armavir, one of the oldest towns in Armenia, which is several times mentioned in the old cuneiform inscriptions on the rock at Lake Van. According to the latter the town was founded by the Khaldian king Argistis I in Tushpa, i.e. Van, *circa* 785-760 B.C. His son, Sardur III (*circa* 760-733), praises himself in one of the inscriptions for having increased the importance of Armavir. This was in the days when Nineveh was at the height of its power.

Naturally this lonely hill, which was easy to defend, would early make it possible for a town to grow up under its protection on this fertile plain, which must have been cultivated by aid of artificial irrigation even in those days. Unfortunately we had not time to stop and see the ruins that have been found there.

A little farther on there were some women weeding a cotton-field. I wanted to see how the work was done, so we stopped and I walked across to them. Then a curious thing happened: a handsome young woman got up, came to me, and gravely handed me a small cotton-plant. This done, without looking about her, she quietly returned to her place, and bending down, resumed her weeding without looking up again. It was a gesture of welcome in accordance with the custom of the country, very touching in its artless simplicity. I kept those modest leaves as a memento of Armenian womanhood.

The cotton plants were still quite small. The fields have to be kept weeded, and the plants, which are sown in rows, must not be too near together. Though the summer is,

comparatively speaking, a short one ( $5\frac{1}{2}$  months), cotton-growing does well, as already mentioned (p. 130) on these plains, and the area under cultivation increases considerably every year. The cost of sowing and of the labour employed in cultivating the cotton is estimated at 120 gold roubles, or somewhat more, per hectare ( $2\frac{1}{2}$  acres), including payment for the work done by the peasant and his family, while the corresponding gross income from the cotton is about 230-330 gold roubles; this gives a net income of from 110 to 210 gold roubles (between £11 5s. and £21 10s.) per hectare.

In due course we came to the site of the old town of Sardarabad, where the most noticeable feature was a large ruined fortress, situated on the edge of the desert of Sardarabad, which extends for many miles westward. We drove on to the railway-station, which is not far away. Close to this was a Near East Relief station for more than a thousand orphan boys, who by now had grown into young men. They were to cultivate a stretch of country which had been allotted to them by the State, and which could be irrigated by means of the newly constructed canal, running from the Arax, and known as the Little Sardarabad Canal.

We had, of course, to go over the factory for cleansing the cotton, where, as I have previously mentioned, 80,000 poods (1,300,000 kilos) are now being cleansed per annum, while the quantity is steadily rising year by year.

We had breakfast at the American settlement; and it was particularly refreshing to get a drink of fine Armenian wine after the long dusty drive in that sweltering heat.

Among the men who were collected here I saw various types, from the purely Armenoid dark type with long hooked nose, narrowing face, and dark, highly pigmented complexion, to types that were almost Nordic. I particularly noticed one young fellow with light hair and beard, a fair complexion, and a face which might well have been Scandinavian. He reminded me most of the Swedish stonemasons of whom we see so many in Norway, a type which I believe is also encountered in North Russia. I was assured that he was a pure Armenian, and that fair individuals are not uncommon in Armenia. But one cannot tell to what extent there may have

been an intermixture of Russian blood. It seems certain that as far back as the eighth and seventh centuries B.C., Cimmerii, Scythians, and other Indo-European peoples invaded these regions from the north, and among them there may have been fair Teutons as well. Moreover, the Armenians who entered the country after that time were originally an Indo-European tribe which came from Europe and may have been mixed with fair people. In addition, there are the fair Kurds. So it is quite possible that fair elements existed among the races that went to compose the later Armenian people.

From the station we motored in a south-westerly direction into the Sardarabad desert, where there is at present no irrigation. It is a true wilderness, an endless scorched, dry, brown plain, with nothing but here and there a few thistle-like tufts of camel-thorn, a rough plant with sharp spikes that you approach at your peril—you cannot touch them with the bare hand without suffering in a way that will discourage you from repeating the experiment.

The road led once more to the Arax, with another big iron bridge over to Turkey, constructed, I need hardly say, by the Russians, to whom the country on either side then belonged. At the bridge-head there was a Red soldier on guard at each side of the road, who forbade us to come too near. On a low eminence just north of the bridge was a dilapidated house in which a small military guard was quartered.

Near the river, and parallel with it, runs a canal crossed by a smaller bridge just before reaching the large bridge. This is the Little Sardarabad Canal, which comes from the Arax at a point higher up, and brings water to the lower part of the Sardarabad plain.

On the opposite side of the river we could see some ruins on the barren desert plain. These were the remains of Karakala, an old fort whose walls were largely made of stones taken from older ruins, no doubt those of one of the earliest towns on the Arax. Everywhere in these parts you can trace layer upon layer of human enterprise and civilization.

Over the bridge the road continues westward to Kulp, where there are large salt-mines, from which the Armenians used to get their salt in earlier days when the country on that

side was also Armenian. A railway to the mines was projected at that time, but the plan never materialized.

Near the bridge where we stopped the plain consists of a layer of lava which overflowed in bygone days from Mount Alagöz. The river has cut its channel through this layer, and opposite the bridge we could see the perpendicular walls of lava along the sides of the river-bed.

We drove along the river to a part higher up where it has excavated a deep gorge, or canyon, down through the strata of lava and basalt, with the topmost stratum looking like a clean-cut horizontal layer on the brink of either side of the canyon. Here is the intake of the Little Sardarabad Canal which we saw farther down by the bridge, and which runs beside the river for some way before turning in across the plain.

Driving some way farther up the river, where there was no road over the lava plain, we arrived at the head of the canyon, where the course of the river opens out into a wider valley. At this point the lava must have dammed up a large lake in bygone days before the river cut the deep canyon through it. Plans have been under consideration for building a dam across the gorge here, thereby converting the wide valley above into a lake again, and thus securing a large reservoir from which to irrigate the Sardarabad plain. But the drawback would be that this intake would be so low that the canal from it could not reach the upper parts of the Sardarabad plain; and in that case the advantages of the project would hardly justify the high cost of construction. Further, there is a fresh consideration, inasmuch as the Arax now forms the frontier towards Turkey; if too much water were taken from it for irrigation purposes there would probably be disputes with the Turks, although there is no population on the Turkish side, at least at present, to make any appreciable use of the water.

From where we stood at the edge of the canyon we could see green, fertile lands on the other side of the river, and several villages; but there would not be many people in them since the former Armenian inhabitants fled.

We returned homewards through the same wilderness.

The soil looks sadly dry and sterile, but in reality it is rich from having lain fallow throughout the ages ; once it is given water and seed, the most splendid crops will spring up everywhere. Danaë's lap awaits the golden rain.

By and by we came once more to cultivated fields, and instead of the scorching sun of the parched desert we ran into the refreshing shade of the tall plane, mulberry, and walnut trees around a little town. This was Molla-Bayazet, with leafy orchards, green fields, irrigation channels, and rows of slender poplars. Sunburnt boys were bathing in the canal, and black buffaloes lay motionless in it with their heads above the water.

We stopped, and the inhabitants, mostly men, emerged from their huts built of sun-baked clay, and with Oriental hospitality offered us water and sour milk to slake our insatiable thirst. They also offered us fruit—refreshing juicy apricots and mulberries. Their faces were of the same mixed types we had noticed before, though rather more Armenian, perhaps ; their clothing was equally grey and Europeanized, with no cheerful colours, though some of the women were better dressed and looked neat and clean. They were friendly folk, but grave and unsmiling. We inquired how many people there were in the town. Only one and a half thousand now, they replied, but there had once been three and a half—two thousand having been massacred or carried off by the Turks in the last war. They said it as if they had been talking of the previous year's harvest ; it was all in the day's work. That their animals, great and small, had been taken, that the major part of the town lay in ruins, they did not even mention. Such is the history of the Armenian people. Has any race on earth passed through such an unbroken succession of inhuman sufferings ? And has any race displayed more tenacious vitality throughout the cruel vicissitudes of the ages ?

Under a roof in the little yard of the hut by which we stopped hung a big, queer-looking vessel of brown earthenware. It was oblong, round in transverse section, widest in the middle, and narrowing at each end. The only opening was in the middle at the top. It proved to be a churn, and

the handsome woman of the house willingly showed me how the butter was made by filling the vessel with cream and rocking it to and fro like a cradle.

We set off again. Channels of running water were now to be seen on all sides, with buffaloes in them, and boys bathing, and sometimes men as well; but we never saw any women bathing.

Then we reached the northern limit of the irrigated region, and drove on into the desert which extends northwards towards Alagöz, with occasional ridges of lava and tuff here and there, looking at a distance like old crater-cones. We struck the main road to Echmiadzin, and saw strings of big bullock-carts laden with bamboos going to the town.

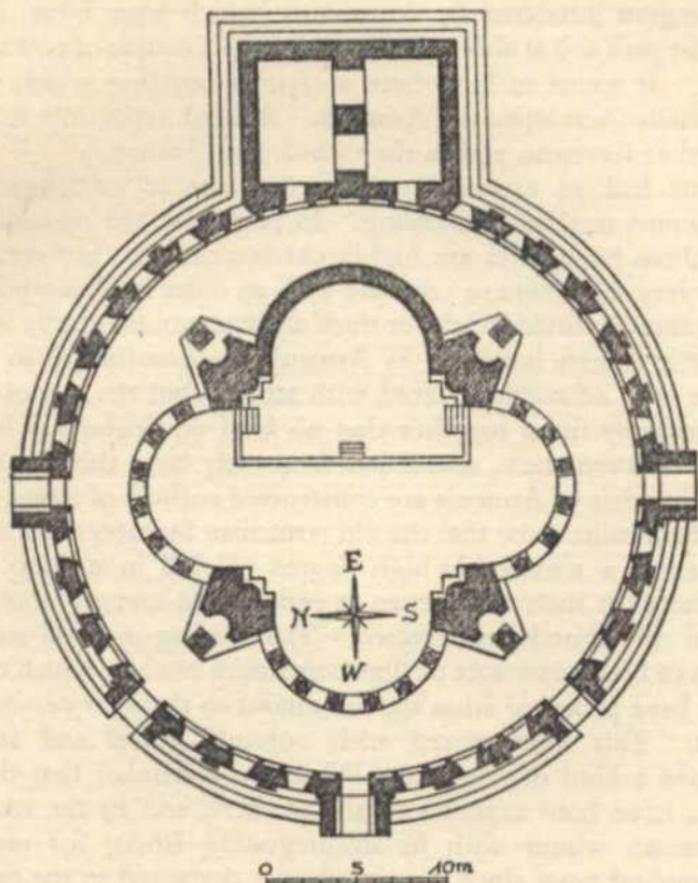
#### ZVARTHNOTZ.

When we had got a little way beyond Echmiadzin on the road to Erivan, we turned off southwards from the main road to see the place where important excavations and investigations have been carried on in recent years under the direction of the Archimandrite Khachik Dadian, the Bishops Mesrop Ter-Movsessian and Thoros Thoramanian, and where they have found the ruins of the historic Armenian church of Zvarthnotz—a name said to mean the same as Zvarthunk, or “the angels’ increasing powers,” i.e. “the angelic hosts.”

Arrived at the site of the excavations we found it to be a large area covered with ruins, where we saw foundations and remains of large buildings, and ranged on all sides the most beautiful fragments of capitals, reliefs, cornices, etc., which once adorned the arches and pillars, sculptured in stone, lava, tuff, and some in basalt.

The first thing that caught one’s eye was the remains of three huge pillars, towering above the other ruins. They were three out of the four piers which had supported the high middle dome. Outside these could be seen the lower portion of the outer wall of the church, which was circular. This shows that the exterior of the church was round, but its fundamental plan was quadrangular, like the church on the cliff at Mtskhetha, being marked by the four big piers. Between

each pair of these, on three sides, were six columns placed in a semicircle to support the apse domes, and taking the place of the usual solid walls of the semicircular apse on each side



ZVARTHNOTZ CHURCH (AFTER THORAMANIAN).

of the square. On the fourth and east side there was a wall, instead of columns, to form the chancel (see sketch).

Outside all this ran a circular corridor enclosed by the circular outer wall (1.04 metres in thickness). The inside diameter of the hall is thus 33.73 metres, while the sides of the square marked by the four piers are rather over 13 metres.

According to the historical sources this church was erected

by the powerful Katholikos Nerses III (A.D. 641-661), called Shinogh (i.e. the Builder), who also built himself a palace near by. The church was destroyed some time between A.D. 930 and 1000. Several churches are now known in Armenia, or the region inhabited by Armenians, which were built on a similar plan and at about the same time, or a couple of centuries later. It seems to have been a type of building which was especially developed in Armenia. Related types are to be found at Ravenna, and in the cathedral at Aachen.

One had an excellent opportunity here of studying the Armenian method of building. In particular, the remains of the three huge piers are highly characteristic. They consist of a very thick core of concrete with an outer shell composed of accurately fitted blocks or thick slabs of stone—chiefly lava. All the church buildings in Armenia are constructed in the same way, of concrete faced with stone; but the stones are so perfectly fitted together that no kind of mortar has been used between them, and it has frequently been thought that the churches of Armenia are constructed entirely of stone.

These ruins show that the old Armenian builders must have possessed a remarkably high degree of skill in making the concrete for their walls, even as early as the seventh century, when this church was erected. The binding material seems to have been some sort of lime containing cement, which they may have procured from the mountains to the west or southwest. This lime, mixed with volcanic gravel and sand, formed a kind of concrete. When we remember that these ruins have been exposed to all weathers, and to the severe Armenian winter with its disintegrating frosts, for nearly a thousand years since the church was destroyed in the tenth century, it is indeed remarkable that this concrete should still exist, to a large extent still tightly adhering to the facing-stones. The domes of their churches were concreted of the same material, covered inside with facing-stone; in many churches these domes have shown themselves to be so strong that they have partially held together even after the facing-stones have dropped off them.

This method of building was not the original one in Armenia; apparently it was never used in building private houses,





THE RIVER ARAX, SHOWING THE INTAKE OF THE LITTLE SARDARABAD CANAL (*p.* 140)

which even in the time of Xenophon (401 B.C.) were constructed of stones with a mixture of clay and straw between them, while the few large pre-Christian buildings of which remains still survive were built entirely of stone. Whence this new method of construction came is uncertain. Concrete was used in Asia Minor (possibly introduced there from Rome), and above all in Mesopotamia, from immemorial times, and with a facing of brick; it was also used in Persia. Most likely the Armenians learned it from Persia and North Mesopotamia,<sup>1</sup> and the facing of brick was replaced by ashlar facing. But the Armenians developed it in their own way, quite independently of the Persians; and they must have used it for several centuries in order to reach the perfection they had attained by the seventh century. We may therefore infer that there was a long preceding period in which churches and palaces were built of concrete and facing-stone, and that during that period both the technical skill of the builders and the typical Armenian style of building were developed; unless, of course, we assume that the buildings in question were constructed by foreign masons brought in from outside, which we have little reason to suppose.

The numerous portions of ornaments in relief, arches, cornices, capitals, and columns which have been found in these heaps of ruins give one a clear idea of the style in which the church was decorated. There are features suggestive of Byzantine and Syrian influence, but still more that points eastward—to Persia.

The floor of the church and its immediate surroundings were once paved with tiles, some of which still exist. The church stood on a broad terrace which was built up on two levels, surrounding the edifice with a wide, open space. Moreover, the church itself was raised upon a sort of plinth or base, rising in three ledges or high steps from the surrounding ground. All Armenian churches stand on a base of this kind. It appears to be a characteristically Eastern, or rather Persian, custom, as previously stated (p. 78), and cannot have been borrowed from the West.

As one looks at this ample circle of masonry and the vast

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Strzygowski, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 354 ff.

piers, and pictures the whole building raised to its full height with all its pillars and arches and the lofty dome above from which the light shone down, one can imagine that it was a truly magnificent edifice. It must have been famous throughout the land of the Armenians, for when it was destroyed an exact copy of it was erected by King Gaghik at Ani, the new capital, in A.D. 1001. This church, however, was likewise destroyed in the year 1064, when the Seljuk Turks under Alp Arslan captured and laid waste the town.<sup>1</sup>

It increases one's respect for the ancient culture of Armenia to see the perfection to which they had brought their architecture in the seventh century, when the Christian architecture of Europe was still in its infancy.

It is said that this church was built in honour of the Armenian Saint Gregory the Illuminator on the spot where King Tiridates came from his capital, Vagharshapat, to meet the holy man. According to another tradition that we heard, the site of the church was previously one of the holy places of the fire-worshippers.

Under the church we saw some rooms with small square holes or cells, not unlike those of a columbarium; but what they were used for, it is difficult to say. The ground below this layer sounded hollow, and many interesting things may be found when it has been excavated. Among the things found in the ruins is a large stone with a long cuneiform inscription dating from the time of the pre-Armenian Khaldians; no doubt it was used in some way in the church, as was often the case with these old stones bearing heathen inscriptions, to which, presumably, a certain religious significance was attached.

Adjoining the square round the church, on its south and part of its west side, was formerly a large block of buildings, the foundations of which have now been excavated. Here one can see the remains of a large pillared hall and other halls and living-rooms. Evidently, too, there was once an arcade with pillars bordering the church quadrangle. These buildings belonged to the palace of the Katholikos, in which he resided with his court when staying in this part of the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Strzygowski, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 119.

country. His court included twelve bishops, besides monks, priests, and retainers. This arrangement, by which a patriarch or bishop has his palace next to the cathedral and within the same walls, is quite common; it is found at Echmiadzin and several other places in Armenia, and may be compared with the Vatican and St. Peter's at Rome. The Katholikos had another palace besides, at Ashtishat (near Mush).

An Armenian writer named Sebeos, who was a contemporary of the Katholikos Nerses III Shinogh, says in his history of the Emperor Heraklius: "At this time (A.D. 652) the Armenian Katholikos Nerses formed the project of building himself a residence near the holy church in the city of Vagharshapat, on the road where tradition relates that King Trdat went to meet St. Gregory. He also built a church there, dedicated to the angelic hosts of heaven who appeared to St. Gregory in a dream. He had the church built with high walls and constructed it in all respects wonderfully, making it worthy of the divine beings to whose glory it was dedicated. He brought water thither from the river (i.e. the Kassagh), made all the stony land fruitful, planted vineyards and orchards, and surrounded the dwelling-place with a high and handsome wall, to the glory of God."

It is related of the Katholikos that he nourished strong Byzantine sympathies, and that when Constans II (641-668) tried, in 652, in the cathedral at Dvin (then the capital of Armenia), to induce the Armenians to adopt the creed of the Council of Chalcedon, he partook of the Eucharist together with the emperor. On this account he incurred the hatred of the Armenians as being a heretic. He therefore went with the emperor to Constantinople, but subsequently returned to his home at Taik, where he lived until his bitterest opponent, Theodore Rshtuni, died in 654. After six years' persecution he returned to his Katholikate, which he strengthened, and set about finishing his church.

In view of all this one would expect the church to be strongly influenced by Byzantine architecture; nevertheless, this does not seem to be the case. It must be remembered that at that time there was a strong national and anti-Greek movement in Armenia, and the builder of this church evidently

preferred to derive his inspiration entirely from his own country, with the result that his great edifice represents a natural evolution from the typical Armenian square church with apses. This does not, of course, mean that there may not be features in the ornamentation which betray Byzantine influence; but, as we have seen, there are more numerous features which testify to Eastern influence, while in the lay-out of the palace buildings there are not a few features which recall the architecture of Persia—for instance, the pillared hall, which is typically Persian, as Strzygowski has observed.<sup>1</sup> We shall have occasion to point out later that, if anything, Armenian architecture influenced Byzantium and Europe rather than the reverse.

This round church of Zvarthnotz stood for three hundred years, and was used for great national gatherings. We know that about the year 661 a great national assembly was held there under the presidency of Nerses III, when the Armenian princes agreed to submit to the domination of the Arab Moavia (661-668).

The church must have been destroyed some time between A.D. 930 and 1000, but we do not know in what way. According to one Armenian historian its destruction was the work of the Arabs, but this does not seem to be certain; not impossibly an earthquake may have wrecked it in the same way as the church of St. Gregory at Dvin. The latter building collapsed during an earthquake at the end of the ninth century.

At this place we were standing on time-honoured historic ground. For several kilometres, right on to Echmiadzin (Vagharshapat), there are mounds which unquestionably conceal ancient ruins, and where remarkable finds may be made if they are excavated. Civilization must have flourished here for long ages; and even in remote times this part of the country must have been cultivated by means of artificial irrigation. Later it would have been more or less devastated by wars and human destructiveness, perhaps also by earthquakes, though their havoc is not so thorough. If the excavations can be carried down to the deepest strata of civilization, underneath this late period of efflorescence, they may con-

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 267.

ceivably reveal relics of still earlier civilizations and of races which were ousted by those that followed them.

At many places on the plains one sees small eminences which involuntarily evoke thoughts of earlier habitations. When generation after generation builds upon the same spot, on the ruins left by the people of the past, the ground gradually rises above the level of the surrounding plain, forming a low hill. By digging there one may find layer upon layer of civilization, going back, perhaps, to the earliest times. In Armenia the spade may open the way to many discoveries.

But we must return to Erivan.

#### IN ERIVAN.

In the evening we had dinner at the "Club." This was to all intents and purposes a large fenced-in space, with a sort of roofed, open arcade along one side, where meals were served at large and small tables. On the ground in front there was a square of asphalt where a number of boys and young men were going round and round on roller-skates. This club-restaurant was much frequented both in the evening and at lunch-time, so it was often quite difficult to get a seat. One saw both sexes there, though men were in a majority. They all looked clean and well-dressed, like middle-class people in any European factory town. Some of the ladies were more smartly dressed, but not exaggeratedly so.

It took a long time to get served, as it always does in these climes; but the food was good, likewise the Armenian wine, and then the fruit! The apricots were just ripe, and Armenia is the home of the apricot; I have never seen them so large and juicy anywhere else.

Outside the fence near which we sat a crowd of ragged boys stood begging. Now and then a waiter came and drove them away; sometimes there was a regular hunt across the ground; but they were soon back again, looking over the fence with their jolly, grinning faces. They seemed to lead a highly care-free existence, and there were no signs of hunger about their chubby cheeks. No sooner did one turn one's

back, however, than their long arms would shoot out to the nearest table and snatch a slice of bread, a cutlet, or whatever they could get hold of; or all of a sudden they would vault over the fence as nimbly as a monkey on to the floor and grab a good big piece of something. One day as we were leaving our table I saw the whole lot of them clear the fence, and before you could say "knife" they had emptied a big dish of apricots, seized everything eatable on the other dishes, and were back over the fence before the waiters could catch them; then they scattered across the club-ground, yelling with glee, to enjoy the spoil. Many of them have been put into children's homes; but they soon run away again, and even persuade others to follow their example. Then they go back to the free life of the streets. So long as it is summer they live in clover, but in winter their lot is not so enviable. But make hay while the sun shines—at present it is summer, and more than hot enough, too!

Later in the evening there was music—a small Armenian band, consisting of five Armenian guitars (known as *tarr*), two Armenian violins, which are held upright on the knee, an Armenian zither, a tambourine, and a sort of muffled double drum. The music they played was also Armenian: folk-songs and dances. Everything had a quick, pronounced rhythm, rather like dance music, or fast march-time; but one noticed a curious underlying note of wistful melancholy.

On the following morning (Friday, June 19th) we had another meeting with the Government committee in order to study maps of the plain, with comparative altitudes, and the Armenian engineers' calculations of the volume of water carried by the different rivers. We decided to leave by the evening train and explore the upper part of the Sardarabad plain. During the meeting a deputation arrived from the Armenian teachers' conference then assembled at Erivan. Its leader gave me a message of greeting in German, and announced that I had been elected honorary president of the conference.

We went to see the museum, which is situated in the main street of Erivan. Here there are important collections bearing on the history of Armenia. I was specially interested in

seeing some finds dating from the Stone or Bronze Age, with some skulls of a decidedly long shape, like all the early Armenian crania that have been dug up. This is the more remarkable in view of the fact that the Armenians of to-day are extremely short-skulled (index about 86-88). It seems to indicate that there used to be a long-skulled people living here, as there was in Georgia, and that this region cannot have been the original home of the short-skulled Armenian race.

During the same morning we also went to see the university. It is a stately building, standing in a beautiful garden near the upper end of the main street. We were received by the Rector and all the professors, and were shown round the various institutes. It is a new university, still in the making and with very modest means at its disposal. But the progress already made in spite of all difficulties is remarkable. I was not a little surprised to meet a professor who addressed me in Norwegian and had been in Norway. This was Dr. J. Bedelian, Professor of Botany, who has studied botany in Copenhagen, and has twice visited Norway, travelling as far as the North Cape. A very charming man.

After seeing the buildings we were taken round the garden, where various experiments in agriculture were being carried on. In connection with the university there is an agricultural college. New buildings were in course of construction to serve as laboratories, etc. Under some shady trees was a long table with delicious apricots, cherries, and wine, which were most refreshing in the sweltering heat. Several of the professors made speeches, in German or English, in our honour; and the Rector informed me that I had been created an honorary doctor of the university.

In the afternoon I went for a stroll round the town by myself. Here and there one can find relics of its changing history, which are interesting, even if they are not of any great antiquity. I made my way up to the old fortress perched on the edge of the precipice above the Zanga gorge, with its high walls and its projecting bastions and merlons overhanging the sheer face of the cliff. Cemented on to the sloping roofs of the overhanging merlons were quantities of sharp bits of glass, which would tear to pieces the hands of anyone

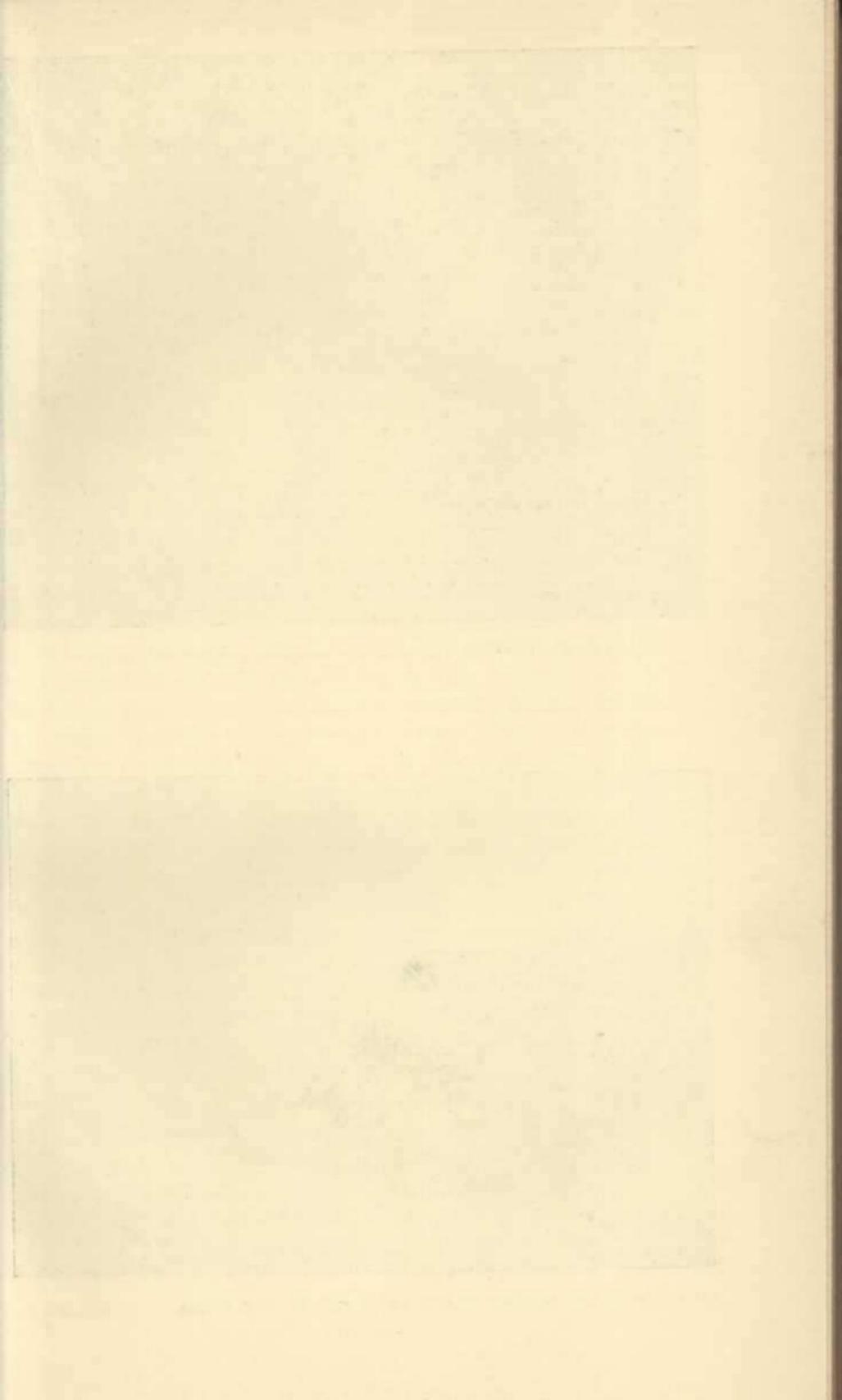
rash enough to try to climb up there. It gave one a little sidelight on the methods of war in bygone days.

On this side the fortress must have been impregnable before the days of big guns, but it was comparatively easy of approach on the remaining three sides, and its walls, made of stones and blocks of sun-dried clay, could hardly have been very strong. Nevertheless the Russians failed to take it in 1804. At that date it was Persian, and the sirdar who governed the town said to the secretary of the British Legation in 1814, that "if three or four of the kings of Fireng (Europe) were to unite to take this castle, they might just take the trouble of going back again, for their labours would be in vain." However, the Russians under Paskevich had no difficulty in taking it in 1827. The Russian bombardment did fearful havoc in this fortified town, built of such unsubstantial materials; and one shell is said to have fallen through the dome of the mosque of the citadel, where thousands of the inhabitants had taken refuge from the rain of shells.

I walked on, and suddenly, right inside the bounds of the stronghold, I came upon the ruins of a Persian mosque with a beautiful bluish-green dome of faience mosaic. Could this be the one the shell came through? It did not look much like it, for the roof was still quite whole.

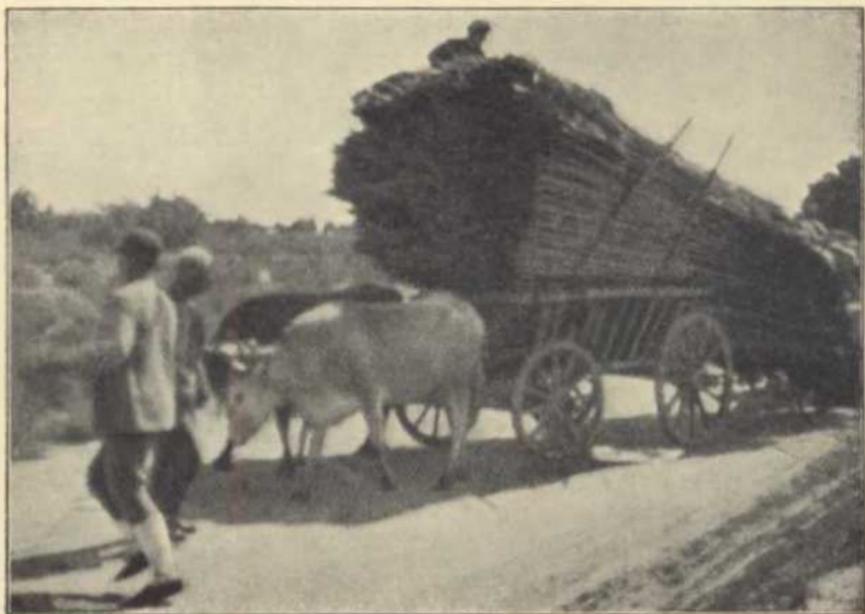
How lovely this brightly coloured architecture looks in such surroundings. But it is a survival of Islam, and of a culture which has never been truly Armenian.

According to a Moslem tradition this fortress was built by the Persians at the beginning of the sixteenth century; but this is open to doubt. In later centuries it was a continual bone of contention between the Persian shahs and the Turkish sultans, and the important stronghold was besieged again and again. In 1635 the Shah Safi took the town; in 1724 the Turks regained it; but ten years afterwards it fell into the hands of Nadir-Shah. After 1827 the Russians kept it. As the Persians are Shiah and the Turks are Sunni Moslems, they hate each other even more, perhaps, than they hate the Christians; and when the Persians took the town in 1635 they razed all the Turkish mosques to the ground still more thoroughly than if they had been Christian churches.





CHURN IN THE VILLAGE OF MOLLA-BAJAZET (*p.* 141)



BULLOCK-CARTS LOADED WITH BAMBOOS ON THE ROAD TO ECHMIADZIN  
(*p.* 142)

On the way down the cliff to the bridge over the Zanga I suddenly met a train of about twenty camels coming from the south. How far away from Europe and our noisy motor age one feels at the sight of these silent animals of the desert, striding with lithe, noiseless tread behind each other in a long line, with their curving necks and the superior smile "that never comes off."

At the end of my walk I was on the way home when a victoria drawn by two fine horses overtook me at a rapid trot and stopped; a man who was evidently some sort of official got out and addressed me in a language I could not understand, but his gestures showed that he wanted to give me a lift. We got in together, and his spirited horses quickly brought us to the hotel, while we entertained each other as best we could by smiling in our most amiable fashion. At the hotel I got out and shook his hand warmly by way of thanks. He drove on, and I never succeeded in finding out who he was.

The name Erivan seems to be of ancient origin, and may go back to the Khaldians; but the town itself apparently belongs to a comparatively late date in the history of Armenia. It only became of importance after the sixteenth century, doubtless mainly because of its strong fortress. This is why the town has no ancient buildings. The churches—except the Russian church—are small and of no particular interest. There are several well-preserved mosques, but these are probably not older than the seventeenth century. The largest is Gök Jami, in the south-west end of the town, surrounded by a shady square with fine tall elms, a lake, and a murmuring brook. One interesting building in Erivan was the palace of the Persian sirdars, which stood inside the walls of the fortress on the edge of the Zanga gorge. But there is now little remaining of its extensive buildings and harems; so far as I am aware there is only a pavilion left now, and this I unfortunately did not see. It has a fine view over the river and the plain towards Ararat. Inside, it was formerly decorated with brightly coloured ornamentation, and pictures painted on canvas, representing Persian sirdars, shahs, heroes, and a Persian amazon. From the windows the sirdar could practise his skill in shooting by sending bullets through the

donkeys of the unfortunate peasants as they came along the winding road on the other side of the river towards the bridge, which was just below. Here, too, he could enjoy the sight of the caravans crawling in from the south, bringing gold for his treasury; while the loveliest women of Georgia and Caucasia waited on his pleasure in the harem close by. But even a Persian sirdar is not altogether heartless. Of the last sirdar at Erivan it is related that a Georgian came to the fortress above the Zanga in order to get a glimpse of his bride in the sirdar's harem. When she saw her lover she threw herself down from the window over the chasm, but was saved from certain death by a ground-willow which stopped her fall. The two lovers were caught, but the jealous lord and master set them at liberty with the words: "Hearts so closely united let no man endeavour to part." This sirdar died deserted and alone in a wretched stable, bereft of everything except the dirty rags which covered his aged body.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lynch, *Armenia*, vol. i, p. 217 f., London, 1901.

## VII

### TO ARPA-CHAI AND LENINAKAN

At ten in the evening we left by train in our own carriage, and arrived at four o'clock next morning (Saturday, June 20th) at Alagöz station, on the highest part of the Sardarabad plain. Cavalry horses and soldiers had been sent by the same train for our use and protection. The officer in command of the military post at the bridge over the Arax, which we had visited a couple of days before, had ridden across the plain to meet us. It all gave me a vivid impression that protection was necessary against the possibility of attack. It appeared that the Kurdish tribes on the Turkish side sometimes indulged in marauding expeditions and carried off live stock from this side; they had been there as lately as the same spring; but no such attack was expected now, and in any case nothing could be gained by kidnapping us.

We were ready to start at an early hour. The first thing was to find a good horse and a good saddle among the many that were waiting ready saddled. They were decidedly fresh, and none too willing to let us mount them; several of the party had to dance round and round on the plain for some time before they could get into the saddle. Then we set off, accompanied by a strong bodyguard of soldiers, westwards across undulating country towards Arpa-chai. In the far distance ahead of us the volcanic peaks of the mountains rose into the sky. The undulating plain consists here of a stony lava-field covered with a brownish decomposed layer. The vegetation is scanty—just a few parched brown tufts of coarse grass or of our old friend the spiky camel-thistle here and there; but once irrigated this soil is rich enough to make the most wonderful gardens.

The ground was firm and good for riding on, and we could gallop as fast as the horses would go. Armenian horses are rather small, slightly larger than ordinary polo ponies or the

horses of West Norway ; they are apt to be rather thin and bony, but as saddle-horses are well-built, swift, and good stayers. They are by no means cheap either, costing two or even three hundred roubles for a fairly good animal. The officer of the frontier post was mounted on a powerful and handsome stallion, but it had cost two thousand roubles. He had ridden forty kilometres over from his post in the morning, and was going to ride the same animal back when he parted from us in the afternoon.

We rode to the river. It was running here through a narrow canyon, possibly 500 metres wide and 60 metres deep, which it had cut through layers of lava and basalt. Above the place where we were standing, and where the canyon was narrowest, the river-bed broadened out into a wide valley, with even, sloping sides. According to the plan previously worked out a dam 53 metres high was to be built across the canyon at this point, thus converting the valley above into a big lake which would serve as a good reservoir. In order to convey the water by a canal to the Sardarabad plain a tunnel would have to be made through the mountain at a level of about 20 metres below the surface of the lake, and the length of this tunnel would have to be about 2 kilometres.

Our experienced expert, Mr. Dupuis, held that this plan could be carried out, but thought that a more satisfactory solution of the problem could be found. To build a dam over 50 metres high would in any case be a big and costly undertaking ; and in the present instance the basalt and lava rock composing the sides of the canyon was cracked, broken, and porous, so that it would be hard work to make it sufficiently watertight to stand the pressure of such a mass of water. Moreover, accidents might happen with a dam of this size ; the dam might spring a leak, or be broken through, for instance, by human agency in wartime, or by an earthquake ; the water would then escape and the reservoir run dry. To repair the dam sufficiently for the water to be raised once more to the height of the tunnel would certainly take years, and during that time all the people who had cultivated the Sardarabad plain and were dependent upon the water from the canal

would be reduced to dire straits, and would either have to migrate or perish.

Accordingly Mr. Dupuis thought it would be better to go sufficiently far up the river to get the necessary height for the canal, and then build a small dam there, say 10 metres high, which could easily be repaired if anything happened. From that point a tunnel could be made through the mountain to the plain. The tunnel would then have to be longer, perhaps 4 kilometres; but this plan would nevertheless be cheaper to carry out than the project with the higher dam. Of course this would not allow of making a big reservoir where water could be stored in winter and spring, when it is not needed for irrigation, for use later during the drought in summer, when the Arpa-chai is often rather low. But Mr. Dupuis was of the opinion that if reservoirs were needed they could be built above the intake and quite independent of it, so that the supply of water for the canal should not be entirely cut off if any accident happened to the dams.

All this seemed very reasonable to the other members of our commission, and the Armenian engineers admitted that there was much to be said for the plan.

Our cavalcade returned home in rather disorderly fashion, for the horses were eager to get back and were difficult to hold. M. Carle's horse got quite out of hand and bolted with him at full gallop until they disappeared from sight on the horizon; we were quite relieved to meet him later at the station—but the horse had never stopped until it got there.

Our friend the stout and amiable newspaper man from Tiflis and Mtskhetha was with us on this expedition also; but the ride was too much for him; he had to go to bed after it, and unfortunately we never saw any more of him.

Alagöz station is situated, as I have said, on the highest part of the Sardarabad plain. A little to the east of the station the country begins to rise in the direction of Mount Alagöz, but that mighty volcano cannot be seen on account of several intervening heights, including some cone-shaped peaks resembling old volcanoes. This part of the country is waterless; strange to say, not a single stream comes down from Alagöz on this side, nor yet from the other heights; and

there are no springs rising out of the ground. The water for the railway-station has to be pumped up at great expense through a pipe from the north. By the station we saw a small garden surrounded by a stone wall; there were some trees in it, which were given water from the pipe; but otherwise the country was utterly bare and barren.

On the way back from Arpa-chai we passed the ruins of some houses not far from the same place. One could not help wondering how people could possibly have lived in such a place without water, for there cannot ever have been artificial irrigation in these parts. Could there at one time have been a spring, which afterwards changed its course? A more probable supposition is that the houses belonged to herdsmen who only stayed here at times of the year when there was more rain, and consequently pasture for their animals.

We could not continue our journey by the train to Leninakan before night, so we spent the whole afternoon at the station. The Government had a farm there with 500 cows and 1,500 sheep. The sub-manager was a Russian from the Don, with whom Captain Quisling could converse in the Russian language. He stated that the intention was to increase the stock to 5,000 cows and 15,000 sheep; but the difficulty was how to get enough water. The water pumped up through the pipe to the station, which they were using at present, was far too expensive.

They asked us whether it would not be possible to drill artesian wells there; and this might not be a bad idea. If one could get down to a non-porous layer of some kind this might very well contain water from the slopes of Alagöz; but the difficulty is that with these porous layers of lava and tuff the water must sink to a very great depth before it is stopped by watertight layers which will retain it. This accounts, of course, for the numerous mineral springs in these volcanic regions, where the water percolates far down, dissolving mineral substances in the depths.

Looking at the brown plains and slopes around, one could not but wonder how the cows could find any food there, let alone give milk. Farther up in the mountains, however, behind the heights that we could see, and where the rainfall

was heavier, there was said to be a fair amount of green grass. Would it not, then, be more reasonable to move up there with all the cattle, instead of making the cows go such a long way up to the mountains and back, and lose their milk? But the difficulty was that there was no water up there—neither streams nor springs—and they would still have to come down to the expensive water-pipe to get the water that they could not do without. If only another water supply could be got it would open up new possibilities.

A good milch cow, giving from 14 to 16 quarts of milk a day, cost several hundred roubles, while an ordinary cow, giving from 2½ to 4 quarts a day, cost 100 or 120 roubles. A milkmaid was paid 20 roubles a month, and a herdsman 30 roubles without food.

They made gruyère and another excellent cheese known as Alagöz cheese. The price of cheese was 35 kopecks the Russian pound, and of butter 75 kopecks, i.e. about 87 kopecks and 1·83 roubles respectively per kilogram (2·205 lb.).

The Russian had once been a rich peasant in the Don district, worth something like a million gold roubles. But he had been robbed of everything, and had now taken on this job. He did not think the Armenians knew how to make the most of a farm. In his opinion much could be done with the plains and mountain slopes. They were now going to strike out a fresh line by breeding pigs on their farm.

Two pretty girls came walking along the railway-line. They had typical narrow Armenian faces, with slightly hooked noses. As they walked, they were spinning cotton with a single hand-spindle, holding it in one hand while they spun the yarn with the other. This seems to be the usual way of spinning in Armenia; I never once saw a spinning-wheel there. It was quite a common sight to see the peasant women spinning busily with their hand-spindles as they walked along the country roads. Several children were running about near the station, and one or two of them were very good-looking. They looked bright and roguish, quite unconscious of the cares of life.

On the plain north of the station were several square stone cottages with flat roofs, belonging to some of the herdsman,

Here one could see how the ordinary country-folk lived. Four stone walls and a mud floor; not a scrap of furniture that I could see, except an iron pot to cook their food in. The usual fuel is dried cow-dung, whenever it is procurable. One can hardly imagine plainer living. In front of a hut which stood by itself on the plain was a woman dressed in a dazzling white dress, perhaps some finery that she had put on in honour of the strangers; but how on earth anything could be kept white in that low, dingy room is more than I can conceive.

Meanwhile dark clouds had gathered in the north. They became more and more lowering, black and threatening, though the sky in the west and north-west was lit up by the sunset. Suddenly there was a blinding flash of lightning, followed by a peal of thunder; then flash after flash across the black sky, while the thunder rolled nearer and nearer. There appeared to be a violent downpour over the mountains to the north. In the end the rain reached us, too, but it did not come to much—it seemed to evaporate on the way. Soon it stopped altogether, and the sky cleared again.

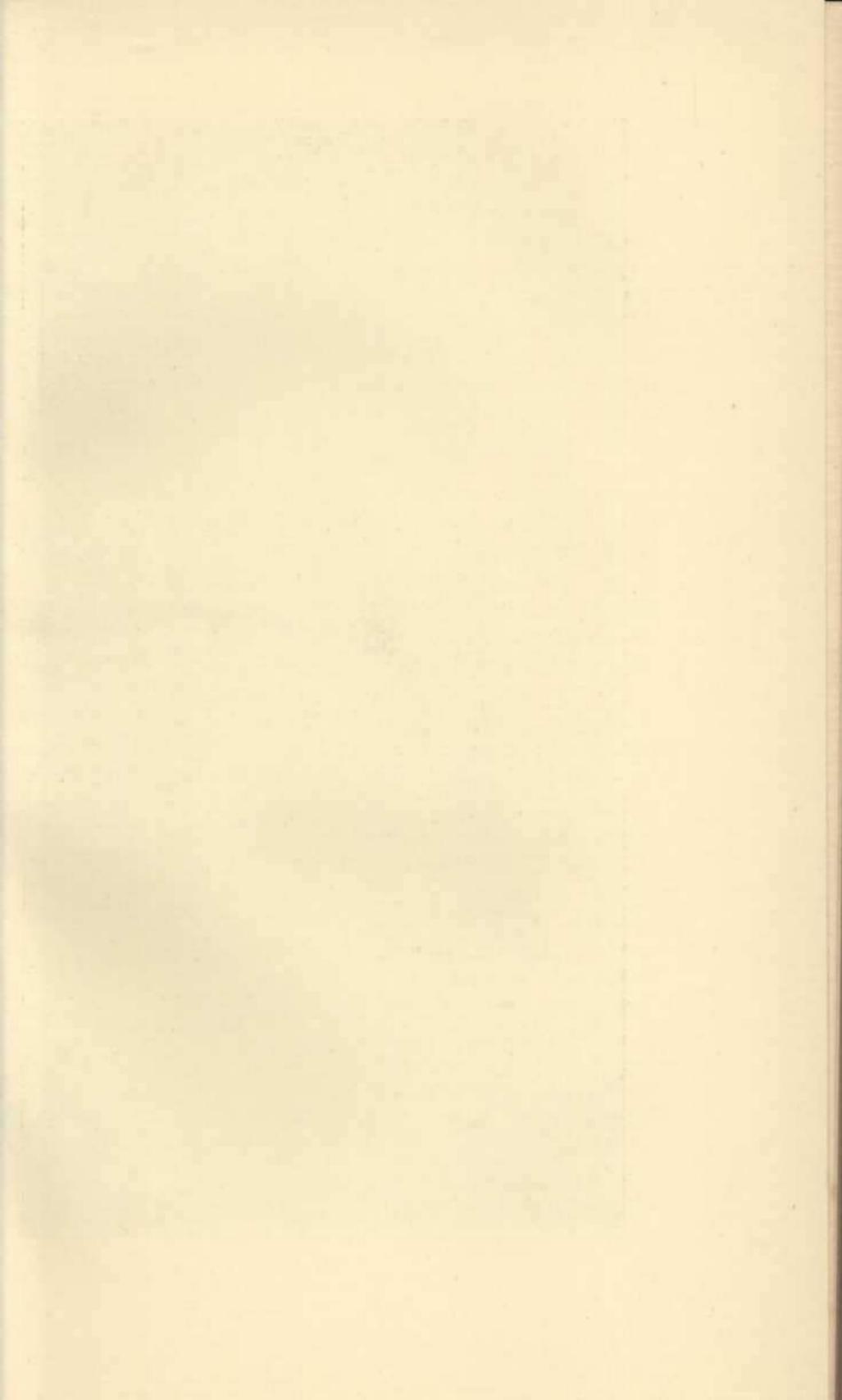
A strange climate this, so cloudy and yet so dry! Either the clouds gather round the summit of Mount Alagöz and spread southwards, or else they gather round the summit of Mount Ararat in the south-east and are blown up here across the plain. The sky may look extremely threatening, but the yearning soil seldom gets any rain.

The darkness fell rapidly over the mountains and the surrounding country. In the middle of the night the train arrived, our carriage was coupled up, and we journeyed on to Leninakan or Gumri.

#### THE NEW CANAL NEAR LENINAKAN.

Sunday, June 21st, had arrived at last—the great day of the opening of the new Shiraksky Canal, whereby about 20,000 acres of new, dry land was to be irrigated and rendered fertile.

When we looked out of the windows of our carriage next morning the station was full of soldiers who had come for the





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function. As soon as we had had breakfast we motored through the streets of Leninakan and out into the plains to the north-west in order to see the tunnel for the canal before the water was released. It was about 13 kilometres to the dam at Arpa-chai, where the intake was. There was a veritable migration of people along all the roads across the plain, men, women, and boys of all ages, on foot and in all kinds of overcrowded vehicles drawn by bullocks or horses, decorated with streamers and flags of every colour of the rainbow, with womenfolk in light, gaily coloured dresses, and thousands of soldiers on foot and horseback—all in merry mood and ready to enjoy the festivities.

Below on our left was the valley of Arpa-chai; here one could see the relics of a population that was no more, the ruins of an entire town, with a monastery and a church with a round dome-tower—all laid waste by war, with no attempt to rebuild it. Leninakan itself was full of ruins, the result of the last Turkish invasion; but much of it had now been restored. To-day, however, we had to give our minds not to the past, but to the present and the future.

The farther we got the denser the migrating crowds became. Once before I had seen a similar endless procession along the roads; it was in Thrace in 1922, when the Greeks and Armenians fled from their homes in terror of the Turks who were to come. But on the present occasion there was no terror, only gaiety and laughter.

We reached a village situated at the end of the tunnel. Here there was a big triumphal arch, decorated in gorgeous colours which blazed against the blue of the sky. It was quite like the country-side in England on Derby Day, with all the crowded carriages and picnickers, except that most of the carriages were drawn by oxen.

A man jumped up on to the car while it was going, and remained standing on the step. He had come to show us the way. By the crossed hammers on his cap I saw that he was a Russian engineer. I looked at him—felt sure that I had seen him before. He smiled. Yes, we had met twelve years earlier and had travelled together in the wilds of Siberia—in Amur—when he was an engineer on the Amur railway,

which was being built at the time. His name was Jakimoff. He was now second in command of the engineering work on the canal and tunnel. The world is small indeed. When I had got out of the train that morning another engineer had greeted me, but I had not recognized him either. Now it transpired that he, too, had been engaged on the construction of the Amur railway twelve years before.

With Jakimoff to direct the chauffeur we drove on through the crowd, now along a road, now across country over bumpy ground with dangerous holes in it. Then suddenly we found ourselves on the edge of the gorge with the Arpa-chai far below us. We descended the zigzag path down the cliff to the bottom where the dam had been constructed.

It was strange to see such swarms of people in this deep, wild gorge between the high mountain-sides, with nothing but rocks on every hand, the river foaming along the bottom, and a strip of blue sky between the cliffs far above our heads. It was like a scene in the *Divina Commedia*.

We made our way through the throng, past the sluice, which was still open to let the river run through, over a suspension bridge crowded with people trying to get across, then down the river-bank and across the river again, finally coming to a stop in front of the mouth of the tunnel. The engineer walked in front, and we plunged into the unknown. Followed an endless wandering through the blackness, faintly lit at long intervals by electric lamps. It was high enough for me to walk upright, and so wide that I could not touch the sides. A herd of jostling people, chiefly boys, slipped past us and tore on in front, kicking up mud and water, and making the most blood-curling howls and screams. There seemed to be women and girls there, too, so far as I could see in that dim light. I could not help wondering what would happen if the water were turned on, or even if a sudden panic arose. What a mad flight for life—the pressure would be so terrible that the crowd would be jammed fast in this narrow tube!

The first part of the tunnel was dry; by and by we came to some puddles, which became larger and larger until they formed a continuous ditch along the middle; only at the

sides, close to the walls, were there a few stones or dry places where one could walk. It was a damp pilgrimage—the tunnel was  $2\frac{1}{2}$  kilometres long.

At first I could see the engineer's white cap in front, and some of my companions when they passed the electric lamps; but before long they disappeared in the crowd and I was left alone in the crush. As I trudged on, doing my best to avoid the deepest water by keeping close to the wall, I became aware of an elderly grey-bearded man of decidedly cultured appearance. He was trudging along with the rest of us, and was constantly bumped and pushed aside by the young ruffians who raced up the tunnel, usually where it was deepest in the middle, splashing the water in all directions. I heard him say something to them now and again, probably admonishing them to be more careful; but otherwise he bore it all with exemplary patience.

We met a whole section of soldiers going in the opposite direction to the crowd. They showed even less consideration than the boys—as is the way of the military, whether Red or White—and often drove us ordinary ununiformed mortals into the deepest water while they passed by at the side, where it was dry.

At length the tunnel began to get lighter in front of us, and in due course I was out in the day again. Here I found Captain Quisling and Mr. Ersingian, the Commissar for Agriculture. Also the elderly grey-bearded man whom I had noticed in the tunnel. Mr. Ersingian introduced me—it was the President of the Georgian republic.

A little later Mr. Dupuis turned up, too. Not contented with the tunnel we went through, he had also explored the short continuation of it just below. As for M. Carle and M. Lo Savio, we had not seen anything of them since the early morning.

We now made our way up on to the plain again, where the car was waiting for us, and drove back to the precipice over the dam. Descending the cliff, we crossed the suspension bridge a second time, and proceeded to a place underneath the high raised platform which had been erected for the speakers, on the steep stony slope opposite. Here we were welcomed

by the President of Armenia, Mr. Sako Hampartsumian, formerly a doctor. He had been elected since our meeting with the Government at Erivan on our arrival. The previous President, Mr. Lukashin, had now become the Armenian representative in the Federal Government of the three republics (Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan) at Tiflis.

An enormous crowd had assembled on the slopes on both sides. They looked like diminutive ants swarming and creeping about among the boulders under the precipitous cliffs.

As usual the men mostly wore European dress, with soft grey Bolshevik caps; many had on white blouses—spotlessly white for the occasion, and at intervals one saw the white cap of an engineer. Here and there, too, one noticed the darker face of a Kurd or Tatar beneath his indispensable big cap of sheepskin; but there was nobody in Armenian national dress—it is never seen now. There were many types of faces, but the Armenian predominated, with its high, short-skulled head, narrow face without cheek-bones, high-bridged, turned-down nose, and high, rather receding forehead. Occasionally, however, there would be a broader face, with a foreign look about it. Almost without exception the faces were either clean-shaven or else had a few short black bristles on the upper lip just under the nose; some had a short bristly tuft on the chin as well; but of grey-bearded old men there were very few. On the whole, it was strange to see how young all these people looked, both the men and the women; one could hardly discover an old face among them.

The womenfolk added a touch of brightness to the crowd by their light, many-coloured dresses and hats, often quite European in appearance; and some of them had gay red parasols. There were many handsome dark faces, narrow-oval in shape, with delicate features and finely chiselled noses; also more savage-looking types with black tousled hair, coarser features, more prominent cheek-bones and chins, aquiline noses, and flashing black eyes.

It was half-past eleven, but according to the programme the water was not to be let into the tunnel till twelve o'clock. A long time to wait in the sun; but patience is one of the

virtues of these Eastern lands. The sluice-gates of the dam and the tunnel were lowered and closed. At once the water began to rise rapidly behind the dam, and a number of people who were standing on the level by the river had to get up quickly on to higher ground to avoid being surrounded by the water, which crept along the lower places and formed islands. Little by little the islands, too, vanished beneath the rising surface. Soon there was a big lake above the dam, and it went on rising.

Suddenly several naked figures dived from the cliff near us with a tremendous splash into the water. They were some young men, who proceeded to swim and lark about in the new lake. They all threw their arms forward alternately over the water when they swam, instead of moving the hands and legs symmetrically as we do. Others followed quickly, splash after splash, laughing and hurling the spray about. The first had on bathing-drawers; those who followed were not so particular. The water continued to rise until it reached the top of the dam, then went foaming over in a splendid waterfall. Many of the swimmers climbed on to the top of the dam and sat sunning themselves there in the dress of old Adam. They were slim, well-built, and powerful.

Next came the opening. Together with the President of Armenia and the Commissar for Agriculture and a number of others, including Mr. Yarrow, of the Near East Relief, I was asked to cross the suspension bridge to the sluice at the mouth of the tunnel. At a given signal the President and several members of the Government took turn and turn about at the windlass and began raising the huge sluice-gate in front of the tunnel, amid enthusiastic shouts of applause which thundered like a storm along the gorge. They went on winding with might and main, salutes rolled and rumbled against the crags, the banners waved, the crowd redoubled its hurrahs, and the water began to flow with increasing force into the tunnel. I had to lend a hand with the windlass, together with my friend the Commissar for Agriculture, and the crowd roared its appreciation. Mr. Yarrow took his turn at it, too, and several public officials. Gradually the opening became large enough down below for us to see the

redeeming water flow through; and one could picture it filling the canals out on the plain and spreading its life-giving streams far and wide over the thirsty soil.

But now it was time to get back to our places under the platform, where speeches were made by the President of Armenia and many others; I was called upon to say a few words, and the President of Georgia conveyed the congratulations of the neighbouring republic. It was truly a great day, marking the completion of an undertaking which created the necessary conditions for thousands of new and happy homes.

Then it was over, and the migration recommenced in the opposite direction. We made our way to our motor-cars, and drove across the fields down to the canal, where the water was now flowing at a great rate. On every side were happy multitudes enjoying the sight, many of the men and boys bathing in the new river, while the women sat on the banks dangling their feet in it. Some of the water from this canal was to be conducted through a pipe down into the valley of the Arpa-chai for a new power-station, the foundation-stone of which was laid by the President on the same occasion.

The work as a whole, including the dam, the tunnel, and the canal, made a favourable impression, and our expert, Mr. Dupuis, had nothing but praise for it; the undertaking was carefully thought out, cleverly planned, and well carried out; one could see that there was an old-established tradition of irrigation in the country. Moreover, the work had been done at a surprisingly low cost. The whole thing had taken about half a million working-days of three shifts, and the total expenditure had been 1,300,000 roubles (about £135,000). The tunnel, which, as already stated, was  $2\frac{1}{2}$  kilometres long, cost about 300,000 roubles (£31,000) the kilometre.

As we motored homewards it was quite touching to see the delight of everybody. They had settled down in groups in the fields, and, having made small fires of dry grass or whatever they could find, were cooking various delicacies over them. Gaiety and happiness prevailed everywhere, but there was no disorder or excess. A large crowd of men had gathered round two musicians playing a bagpipe and a drum. In the middle some of them were dancing; one or two per-

formed graceful solos, and several danced together in a ring holding hands.

On our return to the town we set out with Napoleon as our guide to find a restaurant where we could have dinner. Round the entrance stood a group of shoeblacks. There was a superfluity of these boys both here and in Erivan, but they showed no signs of poverty, and were always in good spirits and full of fun. Their ministrations were by no means unwelcome after our pilgrimage through the muddy water of the tunnel. The sun had long since dried our shoes.

We descended into a deliciously cool, clean cellar, where we got good food and wine, and good music. There were two violins—a man and a woman, with her hair piled up to an extraordinary height—a flute, and an accompanist at the piano. First they played Armenian music with the usual rather monotonous, jumpy dance rhythm. Then came Russian tunes, broader, calmer strains from the great steppes, full of the deep wistful resignation of a long-suffering people's soul. After these the beautiful song about Stenka Rasin, the Ukrainian robber-chief of the Volga and leader of the peasants, who of late especially has become a popular hero all over Russia. And lastly a number of Kurdish, Persian, and Turkish (Tatar) tunes. These were decidedly beautiful, and seemed more melodious than the Armenian music, in particular one striking Kurdish melody from the neighbourhood of Mount Ararat. But it is said that the Kurdish and Turkish songs are really borrowed from the Armenians.

It surprised me to hear them playing the music of their arch-enemies. And the spontaneous applause showed that they liked listening to it. I was assured that there was no longer any hatred between the nations, especially since the soviet system had been introduced. "We are all brothers now," they said; but I doubt whether it goes very deep. For instance, the children are fond of acting and have quite a talent for it; they always play melodramatic pieces, preferably those in which they can kill Turks!

It has become extraordinarily democratic in this country. Sitting at a table not far from us were several young men, one of whom was the Secretary of the People's Commissariat,

i.e. what we should call a Secretary to the Cabinet, while at the same table sat his chauffeur, the only member of the party who ate with his cap on. He was none too polished otherwise; but he took part in the conversation with a loud voice, giving his opinions with great self-assurance. At a long table next to ours sat another party of young men who looked better educated and behaved with more restraint. One of them came glass in hand to drink with us and welcome us in the name of his companions. I went across and touched glasses with them. They gave the impression of being very pleasant young fellows.

I was rather surprised to see so many different facial types. A large number were characteristically Armenian. Another, rather fairer type, had smaller noses and somewhat broader faces, in shape more like the Scandinavian. Some, again, were regular Roman Emperor types, with fatter faces and bull-necks.

When I next went down to our railway carriage I saw a beggar huddled up on the stone steps in front of the station, sleeping there all alone. It was a glimpse of another world. He must have been the only one who was not holiday-making that day. I left him to sleep in peace.

In the evening there was a big meeting at which the President of Armenia took the chair. The proceedings began with a very long speech by the young magistrate or mayor of Leninakan, evidently rehearsing the whole history of the canal, if not of Armenia. Of course I could not understand a word of it, but it struck me that the Armenian language did not sound well in speech-making; it is strong, perhaps, but rather staccato, especially when compared to Russian, which is more fluid. But no doubt much depends, as usual, upon the speaker; in an orator's mouth any language may become musical.

At last he was through, and was rewarded by loud applause. He was followed by many others, including my friend of the morning, the President of Georgia, who had a good presence and a calm, sensible manner. The President of Azerbaijan, a Tatar Moslem, also made a speech. First he spoke in Russian, then in Turkish, which was his native tongue. It





GIRLS SPINNING WITH HAND-SPINDLES NEAR ALAGÖZ  
STATION (p. 159)



ARMENIAN TYPES SEEN AT THE OPENING OF THE  
NEW CANAL (p. 164)

sounded decidedly fine, and he was much applauded. It surprised me once more to see that Turkish was so well received here. Formerly the Tatars in Azerbaijan were among the bitterest enemies of the Armenians, and it was not very long since they had perpetrated their bloody massacres of the Armenians at Baku. But it is all unity, peace, and concord now.

I cannot give the content of all these speeches, excellent as no doubt they were, because unfortunately I was unable to understand a word of them. Suddenly the President asked me to speak, too, and I had to say a few words in German, which were translated by a professor from Erivan. And what was there to say, except what all the others must have been saying, about this historic day, which had ushered in a new era in the history of the present generation of the Armenian people, when at last these wide plains, parched since the dawn of the ages, had been given water to drink, the water which would gradually turn them into one continuous carpet of fruitful fields and orchards? I was also bound to say what a splendid impression we had formed of the whole undertaking—carried out by a clever and capable nation who were labouring, with the small means at their command, to build up a happier future after their age-long sufferings, privations, and disasters from war and pillage. If an era of peace had now dawned, it was our conviction, from all that we had seen, that such a capable and persevering people would quickly develop the many rich possibilities of their beautiful country and provide new homes for thousands of happy families. And they would have the sympathy of the whole civilized world with them in their work of building up a national home, which even if it did not include all Armenians, would at any rate be one which all of Armenian blood could regard as their native country.

After this meeting there was to be a concert, and we left while the chairman was making a speech in my honour, a fact of which I was unaware. In Armenia they still rejoice in a state of primitive happiness in which time is no object, so the concert did not begin until a couple of hours after the time stated on the programme. But the music was worth

waiting for, and there was some good singing by an Armenian baritone trained in the Italian school, and by others as well.

After that we were to have supper. The whole building was decorated in honour of the occasion, and all the passages and stairs had been converted, by a judicious use of sailcloth, into a copy of the tunnel we had plodded along in the morning, except that there was more light and no water to wade through. Up through this dry tunnel we walked in procession to the dining-hall. Here there were a great many people and a lavish menu. I made the acquaintance of the head engineer who had constructed the canal, and congratulated him on the successful completion of the work ; he impressed me as being an exceptionally capable and congenial person. There were many speeches, and the festivities continued merrily until well on in the small hours.

This, so far as we were concerned, was the end of the celebrations. As we had come to Armenia specially to study the prospects of artificial irrigation and the cultivation of new land, we were particularly lucky to have been present at the opening of a new canal, and to have seen how a great undertaking of that kind could be carried out.

#### THE WORK OF THE NEAR EAST RELIEF IN ARMENIA.

We had now to study what the great organization of the American Near East Relief had done for the education of thousands of Armenian orphan children, and for the cultivation of the country. This organization had several sections round Leninakan. These "communities," as they were called, were housed in large buildings—chiefly barracks from the days of the Russian garrison—on the plain outside the town.

In the morning (Monday, June 22nd) Mr. Beach, the director of this work, came with several cars to fetch us, and took us to one of his communities, Kazachi Post, where we were given cleanly, comfortable rooms.

First we visited the well-appointed hospital, where we saw all that was being done for sick children and their relations,

and for many others who came from long distances to get treatment. The doors were seldom closed so long as there was room for anyone. Here there were large, clean, airy rooms where the patients lay in clean white sheets on comfortable iron bedsteads. The house had previously been a barracks. We were shown round by the efficient young Armenian doctors, each of whom was in charge of a separate ward, one for surgical cases, the other for internal diseases.

It was pathetic to witness the gratitude of the patients, who would kiss the doctor's hands while he attended to them. There was a man lying there who had been operated upon for cataract. He had not been able to see for several years, and now the bandage was to be removed from one eye for the first time since the operation. He had lost the other eye a long time before by an accident. It was an exciting moment. The bandage was undone and removed. The doctor held his hand in front of the man's eye. Yes, he could see it! And seizing the hand he kissed it.

After they had witnessed some of these wonderful operations, of which they had previously been afraid, the patients were ready to submit to anything in their absolute faith in the doctors. We saw a remarkable case of a boy with epilepsy. The fits had become more and more frequent, until at length they came on every second hour, and he seemed to be doomed to death. As a last desperate remedy the surgeon, Dr. Evans, opened the whole top of the skull to make more room and relieve the pressure on the brain. From that time the boy had not had a single attack. It was not very long since the operation, so nothing could yet be said for certain as to how things would go; but for the time being the boy had no pain and looked pleased and happy.

In the afternoon we visited the Seversky Community, where we were enthusiastically welcomed by the four thousand girls, all dressed in their best, who lived there, and were of all ages from two or three years upwards. It was encouraging to see all those happy, radiant faces, and to notice the way they gathered round and clung to Miss MacCay, the head of the institution. We saw the big dormitories where they slept, with the beds in long rows and in two storeys; also where

they had their meals and their lessons ; all was clean and airy and in apple-pie order.

Afterwards there was a big gymnastic display and various competitive games on the big playground in front of the buildings. It was a pretty sight to see all those brightly dressed little figures formed up in lines on the plain. Everything was done with precision ; evidently their bodily health and development were well looked after, while their mental growth was attended to in a good day-school.

In the evening there was a big dinner at the American club, which is composed of most of the officials of the various local divisions of the Near East Relief. Besides the American members of both sexes the Armenian officials who had been at the opening of the canal were present as guests. There were numerous speeches, the first being an admirable one by Mr. Beach, who gave a short account of the work and aims of the N.E.R. When it came to my turn to say a few words I spoke of the two memorable days we had just experienced. First, we had seen how the land which had thirsted for thousands of years had been given water ; then how thousands of thirsting and responsive little souls, thousands of happy-eyed children, were receiving loving and wise care. These things were symbolic of what mankind needed now to heal the terrible wounds of war : work to improve the material conditions of life, and love to awaken faith and confidence.

On the following morning (Tuesday, June 23rd) we went over a third section of the Near East Relief : the Polygon Community, with 3,500 boys and 1,500 girls. Here we saw the little gardens which the boys had made ready in advance to receive the water on the great day when the canal should be opened. Each boy had his own little plot, and they had worked with a will at planting and sowing them. But that the water would ever come through this parched desert was almost more than they could believe.

When the day came the boys all stood ready with their tin boxes, waiting to spread the water over the soil if it really came.

And sure enough it had come !—rippling down the little runnels they had dug for it. Then more—and still more !

Indescribable jubilation! All the boys set to work at once to splash the water about with their tin boxes. But one genius found out that the water could be diverted in other directions by damming it up with earth; and this discovery was quickly exploited by everyone else. So the soil was watered, and before long the seeds would begin to come up in all those little gardens. And in those boyish souls, which would never forget that wonderful experience, there would grow up a new idea of what human labour can accomplish.

We also saw the kindergarten for the smallest children, and for those who were a little older—boys and girls alike—the workshop schools with many different divisions for different handicrafts: carpentry and joinery shops, tinsmiths' and shoemakers' shops, and so on. There were needlework rooms for the girls; and instruction was given in weaving, embroidery, lace-making, etc. We were shown specimens of their work; the boys had made beautiful tools; evidently these children were very handy, and had been well taught. The most pathetic spectacle was that of the blind children who had learnt to work, making brushes and combs and similar articles in the construction of which they could utilize their sense of touch. They gave me two splendid brushes as a keepsake: a clothes-brush and a hair-brush, both of which I constantly use. One big lad made excellent fine-tooth combs with tools which he had made himself. His blind, immobile face, with an expression of unutterable melancholy, was almost more than one could bear. Blindness is very prevalent here, being largely due to a widespread disease of the eyes. It is highly important, therefore, that these blind children should learn to do something useful. One school which must not be forgotten is that in which the elder girls learn nursing from competent American-trained nurses. This will help to satisfy a felt want in the country.

In the dormitories the children slept in beds arranged in two storeys, so that several hundreds were accommodated in each room. These dormitories were clean, spacious, and bright, but were not warmed in winter, although the temperature outside was sometimes as low as a couple of degrees below zero (Fahrenheit). In the dining-hall there was room

for five thousand children to eat at the same time, sitting in rows at long, narrow tables. We saw them marching in by sections with military precision, each section going to its own proper table. The dining-hall and the work connected with it was under the direction of a retired Armenian general, a good-looking, grey-bearded old man who had seven children of his own, and who had thrown himself, with touching self-sacrifice, heart and soul into this labour of love. In return he was adored as a father by all the children.

After a pleasant lunch with Mr. and Mrs. Beach, who had a separate house of their own, and after seeing the hospital and the blind school of this community, we paid a visit to the town to see the new Government cotton-mill, a large factory which had only been running for a month, but was probably going to be enlarged so that it could manufacture cloth from all the cotton produced in the country. We went over the whole mill and saw the various cotton materials made there; and I can testify to the excellence of these goods by personal experience of the samples that were given me. Practically all the girls in charge of the looms were from the Near East Relief homes for children. It was surprising to see how expertly they managed the machines after only a month's practice, and how easily and methodically all the work was done. It gave one an excellent impression of the education they had received.

After we had seen the factory we were taken to a kind of lecture or assembly room, evidently used for lectures, theatrical performances, and the like. All the hands had been assembled there. A cordial speech welcoming me was interpreted, and I replied with a few words, wishing their important undertaking every success. Then there was another speech by one of the workmen, who said that they would like me to have a remembrance of this visit in the form of some samples of their work. The materials were still rather coarse, he said, but they hoped soon to be able to make finer ones as well. Thereupon a couple of men came up the room carrying several big rolls of various kinds of cotton cloth made by the factory—sheeting and towelling. I confess that my first ungrateful and horrified thought was how on earth I should take such

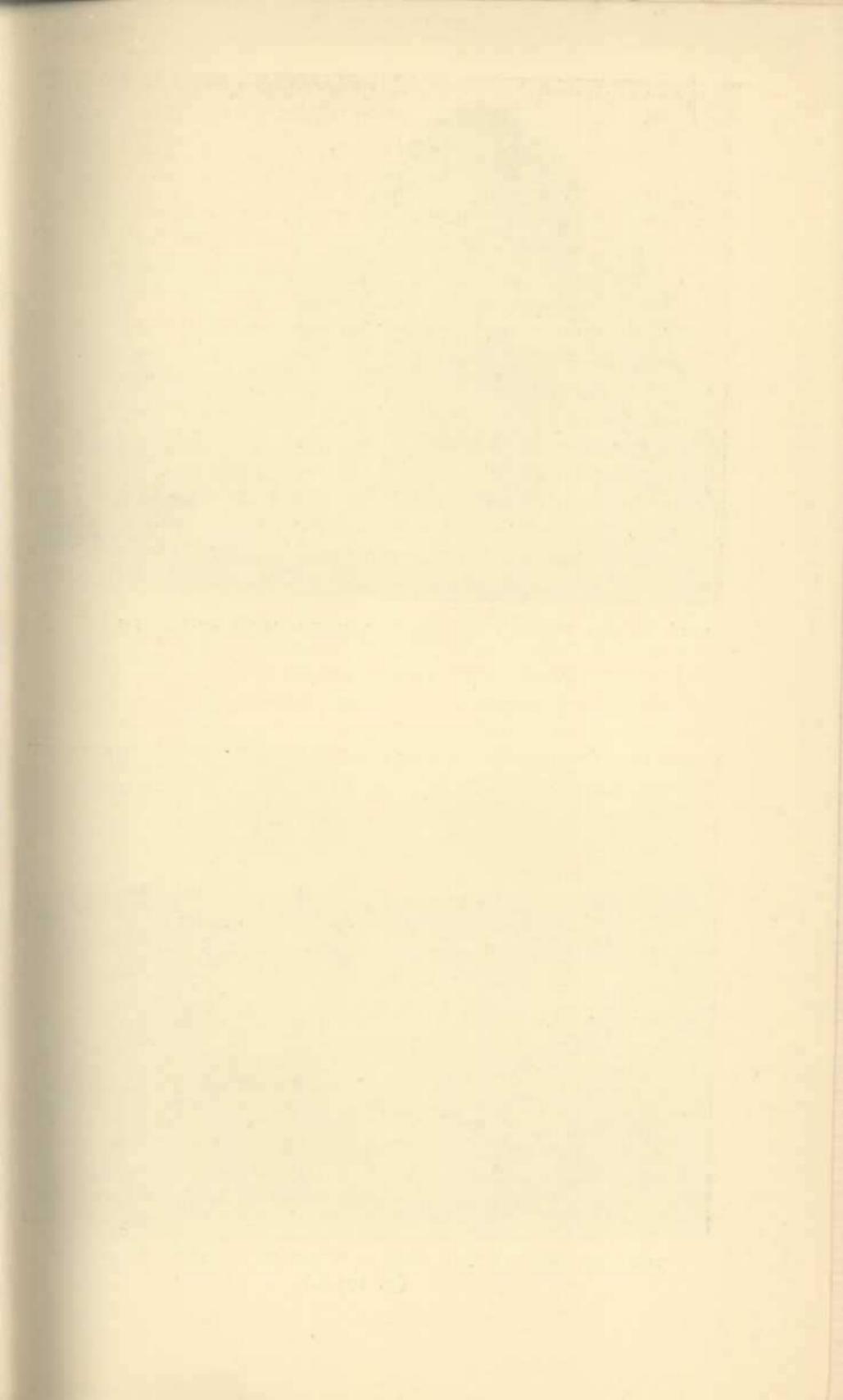
a lot of cloth all the way home. But I was touched by their generosity, and expressed my gratitude as well as I could. In the end I got these excellent materials safely back to Norway, where they are in daily use in my house.

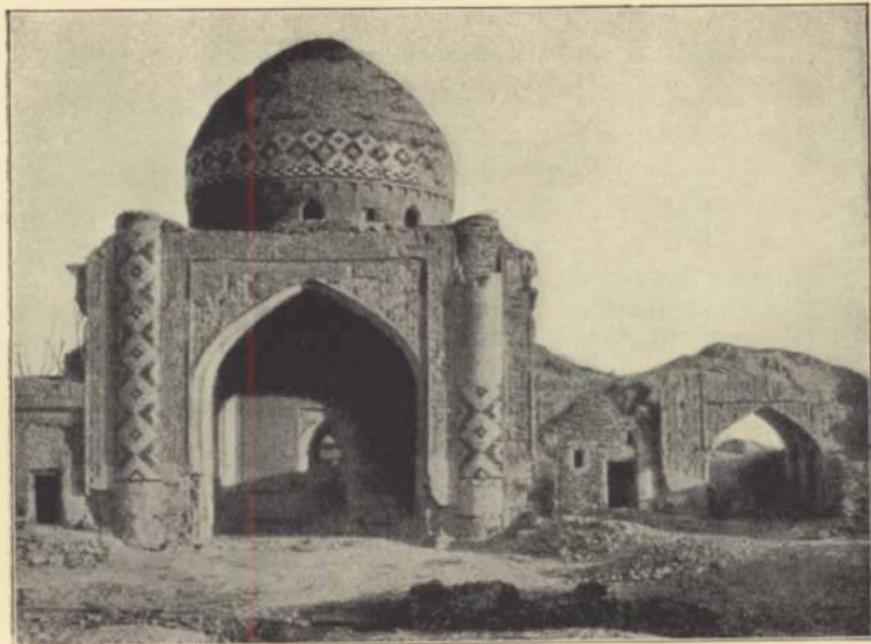
After this we motored out into the country to Arpa-chai. On a level stretch of ground east of the river in the wide valley there was a large summer camp belonging to the Near East Relief, to which the boys were sent for a couple of weeks at a time. Here they lived in tents and led a thoroughly healthy life, bathing in the river and having various gymnastics and games. The camp looked very trim and attractive; there were thirty-two children in each tent. The commandant was a splendid-looking Armenian, formerly an officer on the Russian general staff, who was instilling a military sense of order into the boys. We arrived just as they were going to have "afternoon tea." The boys came marching along in columns from their playground, and sat down at long tables in the open air. They all seemed strong and healthy, and looked very smart as they marched past in their white blouses and shorts. Each was given a bowl of soup and a piece of bread. We were invited to join them at the long tables, where everybody was very cheery, with much joking and laughter. But it was getting late in the afternoon, so we had to take leave of the hospitable commandant and the ladies who were helping to run the camp, and started back over the plains, followed by the cheers of the boys.

This completed our two days' adventures. We had now seen all the different institutions of the Near East Relief at Leninakan. These included homes and schools for 11,000 orphans, probably the largest number to be found assembled anywhere. We were deeply impressed by the magnificent work which had been done, and was still being done, to bring these children up to be efficient members of society. Especially as many thousands of these healthy, happy, and clever children had actually been reclaimed from death. Moreover, we had seen a colony at Sardarabad, where a thousand young men educated in these homes were cultivating new land. A truly great achievement this, in healing the wounds of war.

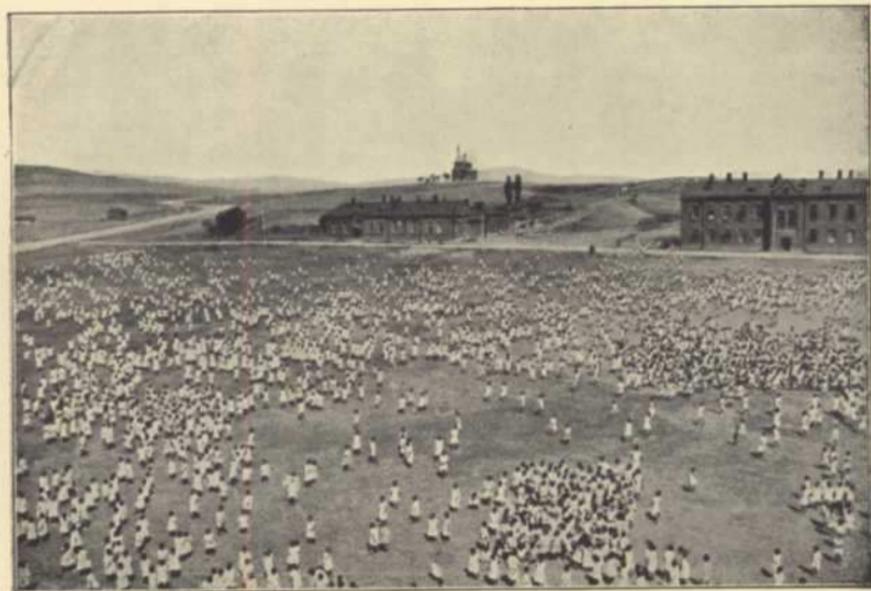
In a valley up in the north of the country there was an

agricultural school belonging to the Near East Relief; also, farther to the north, an agricultural station where a number of the older lads were working and learning scientific methods of agriculture. This would be well worth seeing; the only difficulty was how to fit it in. As we very much wanted to see the northern part of the country, which is entirely different from the southern and western plains we had seen so far, our American friends had most kindly arranged that we should go that way to Erivan next day in a car belonging to them and another lent by the Government. We now found that we could branch off from our route northwards through the mountains to the Near East Relief agricultural school at Stepanova, and still reach Erivan before nightfall; so a wire was sent to announce that we should visit the school next day at lunch-time. After that we spent one more pleasant evening with our American friends.





RUIN OF THE PERSIAN MOSQUE IN THE FORTRESS AT ERIVAN (*p.* 152)



THE CHILDREN AT THE NEAR EAST RELIEF STATION, LENINAKAN  
(*p.* 173 ff.)

## VIII

### THROUGH NORTH ARMENIA TO ERIVAN

EARLY next morning (Wednesday, June 24th) we had first to collect the various persons who were going on this expedition from different places in and outside the town. In addition to the five members of our commission there was Miss MacCay, who was going to spend her holiday at the agricultural station; Mr. Fathergill, who was to act as our guide; the representative of the Government, our friend Narriman Ter Kasarian, *alias* Napoleon; and the inevitable official newspaper correspondent. At last all were duly collected and safely aboard, and we set off in the two cars, leaving Leninakan behind us.

We had not seen much of the town itself, but so far as I could understand there was nothing of very special interest to see there. It is a comparatively new Russian provincial town with an Armenian population. Originally it was a small Armenian hamlet called Gumri, being then in a district which belonged to the kingdom of Georgia. When this area came under Russia in 1801, Gumri became an important Russian outpost and military station on the frontier facing Turkey. Gradually the fortifications of this outpost were strengthened until it eventually became a strong fortress; and more particularly after the visit of the Tsar Nicholas I in 1836 it developed from a hamlet into the considerable town of Alexandropol, which the Bolsheviks afterwards re-christened Leninakan. The fortress, encircled by earthworks and stone and brick walls, occupies a height west of the town, on the side towards the valley of the Arpa-chai. The town used to be a good deal larger than Erivan, and its population may be estimated at something like 40,000.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> After the above was written, Leninakan and the country around were devastated by a terrible earthquake in the autumn of 1926. Four-fifths of the houses in the town were destroyed, besides thirty villages; about 80,000 people were rendered homeless. About 350 are reported to have been killed, and 400 seriously wounded, in this district. A larger number would doubtless have perished had not a small shock induced the population to leave their houses

It is situated on an extensive plateau, stretching—at heights varying from 1,500 to 1,900 metres—in an easterly and north-easterly direction to the foot of the frontier mountains of Northern Armenia north of Mount Alagöz, and far away to the west on the other side of the Arpa-chai river, which cuts through this elevated plain either in a deep valley or a narrow canyon. On the south-east and south this plain is bounded by Mount Alagöz and its slopes and offshoots. In the same way that the whole of the Arax and Sardarabad plain is dominated by the vast bulk of Mount Ararat in the south, the mighty volcano Alagöz is here the main feature of the landscape. With its wide and jagged crater it stretches upwards to 4,095 metres above sea-level. The middle and highest part, with steep sides and snowfields on the summit, is surrounded by a broad belt of more gently sloping mountainous country, often with undulating, rounded ridges, and some volcano-like cones. The whole country consists of lava masses which once overflowed from Alagöz or the smaller craters at the sides right down to the Arpa-chai and the valley of the Arax, except where the ground is composed of tuff and ashes hurled out of the craters.

Owing to the altitude the climate of this plain is a good deal colder than that of Erivan, being too cold for cotton-growing; but the fact that the rainfall is greater on the average than it is on the Arax plain,<sup>1</sup> especially in spring and early summer and above all in May and June, makes it possible to grow corn in some parts without artificial irrigation. The crop is sown in April and reaped in July or August; but the harvest is uncertain on account of the frequent droughts. When artificial irrigation is available it will make an appreciable difference, and this fertile soil will yield really large crops.

before the main shock came. Large areas of Turkish Armenia have also been devastated. Fortunately the Shiraksky canal has not, so far as my information goes, been damaged.

<sup>1</sup> The mean annual rainfall is 408 millimetres in Leninakan, 318 millimetres in Erivan, and 280 millimetres in Echmiadzin. In 1924—a comparatively dry summer on the Arax plain—the amounts were as follows:

	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.
	mm.	mm.	mm.	mm.	mm.
Leninakan .. ..	39	72	83	7	6
Erivan .. ..	44	30	16	10	2
Echmiadzin .. ..	42	18	17	10	2

When we travelled across this plain it looked dry and scorched. As a rule there was nothing but a few scattered tufts of grass; there were no trees at all, and not a patch of rich verdure to be seen anywhere. The winter is very severe, and therefore the small peasant houses, built of stone with flat roofs, are half buried underground in the slopes as a protection against the winter cold. The villages are insignificant-looking and scarcely noticeable in the landscape, particularly as there are no trees round them.

It was a fresh, brilliantly sunny morning. The air was full of trilling larks; and the country we were driving through was very beautiful, with the brown, slightly undulating plain on all sides, and the blue mountain slopes rising in the distance at its edges. On the east and north we had the north-western portion of the mountains which, on this side of the Sevan Lake, form a ridge separating the Arax and Kura regions, and dividing the green valleys and damp climate of the north from the dry desert-like plains of the south. On the south-east and south we had the mighty volcanic bulk of Mount Alagöz; while on the west the plain extended to the distant heights near Kars, and to the Chaldir Mountains round Lake Chaldir Göl in the north-west. But the landscape was utterly bare, without a tree anywhere.

The country road was quite a good one, so we could drive at high speed. We soon left the plain and entered the mountains, crossing the railway-line at 1,952 metres above sea-level. Then we travelled along a wide valley following the railway in an eastward direction, keeping south of the Chobukhly or Bezobdal Mountains. The river, which has a very considerable fall, runs into the Kura.

When we were a good 50 kilometres from Leninakan we turned off the main road and followed a by-road going north across the Bezobdal ridge. An overwhelming spectacle met our eyes when we entered a narrow cul-de-sac valley with the face of the mountain rising sheer in front of us, and saw the road like an ever thinner thread winding with innumerable turns up the precipitous mountain-side, higher and ever higher until it vanished far above us on the edge of the cliff. It is difficult to estimate distances and heights when the

measurements are so great, but from the valley the face of the mountain appeared to be 2,000 feet high (it is really about 500 metres). The road, constructed by the Russians, was an excellent piece of engineering. We drove at a great rate up the never-ending series of bends, and often the turns looked very sharp, with the sheer precipice underneath; but they never were so sharp but what our long car could take them without stopping, so long as it went close to the edge. We ascended higher and higher. Below us was the desolate valley, and the road winding up the naked flank of the mountain. There was not a tree to be seen, but at any rate there was green grass. Far, far down, the river foaming through the bottom of the valley looked like a long thread of white cotton. Far beyond, we could see the main valley; and on the other side of it the Pambak Mountains rearing aloft their blue ridges and peaks.

At last we reached the top and could go ahead. We were on the crest now, and what a sight! Beneath us lay another valley with the most beautiful leafy woods on the steep slopes; and ridge upon ridge of forest-clad hills—refreshing, indeed, after all those parched plains. In the luxuriant greenness of the valley below big red patches showed among the trees; they were villages with red roofs. M. Carle was so enthusiastic about the place that he got out, announcing his intention to stay there and botanize till we came back. We had no food with us for such a contingency, but that did not seem to worry him; there were a few biscuits, and these were all he needed.

So we descended the hill by the sharply zigzagging road, and soon reached the woods, composed of oaks, beeches, limes, walnuts, and other foliaceous trees. Still we continued down and down towards the valley. We drove through several villages totally unlike those we had seen up to then—it was quite like being in another country. The houses had a pleasantly trim appearance, with whitewashed walls, wooden window-frames, and sloping tiled roofs, which shone a cheerful red in the sun against the background of green foliage. These are Russian villages, most of them built by Russian dissenters, Dukhobors and Molokans who had to leave Russia a hundred years ago for the sake of their faith

and settled in the valleys of Northern Armenia. There are also some Orthodox Russians, who came on the scene later. They have all shown themselves to be capable and hard-working farmers, whose houses are usually neat and in good repair, suggesting a certain amount of prosperity. One village, apparently inhabited by Orthodox Russians, had a church with a many-gabled roof very much like a Norwegian *stavkirke*.

This was close to the river Djilga-chai, which winds eastward along the wide level bottom of a remarkably well-developed canyon with precipitous sides. In this respect the Djilga-chai forms a striking contrast to the river on the other side of the pass we had driven through, where there is no sign of a canyon, only an ordinary valley of a pronounced V-shape. It is curious that, in a district where the rainfall is comparatively large, there should be a deep, sheer canyon; for this indicates that there has been little water-erosion at the sides. Probably the explanation is that the very heavy downpours in the mountains, which suddenly swell the river from time to time, give it a far greater erosive power than that of the water which runs down from the sides of the valley.

On the plateau on the other side of the canyon were the ruins of the ancient town and castle of Lori, at a point where the river makes an S-shaped bend, so that on three sides the town was shut in by the canyon with its almost perpendicular sides, while on the fourth, towards the flat bottom of the valley, it was defended by a strong fortified wall. It had thus a situation closely resembling that of Ani, and seems to have been practically impregnable in mediæval times. Here, at the close of the tenth century, a kingdom was established, under a branch of the House of the Bagratids, which continued to exist until the thirteenth century. Ultimately Queen Tamara of Georgia extended her frontiers in this direction also, and took the town.

In due course we arrived at the agricultural school at Stepanova, where they were not expecting us, as our telegram was only delivered after we got there. Nothing, however, could have been more hospitable than the reception given to us, and we were treated to the best the house could provide.

It was interesting to see the work which was being done here to improve the methods of agriculture; especially the experimental cultivation of many different kinds of clover, corn, grass, alfalfa (lucerne), etc., with a view to finding out which were most suitable for this climate and soil. We should have liked to make a thorough study of these important matters, but if we were to reach Erivan before it was too dark to see the country we were travelling through there was no time to be lost; so after a very pleasant lunch we set off again. It was a great pity that we failed to see the big agricultural station itself, situated a good deal higher up in the valley, where, as I have said, a number of the Near East Relief boys were working as agricultural pupils.

We drove back by way of the Russian villages. In one of them we stopped for a minute or two. We saw several well-dressed women, old and young, including one girl, who was quite fair, tall, and handsome. In general, they were altogether different from the Armenians, being bigger, heavier, and not so good-looking, well-built, and graceful; one could see that this was another race, coming from a harsher northern climate. The houses were neat, and had substantial, well-kept outbuildings.

A little way beyond this village was a river with a bridge which was so ramshackle that we did not dare to risk crossing it in our cars, preferring to drive through the river at a shallow place. We tore up the zigzag road to the top of the ascent at a great rate. On reaching the summit we found our friend awaiting us, well satisfied with the results of his stay there; as usual, he had made good use of his time in studying the flora, and had made a number of interesting finds.

A few minutes later we reached the beginning of the descent. Good-bye to the beautiful woods and the ancient realm of Lori—then down into the bare, barren valley on the other side! Down, down, in a never-ending series of hairpin bends. Soon we were back on the road to Erivan, speeding along the valley towards the south-east. For some distance we followed the railway—as far as the town of Karaklis, where it turned north with the river to go by the narrow gorge of the Borchala-chai down to the valley of the Kura

near Tiflis, while our own road continued towards the south-east, up the valley which runs north of the Pambak Mountains.

Everywhere here the country was fertile and beautiful, with well-wooded valleys and slopes, utterly different from the plains in the south. Evidently the climate was damper, with a sufficiency of rain; the fields were green, and there was verdure and rich vegetation wherever one's eye turned.

The villages, Armenian as well as Russian, were built quite differently from those in the south. The walls seemed to be made of whitewashed stone and brick, always with a ridged roof covered with red tiles; flat-roofed houses of the usual Armenian type are unsuitable for this climate, even when they are built of stone instead of sun-dried clay. On the side facing the street they had verandahs.

The sky had gradually darkened with threatening clouds, and just as we were driving through the streets of Karaklis a drenching downpour caught us, so that we were obliged to stop and close the cars. But the rain became worse and worse, and the deep mud on the roads became more and more slippery, with the result that we skidded more than was pleasant. We drove on, but the rain only became heavier. We passed a village named Voskresenka, near a pass where we were at an altitude of 1,600 metres; then descended to the valley of the river Akstafa. The surrounding country was picturesque and fertile, with green, wooded hills on either side, and above them the crests of the mountains veiled in heavy rain-clouds.

There was now a fair sprinkling of houses along the road; evidently we were getting near a town. Then suddenly we turned up a narrow clayey lane. What was the meaning of this? Well, we had to make a brief stop here, because the town council wished to welcome us. The news came as rather a shock, for we had no time to spare if we were to reach Erivan before nightfall. We drove in through a fine luxuriant garden to some inviting-looking houses, larger and more prosperous in appearance than any we had seen in those parts. It proved to be a sanatorium. Here we were received by the senior doctor, by the director, who was an

Armenian Soviet official, by the mayor of the town, and other "notables" of the place.

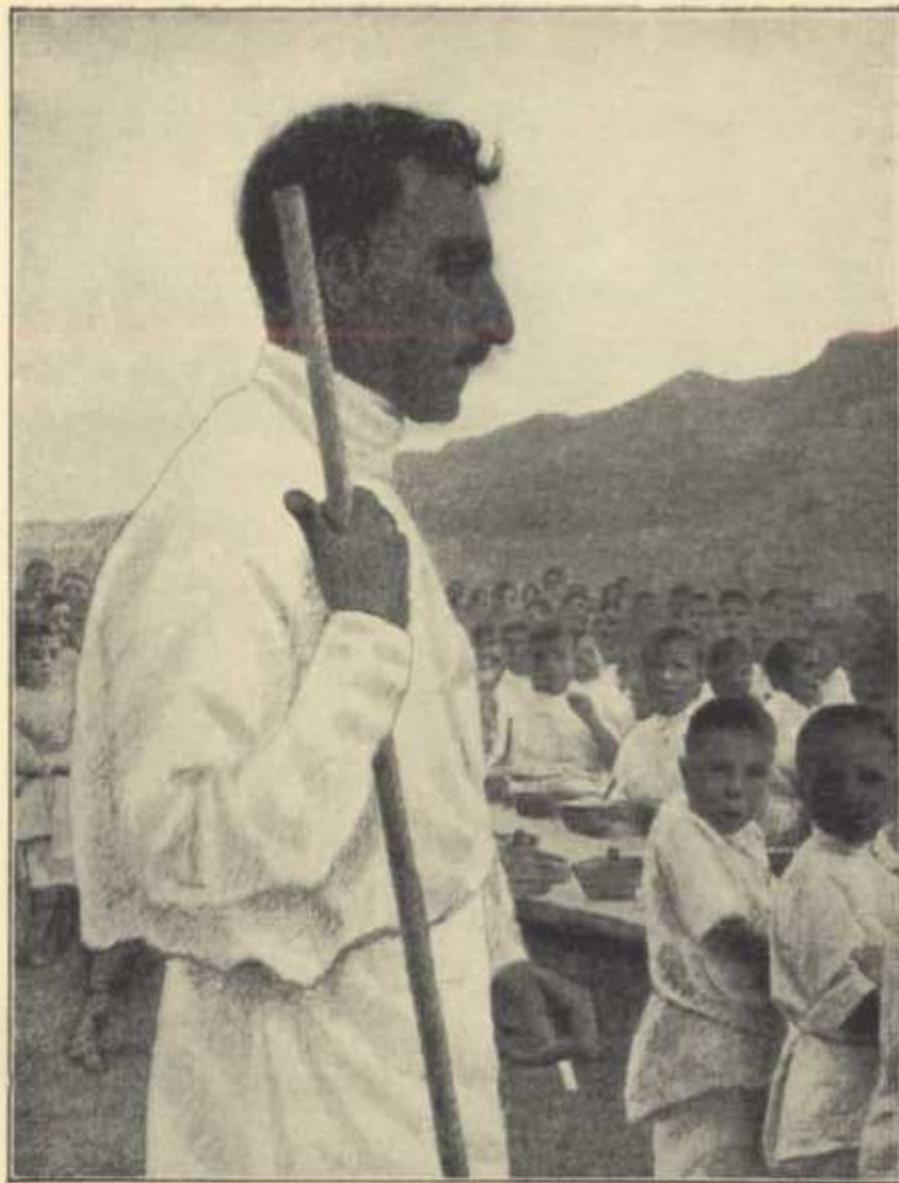
The town we had arrived at was Delidjan, one of the largest in Armenia, and the most important centre in this part of the country. It lies about 1,400 metres above sea-level, surrounded by green wooded slopes, hills, and higher mountains which rise to considerable altitudes, 3,000 metres or more. The river which runs through the valley falls into the Kura. The sanatorium we were visiting was for patients suffering from tuberculosis. Awaiting us on a large verandah overlooking the town was a table laid with appetizing eatables. Clearly we should not be allowed to leave before dark, so we made arrangements forthwith for staying the night in the town.

It came as an abrupt transition after a long and lively dinner, with many cordial speeches in German and English, to be shown round the sanatorium by the doctor. It saddened one to see so many tuberculous patients, especially those in the last stages of consumption; but they were cheerful and grateful for being well looked after. Some of them were so weak that they could hardly lift their heads from the pillow. Oh, that other-world look on the emaciated faces, with features as if chiselled in alabaster, and a smile on the pale lips and in the fine large eyes! One lovely young girl joked and laughed with refreshing courage, brightness, and charm—determined that she would not spoil the few remaining weeks before the last great journey. A moving hymn to life—and there were many such. The patients were being nursed by kind-hearted sisters, and were well off now compared with much that they had gone through before. Besides the genial superintending doctor there were two pleasant and intelligent assistant doctors and three efficient lady doctors.

Having taken leave of our hospitable hosts we drove to the town in the valley below; our hotel was quite new and not yet finished, but we got clean rooms and good beds there. It was still raining obstinately, and the rain continued all night; but in the morning (Thursday, June 25th) it stopped, the mists clinging to the mountain-sides gradually lifted, and the sky became blue.



BUYING BREAD FROM THE STEWARD ON  
BOARD



THE SUPERINTENDENT OF THE BOYS' SUMMER CAMP  
(p. 175). A TYPICAL ARMENIAN FACE (cf. p. 236)

Delidjan is a charming place. The houses are far apart, with luxuriant gardens and trees in between, so that one glimpses their gables and roofs peeping out among the thick overhanging foliage. All around the country is green and wooded. The rain was so abundant while we were there that the valley struck us as being damp; but the mean annual rainfall is only 521 millimetres, a little less than the rainfall in Oslo, which is 572 millimetres. Most of the rain, however, falls in summer, chiefly in June, when it is most needed by the growing vegetation. The mean annual temperature is about 46 or 48° F. (compared with 42° in Oslo), and the climate is evidently very pleasant. The average temperature during the winter months December-February is 32°, or a little less.

From this place we were to drive across the Pambak Mountains to Lake Sevan. First the road ran south through a pretty, thickly wooded side-valley, where the chief foliaceous trees were oak and beech, with patches of pine-wood here and there as well. We passed long strings of bullock-carts loaded with huge logs, which are used in house-building, and are transported in large quantities across the mountains to the treeless regions in the south. We climbed higher and higher up the mountain towards the pass. The ascent was not so steep, or with so many sharp turns, as the pass we had crossed on the way to Stepanova the day before. Above the woods we came to slopes covered with green grass. Excellent mountain pasture it seemed to be; I cannot recollect ever having seen such long luxuriant grass on the mountains anywhere else. Here and there we saw some curious round dome-roofed tents resembling the felt tents (yurts) of the Kirgis. They belonged to Tatars from Azerbaijan, nomads who brought their herds here every summer and wandered about these pastures until the autumn, when they went back to Azerbaijan. We saw several large herds of cattle.

I asked the mayor of Delidjan, who was accompanying us for part of the way, whether it gave rise to disputes when these nomads drove their animals on to the mountain pastures belonging to the resident population. He answered that there were practically no difficulties, as the resident population did

not own so many cattle that they needed all the pasture, of which, indeed, there was more than enough for all. But I could not help thinking that in days to come, with increasing prosperity and larger numbers of cattle, there would be trouble ; and the nomads, who have roamed these mountains from early times, would be none too ready to relinquish their ancient rights.

The pass was at an altitude of 2,125 metres, encircled by rich grassy heights. Leaving it behind, we came to a Russian village, where the Government was building a new dairy which we wanted to see. The intention was to establish fifteen of these dairies in different parts of the country to encourage farming and cattle breeding. Here a provisional dairy was already in full swing. The chief product was gruyère cheese, which was so good that there was no difficulty in selling as much as the dairy could make. There are great prospects for the development of this industry, if full use is made of the splendid pastures on these vast highlands ; and in that case there would be room for a much larger population. Hay is mown on some of the slopes, and the crop could be greatly increased by sowing clover and timothy grass. Round the village we saw large areas under potatoes, which seemed to do well there. Barley was being grown also ; but it seemed to be too high for other kinds of corn.

Our time was limited, so we drove on down the road to Lake Sevan, also known as Lake Gökcha, and soon saw its wide expanse of water below us. Treeless but green slopes fell undulating down towards the lake. We drove through several Russian villages, also through some inhabited by Armenians. The contrast was striking : the Russian villages usually had trim houses with whitewashed walls and tiled roofs, whereas those belonging to Armenians had an unkempt appearance, with low, flat-roofed, grey stone cottages.

The mayor of Delidjan told us that violent hailstorms were so frequent in summer that the barley was often beaten down and ruined ; and for this reason the Government were trying to get the peasants to see that it would be better to confine themselves to cattle-farming and growing hay, and, of course, potatoes. They were sending round ambulatory teachers to

instruct the peasants in scientific methods of feeding their cattle, which would lead to a large increase in the yield of milk and open the peasants' eyes to the fact that such methods paid. But even as things were we saw quite a large amount of ploughed and cultivated land, with fields of barley which were doing well. The rainfall here (at Semenovka) is comparatively great, 639 millimetres for the year.

And now we were down by the lake. It stretches right away to the horizon in the south-west, a distance of about 75 kilometres, and is 33 kilometres at its greatest width in the extreme south. Its height above sea-level is 1,925 metres, and its maximum depth 88 metres. In shape it is roughly triangular, with the longest side on the north-east, running from north-west to south-east. From this north-eastern coast the Shakh Dagh Mountains rise comparatively sheer to altitudes of between 3,000 and 3,300 metres (Akhkaya Dagh) above sea-level. Continuing the Pambak Mountains in the north-east, by which we had come, this ridge of mountains forms the watershed between the Kura and the Arax. It is prolonged still farther eastward from the south-east corner of the lake in the great continuous range of Khrebet Murov Dagh, which, at a height of 3,000 metres, juts out towards the wide plain of the Kura near the Caspian Sea. It has peaks as high as 3,420 (Murov Dagh) and 3,740 (Gyamysh Dagh) metres above sea-level. South and west of the lake the mountains stretch upward rather less steeply to a similar height, with continuous ridges over 3,000 metres high, and peaks of 3,530 metres in the south and 3,600 metres (Akh Dagh) in the west. The lake is thus in a basin encircled by ranges of mountains, whose watersheds are for the most part more than 1,100 metres above the level of the lake and at varying distances: about 6 or 7 kilometres on the north-east, and about 20 kilometres on the west. By the north-west corner, where we came down, the mountains are lower; and it is here that the lake has an outlet into a comparatively flat depression.

Twenty-eight small rivers run into the lake, besides many lesser streams; and most of the rivers come from the south and south-west, but, as will be understood from the short

distance to the watershed, they are all short, and the amount of water in them varies greatly. There are also numerous springs in and near the lake.

Though the winter is long and cold, ice only forms on enclosed bays, and that only when there is a severe frost. The country round the lake is bare, with very little vegetation; on the north and north-east coast there are naked rocks and boulders; only on the south-east, south, and south-west are more inviting-looking tracts, sloping down towards its ample surface. We could still see fields and patches of snow glittering on the surrounding mountains.

The lake is full of fish; its splendid big trout are celebrated all over Armenia as a special delicacy, often served on festive occasions. It is also exported, and plans are being considered for tinning it.

We followed the shore of the lake in a southerly direction, and soon saw the little "holy isle" of Sevan, which is not far from the coast. There is a church on it, and a time-honoured monastery, where there is a museum and a library containing many old manuscripts. It is tenanted by a single monk only. The Armenians think a great deal of this island, which is looked upon as a national treasure, and every year a great church festival is held there in August. The peasants flock thither in great numbers from far and wide, and stay on the island for a week in specially erected hostels. We had intended to cross over and see the island and the monastery, but as there was no boat there just then, and we had no time to wait, we drove on to the outlet of the lake.

Here a great piece of work was in progress: they were building a dam and sluice to regulate the flow of water in the river to some extent, hoping thereby to make better use of the water for irrigation purposes and power. The dam was not a high one—it would not raise the level of the lake by more than 10 centimetres—but it would nevertheless increase the volume of water by 140 million cubic metres, which could be used for irrigation in the driest months, July and August, when it was most needed, and would be sufficient to irrigate a large area of country. But still more important than raising the level of the lake was the deepening of the river-bed at

the outlet, which would make it possible to lower the level of the lake when desired, while the sluice in the dam would regulate to a nicety the amount that flowed out; in this way a large reserve of water would be under complete control, ready to be let out in specially dry seasons.

But it was strange to see how small the river Zanga was; where it flowed into this enormous lake it was no more than a big brook, and this seemed all the more remarkable when there was so much snow lying on the mountains around. Moreover, the rainfall there is not inconsiderable. According to measurements taken at six different stations over periods varying from three to thirteen years—at three of them the periods covered eleven to thirteen years—the average for the whole area is calculated at 477 millimetres. I am inclined to think this calculation too low, as the rainfall in the mountains is certainly greater than that recorded at these stations.

The explanation must be that the lake's area of precipitation is small in proportion to its surface, from which the evaporation is bound to be considerable. By map-measurements I find that the surface-area is 1,360 square kilometres,<sup>1</sup> while the whole area of precipitation, including the lake, does not exceed 4,590 square kilometres, i.e. 3·4 times the size of the lake itself; and if we subtract the latter the land area is only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times the size of the lake. With an evaporation that is probably rather rapid in such a climate all the year round, including the winter,<sup>2</sup> one could hardly expect that there would be much surplus water to run away. A little water might also escape by percolating down through the porous rock at the bottom of the lake, though the amount would scarcely be appreciable. That the evaporation from the surface of a lake

<sup>1</sup> According to the calculation of several Armenian and Russian investigators the area of the lake is about 1,445 square kilometres at the highest water observed, and about 1,400 square kilometres at the lowest water observed.

<sup>2</sup> It is probable that the evaporation from the ice-free surface of this lake is very considerable, even in winter. As a rule, the temperature of the water will then be a good deal higher than that of the cold air above it. The lower layers of air will be warmed by the water and rise, carrying aqueous vapour with them. In this way constantly rising currents of air will be formed, which will carry off the vapour from the surface of the lake and in turn make way for new and drier air. The evaporation from the lake will thus be considerable. Moreover, the rainfall in winter is comparatively small, and the water in the lake is then at its lowest.

in these regions may be sufficient to neutralize the water coming into it is proved by the existence in various places of many small salt lakes without any outlet; while a couple of hundred kilometres to the south-west and south are the two large salt lakes, Van and Urmia, 1,718 and 1,250 metres respectively above the sea, and therefore not much lower than Lake Sevan.

According to measurements recorded for the years 1914-1917 the amount of water annually carried away by the river Zanga from the lake during these four years varied between 29.5 million cubic metres in 1917 and 118 million in 1915, equivalent to a flow of water averaging between 0.4 and 3.75 cubic metres of water a second. This means that only about one-twentieth, or less, of the water that descends over the whole area of precipitation runs out of the lake, provided that the average rainfall is not in excess of the amounts recorded at the stations concerned. The average amount of water carried away by the Zanga may, perhaps, be put at about 2 cubic metres a second; but at times when the lake is at its lowest—especially in winter—no water at all runs away.

After looking at the dam works we drove on across the undulating treeless plain which extends to the west and south-west. South of us the land rose towards the Akhmanagan Mountains and the plateau west of Lake Sevan. North of our road was the flat valley in the elevated plain through which the Zanga runs westward, a formation indicating that the river has never contained very much water, for otherwise it would doubtless have excavated a deeper, narrower valley. Only for a short distance from the outlet of the lake has it formed a 35-metre-deep ravine in the basalt, and this soon opens out into the flat valley.

On the other side of this valley a number of peaks rose in the north and north-west; these were the Darachichak Mountains, including one, Zinshirli Dagh, which is 2,832 metres high. The surrounding plains and mountain slopes were all treeless, but at least there was green grass growing there. We saw several villages, and on the slopes far off in the north-west on the opposite side of the valley we caught sight of a number of houses nestling among trees. This

place, we learned, was Zakhkadzor, a summer resort for the people of Erivan.

We stopped a few minutes in a little village, where the mayor of Delidjan took leave of us; he was going to wait there for his own car, which was coming to fetch him home. It seemed to be a thriving hamlet, thronged with peasants who had come in with their bullock-carts from the country round. Somewhat farther along the road we met two motor-buses which run three times a week from Erivan to Delidjan.

As it proceeds on its course the river Zanga receives the waters of several tributaries, the Grubel-chai, Songh-Bulagh, and Alapars-chai; it increases in volume and turns southward, while at the same time its valley becomes larger and deeper. Our own way went higher up, along the mountain-side. The country began to look brown and parched, and the green patches were now few and far between.

By and by we were heading for Erivan, and the scenery again underwent a complete change. Away in front of us the country opened out; in the south-west the undulating brown mountain plain sloped down to the flat lands in the broad Arax Valley, and in the west we could see the southern slopes of Mount Alagöz behind the heights on the far side of the Zanga Valley. The farther we went the browner and drier the country became.

Gradually the prospect opened out. Alagöz appeared more clearly, its massive shape towering above the mountain slopes in the west. And in the south-west, as far as the eye could reach, stretched the wide plain north of Echmiadzin, with the Sardarabad plain looking like a brown sea away to the west, and far beyond all, in the south, the blue mountain chain which extends westward from Mount Ararat, nearly a hundred kilometres distant.

Farther down we passed a deserted military station, with large empty houses. But the surrounding land was more fertile; there were trees and gardens, evidently the result of irrigation, for a little river came down from the mountains on the east.

But before long most of the country was arid and brown again, though unquestionably it could all be brought under

cultivation, as soon as water was available. Some of it, indeed, was cultivated without artificial irrigation, for we saw a good deal of land ploughed up for cornfields; but most of these fields looked very poor.

The road took a sudden turn, and we found ourselves on the edge of a steep descent, with Erivan on the plain right below us. A wonderful sight! Garden after garden, green and luxuriant, and white houses shining among the trees on the plain. It looked like a magnificent emerald jewel set in the bare brownish-yellow desert slopes that enclose the town on two sides. And behind it the wide, level Arax plain stretched away like a calm sea to the south and west, until it lost itself in the wilderness of Sardarabad. High above all, Mount Ararat reared its vast bulk in the south, with its broad gleaming snow-cap veiled in the clouds around its top, and Little Ararat's dark cone on the slope to the east, and the high chain of mountains extending westwards from Ararat like a blue wall at the back of the landscape. It is these tremendous contrasts between plains and high mountains, bare desert and luxuriant gardens that give to this scenery its peculiar and distinctive character.

The mountain-side around us was utterly barren, not a blade of grass to be seen anywhere, and descended sharply to the outskirts of the town, where it ended in a stone wall. But on the other side of the wall were rich orchards full of big trees laden with fruit—apricots, still unripe peaches, cherries and morello cherries, apples; and beyond these a continuous carpet of gardens and houses stretching away to the other side of Erivan, where you crossed another stone wall and found yourself in the desert again. This is what artificial irrigation can conjure up in Armenia.

We drove down to our hotel in the town, and another eventful expedition was at an end. We had motored through more than half of Armenia, had seen its remarkably varied scenery, and had formed a high opinion of the great possibilities of development and progress in the valleys and mountains of the damper part of the country in the north.





THE ROAD DOWN TO THE WOODED VALLEY ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE  
BEZOBDAL RIDGE (*p.* 179)



THE VALLEY AND ROAD UP THE BEZOBDAL RIDGE (*p.* 180)

## IX

### NEW PLANS FOR IRRIGATION. ECHMIADZIN

IN the afternoon we—the five members of the commission—were sitting in our hotel discussing the results of our investigations up to date, and various possible plans for cultivating the land. While Captain Quisling stood by the window for a moment he saw a violent whirlwind sweep down from the hill above the town and along the main street—just the way we had come—whirling up the dust in a tall column. It stopped when it reached the open space outside the hotel. But we continued our discussion, ignoring the vagaries of the weather outside.

Presently, however, the noise in the street became so much louder and more noticeable that we had to look out. We jumped up and saw that the whole place was flooded by large quantities of water which came swirling down the streets from above. The water rose quickly; soon the street in front of the hotel was a rapid river, the square and park were inundated, and there was no exit from the hotel without getting into deep water. People went wading along on the pavements, keeping close to the wall, carriages were up to their axles, automobiles splashed through water which was not very far from their motors, horsemen galloped by amid showers of spray, and a frightful din punctuated with shouts and screams rose into the air in all parts of the town.

What on earth had happened? Before sitting down to work we had noticed a black thunder-cloud drifting across the sky above the mountains in the north, but without attaching much importance to the sight, as the sky blackened like that so often without it coming to anything. Apparently, however, this cloud had been of unusual calibre, and there had been a regular cloud-burst over the mountain slopes, especially in a narrow ravine through which a small river runs down to the town. This river, becoming tremendously

swollen, had foamed down in spate, burst the banks of the irrigation canal above the university garden, and swept onward, flooding the upper part of the town. There had also been a hailstorm in the country higher up which had done a good deal of damage.

Rather odd that just when we were immersed in our plans for helping to get water, much too much of it should come to our very door!

After half an hour it began to sink. Then it sank more and more quickly, and the street in front began to emerge from the sea, first in islands, then as a whole, though water was still swirling along the gutters. The after-effects were deplorable—mud and dirt covered everything.

We were to have had a meeting in the afternoon with the Government committee, but their hands were more than full now. In the evening we went to the club for dinner. The main street was in an awful state; the gutters had been broken up, and stones and gravel scattered all over the place. Some of the paving-stones had been loosened and removed. It had a devastated look indeed, but we heard that some of the lower side-streets were worse still. Rumours grow apace, and a mole-hill soon becomes a mountain, even in a small place like Erivan. Next morning our friend the newspaper reporter, who, by the way, was employed by the Government, paid us a visit and told us in his best French and with an air of deep concern the most shocking stories of the flood. The damage done amounted to millions, and the corpses of twenty-six drowned people, mostly children, had been found near the station. Later on I heard that only one child had been discovered drowned in a cellar—but in the end that story evaporated too, while the material damage, though considerable, was reduced to quite manageable limits.

It is truly remarkable, however, that a single shower can give the water such power. It furnishes an excellent example of the amazing way in which the transporting capacity of water multiplies with the increasing speed of the current. A cloud-burst is bound to be disastrous here, where there are no woods or vegetation to stop the water on the mountain slopes, and no lakes to regulate the flow of the rivers. Great

masses of water suddenly sweep down in a devastating flood with nothing to hinder them, and that which would bring fertility and life if properly distributed brings death and destruction instead. Water is a good friend, especially in Armenia; but, like its opposite, fire, it must be kept under control. Luckily no catastrophe like the one described had happened for fifteen years.

In the afternoon (June 26th) we had a meeting with the Government committee, with Mr. Muravian, the Vice-President of the Government, in the chair. I informed them that the result of the investigations we had made so far was that the Sardarabad plan was feasible and would render possible the cultivation of large areas of fertile land; but the cost of carrying out that project would be so great that we saw no likelihood of being able to raise such a sum for the time being; and accordingly we could not recommend that the plan should be proceeded with at present. The next question was, could any other land be found which could be made fertile at a lower cost? We had formed the impression that there was a good deal of land answering to this description in the neighbourhood of Erivan.

The Government and its committee would no doubt have preferred us to adopt the great Sardarabad plan, which involved the largest expenditure, and was therefore the most difficult for them to carry through unaided; but they were very anxious that we should bring the Armenian refugees to Armenia, and gave it as their opinion that there were still two other alternatives. On both sides of Erivan were extensive uncultivated slopes, the so-called North-west Kirr and South-east Kirr regions, which could be supplied with water from the Zanga, according to a plan that had been drawn up provisionally. And secondly, there was the marshy land we had previously seen on the plain near Arax. This, as already stated, could be drained and irrigated.

These proposals sounded encouraging; we at once decided to set out next day and investigate the Kirr plan; and then, perhaps, have a look at the marshy lands the day after.

## THE KIRR REGIONS.

At eight o'clock in the morning (Saturday, June 27th) we started in two cars, accompanied by the two chief engineers, up the same road by which we had come from Lake Sevan. To-day the view from the height above the town was even more beautiful. Misty clouds hovered high up above the plain along the slopes of Ararat, but its snow-white summit was visible, shining in the sun well above the clouds.

We first motored to the village of Kanakirr, past the deserted military station we had seen before. From this place we had a view of the arid country lying to the west—nothing but brown slopes and plains as far as the eye could reach. But all this land could be transformed into rich gardens and green fields as soon as water was brought to it from the Zanga.

We drove down to the foot of the slope and walked a little way out into the plain. Of vegetation there were only a few vestiges here and there on the parched stony ground; but perhaps it was a little better than what we had seen in the desert of Sardarabad. We were chiefly struck by a little wild rose with charming pale pink flowers which crept along the ground among the stones in a few places. Evidently the soil was not entirely without moisture. But it looked dry and dun-coloured now; and it was exactly the same all the way westward to the Zanga gorge, and still farther west on the other side. We were more than ever struck by the amazing contrast, the sharp line of demarcation, between the waste and the cultivated land; here was this dun, stony plain—and then only a hundred yards away, on the slope up to the road, the most luxuriant gardens! Yet the soil was the same, the only difference being that, in the latter case, it was irrigated by a little river from the mountains to the east. Given water, all this waste land would look like that.

After motoring up again to Kanakirr we exchanged our cars for horse-drawn vehicles in order to drive through the orchards to the deep, narrow valley of the Zanga farther to the north. We drove to a point from which we could look

over the edge into the valley below. In two places there were trees at the bottom; otherwise the hillsides were brown and bare. The descent was steep. A slight landslide having destroyed the driving road near the bottom, we walked northwards along the valley to the place for the intake of the projected canal, about 7 kilometres from Kanakirr. It was 1,200 metres above sea-level; and the dam was to be 3.3 metres high and 25 metres long.

At that time the idea was to build only one intake canal, which would be carried for about 10 kilometres southward along the steep slope on the left side of the river until it reached the top of the descent, after which it could be continued for 30 kilometres across more level ground, spreading the water by numerous branches all over South-east Kirr, which is bounded on the south by the river Garni-chai. The total length of the main canal and its branches would then have been nearly 100 kilometres. From this large main canal some of the water was to have been conveyed in a big pipe to the west side of the Zanga Valley, continuing thence in another canal. In order to avoid the severe internal pressure in the pipe if it were carried down into the valley and up the opposite side, Mr. Dupuis suggested carrying it across on a suspension bridge; but he was in favour of doing without the pipe altogether if an alternative could be found. Since then the plan detailed above has been abandoned. Instead, a second canal will be constructed from the intake dam on the steep right-hand side, along which it will have to continue for 7 kilometres until it can turn in across more level ground; then, at a distance of about 12 kilometres from the intake, it can be prolonged westward for about 20 kilometres through North-west Kirr to the river Abaran-su, the water being spread over the country by a network of channels. The aggregate length of the main canal and its branches will be about 210 kilometres.

The country here slopes in a south-westerly direction towards the Abaran-su, by which it is bounded on the west, while South-east Kirr slopes to the Garni-chai and Zanga. This will make it easy to drain and run off superfluous water from the irrigated areas, an important point, since the water

must be under proper control to prevent it from stagnating and turning the land sour, or evaporating and making the soil salt.

It has been calculated that the west (right-hand) canal should have a capacity of up to 11 cubic metres a second, and the east canal a capacity up to 5.5 cubic metres. On the basis of the measurements taken up to now, careful calculations have been made of the flow of water in Lake Sevan, etc. The figures show that, on an average, the Zanga carries more than enough water to irrigate these large areas, and also those lying at a lower level, besides supplying the present power-station at Erivan, which requires 10 cubic metres a second. Further, the regulation of Lake Sevan will provide a very large reserve of water which can be drawn upon at the driest times of year if the river does not carry enough (cf. p. 188). Moreover, the Zanga has far larger sources in its tributaries, and in the event of more water being needed at some future time dams can be made across the gorge to create new reservoirs of water that can be let out as required. During the greater part of the year the river will in any case have a large surplus of water over and above what is needed for irrigation and the existing power-station; it is, therefore, intended to utilize this surplus for a big new power-station to be built at Erivan, whither the water can easily be brought in a pipe from the projected east canal.

The whole plan impressed us favourably, and seemed well thought out, though it had not yet been worked out in detail with all the necessary measurements.

Returning through the valley we saw the remains of a large bridge, which, we were told, legend ascribed to Cyrus; but as it was constructed of brick it could hardly have been many centuries old.

Our cars were waiting for us in the cool shade of some big trees in the village. We now drove through Erivan and southward by the road on the east side of the Zanga Valley in order to have a look at the dry country of South-east Kirr, which stretches south towards the village of Aramzalu, and also in a south-easterly direction. The entire dry area is about 7,470 dessiatins (about 18,500 acres), of which 5,000

dessiatins (about 12,500 acres) can be irrigated. The slopes towards the north-east can be transformed by irrigation into splendid vineyards, orchards, or fields of wheat, while the lower lands will do well for cotton or tobacco growing.

The southern end of this dry region is watered by the river Garni-chai, which comes from the mountains in the east. Here there are trees and green fields and luxuriant gardens, showing what the country may become, once it is irrigated.

On this river stood the town of Dvin, which, prior to the days of Ani, was for long the most important town in Armenia, where the Katholikos resided for more than four hundred years (*circa* 462-931), after moving first from Ashtishat and then from Vagharshapat. In this neighbourhood must also have been the site of Armenia's oldest capital, Artashat (or Arktaxata). Higher up the river was the stronghold of Garni, said to have been built by the powerful King Tiridates the Great. Near the latter can still be seen remains of a fine Greek marble temple, which, according to the Armenian historian Moses of Khorene (sixth century?) was erected by King Tiridates in the third century A.D. in honour of his sister Khosrovidukht, but which in reality seems to date from a somewhat earlier time.<sup>1</sup> Near the temple are the ruins of a palace. Even in those days, therefore, and doubtless far earlier still, this part of the country was cultivated and the river used for irrigation.

On the way home we saw just south of Erivan a big caravan-serai, with a spacious square yard surrounded by high stone walls. Here the camel caravans stop on their way from Tabriz and Persia. We moderns, who dash about from place to place in our motor-cars, what good do we do by it? After all, those slow, silent caravans which plodded step by step across the desert used to carry the world-trade of the East.

In the afternoon we drove out to North-west Kirr, west of the Zanga Valley. From a watch-tower at a small military or police station on a hill we had a wide view of this stretch of country, which slopes in a south-westerly direction towards the depression through which the river Abaran-su flows, and towards the plain of Echmiadzin. We could indulge

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Strzygowski, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 342 ff.

in dreams of what it would look like when those brown naked slopes and undulating hills were clothed with luxuriant orchards and fields of wheat, and the lowlands farther down were converted into fertile green plantations of cotton, tobacco, vegetable and other crops, and when villages were dotted all over it. Once the canal had been brought there, it would be a comparatively simple matter to distribute the water over those thirsty slopes.

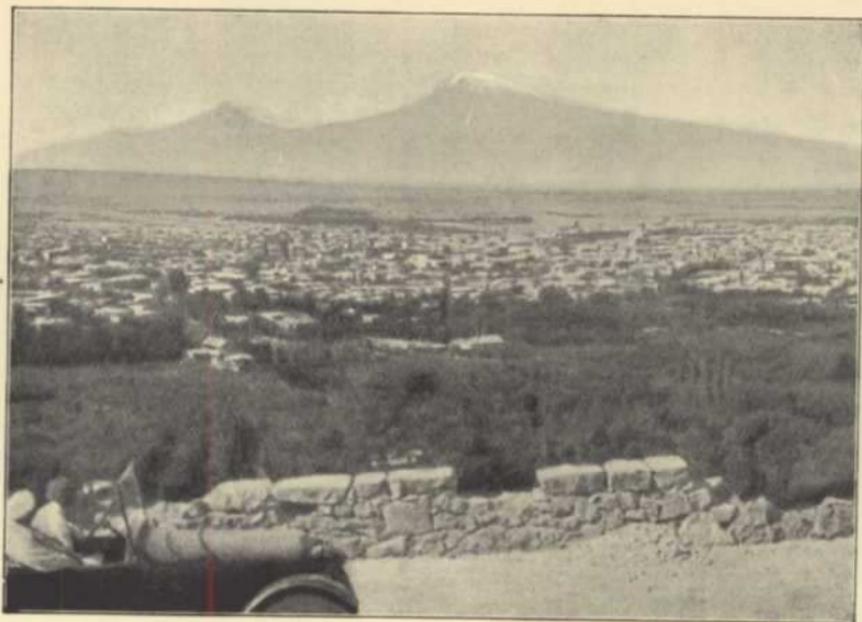
The area of the dry North-west Kirr region is 13,780 dessiatins (about 34,400 acres), of which 11,000 dessiatins (about 27,500 acres) can be irrigated and cultivated. Farther to the west there are some small cultivated stretches of country which obtain water from the Abaran-su. The latter river comes from the valley east and north-east of Alagöz, and has affluents on the east slopes of the volcano. It runs southward to the Arax across the plain west of Echmiadzin, but has seldom much water in it.

The soil in both the Kirr regions is volcanic. The loose surface layers are approximately 40 centimetres deep, consisting of disintegrated tuff, lava, and clay, a fertile combination for purposes of cultivation. As it is interesting to see how this land could be exploited, I append a table compiled by the Armenian Commissariat of Agriculture, giving tentative statistics of what might be grown on the two Kirr areas together.

Nature of Crop.	Area Cultivated.		Crop in Kilos per Hectare.	Total Yearly Crop in Kilos.	Selling Price in Roubles per Kilo.	Gross Value of Annual Crop in Roubles.
	In Dessiatins.	In Hectares. <sup>1</sup>				
Winter wheat ..	4,800	5,280	1,340	7,100,000	0'17	1,188,000
Spring wheat ..	1,600	1,760	1,340	2,330,000	0'092	215,000
Cotton ..	5,600	6,160	1,040	6,400,000	0'31	1,960,000
Vegetables ..	800	880	17,820	15,700,000	0'05	785,000
Orchards ..	400	440	9,640	4,300,000	0'18	774,000
Vineyards ..	1,200	1,320	5,200	6,800,000	0'15	1,020,000
Alfalfa ..	1,600	1,760	5,940	10,500,000	0'12	1,260,000
Total ..	16,000	17,600	—	—	—	7,202,000

<sup>1</sup> One hectare = 2'471 acres.





ERIVAN ON THE PLAIN, WITH ARARAT AND LITTLE ARARAT  
BEHIND (*p.* 192)



THE DESERT AND THE CULTIVATED LAND (*p.* 196)

We had now gone pretty thoroughly into the whole plan for taking water from the Zanga to irrigate these two large areas, together amounting to 16,000 dessiatins, and it impressed us very favourably. Moreover, it was obvious that it would be a great advantage for Erivan to have its surroundings on two sides brought under cultivation; it would increase the wealth and prosperity of the place, not to speak of the enormous gain to the landscape when all these slopes around the town were transformed into beautiful gardens and green fields. For us, who had also to consider the settlement of the refugees, the plan had this further advantage, that during the construction of the canals, etc., we could far more easily arrange for the temporary accommodation and maintenance of the refugees near Erivan than out in the Sardarabad plain; and in every way the work would be rendered easier. Well satisfied with our day's work, we returned to the hotel.

At seven o'clock that evening, while I was sitting writing, a sudden storm blew up. It came from a dark, threatening rain-cloud which was passing over the mountains to the north. The wind bent and shook the great trees in the park, whirling clouds of dust high into the air so that one could not see the houses opposite, and blowing people helplessly along the street. It lasted half an hour, then gradually subsided, and by eight o'clock, when we went out, the weather was quite fine again. These sudden storms are of frequent occurrence; the same thing happened on the day of the cloud-burst. Otherwise, as I have said, the first part of the day is generally still; later in the afternoon there is often a breeze, which would be refreshing in the hot, dry sunshine, were it not for the white dust that it raises. The streets are splashed with the water that runs in the gutters, but in vain, for the surface dries up again at once.

At 8 p.m. Professor Bedelian, the botanist, gave a lecture in the Museum on Norway. It will be remembered that he had visited the country twice, travelling as far as the North Cape; and he gave a very interesting and sympathetic account of our country and its people. There was a large audience, and the lecture, illustrated by excellent slides, was received with enthusiastic applause.

## THE MARSHES.

In brilliant summer weather on the morning of Sunday, June 28th, we motored in three cars from Erivan across the Zanga Valley, by the same beautiful road as before, through all the gardens to the west and past Echmiadzin, then south over the plain to the marshy country near the Arax, of which we had had a fleeting view the day after we arrived.

This marshy land stretches along the Kara-su. The river in question has its source in some springs which rise on the plain somewhere east of Sardarabad, and must consist of subterranean water from the slopes of Mount Alagöz. After joining the Abaran-su, the Kara-su flows over the plain in a south-westerly direction approximately parallel to the Arax, until it runs into the latter. It is chiefly on the right side of the Kara-su, and between that river and the Arax, that the land is so marshy.

It seemed as if this country could be drained fairly easily, as it has a drop of several metres both to the Kara-su and to the Arax, so that a network of dykes and ditches can be ploughed in it, sloping down to these rivers, which will serve as natural canals to carry off the water. Much can be done, too, by clearing away the sedge which clogs the river and its branches, hindering the free flow of the water.

On the other hand, it may be more difficult to get the water needed for irrigation. The Kara-su has more than enough for the purpose, but is lower than the plain; and its sources are also too low down. The Abaran-su, which flows into it, carries too little water, and what there is has to be used for irrigation farther up. The only way to use the water from the Kara-su would be by continuously pumping it up three or four metres higher, which would make the irrigation rather more costly. And, as we have seen, its clear spring water is not so useful for irrigation as the brown muddy water of the Arax.

It would, therefore, be easier and better to bring water either from the Little Sardarabad Canal which irrigates the Arax plain on the west, or from the projected western Zanga canal to North-west Kirr, which is not very far north of these

marshes. It is true that we were told that the water in these canals would not be enough for more than the areas of country they were designed to irrigate. But it is not impossible that this water might suffice for both purposes if it were more carefully controlled and economized; for at present everyone seemed at liberty to use practically as much as he liked. It is quite possible, too, that the volume of water in the Little Sardarabad Canal might be increased somewhat without taking so much from the Arax that it would affect Turkish interests. And if the worst came to the worst the necessary water could always be secured by pumping it up from the Kara-su.

A small portion of the sour land has become salt through the evaporation of stagnant water largely containing salts of soda. But if this ground is irrigated for a time after the drainage system is in order, the salts can easily be washed out before cultivation begins. Evidently the soil is very fertile, and will give a rich yield once it is properly drained, with free outlets for the water, and provided with the requisite irrigation.

The total area of unused or badly utilized land in these parts which can be cultivated in this way is 10,000 dessiatins (27,000 acres). The following estimate has been made, showing how the land could be utilized and what its yield would be.

Nature of Crop.	Area Cultivated.		Crop in Kilos per Hectare.	Total Yearly Crop in Kilos.	Selling Price in Roubles per Kilo.	Gross Value of Annual Crop in Roubles.
	In Dessiatins.	In Hectares. <sup>1</sup>				
Winter wheat ..	3,000	3,300	1,340	4,420,000	0'17	742,500
Spring wheat ..	1,000	1,100	1,340	1,474,000	0'09	135,000
Cotton ..	4,000	4,400	1,040	4,576,000	0'31	1,400,000
Vegetables ..	500	550	17,820	9,801,000	0'05	480,000
Orchards ..	200	220	9,640	2,121,000	0'18	390,000
Vineyards ..	300	330	5,200	1,716,000	0'15	262,000
Alfalfa ..	1,000	1,100	5,940	6,534,000	0'12	800,000
Total ..	10,000	11,000	—	—	—	4,209,500

<sup>1</sup> One hectare = 2'471 acres.

Farther to the south-east on both sides of the river Zanga, before it runs into the Arax, the land is marshy also. This marshy country is divided by the Zanga into two parts, called Eastern and Western Zanga-basar, which form a continuation of the marshes of Kara-su. The two together contain about 3,300 dessiatins of water-logged and unused land which if drained and irrigated can be cultivated and made extremely fertile. In addition there is land which can be better utilized than is the case at present. Drainage will not present any great difficulty, as the plain has generally a sufficient slope. The land has become marsh largely because the peasants diverted the water across the fields without taking care to provide an adequate outlet, with the result that the water stagnated. In addition the river and the existing channels are stopped up with sedge, which prevents the water from running out freely; but it will not be difficult to remedy this by clearing the sedge away.

The water for irrigation can easily be distributed all over the plain by canals from the lower Zanga, where the supply is more than adequate, including as it does the water which runs through the power-station at Erivan and the waste water from the irrigated districts higher up.

The land brought under cultivation here can be used for the same crops as those mentioned above for the Kara-su region, and reckoned in the same way these crops should amount to the gross value of 1,684,000 roubles annually, if the total area of new and improved land in East and West Zanga-basar is put at 4,000 dessiatins.

One great danger closely connected with all this water-logged country is the *malaria*, which is very prevalent, especially in these parts. The disease is common all over Armenia. In the low-lying country around Erivan and Echmiadzin from 90 to 95 per cent. of the population suffer from it, and in the mountain districts the percentage is from 15 to 20 per cent. In all it may be estimated that about one-third of the population suffer from malaria. This insidious disease is a national misfortune, and represents also a considerable annual loss, because it greatly reduces the stamina and enterprise of the people. The Government of Armenia is, of course, fully

alive to this. In 1923 an Institute for Tropical Diseases was established at Erivan; eight malaria hospitals and thirteen smaller stations have been opened in different parts of the country, and the number is constantly increasing. It goes without saying that the draining and cultivation of the marshy regions will be of enormous assistance in fighting malaria, because the malaria mosquito breeds in places where there is stagnant water. As soon as the land has been completely drained, and the running water properly regulated, it should be quite a manageable proposition practically to stamp out the disease, thereby conferring a real boon on the capable Armenian nation. On this account it is very important that the cultivation of the marshy regions around Kara-su and Zanga-basar should begin as soon as possible. The impression we got from all that we saw was that the plans were sound, and that they could be carried out without much difficulty and at a very reasonable cost.

#### ECHMIADZIN.

Well pleased with the result of our investigations, we set out for home, stopping *en route* at Echmiadzin. This is a large monastery, with a number of buildings erected in connection with the great cathedral which is the national treasure of Armenia, the spiritual centre of the whole Armenian world. The latter stands in the middle of an ample square surrounded by the other buildings, while outside all is a high encircling wall.

Here the Katholikos—the Armenian patriarch or pope—has his house and garden. There are houses for bishops, monks, priests, and pilgrims; besides a large and valuable library, a museum, a school or seminary, and other buildings. The monastery is situated near the old town of Vagharshapat, the capital of King Tiridates the Great.

We were conducted, first, to a little square lake just outside the monastery. It had been made by the Katholikos Nerses V in the earlier half of last century. Formerly it had been surrounded by a park full of large shady trees, which must have

been a delightful refuge from the sweltering summer heat ; but now its surroundings were quite bare. The thousands of refugees who sought shelter here during the Turkish attack in the last war had cut down all the trees for fuel, as they nearly froze to death in the winter—like the refugees in other places who, as I have mentioned elsewhere, burned up all the woodwork in the roofs and floors of the houses. New trees have now been planted around this lake, but it will be long before they are as shady and beautiful as their predecessors.

Next we were given a very welcome invitation to lunch in the library. This is a large new building, close to the cathedral square, which was completed a few years ago. Here we were most cordially received by the civil authorities, and the leading citizens were present to act as our hosts. As usual in this hospitable land there was a sumptuous spread, with all kinds of delicacies.

After lunch we were shown the valuable collections in the library, especially the old Armenian manuscripts, including several early Gospels. Many of these manuscripts were handsomely illuminated with richly coloured miniatures. A particularly eminent artist was the painter Thoros (i.e. Theodore) Roslin of Mush (and Cilicia) in the thirteenth century, many of whose little pictures were quite masterpieces.

After seeing these priceless treasures we tore ourselves away from this fine library, where we felt inclined to stay on and study. We then walked across the big square to the cathedral. In front of this we were met by the senior bishop, accompanied by several other bishops. In long black gown and with a pointed hood over his head, a stately figure, grave, sagacious-looking, and with a flowing grey beard, he advanced in dignified fashion to meet us, welcoming us cordially in fluent German. He informed us that he would like to show us round the church.

Before entering, however, it may be appropriate to say a few words about the history of this remarkable building. By tradition it is now closely bound up with the introduction of Christianity into the country by St. Gregory the Illuminator and King Trdat (Tiridates) at the end of the third century ; it is said to stand on the spot where Gregory saw a vision

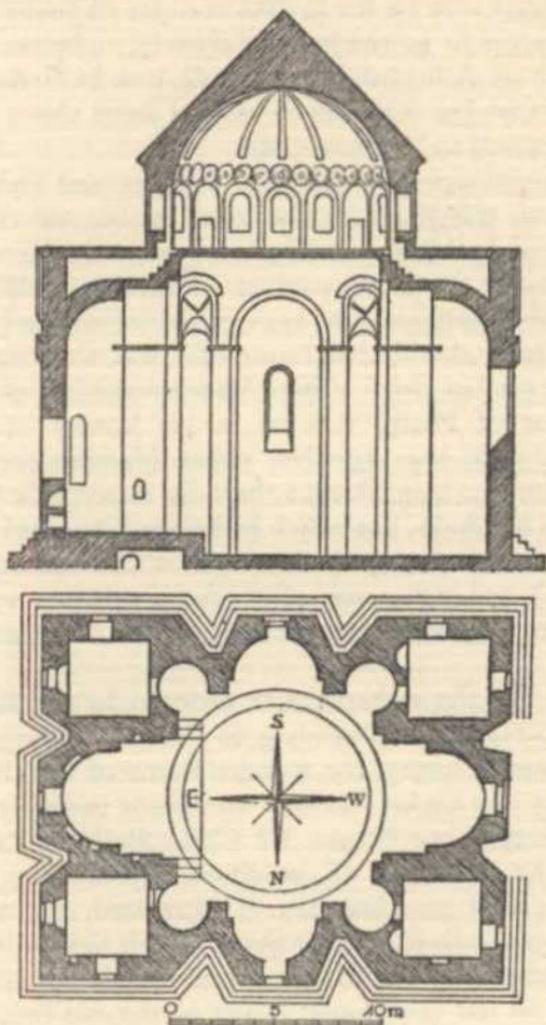
of the Only Begotten descending from heaven—whence the name Echmiadzin, which is supposed to mean "Where the Only Begotten descended." But this may very well have been invented later by the monks in order to justify the claim of Echmiadzin to be the mother church; whereas in reality the church at Ashtishat (near Mush) was built first, and it was there that the Katholikos resided until about A.D. 402, when he moved to Vagharshapat.

It is, nevertheless, possible that Gregory and Trdat erected a church on this site near the royal palace, and that it and other sacred buildings in Vagharshapat were destroyed by the Persians in the fourth century. Probably the Katholikos Nerses I, the Parthian (A.D. 353-373), restored the buildings; but the first authenticated restoration was the one initiated by the Armenian chief Vahan Mamikonean about the year 484. Lazar of Pharpi tells us in his history of Armenia (written in A.D. 505-510) that Vahan Mamikonean restored with the utmost magnificence the holy metropolis which his forefathers had built, but which had since fallen into disrepair. By that date (after 461) the Katholikos had moved to Dvin (cf. p. 199), and it was only after several other moves that he returned to Vagharshapat, or Echmiadzin, in the fifteenth century.

In A.D. 618 the cathedral was restored by the Katholikos Komitas (611-628). According to Sebeos, writing later on in the seventh century, the wooden dome of the church was replaced by one made of stone; and about twenty years after that the Katholikos Nerses III ("the Builder") may have enlarged the inner hall of the church by moving the walls out to the sides quadrilaterally. The church may then have assumed practically its present shape; but it has evidently been restored several times in the course of the centuries. It is difficult to tell how much is left of the old building, and in addition several annexes have been built on in later times. The porch in front of the west door, with an open belfry over it, was completed in 1658, and the open belfries over the three apses on the sides of the church were built in 1682 by the Katholikos Eleazar. The large wing which completely covers the east end and apse of the church, and contains a treasury

and shrine for relics, was built by the Katholikos George IV (*d.* 1882).

We were ushered into the cathedral. The three bishops



THE CATHEDRAL AT ECHMIADZIN.  
(From a drawing by H. F. B. Lynch.)

were all dressed alike in long black gowns with black hoods over their heads, and all had long grey or white beards—a venerable-looking company.





CHURCH OF ST. HRIPSIME, ECHMIADZIN (*p.* 213)

The great hall with four huge piers in the middle to support the lofty central dome, the simple proportions, and the massive stone walls, all combine to produce an impression of stately dignity, carrying one's thoughts back along many centuries, during which the eyes of the Armenian people have constantly turned to this sanctuary in sorrow and hope during the vicissitudes of their strange destiny.

In shape the church is square, the length from west to east being slightly longer than the breadth from north to south. In the middle of each side, facing the four points of the compass, is a semicircular apse (see the figure opposite). In the centre of the church the four piers mark another square. The distance between them is about 5·8 metres, approximately the same as the distance to the north and south walls and the breadth of the apses. Upon the piers, joined at the top by high horseshoe-shaped arches, rests the lofty dome, with small supporting niches above the four corners of this inner square.

According to Lynch's measurements (*op. cit.*, i, p. 267), the inside length of the ground-plan of the church is 33 metres from the farthest walls of the east and west apses, while the corresponding measurement from north to south is 29·9 metres. The depth of an apse is 4·65 metres, consequently the sides of the square hall of the church must be about 23·7 and 20·6 metres respectively.

The light falls from twelve windows in the dome; there are a few windows here and there in the walls also, but these are so small that they do not give much light. The main entrance is in the middle of the west apse. At the east end of the choir is the large altar where the service is usually conducted. But there is also an altar with a canopy over it in the middle of the church—in the centre of the square formed by the four large piers, on the spot where, in the sight of St. Gregory, the Only Begotten struck the ground with His golden hammer. This altar is used on great festivals. The Katholikos has a throne by each side of the two northern pillars to the right in front of each altar. Ordinarily he sits on the uppermost throne at the east end; but on great occasions he occupies the other. These thrones were gifts; the

first from the Armenians during the pontificate of Astvatsadu (1715-1725), the other, near the altar in the middle, apparently from the Pope. The latter bears an inscription with the name Petros Katholikos (Peter II, 1748).

There is another altar in the south apse of the church, with a shrine containing the vessel of holy oil, which is said to have been consecrated by St. Gregory, but which has now become dry and solidified. This oil is used on very solemn occasions, such as the anointing of a new Katholikos, when a little of it is mixed with other consecrated oil, and essence of flowers added—as is doubtless necessary—before the oil is poured over His Holiness's head; after which the bishops rub it into his hair with one thumb while they make the sign of the Cross. Beside the shrine a little lamp burns night and day.

In the opposite apse on the north side there is yet another altar; so there are four in all. The wall there is decorated with paintings of the founders of the Armenian Church: St. Gregory, with his sons Aristakes and Verthanes and his grandson Gregory; and the primates Jusik, Nerses I, Sahak, and Mesrop. In this apse the bishops are ordained.

It is indicative of the conditions in which the Armenian Church has lived and the spiritual life of Armenia developed, that under the floor in front of this alcove in the choir there is a large cistern, constructed to contain sufficient water for the monastery if it were besieged.

The decoration of the cathedral inside is not very conspicuous; the walls are of smooth stone, partly covered by frescoes, partly also by pictures on stretched canvas, representing Biblical scenes. They are executed in subdued colours and do not seem to be of much artistic merit; evidently they are rather late, dating from the eighteenth century, when the dome was decorated with coloured arabesques in the Persian style.<sup>1</sup> It is strange to see pictures in this church, as the Gregorians of Armenia are much against religious pictures, which is the reason why no pictorial art has developed in their churches.

The rather low square door leading from the porch into

<sup>1</sup> S. Lynch, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 267.

the church is surrounded by rich ornamentation in stone relief; but this decoration is probably of the same late date as the porch (seventeenth century). Otherwise the walls are altogether plain, without any ornamentation in relief. On the outside the old walls are quite plain and smooth also, with bare squared stones; and the doors and windows are surrounded by mouldings of the simplest description. In the old part of the church only the central dome is more richly decorated. The narrow rounded windows are surrounded by slender false columns and ornamented false arches. Above each window is a round medallion containing the head of a saint. Between the windows there are taller false columns and a false arcade with pointed arches round the tower, ornamented with plaited work. Under the cornice of the roof above there is in addition a broad carved frieze. The outside decoration of this tower must be comparatively late.

The belfry over the main porch is said to contain a famous Tibetan bell with the mystic Buddhist inscription *Om a bum*.

The treasures and relics belonging to the cathedral are preserved in the annexe on its east side. The most important are St. Gregory's right arm and hand, which possess a deep significance, inasmuch as this arm has become the defence and safeguard of the Katholikos. There is also a piece of wood from the ark, which, as everyone knows, stranded on Mount Ararat not far from here; "where it was still to be seen up to very late times, though all traces of it have now disappeared." Further, there is the head of the sacred spear which was thrust into the side of the Saviour, and which is specially potent in putting a stop to epidemics. There are the arms and hands of several saints, and the head of the apostle St. Thaddeus. A panel, upon which is carved a representation of Christ crucified, is supposed to be the work of the apostle John, a treasure which Ashot Patricius was fortunate enough to secure.

After seeing the interior of this famous cathedral we were invited to a reception at the house of His Holiness the Katholikos, and the bishops conducted us to his residence, a plain building in the south-west corner of the quadrangle in which the cathedral stands.

We were led up a couple of staircases, past a number of servants and ecclesiastics, to the room where His Holiness was awaiting us, surrounded by his bishops and retainers. He was a man of medium height with an unusually sagacious and serious expression and a large grey beard. He was in his robes—black gown, black hood, and a white cross above his forehead. He asked us to be seated at the table on the other side of which he sat enthroned.

Speaking in Armenian, which was translated for our benefit by the bishop who had shown us over the cathedral, he welcomed us, and in particular thanked us for our work for his countrymen the Armenian refugees. He had a fine deep voice, and spoke with a natural dignity which was most impressive even when one could not understand his words; and the expression in his good, friendly eyes showed that he meant what he said.

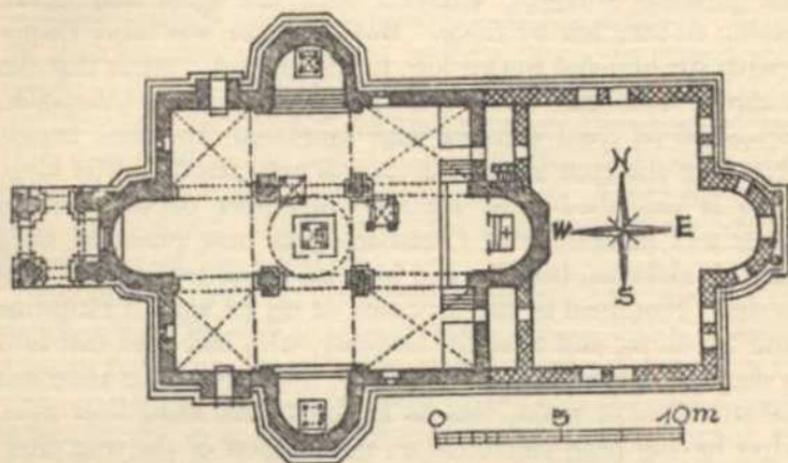
I thanked him, and briefly explained why we had come, telling him what I knew about the Armenian refugees in various places, and how they were faring. With the bishop interpreting, we discussed the great possibilities of Armenia, what we had seen in the country, the hard fate of the Armenian nation, and what in our opinion ought to be done to succour the refugees.

He entered into all this with keen interest; and talking to this simple, sagacious man, with his tranquil gaze, one could well understand that the Church personified in him has been the central force which has kept the Armenians united in spite of all their misfortunes. When we left he expressed his good wishes for the progress and success of our work for Armenia and the refugees.

We had a look at the museum, which contained an interesting collection of ancient stones with cuneiform inscriptions that had been found in various places. They dated from the Khaldic, pre-Armenian period before the sixth century B.C. What especially interested us was that some of them mentioned canals, showing that even at that time artificial irrigation was of much importance in these parts. We saw a great many old Armenian coins stamped with the heads of Armenian kings, several of whom had strikingly handsome Armenian

features, for instance, Tigranes the Great (95-55 B.C.), and others. I was presented with the publications of the museum, a number of volumes in the Armenian language, with good illustrations of churches, coins, etc.

As usual, we had too little time and could not see all the interesting things in this spiritual metropolis. We had to take our leave and start homewards; but on the way we stopped at the beautiful church of St. Hripsime on the road just east of the town. Here the prominent Bishop Mesrob Ter-Movsessian had unfortunately been waiting for us all



CHURCH OF ST. Hripsime AT ECHMIADZIN.

(From the illustration by Thoramanian.)

day without our knowing it, having received word that we were coming. He received us very cordially at the church door. A tall, handsome man, with refined, intellectual features, sagacious, trustworthy eyes and a flowing white beard, he looked very dignified in his long episcopal robes and cowl of dark purple velvet. He is well known for his writings on Armenian architecture and ancient churches, and especially on the excavation of the church at Zvarthnotz, not far from Echmiadzin, in which he took part.

He proceeded to show us over St. Hripsime's church, telling us its history in fluent German and with a sonorous voice which echoed under the high domes. It is dedicated

to the holy virgin Surb (i.e. Saint) Hripsime, who is believed to have played an important part in bringing Christianity to Armenia. Living in Rome in the last half of the third century, she was a nun of royal blood and wonderful beauty; but the unwelcome attentions of the emperor caused her to take flight with the prioress and a number of the nuns; and after many wanderings she finally came to Vagharshapat. Here they were discovered, and King Trdat the Great, blinded by her loveliness, desired to have her as his wife; she refused, however, and we are told how the gigantic king, famous for his physical strength, wrestled with her again and again, trying to take her by force. But Hripsime was more than a match for him and hurled him to the ground. After that she escaped with the other nuns; but they were overtaken, subjected to cruel tortures, and murdered, Hripsime herself dying on the spot where the church now stands. The king, who is described as a zealous worshipper of the heathen gods and persecutor of Christians, was now punished by a terrible sickness, both he and his men being turned into wild boars. Not until he had repented of his sin against Hripsime and her nuns, and after St. Gregory, who had been cast into a deep pit thirteen years previously, had been found alive and taken out of it again, was he healed by the same holy man, after having been converted to the religion of the true God. From being an enemy of Christianity he now became an equally zealous propagator of the faith, and with Gregory he built a large number of churches.

This church of St. Hripsime is of a markedly rectangular shape. As we have observed, the typical ground-plan of the early Armenian churches seems to have been square, probably in imitation of the earlier temples of heathenism. Similar temples seem to have existed also in the countries of the Mediterranean and among the Etruscans, and may, of course, have derived their shape, as Strzygowski suggests, from wooden buildings; but the ordinary type of stone house in Armenia is usually square too, and in its simplest form consists of only one room. It should be remembered that, Armenia being the first country to adopt Christianity as the state religion, ecclesiastical architecture had not as yet crystallized

in any way, and the Armenians and Georgians gradually worked out a style of their own. Over the square they raised a dome, a feature probably borrowed from the Persians, and in order to strengthen the dome structure each side of the square was extended in an apse, which with its crowning semi-dome curved inwards towards the base of the central dome, helping to support it.

The effect of this construction is to produce a well-balanced inner hall soaring upwards to the lofty dome in the middle; and this Armeno-Georgian type of church, with its simple massive walls and piers without columns, gives a compact mass effect which seems characteristic of the country. It is the very feature that strikes us in the scenery—so strong and simple, with the vast, compactly built volcanoes of Ararat and Alagöz. As to how far this type of construction had been developed in the earlier pagan temples of Armenia and Georgia we have still no means of judging. From the same form of building was evolved the great round church of Zvarthnotz (cf. pp. 143 ff.).

The inner hall of St. Hripsime's church is just like that of the church on the cliff at Mtskhetha (p. 77), to which, indeed, it bears a striking general resemblance, having a ground-plan with exactly the same dimensions, except that the four square rooms at the four corners of the church are here made as much larger as is necessary to give a completely rectangular form to the exterior. The two churches seem also to date from nearly the same time (the seventh century), though possibly the Georgian church is some years older. The roofs without gables and the dome tower are noticeably of a more simple and primitive kind in the latter building.

Outside, the ground-plan of the church measures 22·8 metres from east to west, not counting the porch which was added to the west door in 1653, and the belfry built above it in 1790. Inside, the hall between the apses at their greatest depth is 20·5 metres long and 16 metres wide. The inner square of the church, marked by the corners between the apses, is 9·9 metres long and 9·4 metres wide. In these corners are three-quarter cylinders, with a diameter of 2·4 metres, which are distinguished outside by four small

round towers on the sides of the dome tower. The dome itself has an inside diameter of 9.4 metres. Outwardly it is sixteen-sided, with twelve windows. The inside height under the dome is about 23 metres, which corresponds pretty accurately to the exterior length of the building.

The walls of the church are entirely bare, without any decoration inside or outside, except some carved arched friezes over the windows and some simple ornamentation inside the dome. But the whole of the inner hall, with the four apses and the four high cylindrical corner-niches between them, all terminating in supporting arches and semi-domes under the central dome tower, presents an upward soaring appearance which is extremely impressive. The light shines down chiefly from the windows of the dome tower, for the narrow windows in the outer walls of the three apses give but little light. In the west apse, where the main entrance is, there is no window. Hripsime's tomb is in a vault underneath the east apse.

According to Sebeos, who wrote at the end of the seventh century, the church in its present form was built in 618 by the Katholikos Komitas; but we know from Agathangelos, writing in the fifth century, that there was a church on this site at an earlier date; we are thus left in doubt as to how much Komitas really built—whether he chiefly restored the old church or erected an entirely new one. There are several other churches of this type in different parts of Armenia and Georgia.<sup>1</sup> The proportions both of the interior and the exterior of this church give an impression of balance and harmony seldom equalled, and we may safely infer that such a mature form of construction was reached only after a long period of evolution.

A young newly wedded couple from Erivan, accompanied by an exceptionally handsome girl, went round the church with us. It seemed that they were staying the Sunday with the bishop. Very striking was the contrast between the dignified old man with his flowing white beard and the beautiful young girl radiant with vitality—symbolic of the deep seriousness and of the joy of life.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Strzygowski, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 84 ff. and p. 93 f.





THE KATHOLIKOS GEORGE (p. 212)



BISHOP TER-MOUESSIAN OUTSIDE THE CHURCH OF  
ST. HRIPSIME (p. 213)

With our minds filled with impressions of the vanished past of this gifted people we drove back at sunset along the road which divides the cultivated plain from the desert, and then between the gardens in the valley of the Zanga till we reached Erivan.

#### OUR PROPOSAL.

Our work in Armenia was now practically at an end. We had investigated, as well as we could for the time being, the plans for the cultivation of new land, and could draw our own conclusions as to what ought to be undertaken first. During the next two or three days we had several meetings with Mr. Ersingian, the Commissar of Agriculture, with the Government, and with the Government committee. We explained to them the conclusions at which we had arrived as a result of our investigations, and laid before them the following plan.

We had formed the opinion that the various plans—for irrigating, draining, and cultivating land now lying idle—which had been submitted for our consideration were all practicable and ought all to be taken in hand as time went on. But we considered that the largest of these projects, involving the irrigation and cultivation of the so-called Sardarabad desert, where about 43,000 dessiatins of new land could be cultivated, would cost so much—we estimated the total cost at 15 or 20 million gold roubles—and take such a long time (at least three years), that we could not recommend beginning upon it at present.

On the other hand, we found that the plans for irrigating the Kirr districts, and for draining and irrigating the Kara-su region and Zangabasar, would be far easier to carry out, take less time, and involve a smaller expenditure. Accordingly we recommended that the first step should be to try to give effect to these plans. We calculated that in this way at least 30,000 dessiatins (81,000 acres) of fertile land could be cultivated; and that at least 25,000 people (probably a considerably larger number) could obtain a livelihood there. If we helped to raise the necessary money for these undertakings, we should

proceed on the assumption that the Armenian Government agreed that at least 15,000 of the settlers on this new land should be Armenian refugees brought by us from Europe.

We held that it would be a very good thing to begin, preferably as soon as possible, by draining the swampy stretches of country, which, besides being the work that was easiest, would do a great deal to diminish the prevalence of malaria. We further proposed that the Armenian refugees in Europe should be utilized to the fullest possible extent as labourers in these enterprises; and we assumed that by so doing at least 2,000 refugees and their families could be employed from the outset, with the possibility of doubling this number within a short time.

All this was comparatively plain sailing, and the Armenian Government quite agreed with our views. But now came the most difficult problem of all: how were we to raise the money that would be needed for carrying out the plans? So far as we could see from the estimates submitted to us, the amount needed to pay for draining the marshy country, making canals, and constructing the whole irrigation system, both in the Kirr districts and in the marshy tracts, would come to at least 6 million gold roubles; and in addition to this, we should need a good deal of money—round about 3 million roubles—to defray the cost of settling the refugees on the new land and giving them a good start. This meant a total of 9 million gold roubles, or in round figures a million pounds. There seemed to be three possible ways of raising the money: by an international appeal for private subscriptions, by grants from European and American Governments, or, failing these, by a loan. We did not think that, in the economic conditions now prevailing in Europe, there was any hope of raising such a large sum in the form of contributions from private donors or Governments; the only remaining alternative, therefore, was a loan.

I gave an account of what we had done to get the loan for settling the Greek refugees in Greece, and explained how it was secured, on the recommendation and with the aid of the League of Nations, in face of great obstacles. In the present case, involving a similar loan for Armenia and for settling

the Armenian refugees, it would make all the difference if a similar procedure could be adopted. But here there was the additional difficulty that the Soviet Governments refused to have anything to do with the League of Nations; and of course we could not make a proposal of this kind to the League against the wishes of these Governments. As regards the general prospects of raising such a loan as this it was difficult to speak with any certainty; it would depend mainly upon the security that could be given for the repayment of the loan.

The Armenian Government declared that they fully agreed that a loan would be the best solution of the problem, and assured us that they would be willing to take a loan of the kind we had indicated, if it could be secured on reasonable conditions and the term for repayment was not too short, at any rate not shorter than ten years—a proviso we thought very reasonable. The loan would be used exclusively for the purposes named. As to the difficulty that it might have to be raised through the League of Nations, the Government did not think this would prove an obstacle, and they promised to lay the matter before the Government at Moscow. Regarding the security offered, the Armenian Government were of opinion that the value of the land to be cultivated in accordance with our plans would far exceed the amount of the loan; and the yield from the land would be more than sufficient to pay back the loan in a comparatively short time. Further, the Government were willing to agree that all taxes and other dues paid by the settlers on the new land should be applied to pay the interest and instalments on the loan, if necessary until the whole was redeemed. Over and above this the Government and State of Armenia were willing to guarantee the proper repayment of the loan; and if it were considered desirable they were confident that the Soviet Government in Moscow would likewise give their guarantee, as well as security in the State Bank of Russia.

The Armenian Government were also willing to make the following concessions to refugees brought to Armenia in pursuance of these plans: their property should be exempt from customs duty, they should have free transport by railway

from the frontiers of the Soviet republics, they should receive their land gratis (except for the dues collected to pay for the loan), and for one or two years after they settled on the new land they should be exempt from any military service that would interfere with their farming.

There was complete agreement, therefore, between the Armenian Government and ourselves in regard to the plans and the course of action that seemed desirable.

If we reckon that the average yield would be approximately the same as that tentatively given for the Kirr districts, which was put rather low, we find that the total annual yield from the areas to be irrigated and cultivated would at least be as under :

Nature of Crop.	Cultivated Area.		Yield in Kilograms per Hectare.	Total Annual Yield in Kilograms.	Selling Price in Roubles per Kilogram.	Gross Value of Annual Yield in Roubles.
	In Dessiatins.	In Hectares. <sup>1</sup>				
Winter wheat ..	9,000	9,900	1,340	13,266,000	0'17	2,227,500
Spring wheat ..	3,000	3,300	1,340	4,422,000	0'09	405,000
Cotton ..	11,200	12,320	1,040	12,813,000	0'31	3,920,000
Vegetables ..	1,500	1,650	17,871	29,403,000	0'05	1,440,000
Orchards ..	680	748	9,680	7,240,000	0'18	1,326,000
Vineyards ..	1,620	1,782	5,210	9,300,000	0'15	1,417,500
Alfalfa ..	3,000	3,300	5,960	19,670,000	0'12	2,400,000
Total ..	30,000	33,000	—	—	—	13,136,000

According to these figures the gross annual profit on each dessiatin of cultivated land should average about 440 roubles (400 roubles per hectare), which is not too high an estimate. If we put the cost of labour, implements, draught animals, etc.—including the work of the farmer and his family—at approximately half the gross profit, the net income on each dessiatin should be 220 roubles. If, further, we reckon one dessiatin of land per head, and take five as the average family, the gross profit for such a family should be 2,200 roubles (or about £230), and the net profit after paying for the work done by the family should be 1,100 roubles. An ordinary

<sup>1</sup> One hectare = 2.471 acres.

day labourer in Armenia would find it difficult to earn a gross income of more than 300 roubles a year. It will thus be seen that the farmers on the new land could easily pay for irrigation 20 per cent. of their gross profits until the loan was repaid; and that amount would be more than sufficient for the purpose even if, to be quite on the safe side, we were to increase the loan from the 9 million roubles, or one million pounds, originally proposed, to one and a half million pounds.

It is true that five or six years would elapse before the land could be cultivated so as to give its full return. The first two years would be spent in making canals, etc., but once the water was there it would only be a question of ploughing and sowing; already in the third year the land might be expected to give gross profits of over 8 million roubles, rising in the fourth year to 10 millions, in the fifth to 12 millions, and in the sixth and succeeding years to over 13 million roubles.

This shows that the whole plan would be very profitable, and that the yield of the newly cultivated land ought easily to cover the loan in the suggested fifteen years.

Obviously, if we could secure the money to begin upon these undertakings without delay, we should be able to transfer to Armenia a large number of refugees who were more or less unemployed in Greece and Constantinople, and to give them productive work in draining the land and constructing the canals. If we could utilize as many as four thousand refugees in this way, they and their families would constitute a substantial proportion of the people we specially wished to remove.

Clearly, too, the cultivation by up-to-date methods of this new land, thus largely increasing the area of irrigated country, would be of great importance for the development of Armenia; it would serve as a valuable encouragement, foster new activity and enterprise, open the way for further cultivation, help to start new industries which would provide work for new people, and be a long step in the direction of building up the "national home" that the Western Powers had so often promised, and in fact pledged themselves to give to the Armenians. By developing this fertile land it might be

possible at long last to make life fairly safe and prosperous for an incredibly maltreated people. Accordingly we considered that we had every reason to believe that the Governments of the Great Powers would gladly give their adhesion to this plan, and thus honour, without incurring any great sacrifice, some, at least, of their pledges to the Armenians.

#### THE LAST DAYS IN ERIVAN.

We had still to see the work that was being done on the new electrical power-station which was being built in the Zanga Valley, north-west of Erivan. We motored out to see it in the morning of June 30th. The workmen were just constructing the walls. We went farther up the valley and saw the new canal for the water, which was already complete, and the intake. The canal was a clever piece of engineering, and the works as a whole seemed very good and solid. It was curious to see how all the sacks of sand and gravel, for the concrete used in the various buildings of the station, were brought on pack-asses from far up the valley; the future seemed to meet the past on the bridle-path along which the animals came. Near the sandpit at the head of the valley from which this sand and gravel was being fetched we had a rest by a cool, refreshing spring which was gushing out of the rock underneath some large, shady trees. Some of the workmen came with their hands and caps full of apricots and mulberries that they had picked on the hillside just above us, and we had a delicious meal of them.

As we drove back through the streets of Erivan we suddenly stopped in front of what looked like a factory. We were led into a large courtyard, and there received courteously by a big man who evidently was the manager, and who took us down several flights of wide steps to some enormous cellars. It turned out that we were in the Government factory called "Ararat," where they made wine and brandy, and were to be shown what they could do in that line. The amount produced in the previous year (1924) had been 30,000 hectolitres of wine and 7,400 hectolitres of brandy, for export to all parts of Russia and the Near East.

As soon as I realized what was in the wind I decided that there was danger ahead and that I must be careful!

First we went through several rooms with big vats in them; these vats contained brandy, and we were offered some. Cautiously I sipped just enough to taste; yes, it was certainly excellent. Then they brought some of another quality. Better still. But after that they offered us some extra fine old brandy; and it needed a good deal of self-control only to sip *that*. We went on through a great many rooms where the wine was fermenting or in storage, and looked at the enormous vats. Then there were any number of samples of Armenian wines, white and red. All were good, but some, especially one old red wine, were so first-rate that it was not at all easy only to put one's lips to the glass. Moreover, our healths were drunk, and we had to return the compliment. After that came the sherry, which was very fine, and a madeira which was better, and a port which, if possible, was better still; it would seem that the rich grapes of the country are specially suitable for making these wines. Last of all came a *muscatel*, and I thought I had never tasted a more luscious wine. This time it was more than a sip!

It seemed strange to come up from this cool cellar, with all its rich treasures, and return to everyday realities under the scorching midday sun.

In the evening the Government gave a delightful entertainment in our honour in the Sirdar Garden, on the other side of the Zanga gorge, opposite the fortress of Erivan. This garden originally belonged to the Persian sirdar who, during the Persian domination of the country before 1827, was satrap or governor of the province, with his residence in the fortress (cf. p. 153). A glorious garden it was—the Persians are experts in gardening and artificial irrigation. After the Russian conquest this, like other gardens, came into private hands; and later, after the Soviet revolution, it was taken over by the Government and joined on to the neighbouring garden to form a big establishment which is run for the account of the Government. We were entertained in the former owner's house. He had been a rich Armenian who, with his family, had resided in winter at Odessa and in summer

and autumn at this house amid these idyllic surroundings. When the revolution came he lost everything ; but he had not the heart to leave his trees and flowers, so now he lived all the year round in two rooms in the cellar of his former house, working as a gardener in his former garden. He was present at the entertainment, and I talked with him ; but no one seemed to think of him as the previous owner of the house and garden—he was just one of the employees with the rest.

On the following evening (Wednesday, July 1st) there was a farewell entertainment. It began with a concert, at which we heard Grieg's quartette in G minor and several compositions of the Armenian composer, Ailex Spenderian. There were variations on Armenian folk-songs, played by the stringed instruments, and with the composer himself at the piano ; then an "Armenian solo" played by a first-rate 'cellist named Aïvasian, accompanied by the composer. Finally, there was a prelude and dance to the words of a poem by Saiat-Noda (1714-1794), also composed by Spenderian and played by two violins accompanied by himself. The music was very pleasing and was well executed. I was told that Grieg was particularly popular in Armenia, a certain affinity being found between his music and that of the Armenians. I could to some extent understand this from what I heard of their compositions. After the music some folk-dances were performed by a number of men who delighted everyone by their perfect rhythm and supple grace. These fiery Caucasian dances give one a good idea of the energy inherent in the race.

Then came a big supper, the company including the "Committee for Help to Armenia," university professors, artists, and many more. There were many enthusiastic speeches, much good music performed by an Armenian orchestra, and Armenian songs sung by a talented young lady and a good baritone. These strange mournful songs were, in part, old folk-songs which seemed rather like those of Persia. One was about a victorious Armenian king who was invading Georgia and had just crossed the river Kura. On the opposite bank he met a maiden whose brother he had slain in battle. Stopping his horse, she said : "You conquered my brother with your sword ; but I will conquer you with my eyes."

And her dark eyes were stronger than his sword: she went back with him to Armenia as his queen.

The leader of the troupe of dancers who performed at the concert danced a vigorous solo which reminded one of the dances in Scotland. Finally, the handsome wife of the Vice-President danced the national dance for us, looking like some alluring princess in a fairy-tale. With her movements graceful as a gazelle's, her arms raised aloft in supple curves, her swaying hips, and her shapely legs moving with such sure rhythm and so quickly that her feet might have been nowhere near the floor, it all seemed like an Oriental dream. Not till late did we wend our way back to our hotel in the romantic glamour of the moonlight.

The notes of the Armenian folk-songs echo long in the soul. I could not help thinking of what my friend Kurgenian said after hearing one of the melodies sung that evening: "Wouldn't you say that a people whose soul goes out in songs and music like that can never die?" And I felt that he was right.

\* \* \* \* \*

The next evening our train was rolling over the plain. Erivan, the Zanga Valley, and the beautiful gardens had been left behind. Away in the south Mount Ararat could be clearly seen in all its tremendous height, its broad cupola of snow shining brightly in the sunset. The first stupendous sight dominating the whole land when we arrived, it was the last we saw as we left that evening. And as a parting greeting it had doffed its huge cowl of mist.

The sun was sinking in flames behind the undulating landscape as we drew near to Sardarabad. Then darkness fell; but the moon shone brightly from the starry vault, and in its silver sheen we rushed on again past fruitful fields and through desert wastes. The vanishing contours of the surrounding heights loomed dimly in the distance. A few white moon-clouds hung in space above the outlines of the mountains. . . . And past us trooped a never-ending pageant of the changing fortunes of bygone generations who lived on these selfsame plains under the shadow of Ararat and Alagöz.

So many wars and struggles, such dire straits, so much suffering and misery over and over again—and so seldom a victory.

Suffering; yes, mankind is purified by suffering—at least those who are strong enough to bear it. But has any people in any part of the world suffered as this one has done? And to what end? To be deserted and betrayed at last by those who gave it such precious and binding promises in the sacred name of justice?

Politicians and statesmen—is it not time to stop the flow of high-sounding words, before mankind loses its last shred of belief that anything in the history of nations is held sacred?

But the tranquil moon smiles indulgently in at the window. Poor misguided mortal, where is justice to be found?

CHAPTERS IN THE HISTORY OF ARMENIA<sup>1</sup>

Generation on generation,  
Like the long dark billows  
They roll on and cease to be,  
While Time slowly dies.

Ah, why these holocausts of anguish, woe, and pain?

J. P. JACOBSEN.

ARCHÆOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL INFORMATION REGARD-  
ING THE EARLIEST INHABITANTS OF ARMENIA.<sup>2</sup>

THE oldest known evidence of human inhabitants of Armenia is a skeleton which was found, together with a flint implement,

<sup>1</sup> Outlines of the history are given in H. F. B. Lynch, *Armenia*, vols. i and ii, London, 1901; J. de Morgan, *Histoire du peuple Arménien*, Paris, 1919; Åge Meyer Benedictsen, *Armenien*, Copenhagen, 1925. See also Haik Johannissian, *Das literarische Porträt der Armenier*, Inaug.-Diss., Leipzig, 1912; Joseph Burt, *The People of Ararat*, London, 1926; H. F. Helmott, *Weltgeschichte*, vol. v; H. Zimmerer, *Armenien*, 1905, and vol. iii; H. Winkler, *Armenien*, 1901.

Information regarding the history of Armenia before the Armenians may be found in Lynch, *Armenia*, vol. ii, 1901; and especially in C. F. Lehmann-Haupt, *Armenien Einst und Jetzt*, vol. i, 1910, vol. ii, part i, 1926, and particularly vol. ii, part ii, which has not yet been published. See also the same author in E. G. Klauber and C. F. Lehmann-Haupt, *Geschichte des alten Orients*, 3 Aufl., 1925, in L. M. Hartmann, *Weltgeschichte*, vol. i.

The sources for the early history of Armenia are Agathangelos (chiefly regarding the introduction of Christianity), possibly written about A.D. 452-456, though parts of it are earlier; Faustus of Byzantium, who wrote about A.D. 395-416; Moses of Khorene, who wrote in the fifth or sixth century (according to some authorities still later); Elise, in the latter half of the fifth century; Lazar of Pharbi, in 505-510; Sebeos, in the seventh century, and others.

For more recent times see especially A. N. Mandelstam, *La Société des Nations et les Puissances devant le Problème Arménien*, Paris, 1925; Johannes Lepsius, *Deutschland und Armenien, 1914-1918, Sammlung diplomatischer Aktenstücke*, Potsdam, 1919.

On Armenian architecture, see J. Strzygowski, *Die Baukunst der Armenier und Europa*, vols. i and ii, Vienna, 1918.

<sup>2</sup> For the information given below regarding the latest archæological researches, including important discoveries about the Armenian Stone and Bronze Ages, I am indebted largely to the information which my friend Dr. J. Bedelian, professor at the University of Erivan, collected and sent me from his colleagues, Dr. S. Ter-Hakobian, librarian of the Scientific Institute at Echmiadzin; E. Lalajan, director of the Armenian State Museum at Erivan; and A. Kalantar, professor of archæology at Erivan University. I avail myself of this opportunity to express my gratitude to these gentlemen for their valuable assistance.

at a depth of 6 metres in the Zanga Valley when the power-station was being built in 1925 (cf. p. 222). Professor A. Kalantar,<sup>1</sup> of Erivan, holds that it dates from early Palæolithic times and belongs to the markedly long-skulled race of the Aurignac type that is found in Brünn (and Galli-Gill). A great number of remains of civilization dating from many thousands of years later—from the younger Stone Age (Megalithic)—has been found by Armenian antiquaries in the country round the volcano Alagöz (in 1924),<sup>2</sup> and in the country round Novo Bajazet, near the Gökcha Lake (especially in 1926). Stone houses, fortifications, caves, and graves have been discovered. The remains belong to a markedly long-skulled race who lived in these regions in the latter part of the Stone Age (since 3000 B.C.), and probably earlier, as well as throughout the Bronze Age, and possibly on to the middle of the second millennium B.C. This long-skulled race had a comparatively advanced civilization even in the Stone Age, with a well-developed system of irrigation and a widespread water-worshipping cult, with remarkable representations of "Vishap," typifying a fish-like giant, the water-god. They had also inscriptions in a hieroglyphic script of a hitherto unknown kind, which Armenian investigators have recently succeeded in deciphering.<sup>3</sup>

In the Bronze Age the long-skulled people in Armenia had a highly developed metal civilization, apparently peculiar to themselves. Only in the tracts near the southern frontier have finds been made which show the influence of Mesopotamia.

The Babylonians called the mountainous country in the north, east of the Upper Tigris, by the name of *Gutium*, and the peoples inhabiting it must have been united in a single kingdom even before 2500 B.C., as there is an extant inscription of one of their kings dating from that time.<sup>4</sup>

It was here, too, in this northern mountainous country that the Babylonians made their Noah, Atarkhasis (or Xisu-

<sup>1</sup> Professor Wischneffski in Leningrad has measured the skeleton. His and Kalantar's description of the find will soon be published.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. A. Kalantar, "The Stone Age in Armenia," in the review *Norsk*, Nos. 5 and 6, which will soon appear in an English translation.

<sup>3</sup> According to information received by letter from Professor A. Kalantar.

<sup>4</sup> H. Winckler, of Helmolt, *Weltgeschichte*, vol. iii, pp. 11, 126 ff., 1901.

thros, according to Berossos), strand in his ark in a land called Nizir, while the Jewish version of the same legend in Genesis makes the ark strand on Ararat.<sup>1</sup>

The Gutians conquered Babylonia and twenty-one of their kings reigned over it for one hundred and twenty-four years (*circa* 2447-2323).<sup>2</sup> Gutium may have been situated in or near the south-eastern part of what was later Urartu and Armenia.

It is not until more than a thousand years after this time that we read in Assyrian inscriptions of these regions, possibly including the country a little farther to the north, west of Lake Urmia, around Lake Van, and farther on to the west. They were then inhabited by the Naïri peoples, against whom the Assyrian king Salmanassar I and his son Tukulti-Nimurta I waged war at the beginning of the thirteenth century B.C. Tiglath-Pileser I defeated the united armies of the Naïri kings about the year 1110 on the plain of Manazkert, north of Lake Van.<sup>3</sup>

During the succeeding centuries one of the Naïri kings must have become powerful enough to dominate the others, or else a new conquering people immigrated, probably from the west, for an inscription of the Assyrian king Assurnasir-pal (885-860 B.C.) alludes for the first time to *Urartu* (the Ararat of the Bible) as a kingdom in this region near Lake Van. In a short time his kingdom grew more powerful, gradually extending over the same regions as the Armenia of later days. Several Assyrian inscriptions related that Salmanassar III (860-825) waged war against King *Aram* of Urartu.

In the numerous inscriptions of the Urartu people that still survive they call themselves *Khaldians* (Khaldini),<sup>4</sup> deriving the name from their god Khaldis, as the Assyrians called themselves after the god Assur. The whole country was

<sup>1</sup> On the Babylonian flood, see E. Suess, *Antlitz der Erde*, vol. i, pp. 29 ff., 1885. See also Klauber and Lehmann-Haupt, *Geschichte des alten Orients*, p. 86.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Klauber and Lehmann-Haupt, *Geschichte des alten Orients*, 3rd edition, p. 92; in L. M. Hartmann, *Weltgeschichte*, vol. i, part i, 1925.

<sup>3</sup> Lehmann-Haupt, *Armenien Einst und Jetzt*, vol. ii, p. 13, 1910; vol. ii, pp. 115 ff., 595.

<sup>4</sup> This name must not be confused with that of the Semitic Chaldeans in Babylonia, with whom the above-mentioned people had no connection.

Khaldia, the god's country, and its capital was Khaldina, the god's city. They had a remarkably complete theocratic constitution. Tushpa (the Assyrian Turuspa), afterwards called Van, by Lake Van, was the capital, apparently founded about the year 830; and King Sardur I (II) erected a castle near it on the isolated craggy hill overlooking the plain. On the steep face of the rock he and subsequent kings had long inscriptions hewn, telling of themselves and their deeds. Numerous inscriptions of various kings have also been found elsewhere in the country. Sardur I (II) still calls himself "king of Naïri" in an inscription in the Assyrian language, as does also his successor *Ispuinis* in one inscription (in Khaldian), though in another he is entitled "King of Biaina," the name of the country which was afterwards corrupted to "Van." The Khaldian kings who succeeded him simply call themselves kings of Biaina.

The inscriptions are in Assyrian cuneiform script. The earliest—those of King Sardur—are in the Assyrian language, but the later inscriptions are in Khaldian, with one or two in both languages. The Khaldian language, which is little known, but has been partially deciphered in the last few decades,<sup>1</sup> was neither Arian nor Semitic; it was related to the language of the Mitanni.<sup>2</sup> Like the latter, the Khaldians and possibly also the Protokhetiti, may have belonged to the group of Subari, and they came from Asia Minor (Cappadocia). It would seem that the Mitanni founded the Assyrian empire; at any rate the first known rulers of Assyria had Mitannic names.<sup>3</sup> As already mentioned (p. 85), the Khaldian language seems to have certain features resembling Georgian. Lehmann-Haupt holds that there may have been Indo-European blood in the ruling classes among the Khaldians.

The kings of Biaina became so formidable that for a time

<sup>1</sup> The honour of interpreting the language is shared by Stanislaus Guyard, Professor A. H. Sayce of Oxford, Professor D. H. Müller, Dr. Valdemar Belck, and Professor Lehmann-Haupt. The two last have made important finds which have more than doubled the number of known Khaldic inscriptions.

<sup>2</sup> It has been suggested that the name *Mitanni* may be explained as consisting of the Georgian *mī'a* + the suffix *ani*, meaning mountain people. Cf. C. G. v. Wesendonk, *Ueber georgisches Heidentum*, p. 34, Leipzig, 1924.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Lehmann-Haupt in L. M. Hartmann, *Welgeschichte*, vol. i, part i, pp. 104, 145.

they even threatened to wrest the "world empire" from Assyria, and the Assyrian kings had to work hard to defend themselves. One of the most notable kings of the Khaldians was *Menuas*. He extended his dominion northwards and conquered a large part of the valley of the Araxes north of the Ararat Mountains, and later, after the petty kings in this fertile region had been expelled, his son *Argistis I* founded, in the first half of the eighth century B.C., the city of *Armavir* on a site near the present village of Tapa Dibi, on the plain north of the Araxes (cf. p. 137). His son, *Sardur II (III)*, enlarged the city and increased its power—presumably by extending and improving the irrigation system, and constructing larger canals from the Araxes.

The Khaldians were experts in constructing watercourses and irrigating, an art which they may have inherited from the earlier long-skulled people. They dammed lakes, regulated the amount of water carried by the rivers, and conducted the water across the plains by canals to irrigate cornfields and vineyards; and by this means they were able to cultivate the land. Many of their irrigation systems are still in use, and are vital to the very existence of the population. King *Menuas* constructed a large canal 70 kilometres in length to carry water from a mountain stream to the plain near Van, which was thus irrigated, enabling a flourishing "garden city" to grow up there. This canal, which is now, curiously enough, called *Shamyram-su* (*Semiramis's river*), is still, after more than 2,730 years, indispensable for the existence of the people living in that fertile region. King *Rusas I* cultivated another part of the Van plain by damming an artificial lake and distributing the water by means of a canal; this irrigation system is still in use, and there are many others. The Khaldians also made roads and bridges; moreover, they were clever builders, and especially efficient as stone-masons and stone-workers. They were skilful in preparing iron and other metals, and clever metal-workers and smiths. Possibly they were identical with the later *Khalybi*,<sup>1</sup> who played such an

<sup>1</sup> The *Khalybi* in Little Armenia were conquered by *Zariadres* (after 189 B.C.; cf. *Strabo*, XI, 14, 5), and driven away to the coast of the Black Sea west of *Trebizond*, where they lived in *Strabo's* time.

important part in antiquity on account of their skill in working iron, and from whom the Greeks derived their name for steel.

Judging from the distribution of the Khaldian kings' inscriptions in different parts of the country, their realm must have stretched from the lands around Lake Van north-eastwards to Lake Gökcha, north-westwards to Erzerum, westwards across the Mush plain and the Taron Valley to the Euphrates near Malatia, south-westwards and southwards into Syria, and south-eastwards to the country south of Lake Urmia. These are the same regions that subsequently made up the kingdom of Armenia.

At the end of the eighth century B.C. Urartu was fiercely attacked by the Indo-European Cimmerians, who advanced through the Caucasus from the north and threatened Assyria as well. About the year 670 B.C. the Cimmerians were pushed westwards into Asia Minor by their eastern Indo-European (Iranian) neighbours, the Ashkuza people (i.e. the Scythians), who had come southwards east of the Caucasus along the Caspian Sea. Then Urartu was attacked by Ashkuza and other peoples, until at length the Khaldian kingdom in Van was crushed by the Indo-European Medes under Cyaxares; the royal castle on the cliff called Toprak-Kaleh, near Van, was destroyed and burnt to the ground, probably before 585 B.C., and Rusas III, the last of the Khaldian kings, may have lost his life on the same occasion.<sup>1</sup> About the year 612 the Medes, Scythians, and Babylonians had destroyed Nineveh.

The first time we hear of Armenia (Armina) as the name of the country is in the Persian King Darius Hystaspes's inscription on the cliff at Behistun (or Bisutun), dating from *circa* 521. It is written in three languages (Old Persian, Elamitic-Anzanic, and New Babylonian), and tells, *inter alia*, of the suppression of insurrections in Urartu; but this Assyrian name is replaced by *Armaniya*, *Armina*, and *Harminiuara*. The fact that this name suddenly appears, and is henceforth the only one used both for the country and the people, seems to show that in the period that had elapsed since the last mention of Urartu and Khaldia (Biaina) in the Assyrian and Khaldian inscriptions, another people—the Armenians—had entered and

<sup>1</sup> Lehmann-Haupt, *Armenien Einst und Jetzt*, vol. ii, pp. 462 f., 685 f.

occupied the country in the sixth century B.C. About eighty years later Herodotus (484-424) uses the name Armenia of the country north of Assyria,<sup>1</sup> stating that the Euphrates forms the boundary between Cilicia and Armenia, and that this country extends for fifteen days' journey (stations), or  $56\frac{1}{2}$  parasangs, eastwards, evidently to the region near Lake Urmia. The Armenians may thus have occupied the whole of that country before his time.

Herodotus says that the Armenians were descended from the Phrygians, and that the latter came from Europe, where they "were called Brygians as long as they dwelt beside the Macedonians."<sup>2</sup> They "have the greatest wealth in cattle and fruit of all the peoples I know," and the Armenians "are wealthy in cattle likewise." This agrees remarkably well with what we may conjecture to have been the facts. The ancient Armenian language was Indo-European, and most nearly allied to the middle western (Slav-Lettish) group. The language of the Phrygians was also Indo-European, related to Thracian. Both peoples lived largely by keeping cattle. Probably they lived at an earlier period in the Balkans, and after a time crossed over the straits, especially perhaps the Bosphorus (the ox-ford?), to Asia Minor, chiefly, we may suppose, at the end of the third and the beginning of the second millennium B.C. At that time—*circa* 1900—Troy, which had had a long-skulled population all through the third millennium B.C., was taken by a short-skulled Indo-European people, possibly the Phrygians; and it is not impossible that some at least of the Trojans against whom the Greeks fought in the *Iliad* belonged to that race. Paris and Priam might be Phrygian names. These Indo-European peoples who invaded Asia Minor had horses and chariots, which gave them a great superiority in battle.

At the same time we find a powerful people in Cappadocia called the Khetites (Hittites), who also possessed horses, and who won themselves an extensive kingdom. They penetrated Syria and pressed on as far as Babylon, which they took and sacked about the year 1726 (or possibly 1756) B.C. Their language had a strong admixture of Indo-European, and the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Herodotus, i, 194; v, 52.

<sup>2</sup> Herodotus, viii, 73; v, 49.

ruling classes may have been to a large extent short-skulled Indo-Europeans. At this period—from the end of the third millennium B.C.—other new tribes, probably for the most part short-skulled Indo-Europeans, invaded Thessaly and Greece.<sup>1</sup> There is every indication that there was unrest in the Balkan peninsula; powerful barbarian peoples had come from the north, and some of these had introduced the Indo-European language into Greece.

Apparently it was not till the fourteenth century B.C. that one or more short-skulled peoples crossed in large numbers to Crete, chiefly, no doubt, from the south of Greece. Perhaps, as we shall see later, it was at about the same time, or a little earlier, that short-skulled people drove out the older long-skulls in Armenia. Somewhat later the Armenians may have settled in Cappadocia, possibly in what remained of the Khetite (Hittite) kingdom, alongside of the Phrygians, with whose help they may have expelled the Moshi (cf. p. 84).

The origin of the name Armenia is unknown; but in the regions which may previously have been inhabited by the Armenians we come across several places called Armenion or Arminion. Strabo (XI, 4, 8, and 14, 12), mentions the town of Armenion near Lake Boibeis in Thessaly. The *Iliad* (II, 2, 734) mentions an Ormenion in Thessaly, which Strabo (IX, 5, 18) calls Orminion. In Bithynia in Asia Minor there was a mountain called "Orminion oros"; at Sinope there was the harbour of "Armene"; by the sources of the Halys (now the Kizil Irmak), in what is now the Sivas district, there was a mountain called "Armenion oros." An inscription of the Khaldian King Menuas mentions in connection with his campaigns in the west a place-name *Ur-me-ni* (-u-bi-ni), which corresponds to the Greek Orminion; and his son Arzistis speaks of the "town" (?) of *Urmani*.<sup>2</sup> It seems, therefore, that as early as the eighth century B.C. the Armenians inhabited the mountainous country near the sources of the Halys, west of Urartu (Khaldia), or what was afterwards Great Armenia.

As the power of the Khaldians was gradually broken down

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Emil Smith, *Hellas für Homer*, pp. 175 ff., Oslo, 1926.

<sup>2</sup> Lehmann-Haupt, *Armenien Einst und Jetzt*, vol. ii, p. 692.

by the attacks of the Indo-European tribes on the north and east, the Armenians, possibly with remnants of related peoples, the Treres (from Thrace), and the Cimmerians, migrated into their country and partially displaced them—the Khaldians retiring into the mountains—or intermarried with them, at the same time introducing their own language. When Xenophon crossed Armenia with the "ten thousand" (401 B.C.) there were still warlike tribes of Khaldians, whom he wrongly calls Chaldeans (*χαλδαῖοι*), in the mountain tracts on the frontier of Armenia.<sup>1</sup> He describes them as being independent and bellicose, evidently more warlike than the Armenians. Probably remnants of them survived for a long time in various border districts.<sup>2</sup>

When the Armenians came to Urartu they may have been predominantly herdsmen (cf. p. 177), whereas the Khaldians were farmers and gardeners with a highly developed technique of irrigation. The subsequent civilization of the Armenians would thus become a combination of the two modes of livelihood. We may infer that they were farmers as well as herdsmen in the time of Herodotus from the fact that he states (I, 194) that round boats made of willow covered with hides were used in the country. In these boats they transported wine, sedge, and other produce down the river to Babylon, where the cargo was sold. The largest of these vessels could carry cargoes weighing up to 5,000 talents, i.e. 130 tons. Strabo (XI, 14, 4) says that Armenia has fertile valleys, such as the plain of the Araxes and others, where there is a superabundance of corn and agricultural produce; moreover, horses are bred largely, there are gold and other mines, and the people are wealthy (XI, 14, 9-10).

The Armenians called themselves *Haï* (plural *Haïkēb*), and their country *Haïots Jerkir*, afterwards Iranianized to *Haï-astan* (the place or country of the *Haïs*). In the parts near Lake Van the name was pronounced *Khaï*. Its origin is uncertain. Jensen would derive it from the name *Hati*, applied to the Hittites, as "t" between two vowels is dropped

<sup>1</sup> *Anabasis*, iv, 3; *Cyropadia*, iii, 1, 34; iii, 2, 7-10; iii, 2, 17-26.

<sup>2</sup> Lehmann-Haupt, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 710, 715 ff., 722. Lynch, *Armenia*, vol. ii, p. 68 f., 1901.

in Armenian. But this derivation may be uncertain. The same name occurs also in many place-names, such as Haiots-dzor (the valley of the Haïs), near Van, the ancient Khaldian capital, Haikapert (the fortress of the Haïs), Haikazor, Haikavan, Haikashen, etc.

#### ANTHROPOLOGY AND ORIGIN.

Like all the modern peoples in Western Asia the Armenians are a mixture of several races ; but they are more homogeneous than most of the near-Asiatic peoples, the large majority of them having the easily recognized characteristics of the strongly marked race which has been called Western Asiatic, Armenoid, or Armenian.

The race in question is tall and of a slim build ; the head is decidedly short-skulled (index, 85-87), and remarkably high, especially from the ear to the crown, the back of the head being curiously flat, as the line of the neck continues straight up ; the skull is not particularly wide, but can nevertheless contain a brain of considerable size on account of its exceptional height. The face is long and narrow (face index, 92-94) ; the nasal ridge is high and narrow, often in an almost continuous line with the forehead, and with a fleshy and somewhat hooked tip ; the forehead is of medium width, high, and rather sloping, the chin generally weak, with the profile receding in a line from the upper lip downwards. The complexion is of a light-brown, resembling sunburn ; the hair soft, often wavy, and brownish-black ; there is a thick growth of beard and hair, both on the head and on the body ; and the eyes are dark brown. Characteristic of the race, and especially of the Armenian people, are its tenacious vitality and exceptionally high birth-rate. In Western Asia the race is widely distributed, forming an important element of the various peoples inhabiting Asia Minor, the Caucasus, Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine, and North Arabia ; while it is also found in mixed types eastwards in Persia as far as India.

It bears so strong a resemblance to the so-called *Dinaric* race in Europe that it is impossible to distinguish between

them; the two races must be regarded as branches of the same stock. The Dinaric, however, has been partly mixed with other European races; it is very widely distributed in the Balkan Mountains (the Dinaric Alps), Albania, Montenegro, Herzegovina, Bosnia, Serbia, and Croatia. Of the Southern Slav peoples in these countries (except the Bulgarians, originally a Finnish people, who entered the Balkans later) it forms the bulk. It is found in the Carpathians and the Transylvanian Alps, and sporadically in Austria, South Germany, Czechoslovakia, here and there in Switzerland, in North Italy, in the midlands and south of France, etc., and also in Ukraine.

F. v. Luschan<sup>1</sup> and several other scholars hold that the west-Asiatic (Armenian) race was indigenous in Asia Minor, whence it spread in all directions. At a later date people of the dark, long-skulled race entered from the south and people of the fair Nordic race from the north, and intermingled more or less with the Armenoid people. If this hypothesis is correct, the Dinaric race must have immigrated at an early date from Asia Minor into the Balkan Peninsula, and thence spread over Southern Europe. But later on there were migrations in the opposite direction of Indo-European peoples like the Phrygians, Armenians, Treres, and other Thracian tribes, who passed from the Balkan Peninsula to Asia Minor. There has been a strong tendency to assume that all these Indo-European or "Indo-Germanic" immigrant peoples belonged essentially to the fair, long-skulled Nordic race, whose Nordic characteristics soon largely disappeared as a result of admixture with the Armenoid aboriginals, though the languages remained intact. But all this seems very doubtful. For one thing, the peoples who spoke the Indo-European languages belonged to different European races, and even in those days the peoples of Europe must have been largely of mixed race. For another, it is extremely unlikely that a people coming from the Balkan Peninsula and with a language from the very parts inhabited by the Dinaric short-skulls would belong—to any large extent—to the Nordic race. On the contrary, there are

<sup>1</sup> F. v. Luschan, "The Early Inhabitants of Western Asia," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, xli, London, 1911.

indications which seem to show that the peoples who migrated from there between the end of the third and the beginning of the second millennium B.C., both to Asia Minor (where the long-skulled Trojans were dispossessed by a short-skulled and probably Indo-European people about 1900 B.C.), and to Greece, were short-skulled (cf. p. 233).

As regards Armenia we know now that the short-skulled Armenoid race immigrated into the country after a long-skulled race who inhabited the country in the Stone and Bronze Ages. At the museum in Erivan I saw some of the crania from that early period, and they were all typical long-skulls. Not till iron begins to appear in the graves do we find short-skulls. Mr. E. Lalajan, director of the State Museum in Erivan, has excavated more than five hundred graves in the Novo-Bejazet district near Lake Gökcha, the bulk of these dating from the Bronze Age. They contained typical long-skulls (index, 65'3-73'9). In Georgia, too, and in the Caucasian regions, extending from the Kuban country to the eastern parts of Asia Minor and farther south, a similar long-skulled race seems to have been widely distributed and in sole occupation before the incursion of the later short-skulled peoples. According to Armenian students of the subject, the sole supremacy of the long-skulls in Armenia began to decline in the first half of the second millennium B.C., and by the middle of the millennium the country was peopled by short-skulls.<sup>1</sup> It is not at all improbable that this change was connected with the developments in producing iron and making iron weapons in Asia Minor at approximately the same time, or possibly in the fourteenth century. These new weapons obviously gave the short-skulled Armenoid people of Asia Minor a great advantage over the long-skulled and smaller bronze men in the west, whom they easily conquered. And in this connection it should be remembered that the later Khaldians in Armenia (as well as the Khalybes) were particularly clever smiths and workers in iron and steel.

We may probably assume that the early long-skulled peoples in Armenia and the countries of the Caucasus belonged

<sup>1</sup> According to information received in a letter from Dr. S. Ter-Hakobian, librarian of the Scientific Institute at Echmiadzin.

to a race which was the same as the Mediterranean or Afghan race.<sup>1</sup> The latter was dark-haired and comparatively short and slight in build. It was originally distributed over the Mediterranean countries, Egypt, North Africa, Crete, many of the Greek islands, the south of Greece, and farther to the west. In Asia it was distributed over Arabia, and eastwards to Persia and Afghanistan. The Arabs and several of the original Semitic peoples belonged to this race, as did also the Israelite immigrants into Palestine, and probably the Phœnicians. The northern Arabic-speaking tribes and the Druses, Maronites, etc., have a strong admixture of Armenoid blood. This applies in a particularly high degree to the Jews; it is the source of the so-called Semitic appearance, with the hooked Armenoid nose, which in reality is not Semitic at all. On the coast of Asia Minor we meet with the long-skulled race in Troy in the third millennium B.C.; but the extent of its earlier distribution elsewhere in Asia Minor is unknown. In view of its wide distribution at an early date in the east, south, and west, we might expect it to have extended at that time over the interior of Asia Minor and Syria; at present, however, there have been no systematic investigations of prehistoric graves in those regions, and failing these we can reach no definitive conclusion.

The circumstance that kings and gods on Hittite reliefs of the second millennium B.C. are undoubtedly of the Armenoid type is not of the evidential value that Luschan holds it to be. These reliefs are sufficiently late for us at least to expect that there had been an immigration by then of the short-skulled race. Further, they unquestionably represent the type of the ruling class, which, as we know, was immigrated Indo-European. According to these reliefs it would have been markedly Armenoid.

According to Luschan's investigations a very considerable percentage of dark long-skulls may be found in the present-day Turkish-speaking population of Western Asia. But it seems more reasonable to suppose that these long-skulled people are descended from an original people of the Mediterranean race than that they entered the country at a later epoch, which

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Halfdan Bryn, *Menneskerasene og deres utvikling*, pp. 125 ff., Oslo, 1925.

would be the reverse of what happened in the neighbouring lands of Armenia, Georgia, Troy, Crete, etc.

It is, nevertheless, remarkable that in the ancient Sumerian reliefs and sculptures from the beginning of the third millennium B.C. and later, the Sumerians generally differ from the Semites in having Armenoid faces with the big curved nose and high nose-bridge continuing in the line of the sloping forehead, sometimes also with a weak receding chin.<sup>1</sup> In shape, on the other hand, the heads do not resemble the high Armenoid short-skulls, but look rather long-skulled. How much weight should be given to these facts it is difficult to decide. That the Armenoid type is found later on Assyrian reliefs is of less importance, as the Assyrian empire may have been founded by Mitanni from Asia Minor (cf. p. 230).

We do not know who the short-skulled peoples were who dispossessed the long-skulls of Armenia at the beginning of the Iron Age, but they may possibly have included the Naïri peoples, who are first referred to in Assyrian inscriptions of the thirteenth century B.C. as living in Southern Armenia, near the Urmia and Van Lake, and who are mentioned with the Khaldians at a later date. These peoples evidently entered from the west. In a relief of a battle with the Khaldians—the Assyrian King Salmanassar III's (860-825) bronze plate on the gate at Balavat—the Khaldians are represented as two different kinds of people, large men and dwarfs, the latter always under the protection of the former.<sup>2</sup> The meaning of this seems to be that there was a ruling people, probably of the tall, short-skulled Armenoid race, and a smaller subject people, probably of the earlier long-skulled race, of whom some still survived, though they afterwards disappeared, leaving little trace of themselves in the later population of Armenia.

After the Khaldians the Armenians likewise immigrated from the west, chiefly in the sixth century B.C. Like the former, they belonged to the Armenoid race, but they spoke an Indo-European tongue. Their forefathers evidently came

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the pictures in L. W. King, *A History of Sumer and Akad*, pp. 40 ff., London, 1910. See also Eduard Meyer, *Sumerier und Semiten in Babylonien*, Abhandl. d. k. preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1906.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Lehmann-Haupt, *Armenien Einst und Jetzt*, vol. i, p. 306; ii, p. 681 f.

to Asia Minor from the Balkan Peninsula; they may have lived near Thessaly, where there are still people of the Dinaric race. In Cappadocia they intermingled with people of Asia Minor who were also Armenoid short-skulls, and possibly with remnants of Trepes, Cimmerians, and other Indo-European tribes. Some of the latter may have been mixed with the fair Nordic race. No doubt the Armenians and Phrygians themselves were to some extent of mixed race before they left Europe; they were mainly Armenian (Dinaric), but had possibly a tinge of Nordic blood in their veins. It is also possible, however, that the traces of the Nordic race, and perhaps of the Alpine race, found among the Armenians, are due to later admixture. Among other evidence it may be noted that more than half (53 per cent.) of the West Kurds examined by Luschan in the mountain districts of Kurdistan were fair, with light-coloured eyes and long skulls.<sup>1</sup> But the Kurds presumably immigrated comparatively late, long after the peoples of Armenian race.

Another point worth noticing is that the numerous tribes and peoples who now speak the Caucasian language—both North and South Caucasian—are on the average short-skulls, more or less Armenoid in type. We must suppose that they immigrated after the earlier long-skulled race whom they dispossessed. Their language is related neither to the Indo-European nor to the Semitic tongues; on the other hand, it may be related to some of the earlier languages of Asia Minor, possibly forming a special language-group with these. It looks as if the short-skulled Armenoid peoples had been very long in Western Asia, and they may have lived there alongside of peoples of the long-skulled race. But in addition there were other peoples of the Armeno-Dinaric race who immigrated from the Balkan Peninsula and whose language was Indo-European.

#### ORGANIZATION AND RELIGION.

The Armenian people was divided into two main classes: a proprietary upper class, the nobility who owned the land

<sup>1</sup> F. v. Luschan, *op. cit.*, p. 229. See also the same author's *Völker Rassen sprachen*, p. 91 f., Berlin, 1922.

and were lords (*sepub*), and a lower class of peasants and labourers who were vassals (*shinakan*), working on the land or as craftsmen. The peasants paid dues to the nobles and feudal lords, and served under them in war; but they were free men, able to move about as they pleased, and there does not seem to have been any serfdom of the sort that existed to some extent in Georgia. In addition, the clergy formed a class of their own, with extensive lands which belonged to the Church and to its more important offices. In course of time yet another class—the citizen class—came into being in the towns. The community was based on the “great family,” which, with its head, sons, daughters-in-law, and grandchildren, formed a natural labour unit, often consisting of nearly a hundred members. This was not unlike the Georgian system (cf. p. 88). The Armenians may have brought it with them from Europe, where it continued in force down to recent times, especially among the Southern Slavs, Serbians, etc.

Armenia seems never to have formed a really united State; it was rather a series of cantons, with fertile valleys and plains separated by high mountain ranges; these cantons were inhabited by separate tribes, partly composed of different stocks, and it is impossible to say with certainty what proportion of them was really Armenian. Each tribe was under an hereditary chief, who belonged to a powerful family owning extensive lands, and ruled it with practically unlimited power. It is characteristic that several of the most powerful families were of non-Armenian origin. One example was the *Artsruni* family in Van, which was of Khaldian descent, perhaps originally Assyrian (?). The *Mamikoni* family, which gave Armenia its noblest champions of liberty, came from the east and was possibly of East Parthian origin, and related to the royal family of the Arsacids. The powerful *Bagratid* family liked to be thought Jewish, but was more probably of Medo-Persian descent.

At the head of the State was the king, as the chief ruler and war-lord; but he was usually more or less dependent on the tribal chiefs, whose power, especially if several of them joined forces, was often equal to his own. Gradually a feudal

system developed after the Persian pattern. The powerful nobles, called in Armenian *nakharars*, became vassal-princes or feudal lords, who lived in their own strongholds and governed their lands independently in all domestic matters, but paid annual tribute to the king, and were bound to follow him in time of war at the head of their own troops, chiefly consisting of well-trained horsemen.

This highly developed feudal system had obvious weaknesses, but had certain strong points as well. It greatly diminished the country's belligerent power, as it prevented the people from feeling that they formed a real political unit, and from joining forces in times of peril to resist enemies from outside. It often led to inner dissensions among the feudal lords, to an even greater extent than in Georgia. But, on the other hand, so long as the powerful Nakharars in their strongholds could defend and retain their freedom, it was difficult for foreign rulers to establish any firm footing in the country; and notwithstanding the outward dependence of Armenia, these feudal lords were for a long time able to save the country and its population from destruction by the way in which they upheld the local independence of their lands at home. In the thirteenth century, however, the Nakharars more or less disappeared, and this, so far as Armenia's political existence was concerned, was the beginning of the end.

A decisive factor in the whole history of the Armenian people was the exposed position of their country. The Armenian highlands formed a very valuable coign of vantage for warlike expeditions both to the east and west, and accordingly the possession of this key position was considered of great importance by the World Powers on either side in their constant wars with each other. But the very situation which involved the country in so many political struggles may have had certain material advantages. The important caravan routes from Persia, India, and Babylon naturally came to pass largely through Armenia to the Black Sea, where the busy port of Trebizond was situated. Through being continually in contact with this stream of world trade the Armenians probably became efficient traders at an early date; and the frequent visits of foreign travellers would encourage handi-

crafts and industries. Moreover, their country was fertile, and furnished products of commercial value; as we have seen, their trade expeditions to Babylon are mentioned already in Herodotus.

The Armenians, therefore, found it comparatively easy to acquire wealth, and this, together with their great fecundity, accounts for the amazing staying-power which enabled them to survive the repeated devastations of their country. They sought shelter from their enemies in their inaccessible mountains, and when the invaders retired they could return to their lands to make a fresh start, unless the necessary system of irrigation had been too thoroughly destroyed for them to repair it again. In the latter event they had to migrate, and the land became a desert once more. Even in Strabo (XI, 14, 10) we read of their wealth, which was so great that Tigranes was able to pay Pompey (see below) the enormous sum of six thousand talents in silver. It must have been this prosperity that enabled the people, or their Church and rulers, in spite of constant wars, to carry on vigorous building activities and develop a remarkably high standard of architecture. No doubt their constant intercourse with foreigners also gave them new impressions and inspirations which had a stimulating effect upon their intellectual life.

The geographical position of the country may thus have helped to develop certain outstanding national traits. On the one hand the constant presence of armies in their valleys and plains accustomed them to oppression; but with their stubborn vitality they never abandoned hope, and set to work again and again to recover the lost ground. On the other hand, their industry and thrift combined with their skill in trade and handicrafts made them specially suited to get on wherever they went, and enabled them to form colonies in foreign countries, where, however, their cleverness has not always earned them the esteem of the native population. A people subject to continual oppression and persecution is apt to develop characteristics which are not altogether attractive.

Although circumstances compelled the Armenians to carry on many wars, they do not seem to have been a conspicu-

ously warlike people like their Georgian neighbours after they settled in Armenia. Their tastes lay more in the direction of comfort and the pursuits of peace. Xenophon (in 401-400 B.C.) describes them as peaceable, well-to-do, and very hospitable, whereas his *Anabasis* and the romance *Cyropædia* (cf. p. 235) describe the Khaldians as warlike, poor, and independent. The latter lived a poverty-stricken life in the mountains, and were to some extent dependent on what they could get by looting.

*Religion.*—The religion of the Armenians has drawn its inspiration from a variety of sources. Their chief divinity in early times was apparently *Anahit*, the goddess of fertility, who was the mother of the people, the golden mother, or sometimes the immaculate virgin goddess. Originally she was evidently the goddess of the fertile soil, who had been worshipped ever since the third millennium B.C. in Asia Minor and the countries of the eastern Mediterranean—equivalent to the *Rhea* of Greek legend, the serpent-goddess of Crete, perhaps also called *Da* (cf. the Greek *Da Mater* = *Demeter*), the *Cyrene* of the Ægean, the *Cybele* of the Moshi and Phrygians, and the *Ma* of Cappadocia and Pontus. The Persians also had a goddess *Anahita*, called in the *Avesta* (Yast V) *Ardivi Sura Anahiti*, i.e. the “tall, strong, immaculate,” who is described as a noble young virgin with a golden crown of stars and a golden robe adorned with thirty otter-skins. She is the goddess of fertile water—of the primal source up among the stars from which all rivers flow—in other words, the personification of the fertilizing power of water; but also the war-goddess, who drives in a chariot drawn by four white horses (wind, rain, clouds, and hail—compare the white horses of Mithras). Possibly she grew out of a combination of *Anahit*, whose cult came in from the west, and a Persian river goddess *Ardivi Sura*. *Anahit* (*Anāitis*) was also worshipped in Lydia and Pontus, where according to Strabo (XII, 3, 37) she had a wealthy and esteemed shrine at Zela. She may be identical with the Semitic goddess *Anat*. Under later Hellenic influence she was sometimes classed with the Greek virgin goddesses *Artemis* and *Athene*. Not impossibly it is the same idea of a pure

virgin goddess that survives in the Virgin Mother of God of the Christian religion.

As the goddess of fertility, however, she was also associated with reproduction, and possibly with the Assyrian Istar (Astarte); Strabo (XI, 14, 16) tells us that her rites, especially at the great temple at Akilisene near Eres (Erzinjan), included prostitution, to which even the highest nobility sent their virgin daughters, who afterwards "married, and no man had any hesitation in wedding such a one." This form of worship is very probably of Semitic origin (cf. Herodotus, i. 199).

The Armenians evidently got their more important gods of a later date from the Persians. *Aramazd* became in course of time the chief deity, being either the father or the husband of Anahit. His son was called *Mibr* (i.e. Mithras, originally Indian), and his daughter *Nine* or *Nana*, probably adopted from the Assyrians. The god of strength, war, victory, and hunting was the snake-killer *Vahakn*, evidently the same as the Persian dragon-slayer Verethraghna (the Greek Artagenes). He was afterwards associated with Hercules. *Astghik* (or *Astlik*) was the goddess of beauty and love, and her sacred flower was the rose. With *Vahakn* she gave birth to "fire." She may derive from the Assyrian *Istar* (Astarte), the sensual goddess of love and reproduction (the Greek Mylitta), who is mentioned in a Khaldian inscription (of King Menuas) in Armenia as early as *circa* 800 B.C. Other gods were *Tiur*, the god of wisdom, and *Barshamin* the sun god, who was doubtless Assyrian. Of Armenian and possibly Khaldian origin were in all probability the god *Vanatur* (lord of the new year) and the worship of the Sun and Moon.

*Earliest Poetry.*—Even in heathen times the Armenians probably had poetry, with songs, popular legends, and even a great heroic epic, though only a few fragments of this latter survive. They had no script of their own before the Christian era. Their heathen coins have Greek characters on them; and the court and upper classes probably had a certain amount of Hellenic culture, especially under the Arsacid kings.

## ARMENIA UNDER THE ARTAXIAD AND ARSACID DYNASTIES.

Not long after the immigration of the Armenians the country came under Persian sway in the latter half of the sixth century, being ruled by two satraps. When the Persian empire fell into the hands of Alexander (331 B.C.), Armenia may have remained comparatively independent for a time, though subsequently it was partially subject to the Seleucid kings of Syria. When the power of the latter was crushed by the Roman victory over Antiochus the Great in 189 B.C., the two satraps seized their independence, Zariadres in Little Armenia on the Upper Euphrates, and Artashes (Artaxias) in Great Armenia and the Ararat country around the Araxes. They successfully consolidated and enlarged their respective kingdoms. Artashes founded the town of Artashat (Artaxata), north of the Araxes, and south-west of the present town of Erivan; with only a short break it remained the capital of the country for three and a half centuries.

Under the succeeding kings of the Artaxiad dynasty the country seems to have prospered. But it had now a dangerous enemy on the east in the Persian empire of the Parthians, which also had seceded from the Seleucid empire. Under the warlike King Tigranes II (Tigranes the Great, 95-55 B.C.) Armenia reached the zenith of its power, and embraced even larger territories than Urartu in its proudest days. He united Great and Little Armenia into one kingdom, and in alliance with his father-in-law, the adventurous King Mithridates VI Eupator of Pontus, waged war against Rome herself. He extended his dominion to the Caspian Sea in the west and Cappadocia in the east; while in the south he pressed on across the Taurus Mountains, on the southern side of which he built a new and magnificent capital which he called Tigranokerta, and populated with war prisoners "from twelve Greek towns that he had destroyed."<sup>1</sup> He reduced the country as far as Edessa (Urfa), and extended his sway on the south-east as far as Judæa.

Eventually, however, Mithridates was defeated by the Romans under Lucullus in 72 B.C. Thereupon he took

<sup>1</sup> Strabo, XI, 14, 15.

refuge with his son-in-law, with the result that Lucullus attacked the latter also, routing his army in 69 B.C. near Tigranokerta, which was captured and destroyed. In 65 B.C. Tigranes was forced to capitulate to Pompey. He now lost the large dominions that he had conquered, but was permitted to retain Armenia under Roman suzerainty, in order that it might serve as a strong buffer-state against the Parthian empire. The country thus became inextricably involved in the continuous struggle for supremacy between the two great World Powers of the west and the east, a stroke of ill-fortune which proved disastrous for the Armenian people.

*The Arsacid Dynasty.*—After kings of the Artaxiad family had ruled over Armenia until the commencement of our era, a period of confusion followed, during which various adventurers of foreign extraction endeavoured to seize the throne. Finally, in A.D. 52, Tiridates (Trdat) I became king. He belonged to the Parthian family of the Arsacids, and was the brother of the King Vologeses of Persia. After some opposition Rome consented to recognize his title under Roman suzerainty, and the Emperor Nero himself placed the crown upon his head in Rome. From that date kings of the same dynasty ruled Armenia for several centuries. Their sympathies were apt to be with their Parthian neighbours on the east, but Rome watched their policy with wary and jealous eyes, and the country suffered again and again from wars and hostile incursions, being even for a short time, in A.D. 115–116, reduced to the position of a Roman province. In A.D. 163 the capital, Artashat, was destroyed by the Roman general Priscus, and a new town was built on the plain of the Araxes; this was the later capital Vagharshapat, now usually called Echmiadzin after its famous monastery.

When the Parthian dynasty of the Arsacids in Persia was overthrown about the year 226 by the Sasanids, the Armenian King Khosrov I invaded Persia to avenge his kinsman. His army included nomads from the other side of the Caucasus. The King of Persia was defeated, and with the help of Rome Khosrov made several successful inroads into Persia, until he was assassinated at the instigation of the Persian king. Armenia now came under Persian influence for a time, and an

attempt was made to enforce the adoption of the Sasanid State religion, which was the later form of the Avesta teaching and fire-worship.

Meanwhile Khosrov's son Tdrat (or Tiridates), who was still a child, had been saved, and was apparently brought to Rome, where he is said to have distinguished himself as a warrior, whose remarkable feats and exceptional strength were afterwards celebrated in popular legend. It seems that soon after the Persians were defeated by Odenath, Prince of Palmyra, *circa* A.D. 265, Trdat returned to his own country, with Rome's support, to claim his father's throne. He expelled the Persians, consolidated his power by various successful campaigns, and became famous as one of the most remarkable hero-kings of Armenia, Trdat III, "the Great."

*The Advent of Christianity.*—Trdat adopted Christianity as the State religion, apparently about the year 280. This faith must have been introduced into Armenia at an early date, probably by Syrian missionaries from Edessa, and even in the second century there may have been many Christians in the land. Trdat was apparently a devout worshipper of the ancient gods of his country, anxious to defend them both against the fire-worship of the hated Sasanids and against the Christian religion. But eventually the Apostle of Armenia, Gregory the Illuminator, appeared on the scene, and Trdat was converted by a number of improbable occurrences. The later ecclesiastical authors' legendary accounts of his conversion, and the events connected with it, do not seem to contain much historical truth. According to these, Gregory was the son of Anak, the Parthian who murdered Trdat's father, and he, too, was a refugee. He found his way to Cappadocia, the ancient country of the Armenians, and was given a Christian education at Cæsarea. Learning of his father's crime, he resolved to expiate it, sought out Trdat in his place of exile, and, after serving him faithfully without revealing his identity, accompanied him when he returned to Armenia. One day, however, a serious difficulty arose; the king having commanded Gregory to make an offering of garlands in the temple of the goddess Anahit near Eres (Erzinjian), the latter refused to betray the God of the Christians. The upshot of

this conflict was that Gregory was confined in a cave near Artashat, where, with the help of a Christian widow, he managed to live for thirteen years until he was fetched back, to become the apostle of the Armenians after the king had been convinced, by humiliating experiences and a terrible illness, of the victorious power of the new religion (cf. p. 214).

Presumably the statement that Gregory was given a Christian education in Cappadocia is historically correct. Whether the story of the king's conversion is true or not, a ruler in his position would have had weighty political reasons for adopting Christianity: it would serve as a powerful weapon against the influence that the Sasanids exercised in the country by means of the doctrine of the Avesta, which they had established as the religion of the State in Persia. Moreover, there seem to have been many Christians in the country who, being notorious for their clannishness, would be able to give valuable support to the crown, which needed strengthening over against various independent feudal lords. Powerfully backed, then, by the king, Gregory the Illuminator was in a position to found the Church of Armenia, and that country was actually the first to adopt Christianity as the religion of the State.

The antagonism and the struggle between the old heathenism and the new faith which replaced it cannot have been as embittered and irreconcilable as the ecclesiastical writers of later times would have us to believe. Christianity was evidently propagated to no small extent by making use of the ancient shrines, places of sacrifice and sacred groves for the worship of the new god, and by adapting the ideas of the older to the requirements of the new religion. The goddess Anahit—the immaculate—could be identified with the Virgin; Aramazd, the Lord of Wisdom, with God the Father; the mighty Vahakn with His Son; and the sacred fire with the tongues of fire which descended upon the heads of the apostles. Numerous striking survivals of the ancient heathen sacrificial customs may still be encountered in Armenia, connected with the Church services and festivals, and they bear unmistakable testimony to the way in which the old

religion merged in the new. Moreover, we are told that Gregory expressly chose sons of heathen priests as bishops of the newly founded Church. Christianity was even less opposed to the religion of the Avesta than it was to the myths of the more primitive gods. Zarathustra, in fact, paved the way for Christianity in several respects, and his religion contributed largely to its actual content. But undoubtedly Trdat propagated the new faith to a large extent by force, and this would be strongly resented by the powerful Nakhharar families. It must have taken a long time for Christianity to penetrate every part of the mountain districts, where heathenism could count upon the ready support of Persia.

The king appointed Gregory Patriarch or Katholikos of the whole country, and his consecration was performed by the Archbishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia. The high office thus created became hereditary in Gregory's family, and evidently its powers were the same as those invested in the heathen high priest; it was also hereditary in the family of the latter, who resided at Artishat in Taron (near Mush)—the place to which Gregory returned after his consecration in Cæsarea, and where he built the mother church of Armenia after destroying the three famous temples, or possibly the triple shrine, of Anahit, Vahagn, and Astghik.<sup>1</sup> This ancient heathen place of sacrifice was the see of the Katholikos up to the year 402, when he moved to Vagharshapat. No doubt the power of the heathen high priest in Armenia would correspond to what Strabo (XII, 2, 3) tells us about the temple of the goddess Ma, or Artemis Tauropolos (= Anahit) at Comana in Cappadocia, the earlier home of the Armenians. The priest there ranked next after the king, and usually belonged to the same family (cf. p. 91). He presided over the temple and the servants of the temple, of whom there were more than six thousand of both sexes when Strabo visited it. There were extensive lands belonging to the temple, from which the high priest derived his revenues. Strabo mentions something similar in regard to the temple at Comana in Pontus (XII, 3, 22, and 34-36) and that of Anaïtis at Zela (XII, 3, 37).

<sup>1</sup> Another instance of a triad of divinities, a common conception in the East (cf. p. 88), and one which evidently lives on in the Trinity of Christianity.

In addition to absolute power over the Church and all its affairs the Katholikos acquired a large measure of temporal authority. The riches of the old temples, their lands and other property, were given to the churches, which were also endowed with new estates. In course of time the Church came to own no fewer than 12,000 farms, and was able to raise an army of 5,470 horsemen and 3,807 foot. To Gregory and his family the king gave large estates in fifteen provinces, including several princely castles. And at assemblies of the grandees of the country the Katholikos took precedence of them all. Up to A.D. 374 every new Katholikos was consecrated by the Archbishop of Cæsarea and was nominally under him, but this did not in any way detract from his position and power in Armenia. Afterwards he became an entirely independent patriarch, subject to no ecclesiastical authority either inside or outside his country; he acquired an enormous influence over the whole nation, and has ever since been regarded as its supreme spiritual head and guide. The Katholikate, as we have seen, was hereditary in Gregory's family. If there were no heir, or the Katholikate became vacant for other reasons, a new Katholikos was elected not at first, by the clergy, but by the king, the army, and the leading men of the realm. After the Katholikos Sahak died in 438 his successor was chosen by a Church assembly, in which the laity were also represented; but in course of time the electoral power was vested in the bishops.

We are told that Gregory and Trdat built numerous churches in different parts of the country. It is typical of the conditions in those days that the churches were usually fortified like castles; first, strong walls were erected round the close where the church was to stand, and then, when these were complete, the church itself was built. Of Gregory's son, the Katholikos Verthanes, we read that he celebrated Mass in the church at Ashtishat while it was being besieged by two thousand pagans outside its great walls. The records tell us nothing about the shape of the earliest churches.

Trdat probably died somewhere about A.D. 314-320. The story runs that his death was brought about by a conspiracy

among the nobles, who disliked his forcible method of introducing Christianity.

*The Last Arsacid Kings.*—When King Narseh of Persia declared war upon the Roman Empire, probably because it supported Trdat, he was defeated, and had to accept humiliating terms in A.D. 297, by which he ceded to the Emperor Diocletian considerable territories south of Armenia, while the latter country was placed under Roman protection. Subsequently, however, the kings of Persia made repeated attempts to bring Armenia under their sphere of influence, and apparently none of Trdat's successors on the throne of Armenia was a sufficiently strong personality to cope with the difficulties that arose through the conflicts between the two great neighbouring empires. Their frequently vacillating policy, due to uncertainty as to which of the competing powers could give the highest rewards and the best guarantees of safety, weakened, as time went on, both the country and the crown. Internal dissensions with the Church and the nobles were a further cause of weakness. Had there been a wise co-operation between the ecclesiastical power and the crown—as was the case in Georgia (cf. p. 91)—the latter would have been materially strengthened, and with it the country as well; but unfortunately these disagreements developed into open quarrels between the kings and the patriarchs, and two of the latter were murdered by the kings, who nevertheless lost ground continually, while the influence of the Katholikate was augmented by several powerful patriarchs.

By these internal feuds, in which the potent Nakharar families took part, the kingdom was materially weakened externally. The later ecclesiastical writers, who are our only sources, naturally praise the representatives of the Church and lay all the blame on the depravity of the kings; but it is not improbable that the Church gradually sought to obtain more than its share of power in the State, besides appropriating an unreasonable amount of land. This division of power, in temporal things, was impracticable and bound to lead sooner or later to serious friction. The responsibility must be placed at the door of King Trdat, who made the initial mistake of giving Gregory's family and the Church too much temporal power.

Under Trdat's son *Khosrov (Chosroes) II*, known as the Little (d. *circa* 342), several powerful Nakharar families carried on feuds and rebelled against the king, with the result that at last he put them all to death and confiscated their lands. Then the country was invaded and laid waste by an army composed of Iberians (Georgians) and Albanians (Caucasian tribes) under King Sanesan. Khosrov and the Katholikos had to flee, but in the end the invaders were driven out by Khosrov's generals, Vache Mamikonian and Vahan Amatunian. Sanesan was killed and his head was brought to the king, who wept bitterly over him, for though an enemy he was one of the Arsacids. Khosrov built the town of Dvin as a residence for himself, adorned it with palaces and castles for hunting and recreation, and planted woods round it. He also transferred to it the inhabitants of Artashat.

Meanwhile Persia had got a powerful king, Shapur II, known as the Great (310-379). He was still in his cradle when he came to the throne, but on reaching man's estate he set himself the task of avenging Narseh's humiliating defeat at the hands of the Romans. It is recorded that his army attacked Armenia, but was defeated near Lake Van by Khosrov's forces, possibly aided by the imperial troops. In the reign of Khosrov's son, *Tiran II* (342-350), the bitter conflict between the heads of the State and the Church began, and it went so far that the king, whom the Katholikos Yusik had forbidden to enter the church on account of his sinful life, had the primate flogged to death. Although Tiran does not seem to have been at war with Persia, we read that a Persian satrap seized him by a treacherous stratagem and had his eyes put out; afterwards, when a large Persian army invaded Armenia, it was routed by an imperial army, which captured the Persian king's harem.

The blind king Tiran refused to take the burden of government upon himself again, so the emperor placed his son *Arshak II* (350?-367) on the throne. The ecclesiastical writers' unfavourable accounts of this king are obviously much biased; he seems to have been in many ways an able man who was alive to the inner weakness of his country, and evidently did much to strengthen the crown and the kingdom.

But towards the Roman Empire and Persia his policy was vacillating. At one time, when he seems to have had a quarrel, possibly of an ecclesiastical nature, with the emperor and the Greek Church, he entered into an alliance with the Persians, and his armies, under the capable generalship of Varsak Mamikonian, penetrated far into Asia Minor and defeated the Roman army. Later, however, Arshak deserted the Persian king Shapur and resumed friendly relations with the emperor. But he had quarrelled with the powerful Katholikos Nerses, and in consequence of this breach his position at home had been weakened, and many of the nobles were hostile to him. When, therefore, after the death of Julian the Apostate in 363, the Romans had to make peace with the Persians on humiliating terms, which included a promise not to help Arshak, his position became very difficult. However, he resisted Shapur's attacks for some time, until he fell into a trap laid for him, and, in spite of Shapur's sworn promise that his person would be respected, was put in silver fetters and imprisoned in the "Castle of Oblivion." As for his loyal companion, the brave Varsak Mamikonian, Shapur had him flayed alive, after which his skin was stuffed with straw and sent to the captive king in prison. Arshak's queen, the beautiful Pharanzem, of the noble family of the Siuni, defended herself bravely in the fortress of Artagers for fourteen months, after which she had to capitulate. Shapur allowed her to be publicly violated in the sight of the army until she died of the atrocities to which she was subjected. Some years later Arshak is said to have committed suicide in prison.

The king and his much-feared general Varsak having thus been disposed of, terrible massacres took place in Armenia, apparently under the personal direction of Shapur. Thousands of Armenians of both sexes were driven together and trampled underfoot by elephants. Vagharshapat and other towns were sacked and razed to the ground, and great numbers, including the Jewish colonies, were carried off into captivity. Christians were persecuted, fire-altars set up, and it seems that several of the chiefs, like Merushan Artsrunian of Van, were fire-worshippers and well-disposed towards the Persians.

These events took place about A.D. 367. Shapur's persecution of the Christians in Persia and Armenia was due to political considerations rather than to religious fanaticism. Christians were naturally favourable to the Christian State of Rome, and therefore it was good policy to exterminate them.

Arshak's son *Pap* (368 ?-374) succeeded to the throne with the emperor's help, and assisted by the imperial troops he managed to drive his enemies out of the country. We read that Varsak Mamikonean's son, the mighty war-lord Musheg, avenged his father and his people, defeated the Persians, destroyed the fire-temples of the Magicians, and burned alive those of their priests who fell into his hands. He had many Persian leaders and princes flayed, and stuffing their skins with straw, exhibited them on the battlements. But when Shapur's chief queen and other ladies of his harem fell into Musheg's hands he treated them chivalrously and sent them back to Shapur, escorted by a bodyguard of Persian war-prisoners. Evidently this was meant as a contrast to Shapur's cruel treatment of noble Armenian ladies, which is depicted in the most lurid colours.

King *Pap* was also successful in subjugating the Nakharars, who had deserted his father, and, like the latter, he did his best to strengthen the central power of the crown. But he could not avoid coming into collision with the perhaps unduly powerful Katholikos Nerses, and the upshot seems to have been that the king poisoned this primate with a loving-cup which he gave him at a banquet intended to mark their reconciliation. He closed the convents, and let it be known that he thought marriage a more profitable vocation for the nuns. He confiscated five-sixths of the Church lands, which had augmented to a fantastic extent, and even then he was of the opinion that enough was left to support the clergy. Moreover, he reduced their numbers, holding that one priest and a deacon would be sufficient for each village. Much of this seems reasonable enough. But even King *Pap* vacillated in his foreign policy. Eventually, having defied the emperor, he was enticed to the Roman general Terentius and cut down from behind while sitting intoxicated at a banquet held in his honour (A.D. 374).

In succession to Pap the emperor allowed Arshak II's nephew, *Varasdat*, to be crowned king (374-377); but after he had had the prominent general Musheg assassinated he was ousted by the powerful Manuel Manikonean. The country was soon divided in support of rival pretenders to the throne, aided by the emperor on the one side and the King of Persia on the other. Ultimately, when the Emperor Theodosius made peace with King Shapur III in A.D. 387, Armenia was partitioned between them. The western portion of the country—Little Armenia and its capital, Karin (Erzerum)—fell to Rome; while the eastern portion—Great Armenia, with the Araxes Valley, Ararat, Taron (Mush), the Van region, etc.—fell to Persia. For a short time nominal kings of the Arsacid royal house were allowed to reign over Great Armenia, but after 428 the province was governed by a Persian satrap known as the *marzpan*, while Little Armenia was ruled by a Roman prefect after the first nominated king died.

This settlement was of far-reaching historical importance. Whereas a powerful and united Armenia under East-Roman suzerainty might have formed a strong bulwark against the subsequent advance of Islam, this vital gate of entry now fell into the hands of the Oriental Powers, and the way was left more or less open.

#### THE ARMENIAN CHURCH.

While the kingdom of Armenia thus collapsed, the Church, as we have seen, was strengthened by the work of several able patriarchs, among whom special mention may be made of Nerses I (353-373) and his son Sahak (Isak) the Great (*circa* 390-438). Churches were built, numerous monasteries were founded to serve as centres of ecclesiastical learning and popular instruction, schools were established in every district to promote education, and much beside. Most important of all for the national consciousness and culture was the fact that in Sahak's time, about the year 404, the Armenians obtained a script of their own, invented by the monk Mesrop, which comprised thirty-six letters, mostly adapted from the Greek alphabet; and a school of translators was set up, who

translated the Gospels, the Old Testament and various ecclesiastical writings from Greek and Syriac into Armenian. This national script alienated the Armenians from the Byzantine Greek Church and Byzantine learning—to which they were always in some degree antagonistic—and prevented them from being absorbed. A very important step was taken, moreover, by Sahak, who, on a visit to Constantinople, obtained leave to introduce the Armenian written language into Byzantine Little Armenia. This kept alive an ecclesiastical and intellectual connection between the two parts of the country, which had otherwise been separated.

The evolution of the doctrines of the Armenian Church was a curious one. According to teaching originally derived from Syria, Christ was evidently a sinless Man who only became God's Son at His baptism. This is the heretical teaching of the Patriarch Nestorius, which spread from Syria and Mesopotamia to Persia, India, and China. John the Baptist was regarded with special reverence in the early Armenian Church; his bones were the first relics brought to the country by Gregory, and many churches and monasteries were dedicated to him (*Karapet*).

But the Council of *Nicæa* in 325 laid down the doctrine that Christ and God were One. This was accepted by the Church of Armenia—as it is said by Gregory himself, who was still alive—and the step thus taken was decisive for the future. The Armenian Church was not represented at the Councils of Constantinople in 381 and Ephesus in 431, but it accepted the doctrines they enunciated, including the dogma that the Holy Ghost was of the same nature as the Father and the Son, but proceeding only from the Father; and it likewise associated itself with the condemnation of the Nestorian teaching regarding the dual personality of Christ.

Then came the Council of *Chalcedon* in 451, and again the Armenian Church could not participate in the proceedings because of the ruthless persecution of Armenian Christians by the Persian king Yesdegerd II. At this council the mystery of Christ was defined once for all in the rather ambiguous formula: "Christ according to the Godhead is of one nature with the Father, according to His humanity is, apart from

sin, of one nature with us. This one and the same Christ is recognized in two natures indissolubly united but yet distinct."

When the unfortunate Armenians who had survived the horrors perpetrated by the Persian fire-worshippers found a respite from their tribulations they convened a council of their own at Vagharshapat in 491, and solemnly condemned the formula of Chalcedon. This meant a complete breach both with Byzantium and Rome, and the schism has continued to this day. Throughout their troubled history the Armenians adhered to the Monophysite doctrine of a single person and one divine nature of Christ, refusing to countenance the idea of two natures; but at the same time they bitterly opposed Eutyches, the irreconcilable antagonist of the Nestorians, who taught that the body of Christ could not have been of the same nature as ours, whereas the Armenians held that He was in all respects Perfect Man.

These fine-drawn theological controversies have rent asunder the Christian world and destroyed the lives of thousands of innocent people to whom these theological definitions were nothing but empty words. In the East they helped to pave the way, at a later date, for the advance of Islam. They alienated Armenia from the Byzantine and the West Roman Empires and from the numerous Christian communities in Persia. Over and over again the Greek Church of Byzantium tried, by every means in its power, to cajole or compel the Armenian Church to acknowledge its supremacy and accept the formula of Chalcedon. But the Armenian people were always on their guard against these attempts. It is strange to see how the Armenians, who politically have always been weakened by domestic dissensions, have invariably closed their ranks when any danger has threatened the doctrines of their faith or the independence of their Church.

#### UNDER PERSIAN AND ARAB RULE.

When the Persian king Yezdegerd II tried forcibly to impose Mazdaism (the teaching of the Avesta) upon the Armenians as the only true religion, they rose in revolt in

A.D. 449 under the leadership of Vartan Mamikonean. At first Vartan fought several successful engagements against the Persians. Then there was a pitched battle against a greatly superior Persian army at Avarair, near the east frontier of the country, in 451. After a heroic struggle, in which the Persians suffered great losses, Vartan and several of his principal leaders fell. The Persian army won a dubious victory, but was badly crippled. Smaller engagements followed, in which several more Armenian leaders lost their lives. In the end, however, religious freedom was secured, and the Church and faith of Armenia were saved; but not before the Katholikos and several other clergy had been taken as prisoners to Persia and executed there.

Peace ensued for a time; then, with the recurrence of persecution and compulsion, there was a fresh rising led by Vartan's nephew, *Vahan Mamikonean*. He was repeatedly victorious in engagements with the Persians in 484; eventually they came to terms; and Vahan, having been appointed *marzpan*, governed the country successfully for a quarter of a century (485-510). Naturally Vartan and Vahan Mamikonean are popular heroes in the eyes of the Armenians.

*The Arabian Conquest.*—When the lengthy struggle between Byzantium and Persia for supremacy in Western Asia ended (as already mentioned on p. 92) in the defeat and destruction of the Sasanids in A.D. 627 by the Emperor Heraclius, the Arab hordes pressed forward instead, conquered Persia, and invaded Armenia. The Armenians were supported by Byzantium, which, however, tried to turn the opportunity to account by subjecting the country, and especially the Church, to itself; but this the Armenians resisted with vigour. After the most harrowing struggles Armenia was obliged to submit to the Arabs some time between 654 and 661, and became a province under the Khaliphate, administered by Arab governors. But though the Arabs had forcibly and within a short time introduced Islam into Persia and eradicated Mazdaism, they apparently soon gave up the idea of introducing it into Armenia, where they allowed the people to enjoy comparative religious freedom, in spite of sporadic cruelties and acts of oppression.

It is a remarkable circumstance that the seventh century,

even to some extent including the period of the Arab invasion, was a time when building flourished in Armenia, particularly under the Katholikos Nerses III Shinogh (641-661; cf. pp. 144 ff.). Many fine churches were erected, but the Armenian domed structure probably reached its highest perfection in the church at Zvarthnotz (cf. pp. 142 ff.), which Nerses built in spite of the Arabian attacks.

The Arab governors or emirs resided in Dvin, where the Armenian Katholikos also had his residence. The Arabs were chiefly interested in taxing the people and squeezing them to the utmost; they did not interfere much with domestic affairs or administration, and left the churches and monasteries in peace. But the position of the country under a foreign yoke was naturally humiliating. Even at an earlier date there had been large emigrations—both voluntary and compulsory—to the countries of the Mediterranean, the Near East, and Persia, and these continued. There were also frequent revolts against the Arabs, especially whenever Byzantium achieved any success in its struggle with the Khaliphate. The insurrections were organized by the Armenian grandees in their castles, but as a rule there was little unity in their counsels, and the risings were soon suppressed. Then for a brief period the leading men agreed to act together, and a serious rebellion broke out, which at first was crowned with success at a time when the Byzantine forces were simultaneously driving back the Arabs. But the tide turned. Byzantium had to make peace on humiliating terms, and stern punishment was meted out to Armenia (A.D. 785).

#### THE BAGRATID DYNASTY.

After a while a new period of Armenian insurrections set in, and *Sambat Bagratuni* distinguished himself as a leader until he was taken captive to Bagdad, where he met his death on the rack because he refused to recant (*circa* 856). But in course of time the power of the Khaliphate was weakened by the Turkish onset from the east, while simultaneously Byzantium flourished under a succession of able emperors, who were partially of Armenian origin. In 859 *Asbot*

*Bagratuni*, son of Sembat, was appointed by the Khaliph to be prince of Armenia. In 885, or thereabouts, he assumed the title of king; the Khaliph sent him a royal crown, and he received another from the emperor Basil I, who seems to have been of Armenian lineage.

Armenia was now governed for nearly two hundred years by kings of the Bagratid family. Nominally they acknowledged, at any rate at first, the supremacy of the Khaliph, but to all intents and purposes they were independent. In many arduous wars waged with varying success, chiefly against their Muhammedan enemies, but also against Byzantium, they managed to hold their own, notwithstanding embittered dissensions with rebellious nobles and not a few other misfortunes and calamities. They extended their dominion to a large part of old Armenia, as well as to Vaspurakan, near Lake Van, which was ruled by Artsruni chieftains, who were often in jealous opposition to the Bagratids, and eventually assumed the title of kings of that region. Those were harsh times, and the combatants, even if they were Christians, often showed little mercy to one another. When the powerful king *Sembat I* (890-914) defeated and took prisoner a number of rebellious Nakharars, he put out their eyes and committed them to the safe keeping of the emperor of Byzantium and the king of "Colchis" (Imeretia). Perhaps this was more humane than executing them.

The kingdom of the Bagratids attained the zenith of its prosperity under the three kings, *Ashot III* (951-977), *Sembat II* (977-989), and *Gazdik I* (989-1020). The stronghold of Ani (cf. p. 110) was adopted as the capital, and its fortifications strengthened, a massive wall with a number of towers being built on the north-east, where it was accessible and not protected by deep gorges. Numerous churches, monasteries, palaces, and castles were built in and near the town and elsewhere in Armenia. Here, again, it is striking that notwithstanding the frequent and destructive wars, the builder's art entered upon a new era of prosperity, great activity being displayed in erecting a large number of fine buildings. But obviously the kings, the clergy, and the aristocracy initiated these building enterprises, no doubt largely at the expense of

the lower classes. The national culture was an upper-class culture, in which the other inhabitants of the country and the dwellers in the towns had little or no part, for their houses were evidently simple in the extreme, and little now remains of them, whereas innumerable ruins of the finer buildings still survive. The latter serve at least as a notable testimony to the vitality and capabilities of the Armenian race.

The Armenian Katholikate led at this time a somewhat roving existence. In 931 it removed from Dvin to Akhthamar, an island in Lake Van; then in 959 to Argina, north of Ani; and in 992 to Ani, which was its seat until 1072.

After the death of Gaghiq in 1020 the kingdom was divided between his sons *Johannes Sembat* (1020-1041) and *Ashot IV* (1021-1040). Factious dissensions arose among the noble and the petty kings, of whom there were now four, in Vaspurakan, Aghvan, Kars, and Lori respectively; the national power of resistance was sapped, and that at a moment when a new danger was threatening the country, for the Seljuk Turks, who had obtained the ascendancy in the East, were pressing on, drawing ever nearer and nearer. These uncivilized hordes, who came swarming over the mountains and plains, their long hair waving in the breeze, with innumerable bowmen who outmanœuvred the Christian soldiery armed with swords and lances, were sinister foes indeed. The rich country of Vaspurakan was first attacked, and after suffering a defeat its king, Senekherim Artsruni, was so disheartened and apprehensive that he handed over his kingdom with its 72 strongholds, 8 towns and 4,000 villages to the emperor of Byzantium, in return for permission to settle with his people near the town of Sebastia (Sivas), in Asia Minor, where he thought he would be in safety. We are told that he migrated thither about the year 1021, accompanied by 14,000 men, besides women and children.

Ani was taken and sacked in an unexpected attack by the kings of Georgia and Abkhazia, both of whom were Bagratids; then the valley of the Araxes was overrun and devastated by the Seljuk hordes under their prince *Toghrul bey*, a grandson of Seljuk. The Armenian nobles showed themselves incapable of making a united stand against the invaders, and King

*Gaghik II* of Ani (1042-1045) was at war with Byzantium, which ought to have been a trustworthy ally against the Turks. After a series of battles fought with varying success, in which the Armenians defeated both the Seljuks and the imperial army, King Gaghik was enticed to Constantinople by imperial promises, while the imperial forces attacked Ani, which capitulated. Armenia now became, like Vaspurakan, a Roman province with a Byzantine governor, and the deluded king was allowed to have a country in Cappadocia and a palace in Constantinople. Thus ended the glamorous rule of the Bagratids in Armenia. In Lori the Bagratid dynasty continued in power until the thirteenth century.

But not even Byzantium could check the hosts of Seljuk Turks who pressed on under the leadership of Toghrul bey. One raid followed another; they advanced to the upper valleys of the Euphrates, to Arzen (near Erzerum), to the forests of Pontus, and even to Sebastia, where Senekherim, the king of the Artsruni, had thought himself safe. His sons now fled for their lives. The Turks paused when they caught sight of the numerous white cupolas of the church, which they took to be the tents of the enemy; then the order was given to pillage the town, and the streets ran with blood.

Meanwhile the Byzantine Church was doing its best to subject the Armenian Church and induce it to renounce the Monophysite doctrine of the nature of Christ. But on this point the Armenians remained adamant, and these attempts at coercion only served to exasperate them.

Then, in 1064, after a raid on Georgia (p. 92), the Seljuk Turks, led by Alp Arslan, their new and enterprising sultan, appeared before the gates of Ani. After a siege lasting twenty-five days the Turks swarmed into the splendid city of "a thousand and one churches," every man holding a knife in each hand and a third in his mouth, and the inhabitants were "mown down like grass." After this disaster the defence collapsed in 1071, when the Emperor Romanos was defeated and taken prisoner by Alp Arslan at Manazkert (Melazkert), north of Lake Van, and the struggle for Armenia came to an end. The country now passed into the hands of the Turks and the Kurdish Emir of Karabagh. In the twelfth

century it was for short periods under the protection of the Georgian kings David the Renovator and George III. On several different occasions they took Ani, but it was recaptured by the Kurds. Then, in the reign of Thamara, the city was attacked unexpectedly by the Emir Ardebil of Azerbaijan, and its inhabitants put to the sword. Even after this, Ani seems to have recovered; but a crowning disaster occurred in 1239, when Jenghiz Khan's ferocious Mongolian bands sacked the place, while in 1319 an earthquake wrecked many of its splendid buildings. The complete desertion of the city, however, only happened at a somewhat later date.

To-day the beautiful ruins of Ani, steeped in memories of a proud era in Armenia's history, and slowly crumbling into dust in the stillness of the desert, are a symbol of man's love of building up and pulling down—relics of a highly gifted race forgotten in the hustle of the Western world.

#### ARMENIA UNDER THE TURKS AND THE PERSIANS TO THE CLOSE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

In the critical times which recurred so often in Armenia, even as far back as the fifth century, bodies of Armenians emigrated to various parts of Asia Minor or still farther to the coast towns of the Mediterranean and Europe, where they founded colonies. Emigration increased during the Seljuk inroads of the eleventh century. Small new Armenian kingdoms, as we have seen, sprang up in Sivas and Cappadocia; and the king of Kars settled with his people farther to the north, close to the stronghold of Tramentov, near Amasia.

*The Kingdom of Cilicia* (1080-1375).—Many of the nobles made their way to the Taurus Mountains in the west and south-west, and to the country west of the Euphrates. Here, in Cilicia, where the fertile country had been partially depopulated on account of the Arab devastations, they founded in 1080, under their chief Ruben, an independent kingdom hostile to Byzantium, which sought to suppress their heretical State and reduce their Church to subjection. Strengthened by new contingents of Armenians and by a friendly alliance with the Crusaders, who came to Cilicia in 1097, this new kingdom of capable Armenian colonists grew and flourished;

and for three centuries the Cilician barons retained their independence, although surrounded by enemies and continually engaged in warfare both against the rising power of the Turks and against Byzantium. In vain the Byzantine Greek Church and the Church of Rome tried blandishments or threats; the Armenians of Cilicia, like their kinsmen, would neither give up their Monophysite doctrine nor their Church.

The history of this Cilician kingdom is one succession of the most romantic and extraordinary occurrences. For any people to be able, after so many terrible misfortunes, to migrate elsewhere, and then establish and maintain a flourishing new kingdom for three centuries on alien soil and among hostile nations, is evidence of unique vitality. But in the course of time it was weakened by inner dissensions, and in 1375 Sis, the capital, was taken by the Egyptian Mamelukes after a romantically heroic defence led by its last king, Leon VI. Nevertheless a free and independent remnant of this Cilician kingdom, with its independent Armenian Church, survived until our own times at Zeitun, up in the Taurus Mountains.

*Mongolian, Persian, and Turkish Inroads.*—About the year 1223 Jenghiz Khan's Mongolians swept across the borders of Armenia, plundering wherever they went, and for nearly a hundred years they were more or less masters of the country. In the middle of the fourteenth century East Armenia was taken by the Persians, while West Armenia fell into the hands of Turkish beys. Then, in 1387, Timur Lenk's savage Mongol hordes fell upon the country and devastated it for a number of years, burning towns and villages, and giving no quarter, until they drew off again to Turkestan in 1403. Among all the horrors of the early history of Armenia the memory of Timur and his predatory bands stands out as the most sinister.

Armenia became once more a bone of contention between two opposing Powers and the favourite field of battle in their wars. These Powers were now the two chief Moslem States: Persia on the east, and on the west Turkey, taking the place of Byzantium. East Armenia was again mainly under Persia, while West Armenia was under Turkish domination. In order to increase this power in the depopulated areas, Sultan Selim I summoned from Kurdistan, in 1514, numbers of

Kurdish nomads with their cattle, and settled them in several places around Lake Van, south of Ararat, and near Erzerum. The tribesmen were Moslems, but hostile to the Persians; they and their khans became and long remained the real masters of the country, developing into what were virtually robber bands, which exacted self-imposed taxes, and fleeced or carried off as they pleased the unfortunate Christians, who were not allowed even to carry arms.

After the war between Persia and the Turkish empire had gone on for some time without any definite result, the two Powers made an agreement in 1639 which involved a fresh partition of Armenia. The Arax country with Echmiadzin, the seat of the Katholikate, and the country in the north, corresponding more or less to the present Armenian republic, was assigned to Persia, while the rest of old Armenia fell to the share of the Turks. This demarcation of the frontiers remained unaltered for nearly two hundred years, although the country was again devastated in wars between the Turks and the Persians.

*Under the Turks.*—In the Armenian people's long tale of woe the most woeful chapters are concerned with the time when the Armenians were under Turkish rule. To their Muhammedan "masters" the Christians were slaves and chattels, whom Allah had given to the faithful, and who were quite outside the pale of the law. The evidence of an infidel—i.e. a Christian—against a Moslem was invalid in the law courts; nor could he defend himself against violence and robbery, because no Christian was allowed to carry arms. This, of course, gave the Kurds and other marauders a pretty free hand. As Christians could not do war-service for Allah, every male between the ages of eight and sixty had to pay a specially heavy tax in addition to all the other taxes and dues. Furthermore, there was the "boy tax" which the sultan exacted from the infidels; this consisted in taking every year thousands of boys, aged between four and eight, from Christian families, in order that they might be circumcised and brought up as Moslems to form the standing army of Janissaries which for long was Turkey's most formidable weapon against the Christians.

Such treatment does not in the long run develop the best characteristics of a nation. The independent, proud, and high-spirited are either killed or forced to leave the country. Meek submission is the only way to get on, or, at any rate, to live in peace. But the curious thing in this instance was that the oppressed were far superior to the "ruling race" in intelligence, capacity, and knowledge, except, perhaps, as soldiers. Trade and finance passed into the hands of the Armenians or of the Greeks; the writers, tax-gatherers, interpreters, and other State officials were also Armenians; and they were the best craftsmen, builders, and engineers, who usually constructed the larger houses, bridges, and mosques for the Muhammedans.

Of decisive importance in strengthening the nationalism of the Armenians throughout these centuries was the fact that the great nobles, who had always been the natural leaders and the backbone of the people, had to a large extent been exterminated or had left the country during the disastrous wars of earlier days. Accordingly the Church had to be the mainstay and support of the people. Turkish rule had at least one merit: it did not interfere with the religion and culture of the Armenians; and the Persians showed the same tolerance. The Katholikos at Echmiadzin was the supreme head of the people; but as he was under Persian rule, the Armenian patriarch at Constantinople administered the affairs of the Turkish Armenians, and was responsible to the Sultan. This patriarchate was established as early as the year 1461 by Muhammed II, the conqueror of Constantinople.

The great monasteries, both in Persian and in Turkish Armenia, served as the civilizing influences of the nation. Within their walls were the spiritual workshops where the books were written and copied out that fostered the faith, and to some extent the thought and poetry, of the people. Here were the country's only schools, and here, too, the clergy were prepared for their ministry. In these monasteries the people received comfort and spiritual nourishment; and they often sought asylum within the strong walls in days of persecution and pillage.

At this time the old popular poetry of Armenia came into vogue again. The Armenian minstrels went from village to

village, singing to the accompaniment of a *sax* (violin) songs which were partly religious, but which also told of the life of the people, of joy and sorrow, battle and murder, nature and love. These minstrels were patronized by the monastery of Surb Karapet, at Taron, near Mush, where they held competitions every year. Here there had once been the famous old place of sacrifice with its three heathen temples; and St. Gregory built the first Armenian church there, at Ashtishat. The custom went back, no doubt, to pagan times; the patron saint of singers was now John the Baptist (Karapet), but he inherited his title from the gods of heathenism.

Out of this popular cult of poetry there arose several poets of real merit. Already in the twelfth century the Katholikos *Nerses Klayetsi*, known as *Shnorhali* (i.e. the graceful), wrote fine poetry in the language of the people, in addition to hymns and religious works. In the thirteenth century, under the Mongols, a remarkable poet appeared who called himself by the pseudonym of *Frik*, and who strikes many a deep chord in telling of joy, suffering, and sorrow, as well as in satirizing the futility of life. Another poet of importance, who perhaps may be placed in the fifteenth century, was *Nababed Kutjak*. He loves to depict the gloom of sorrow and suffering, but can also use brighter colours when painting the joy of life. In all this Armenian poetry there is an undertone of wistful melancholy.

In other directions also, notably in architecture and art, the intellectual life of Armenia bore fruit during these centuries. As a Turkish writer expresses it, Armenians left their artistic stamp upon magnificent mosques both in Anatolia and in European Turkey, and upon various kinds of applied art. Most of the artistic and intellectual achievements in that strange and mentally apathetic empire can be traced to the Armenians; they were actors and clowns on the Turkish stage, they were Turkey's public singers and musicians, and to a large extent they even created Turkish music.

*The Mekhitarists.*—Of great importance for the rise of Armenian intellectual culture were the so-called Mekhitarists, an order founded by the monk *Mekhitar* (i.e. the comforter) *Manuk* from Sivas, who first lived with his fellow-monks at

Constantinople and Morea, and then went, in 1715, to Venice, where he was allowed to settle on the lagoon-island San Lazaro. Here he built a stately monastery. The monks had gone over to the Roman Church as early as 1712, but this did not prevent them from collaborating with their Armenian kinsfolk. They set up a printing-press of their own, and established another monastery with a printing-press in Vienna in 1811, after having it for some time in Trieste (after 1773). Mekhitar and his brethren carried on remarkably comprehensive activities, printing and publishing in the Armenian language all kinds of books and other works, original and in translations. This gave rise to a renaissance of Armenian civilization, thought, and self-consciousness; developed the modern literature of the country; and raised the standard of popular culture, not least by providing good translations of Western European literature and science. Mekhitar Manuk certainly did wonders in arousing his down-trodden countrymen.

#### THE ARMENIANS AND CIVILIZATION IN OTHER LANDS.

It has been the tragedy of the Armenian people that although they have invariably shown the most distinguished ability when in foreign service, they could never administer their own country successfully for any length of time. In Byzantium many of the leading men, and often, strange to say, the most capable administrators and generals, were Armenians, like the Emperor Justinian's famous general Nerses—who conquered Italy for him, but was afterwards burnt alive—and Johannes Kurkuas (920-942), the victorious commander-in-chief against the Arabs. At various times able emperors of Armenian extraction ruled over the Byzantine empire in troublous days, upholding and consolidating its diminished power; among them may be mentioned the emperors Mauricius, Heraclius (whose father was Armenian), Bardanes (Philippicus), Artavasdes, Leo V, Basil I, Romanus, Lakapenus, Johannes Tzimiskes, Basil II (the *Bulgar Butcher*), and others. A number of empresses also came from Armenia. In this way, therefore, the Armenians exerted a decisive and

strengthening influence upon the destinies of this world-empire throughout a lengthy period.

But with all their ability the Armenians could not save their own country. Though they had a strong feeling of the spiritual unity of their people, shown among other things by the way in which they invariably closed their ranks in defence of their Church and its doctrine against all Greek Orthodox or Roman Catholic attempts at oppression, they never felt that completely unifying and absolutely compelling love of country and people which is the foundation of all political unity and freedom. This was probably due in the main, as has been suggested elsewhere (p. 242), to the physical formation of their country, which divided the people up into isolated valleys and districts. These fractions of the nation, under chiefs of their own, looked upon themselves more or less as separate entities, and their mutual dissensions greatly reduced the national power of resistance to enemies from without.

Another important factor which tended to weaken the nation was the frequent and extensive emigration already described (p. 265), which drained the country of much of its best blood. Nature has obviously endowed the Armenians with that desire to travel and see the world which is often found in gifted races, and the force of circumstances has more than gratified their wish. Again and again from the earliest times the incursions of hostile hosts have driven out large numbers and scattered them over other lands. Moreover, some of the Byzantine emperors, such as Mauricius (582-602), Phocas (602-610), and Basil II (976-1025), transferred whole populations—Phocas transferred 30,000 families—from the subjugated territories of Armenia to Thrace and Macedonia, in order to strengthen the country against enemies from beyond the Danube or against the Bulgarians.

In many of the countries to which they came the Armenian emigrants founded larger or smaller colonies; and they brought with them efficiency, enterprise, and prosperity. Those who went eastwards settled in Persia, India, the Sunda Islands, and China; while in the west they entered Syria, Egypt, and the Mediterranean countries, where they formed colonies in most of the larger coast towns. They also emi-

grated to Poland (100,000), Galicia, Moldavia, Bukovina, Transylvania, Italy, etc. Mass emigrations took place after the Seljuk-Turk invasion in the eleventh century and after the Mongolian invasion at a later date.

These numerous and extensive emigrations reduced the Armenian population at home, so that whole regions of fertile country were nearly depopulated or greatly impoverished, while Kurdish nomads occupied the mountains and Turks, Tatars, and Kurds settled in the valleys and on the plains. Where the Armenians had previously been the sole occupants, or greatly in the majority, the population now became extremely mixed.

Although constant intercourse with foreigners in the caravan trade may have had an intellectually stimulating effect, Armenia was not very promising soil for the growth of a high standard of general culture. The country was divided up into small centres of culture with an inadequate system of communication. The population consisted mainly of peasants—who can never serve directly as emissaries of high intellectual progress. The development of the arts presupposes a class of people in easier circumstances who have more leisure, and are not always tied to the plough; and it requires towns as smaller or larger centres of culture, where intellectual life is more vigorous, and where there is an easier interchange of thoughts and ideas, with, as a rule, more demand for them. Armenia was lacking in town centres of this description; the large monasteries formed for the most part the foci of intellectual life. Moreover, the country was cut off from the sea and had no ports. Naturally, therefore, many of the more gifted spirits went abroad to larger centres of culture with better opportunities, such as Byzantium and other towns of the West, and probably also the chief cities of the Persian empire. Here their intellectual abilities could develop more freely and benefit others, but unfortunately they were lost to their own country.

But, on the other hand, the isolation of the Armenian highlands gradually fostered in the people a more distinctive national culture and a stubborn, often fanatical, adherence to what was their own. This found expression not least in their

religion and in their Church, which never at any time surrendered its independence. Through their in many ways independent development, moreover, this gifted people made valuable contributions to the evolution not only of Byzantine, but also of West-European civilization. Even at quite an early date the Armenians, who were the first people to adopt Christianity as the State religion, seem to have carried on extensive activities in promoting ecclesiastical learning outside their own country. We are told that before the sixth century—even the fourth is named—seventy Armenian monasteries had been established in Jerusalem and other parts of Palestine, in addition to many monasteries in Egypt, at Sinai, in Alexandria, and in the Thebaid.<sup>1</sup> In the eleventh and twelfth centuries there were many Armenians in Egypt. Mention has already been made of the important part they played in the history of Byzantium.

With the Germanic nations of the North, too, the Armenians have had a remarkable connection. It is probable that the Goths received their first Christian teaching, at any rate partly, from them. As Sophus Bugge has shown, there are several Armenian elements in the Gothic of Ulfilas's translation of the Bible. This may be because his grandparents<sup>2</sup> came in A.D. 257 to South-west Russia, brought thither by the Goths as war-prisoners from Cappadocia, the former home of the Armenians, where numbers of Armenians still lived. Gregory, the apostle of Armenia, was being brought up there at about the same date. The Goths near the Black Sea apparently had another connection with Armenia, probably through Armenian traders and missionaries. Various characteristics of their mode of building, which they brought with them to Bulgaria and Western Europe, seem to indicate Armenian influences. It is also remarkable that even down to the end of the West-Gothic supremacy in Spain there were Gothic princes with Armenian names, such as Artavasdes (*circa* A.D. 710).<sup>3</sup>

This Armenian influence may also have extended as far

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Strzygowski, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 730 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Ulfilas was born in A.D. 311.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Strzygowski, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 728 f.

north as Scandinavia, and may explain, among other things, certain similarities between our burying-places and *bauta* stones—for instance, in Bohuslen and Blekinge—and the Armenian churchyards and gravestones. There was also a connection later on. As Professor Magnus Olsen has pointed out to me, Are Frode tells in his *Islendingabok* (chap. viii), of three *ermiskir* (i.e. Armenians), Peter, Abraham, and Stephen, who came all the way to Iceland, and stated that they were Armenian bishops. Their rule of life was “in many ways less strict than Bishop Isleiv’s (A.D. 1056–1080), wherefore they were beloved of evil men, until Archbishop Adalbert sent his letter to Iceland forbidding people to receive (God’s) ministry from them, and saying that some of them were excommunicated, and that all had come without his leave.”<sup>1</sup> These *ermiskir* were probably Armenian missionaries who had made their way to Iceland. It was just at the time when the frequent inroads of the Seljuk Turks into Armenia had given rise to mass emigration to different parts of the world. They had taught their Gregorian doctrine, which, of course, was heretical, and were therefore very naturally excommunicated by the Catholic archbishop.

The evolution of architecture in the Middle Ages seems to have been indebted to the Armenians for several important ideas and inspirations. As early as the end of the third, and especially in the fourth and fifth centuries, many churches were built in Armenia; but even before that time, in the second century, churches were built in Syria (Edessa) and also east of the Tigris at Arbela. These were generally long churches of the basilica shape, and similar ones may also have been erected at an early date in Armenia and Georgia; apparently there is a fourth-century basilica at Nekressi. But these countries soon seem to have evolved a native style of church, characterized especially by the square edifice with a central dome (cf. p. 214). This style is most nearly related to the architecture of the East. The Armenians probably came first under the Median and then under the Persian domination; later they were in close contact with the Parthian empire,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hungrvaka, ch. 2; Biskupa sögur 1. See also Konrad Maurer, *Die Bekehrung des norwegischen Stammes zum Christentum*, vol. ii, p. 586 f., 1856.

whence they obtained their Arsacid dynasty. It followed that the princes and nobility had always Parthian sympathies, and neither the Sasanids, nor Rome, nor Byzantium could ever win their sympathy. Naturally this left its stamp on the architecture. The square building with a dome may have developed from the heathen temples of an earlier date (cf. p. 214). One relic indicating a connection with these would seem to be the previously mentioned plinth with high steps surrounding the outside walls of the Armenian churches (cf. pp. 78 and 145), and see also the illustrations on pp. 208, 213, which almost certainly correspond to the high plinths with flights of steps that led up to the old places of sacrifice and temples. There is no parallel construction in the churches to the south (Syria) or to the west (Asia Minor), or in those of Europe.

The central dome of the Armenians is unquestionably Eastern, and probably came originally from Persia.

When the development of ecclesiastical architecture set in in the countries of the West—apparently several centuries later—it drew much of its inspiration from the East—not only from Byzantium, but more directly from Western Asia: Syria, Mesopotamia, Armenia, and Georgia; and this Eastern influence was doubtless received largely from Syrian and Armenian immigrants. In the Romanesque architecture there are numerous peculiarities which were used at a very early date in the East, apparently earlier than in Europe. The heavy piers in addition to columns, the arched frieze, and the Romanesque (cubical) capital; false arcades and tall, slender, false columns outside the church; the trumpet-shaped porch, with arches and pilasters behind each other leading inwards, which is so characteristic of mediæval art in Europe—all these features are found at a very early date in Armenia. The decorative use of light and dark stone in stripes and layers may have been borrowed by the Armenians from the Khaladians; afterwards it was largely used in Italy, especially at Genoa and Florence. Barrel vaulting, which replaced the wooden roof of the basilica, came from Mesopotamia, while the dome above a square structure became the most striking feature of Armenian and Georgian architecture. This con-

struction, which was quite distinct from the ancient Roman domed edifice, found its way to Europe already in the early Middle Ages; as previously suggested (p. 35), it may have furnished the idea for St. Sophia, and it spread westwards, probably through the instrumentality of Armenian emigrants, and very likely in connection with the Goths. There are several churches and baptistries, which are typically Armenian in style, in Athens, North Italy (Milan), France (Germigny-des-Prés, near Orleans), and several other places; and this construction was much used in the numerous churches on Mount Athos.<sup>1</sup> The style of building with a central dome attained its highest development in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in the work of masters like Brunelleschi, Alberti, Leonardo, Bramante, and Vignola (the Church of Jesus at Rome), and its fruits may be seen in the cathedral at Florence and the dome of St. Peter's. There are plans and sketches by Leonardo which bear such a striking resemblance to the Armenian churches with their domes and supporting niches that it is difficult to imagine that he could have designed them without first-hand knowledge of these buildings.<sup>2</sup>

With regard to the current opinion that it was Byzantium that influenced the architecture of Armenia rather than the reverse, it may be remarked that the Church of Armenia, founded long before that of Byzantium, was always bitterly opposed to the latter after the Council of Chalcedon; moreover, Armenian architecture is sharply distinguished from the Byzantine style by its austerity, its sparing and discreet use of ornamentation, and especially by its dislike of religious images of any kind. It presents a striking contrast to Hellenic art and feeling, being connected, on the contrary, with the religious conception which found expression in the teaching of Zarathustra, namely the idea that the deity or the divine beings were supernatural, abstract concepts which could not in any way be embodied in or represented by human forms. It springs from a deeper and more serious religious sentiment in people whose religion is more spiritual and less materialistic than that of the more easygoing inhabitants of large civilized towns. The Jahve-worship of the Jews, and later on the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Strzygowski, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 766 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 863 ff.

faith of Islam, likewise dispensed with images. This aversion from images left a deep impression upon the history of Byzantium, where the controversy about images (726-843) raged like a purifying storm in an atmosphere of much discreditable superstition. The controversy was fomented by Armenian influences, and was carried on more particularly by the emperors whose ancestors came from Asia Minor and Armenia. It represents a movement in the Christian Church which leads right on to Luther and the Puritans.

To Gothic architecture, the greatest creation of the Middle Ages, the Armenians appear also to have contributed inspirations of fundamental importance. It can no longer be denied that many of the features which are most characteristic of Gothic architecture were used in Armenian churches and other buildings several centuries before the Gothic style was evolved in Europe. This is particularly well illustrated by the cathedral at Ani,<sup>1</sup> a long church with three aisles, the walls and roof of which are still standing, unless the last earthquake has destroyed them. It was completed in the reign of King Gaghik I, in A.D. 1001, by the noted builder Trdat, who also erected the cathedral of Argina, farther to the north by the Kars-chai, in the same style.<sup>2</sup> In 989 Trdat was summoned to Constantinople by the Emperor Basil to restore St. Sophia, which had been damaged by an earthquake.

As regards the cathedral at Kutais, mention has already been made (p. 96) of its resemblance to the later Gothic churches in Europe; and the same thing applies even more to the cathedral at Ani, which was built at a somewhat earlier date. The style of the latter appears to be transitional from typical Armenian to Romanesque Gothic, and it has several of the most characteristic features of Gothic, including pointed arches and clusters of columns. The resemblance is so striking that some authorities on the history of art, convinced that Gothic is entirely European in origin, argue that this cathedral must have been restored in the thirteenth century by builders from Western Europe. But the facts cannot be explained away in this fashion. Even if we had not convincing evidence of

<sup>1</sup> See Lynch, *Armenia*, vol. i, pp. 371 ff.; Strzygowski, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 184 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Strzygowski, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 590 ff.

the antiquity of the church in its final shape, there are similar "Gothic" features in a more or less developed form in many other churches of the same and of earlier date in Armenia.

The development of this style of church probably came about as follows. The long church with Mesopotamian barrel vaulting was adopted from the south, and this was combined with the square-domed church, with its outer surrounding lobby and four piers standing by themselves in the middle. Thus arose the three-aisled church. The most ancient church of the kind may have been St. Gregory's church at Dvin, erected at the beginning of the seventh century and destroyed by an earthquake in the ninth century.<sup>1</sup>

Specially Gothic features in the cathedral at Ani and in other churches of the same shape are :

The constructional use of the *pointed arch*, especially in the four main arches which join the four piers and support the central dome. The pointed arch is also found in non-ecclesiastical buildings, such as the castle at Ani. *Clusters of columns*, the logical development of which can be traced step by step from the original four corner piers supporting the dome. These clusters of columns on the piers are also connected with clustered columns on the pilasters on the walls. *Ribbed vaulting*, of which there are indications in several Armenian churches and monasteries. And lastly, mention must be made of the visible strengthening of the walls that bear the weight of the central dome by *supporting niches*. This is the same constructional idea that we find in the flying buttresses of Gothic architecture, and it may have led up to that development.

These first beginnings of Gothic may have come to West Europe with the large numbers of Armenians who scattered over its various countries in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Another important connection may have been through the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia, which maintained lively intercourse with the Crusaders after the close of the eleventh century, and through them came into touch with the West of Europe as well. Thus Gothic architecture, the great new

<sup>1</sup> See Strzygowski, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 163 ff.

contribution of the Middle Ages to the world's culture, may have received early and important inspirations from this small but gifted people at a time when they were engaged in a desperate struggle against the overwhelming forces of their enemies.

## ARMENIA IN MODERN TIMES

## IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

ALL misfortunes and all maltreatment notwithstanding, the soul of Armenia's people could not be crushed, and the dream of liberty revived whenever any gleam of hope reached them from outside. In course of time they began to nourish a fresh hope of deliverance from Islam with the aid of Christian Russia, which was pressing on from the north. But appeals to the tsar in Moscow had brought nothing save disappointments in earlier centuries; even Peter the Great's wars against Persia had only involved Armenia in new disasters. In the hope of winning Russian support there were several risings in Persian Armenia during the eighteenth century, but Russia's aid was not forthcoming, and they were quenched in blood. Then, in the early part of last century, Russia intervened in earnest. The Armenian Archbishop *Nerses Ashtarok* mobilized his people in the Arax Valley, equipped an Armenian force of volunteers, established stores of corn, and made other preparations. A joint Armeno-Georgian army under the Armenian leader Madatov defeated the Persians, Nerses himself riding at the head of the troops with cross and sword. The "impregnable" fortress of Erivan was taken by the Russians in 1827 (cf. p. 152), the Persians had to make peace, and the Armenian territory north of the Arax was united to Russia.

But the Armenian delight at once more coming under Christian government was of short duration. The Russian promises of home rule were broken, as is the way of the world when once victory has been attained. A national movement for Armenian freedom on the new frontier of the empire did not win favour with the rulers in Russia, and the "stiff-necked and heretical" Armenian Church was a peculiarly irritating thorn in the flesh for the Orthodox Russian Church. Before

long a policy of suppression was adopted, with a view to the complete Russification of Armenia. Accordingly the decree of 1836 closed the elementary schools, forbade all teaching in the Armenian language at public institutions, and made it compulsory for the Armenians to serve in the Russian forces. The administration of the Church, too, suffered more and more from Russian interference. To his dying day Nerses, the champion of liberty, who became Katholikos (1843-1857), protested repeatedly against all these encroachments and broken promises; but it was in vain, things only went from bad to worse.

It was true that Russia had liberated Armenia from the oppression and misrule of the Muhammedans and from the ravages of the robber Tatar khans; peace and order, with comparative justice and equality before the law, had been established, so that the people could carry on their vocations again under favourable conditions and regain a measure of material prosperity. But the previous rulers had not interfered with the affairs of the Church or the religious and intellectual life of the people, which they did not understand. Here the Russian rule wounded the Armenian spirit of independence just where it was most sensitive, with the result that the new administration was hated in spite of all its obvious advantages.

Meanwhile the state of things in Turkish Armenia was far worse. While the liberation of Greece, Montenegro, Serbia, and other countries from the loathed but increasingly weakening empire of Turkey continually raised the hopes of the enclosed and oppressed Armenian population, the same events served to increase the Turks' hatred of the Christians, and there was no limit to the extortion, pillaging, and cruelty that the Armenians suffered at the hands of tyrannical and corrupt Turkish officials, and Kurdish chieftains and robber bands egged on by the Turks.

When in due course better connections with Europe were established, especially through foreign consuls and missionaries, the world could no longer be kept in ignorance of what was going on in the Armenian mountain valleys. In Europe voices were raised with ever-increasing indignation against

the Turks, urging that succour must be sent to their Christian brethren. In England Gladstone wrote, in 1876, his famous protest, throbbing with indignation, against the misdeeds of the Turks. Russia was more than ready to step in and snatch the Christian country out of the claws of the Turks, and it could easily have done so. But the other Powers did not wish to see Russia too strong; in particular, it was contrary to the policy of the British Government, which envisaged Russia as the really dangerous foe in the East. Turkey had long been ripe for dissolution, and its rotten administration stank in the nostrils of the world; yet the Great Powers could not agree how to divide the spoil; they went on supporting "the sick man", while each hoped for a convenient opportunity to seize the lion's share. The more and more indignant demands of public opinion in Europe for some intervention that would put a stop to the atrocities in Armenia were utilized by European statesmen as a weapon to extort fresh concessions from Turkey for their respective countries, apparently without any serious intention of helping the wounded and bleeding people who provided them with such ample materials for their moving oratory.

For all their corruption the wily Turkish statesmen had sufficient acumen to appraise the situation, and they turned it to their own advantage. While they put off the public opinion of the world by solemn promises to give freedom and equality to the oppressed—promises they never dreamed of fulfilling—they played one Power off against another. As for the protests against their atrocities, they flatly denied that these had ever taken place, feigning extreme indignation at such shameful accusations. In this typically Turkish diplomatic strategy they showed themselves to be past masters.

We need not here go into the various solemn proclamations which the sultans issued as far back as 1839, after the Crimean War in 1856, again in 1876, and later, promising all subjects, irrespective of race and religion, equal rights, equality in the sight of the law, religious freedom "without compulsion of any sort," and much beside. Nor need we stop to consider the Russo-Turkish War in 1877-1878, which naturally raised such strong hopes in the breasts of the Armenians in Turkey,

or the devious diplomatic negotiations of the subsequent peace conference at Berlin, in 1878, which approved the sultan's renewed promises to give the Armenians better conditions. All this paper, all these fine promises, meant so many victories for West-European diplomacy and European justice and philanthropy, which the diplomatists could exhibit to the world, although they knew perfectly well that the Turks had no intention of keeping their word.

For the Armenians in the Turkish Empire this was worse than nothing. It raised false hopes, and actually made things worse for them. It is the tragic truth that they would have been better off if the nations of Europe and their Governments and diplomatists had never pleaded their cause at all. By their alleged sympathy with the Armenians and their representations and notes demanding better treatment for them—demands which they *never once* made any serious sacrifice to try to enforce—they merely irritated the Turks, at the same time showing that they did not mean business. The Turks could thus, with complete impunity, take a bloody vengeance upon their Armenian subjects, who were the cause of so much unpleasant criticism, and of the humiliating promises they had to make. This, in brief, is all that the statesmen and diplomatists of Europe have done for the Armenians.

While the Powers were in the middle of the peace negotiations in Berlin, the British Government signed a secret agreement with the Turkish Government to give them armed support if Russia tried to keep more Armenian territory than the treaty of peace entitled her to; while in return Turkey promised to introduce reforms for the benefit of the Armenians, and allowed Great Britain the island of Cyprus as security. The Duke of Argyll said in the House of Lords: "In no part of the world has our policy been dictated by such immoral and senseless considerations." The words apply equally to the whole policy of Western Europe with regard to the Armenians.

In 1875 *Abdul Hamid* had obtained the throne of Turkey by coquetting with the Young Turkish party of reform. With its aid his uncle *Abdul Aziz* had been murdered in May 1876, after which his brother *Murad* had become

sultan, only to be deposed on the ground of insanity and placed in confinement in August of the same year. Thereupon Abdul Hamid became sultan, and soon proved to be the most slippery, wily, and cruel ruler that Turkey had had for centuries. This cunning politician engaged in a duel with European diplomacy, and shielded himself by continually playing off one Power against another. Although his own mother was an Armenian he nourished an unquenchable hatred of the Armenians, whom he regarded as one important cause—or pretext—for the constant interference of the Great Powers in Turkey's affairs.

The British military consuls who were sent to Anatolia after the peace of Berlin reported the most shocking things about the appalling Turkish regime in Armenia. When Gladstone came back to power in 1880 he took action; but not even he went beyond several sharply worded notes from the Powers to the Porte, demanding the "immediate carrying out" of the reforms promised in the Treaty of Berlin; which provoked several notes from the Porte in reply, evading the point and denying the truth of the allegations. Nothing more was done. Abdul Hamid knew well that none of the Powers would resort to more forcible means than paper; he could go on maltreating the Armenians without interference.

When Great Britain, during Gladstone's administration, occupied Egypt in 1882, there came a change in its attitude to Turkey, and also to France and Russia, which were embittered over this encroachment. There was no time to think of the Armenians now. Shocking reports on the shameful conditions in Turkish Armenia still kept coming in, but they were no longer published, and there was silence in Europe about the people whose cause had been betrayed. It was no longer opportune for the British Government to try to fulfil promises made to a small and suffering people, or to aggravate the Porte by reminding it of its undertakings in regard to them. As for Russia, the Liberal Government, under the leadership of the able statesman Loris Melikoff, who was an Armenian, had fallen in 1881 after the murder of Alexander II. To the incorrigibly reactionary Government that followed, the Armenian movement for freedom was anathema. Even

Russian Armenia was now to be tyrannized and forced to adopt the Russian language and the Russian Church. Consequently the heart-rending appeals of the Turkish Armenians fell on deaf ears so far as these statesmen were concerned.

Meanwhile the Powers' advocacy of the Armenian cause at the Berlin Conference, their many high-sounding words and notes in the following year, and the solemn promises extorted from Turkey had convinced the Armenians that salvation was at hand. They were simple, naïve people, who knew nothing about the game of international politics, and thought a promise was a promise, especially when given by the Great Powers. Soon the excitement spread to the Armenians in Europe, and the various Armenian associations laboured actively and zealously to support their kinsmen and rouse them to work for their liberation. The movement derived fresh encouragement from the successful fight put up by the small Armenian colony at Zeitun, in the Taurus Mountains of Cilicia (see p. 266), against Turkish oppression. The aim of this liberationist movement was not consciously the separation of Armenia from Turkey; the population there had by now become too mixed, and the Armenians were not sufficiently in a majority; the object in view, therefore, was to secure conditions which would make life possible, with administrative freedom in domestic affairs.

But the Sultan had determined to crush the Armenians, and the unrest that this liberationist movement caused here and there in Anatolia gave him a welcome pretext for fresh persecutions and acts of violence, imprisonment, torture in the prisons, looting, extortion, and every form of maltreatment. In reply to European protests the Turkish Government answered with scornful cynicism that if they were acting with severity they were compelled to do so as a measure of self-defence, on behalf of the poor terrorized Moslem population.

In order to secure a willing instrument to carry out his further plans, Abdul Hamid raised in Anatolia, in the summer of 1891, a force of frontier cavalry called *hamidije*, who were recruited chiefly from the Kurdish nomad tribes and had Kurdish chiefs to command them. These troops were

equipped with modern weapons, were exempted from the ordinary provisions of the law, and had only to obey the orders of the commander-in-chief at Erzinjan. When we remember that these Kurds and their chieftains lived by robbery on a large scale, the value of the Sultan's weapon will be evident. He was gradually preparing for the final blow.

The following typical episodes will serve to illustrate the way in which the Armenians were treated. The valleys in the wild Taurus Mountains south of the fertile Mush plain, separating it from the great Mesopotamian plain in the south, were inhabited by Armenians; but there were also Kurds living there, to whom the Armenians as usual paid tribute in order to restrain them from robbery and pillage. In the summer of 1893 an Armenian agitator had carried on propoganda against the Turks near the village of Talori in Sassun, on the southern slopes of the mountains, and he was imprisoned. Soon after, some of the Kurdish bandits were induced by the Turks to attack the Armenian villages near Talori. The Kurds were beaten and complained of the "insurgents" to the authorities; Turkish troops then helped them by levying an illegal "tax," the villages were looted, and the villagers had to flee to the neighbouring mountains. Next the Armenian peasants were required to pay heavy fines and fresh taxes as a punishment for using their arms against Muhammedans; but they refused to pay double taxes, or to give anything to the Turks until they were liberated from the illegal exactions of the Kurds. Thereupon several regiments with mountain artillery were sent against them; the villages were taken by storm, and then massacres commenced by order of the Sultan. For three weeks the fugitives were pursued and killed; between 900 and 1,500 people lost their lives, and many young Christian girls were carried off as "booty."

These outrages made public opinion uneasy, especially in England; but France and Russia, who were now allies, would do nothing. On the initiative of the Powers, however, a Turkish (!) commission was sent in January 1895 to "investigate the criminal acts of the Armenian brigands."

In the end the consular officers also went to Sassun, and made it clear that the Armenian population were not to blame.

After this, when Great Britain and the Powers demanded, on May 11, 1895, security against a recurrence of these atrocities, and set forth definite reforms which must be made in order to safeguard the Christians, the Sultan merely protracted the negotiations by refusing to admit any guilt, by making a counter-proposal of sixteen articles, and by proclaiming an amnesty for all suspicious (*sic!*) Armenians, while in secret he rewarded and promoted the instigators and leaders of the massacres.

This was too much for Gladstone, the aged champion of liberty; though bowed by the weight of his eighty-six years, he stood up and made a flaming speech at a meeting in Chester against "the great criminal in the palace," the enthroned murderer, declaring that if Great Britain, Russia, and France, with influence and power fifty times as great as Turkey's, and with definite obligations in this matter, were to give in now to the Sultan, they would cover themselves with shame in the eyes of the world. The meeting, like so many others, ended in—a resolution.

Abdul Hamid listened attentively, and soon understood that once again things would not go farther than words and paper. He could safely go on with his plans. So while His Persecuted Innocence complained to the Pope of the English accusations, and the Pope tried to mollify England, the authorities in Anatolia received a hint that they had better be prepared to step in and protect the Moslem population against the Christians, who were planning a rising. The whole Armenian population must therefore be searched, and all weapons, even knives, taken from them.

The Armenians soon began to see what was in the wind, and it was with fear in their hearts that they handed over the few feeble weapons which they had in their possession, and which the authorities handed on later to the Moslems to murder the Christians with. Many of them were subjected to the most barbarous tortures to make them tell where weapons were hidden, or betray the revolutionary associations

to which they belonged, simply in order to give the Government a good pretext for saying that there was an insurrection.

At length something happened which furnished a pretext for striking. On the 30th of September, 1895, a procession of a couple of thousand Armenians passed through the streets of Constantinople to the Sublime Porte in Stamboul, to hand the Grand Vizier a petition setting forth the grievances and demands of the Armenian population. There was a quarrel with some Turkish students (*softas*), a few shots were exchanged, and then the police swooped down; numbers of Armenians were shot; others were arrested and bayoneted at the police-stations; the Armenian lodging-houses were stormed at night; and crowds of Armenians who took refuge in the Armenian churches were only saved by the intervention of the foreign embassies.

This was an unmistakable rising; the Sultan could safely give the word. Immediately the blow fell in every Armenian town and village; the disarmed Armenians were massacred by armed roughs led by the police, by Kurds—including the Sultan's new *hamidije* cavalry—and by Turks. The regular troops kept order, seeing that "the work" was properly done, and intervening on occasion if the Armenians defended themselves in their quarters, which were then bombarded. The Sultan's organized brigands "worked" quite satisfactorily, and Armenian blood flowed in rivers everywhere—in Akhissar, Trebizond, Erzinjan, Baiburt, Bitlis, Erzerum, Arabkir, Diarbekir, Meratia, Kharput, Sivas, Amasia, Aintab, Mersivan, Marash, Cæsarea, and other places, ending with Urfa, where 1,200 Armenians were burnt alive in the cathedral at Christmas 1895. Some belated butchery also took place in 1896 in Van, Constantinople, and other towns, where circumstances had made it inconvenient to arrange for this before.

A proclamation issued by the authorities in Arabkir has been preserved, and runs as follows: "All who are children of Muhammed must now do their duty and kill all Armenians, sack their houses and burn them to the ground. Not *one* Armenian is to be spared. Such is the command of the Sultan. Those who do not obey will be regarded as Armenians and killed also. Therefore every Musulman must

show his loyalty to the Government by first killing the Christians who have lived on terms of friendship with him."

Everything worked with the most satisfactory precision. The orders were sent out by the general commanding in Anatolia from his headquarters at Erzinjan. "The work" began on a prearranged signal by trumpet-call, and ceased on another fixed signal being given. The discipline was everywhere so good that even during the wildest orgies of wholesale murder extreme care was taken to avoid killing any foreigners, for that, the Sultan knew, might be serious, and really bring about the intervention of the Powers.

According to the information collected by all the embassies in Constantinople and sent to the Sultan on February 4, 1896, from 70,000 to 90,000 people were massacred between August 1895 and February 1896, while many more died of starvation and destitution. After the massacres many of the Christians were forced to become converts to Islam, and there were public circumcisions, although thousands preferred to die rather than give up their faith, and whole villages which had been allowed time to think the matter over went to death headed by their priests. Thousands of refugees escaped over the frontiers to Persian and Caucasian towns; numbers of them assembled in camps around Echmiadzin, where the splendid Katholikos Mekertich Khrimean looked after them, assisted by townspeople and peasants. He it was who had helped the patriarch Nerses to plead the Armenian cause at the Berlin Conference in 1878, and had got the all-important paragraph 61 adopted. And now he saw his people massacred and scattered, betrayed by the Christian Powers of Europe in whom he and his people had put their faith.

The many warm-hearted friends of Armenia sent help to ameliorate the suffering; but even now the Governments of Europe did nothing to speak of. Great Britain apparently would have done something, but stood alone, for there was trouble with the French about Africa, and France's hands were tied by the alliance with Russia. While Armenian blood was being poured out in streams, Rostovski, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, declared that Russia would on no account use force against Turkey, and that the Tsar would

not concur in any forcible measures on the part of another Power. After three months of massacres and atrocities the same impassive statesman declared on January 16, 1896, that nothing had occurred to shake his confidence in the good intentions of the Sultan, adding that it would be desirable to render easier his enormous task of carrying out the promised reforms, by giving him more time. Austria acquiesced in this, for fear of the situation in the East and out of regard to her own interests. . . . Such is Europe! According to the Greek myth she allowed herself to be seduced by a bull. The thought that one is a European is not always a proud one.

The Sultan could safely allow the massacres to continue, asserting that all representations on the subject were shameless lies; if there had been bloodshed it was only in self-defence against the attacks of the Armenians (who had no weapons). In his desire to promote the welfare of his Armenian subjects he asked England to aid him in calming and disciplining their rebellious spirits. He was deeply hurt, and complained bitterly through his ambassador in London when Gladstone called him "the Red Sultan."

Before long another convenient event came to his aid. On August 26, 1896, twenty-six young Caucasian Armenians suddenly stormed and seized the Ottoman bank in Constantinople, which they threatened to blow up unless the Sultan conceded their demands. They hoped that in this way they could draw the attention of apathetic Europe to the martyrdom of Armenia. But with the help of the Russian dragoman and the promise of a safe conduct they were induced to give up the building, and were allowed to leave unmolested. There are indications that this raid on the bank happened with the knowledge and acquiescence of "the palace." At any rate "the palace" could now point to these childish revolutionaries as evidence that the Armenians were insurrectionists who must be chastised openly under the eyes of the diplomats. Next day a well-organized attack on the Armenian shops and houses was launched simultaneously in different parts of the city under the leadership of Kurds and Lasis. Rows of carts stood in readiness to remove the corpses. This went on for two days. The soldiers only participated here

and there in the looting and murders; but troops were stationed everywhere to guard the Greek and European quarters. Then the slaughter stopped as suddenly as it had begun, but by that time some seven thousand Armenians had been massacred.

A joint note from the ambassadors of the Powers emphasized the fact that this had been more than the chance rioting of a fanatical crowd, for there was every indication that the whole affair had been arranged by a special organization, well known at least to certain agents of the Government, even if the latter had not actually taken a leading part in the massacre. This was all the Powers did in the matter; as usual they confined themselves to paper, and went on negotiating about reforms until diplomacy was able to record a signal victory: for the Sultan, having finished the massacres and, as he thought, annihilated the Armenians, agreed to the proposed reforms on October 17, 1896, refusing, however, to make his concessions publicly known. With this the Powers were satisfied; they had now given the Armenians all the help that was in their power, and in accordance with "a policy which could be followed with due consideration for our own welfare," as an English ambassador wrote on a similar occasion.

After all these terrible disasters in all the Armenian territories and colonies in Turkey one might suppose that the Armenian population would have been completely crushed and destroyed, especially as they had nowhere to take their grievances, no court of appeal, and not a single protector. But for thousands of years in the past this extraordinarily enduring people had become inured to similar disasters, and invariably set to work again patiently to rebuild their devastated country. The same thing happened now; from their places of refuge in the mountains, in neighbouring countries, in monasteries that had been spared, the survivors presently returned to their plundered homes and started afresh. But they were in great distress, for the able-bodied men had been killed, the draught animals stolen, the farm implements taken or destroyed; moreover, there was a drought that year which brought famine and misery in its train. In all parts of Europe and America money was raised to help them, and many associations

of "friends of Armenia" were formed. This European movement was distasteful to the Murderer-Sultan. He issued a declaration that he would relieve his distressed subjects himself. By so doing he gained a sort of "moral right" to close the country against foreign relief and keep out prying eyes as far as possible. His measures of relief, however, were mainly farcical, and gave his tools new opportunities for extortion and violence. The gendarmes could barter corn for young Christian girls.

Refugees should be entitled to receive back their stolen property, but nothing of the kind was done. The thousands of Armenians who had escaped over the frontier to Russian territory, or elsewhere, were refused permission to return; "they had not obtained leave to escape from Turkey, and had no passports." Their property was "legally" confiscated by the local authorities on behalf of the Sultan, and Moslems took it over. This seems to be a typically Turkish practice; they have adopted exactly the same procedure towards refugees in quite recent years (cf. p. 26).

Now that the European Powers had so completely betrayed the Armenian cause in spite of all promises and expectations, it was not to be wondered at if the Armenians in their despair tried to take the matter into their own hands. The young men organized themselves in small armed bands which kept to the inaccessible mountain tracts. They tried to take vengeance for the misdeeds of the Kurds and the Turks, and to help the Armenian population in any way they could. Some of their leaders even made agreements with Kurdish khans and their followers who were dissatisfied with the Turkish tyrants. These bands may have handled the Turks none too gently at times; but that was only natural, and in any case it was nothing to what their countrymen had suffered from the Turkish bloodhounds. Nevertheless it was bound to give the Turkish authorities an excuse for fresh acts of violence.

While, as we have seen, much was done privately both in Europe and in America to help the Armenians, and while the various mission stations, which the Sultan could not touch, received and saved from destruction thousands of homeless children, the Governments of the Great Powers still did

nothing for Armenia. In fact, the statesmen of Europe were tired of the endless and vexatious Armenian question. Great Britain had had nothing but disappointments and reverses in trying to aid the Armenians, Russia disapproved of the Armenian national movement in Transcaucasia, and France, following Russia's lead, refused to intervene in Armenian affairs.

The fearful massacres had nevertheless caused a certain coldness in the relations between the Turkish Government and the above-mentioned Powers. Germany thought it a good idea to offer her friendship in place of theirs. To be Turkey's powerful adviser instead of Great Britain, with the Turkish empire as a future German protectorate, and to secure a railway forming a continuous steel chain to link up Berlin and Bagdad, were attractive projects. Doubtless Abdul Hamid's hands were unpleasantly stained with blood; but no one could deny that he was a subtle and clever diplomatist who had bluffed and tricked all the diplomatists of Europe; or that he was a strong ruler who had crushed all opposition in Macedonia and Armenia, and had repulsed the Greeks (in 1897) with the aid of a German head of the general staff. Moreover, he could pull wires everywhere in the Moslem world and start a pan-Islamite agitation which would cause very serious disturbances in British, Russian, and French territories. Yes, the massacres were certainly unpleasant, but Germany was willing and ready to relieve the distress by giving her powerful and unselfish help.

On the whole Abdul Hamid would be quite a useful ally; so Kaiser Wilhelm II paid a friendly visit to him in Constantinople in 1898, pressed his blood-stained hand, kissed his cheek, and declared himself a true friend of Islam. As a German in the Kaiser's retinue wrote, the Armenian massacres were still fresh in men's minds, but "what has the opposite policy effected save to excite Muhammedan fanaticism? What good has Gladstone done by insulting the Sultan? Our Kaiser . . . has chosen the more Christian way of repaying evil with good." But the visit lost a little of its *éclat* by being combined with a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

Meanwhile the conscience of the peoples of Europe remained

uneasy, and at various conferences—such as the Peace Conference in Paris in 1900, the International Socialist Conference there in 1902, and several others—resolutions were adopted deploring the way in which Europe had neglected its obligations to the unfortunate people of Armenia, and recording the indignation of the civilized world. But that was all; and the Russian Government went on Russifying and tyrannizing the people in Russian Armenia more brutally than ever.

#### THE ARMENIANS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

In Turkey, meanwhile, the "liberal" Young Turk party of "unity and progress" had been growing vigorously, and had formed an alliance with the Armenians. The latter, who brought to the movement strength, capacity, and vision, contributed largely to its ultimate triumph. But whereas the Armenian leaders were working for liberal ideals and the rights of man, the Young Turks in reality only wished to seize the reins of power; from first to last the rights and liberties they said they were fighting for were notions essentially alien to the truly Oriental mind of the warlike Turk.

The storm broke in July 1898. The Young Turkish leaders were in Macedonia, with troops, officers, and a friendly population to back them up. A telegram was dispatched to the Sultan. The Sultan ordered the immediate arrest of the impudent rebels and summoned military assistance from Anatolia, but no one obeyed. Foaming with rage, the cowardly tyrant gave in. The whole affair lasted only twenty-four hours. He was permitted to remain on the throne as a hostage for the good behaviour of his adherents throughout the realm, but a liberal constitution was enacted, which gave equal rights to all races and creeds. Great was the joy throughout the empire; Constantinople was illuminated, the prisons were opened, crowds marched in procession to the big grave of the Armenians massacred in 1896. The Muhammedan leaders praised the dead as martyrs for freedom. The whole nation felt that it had thrown off a crushing yoke.

But the delight of the Armenians did not last long. Though the new Young Turk rulers were free from religious

prejudices—if not irreligious—it soon became clear that their aim was to establish a *Turkish* supremacy, with as few concessions as possible to the non-Turkish population, of whatever faith—whether they were Arabs, Kurds, Armenians, Greeks, or other nationals. Turkish was to be the language of the whole empire. Their gratitude to the Armenians for helping them in the struggle for liberty may have lasted for a short time; besides, they had to win the approval of the Powers by a show of humanity. But their efforts to treat the Christians justly gave increasing offence to the former ruling classes, who were in the habit of fleecing especially the Armenians; while the Moslem teachers became more and more incensed. The Young Turks found it necessary to change their tactics.

In April 1909 Abdul Hamid tried to regain power by a military coup. For a few days fortune favoured him, and this time it was Young Turkish blood that flowed in rivers; but soon the Macedonian army under Mahmud Skefket Pasha stood at the gates of Constantinople. As the Sultan did not capitulate within the time allowed him, Stamboul was surrounded and a fierce battle began. Armenian women and children helped the Young Turkish soldiery to drag the guns into position. The Sultan's castle was taken by storm. He himself was dragged out of a back room behind the women's apartments in the harem. Beside himself with terror, he listened to the *Fetvá* which deposed him from the throne of the Khalifs. His first words were: "And what about my life?" This was the sole thought of the man who had deprived tens of thousands of their lives. He was given his life, but died some years later as a prisoner in Asia Minor. His submissive brother Reshad succeeded to the throne as Mehmed V.

Brief as had been the triumph of the Old Turkish anti-Christians, it had nevertheless been long enough for them to make an onslaught upon the Armenians in Cilicia. The latter had been spared in the earlier massacres, but had doubtless been too much elated over their liberation when the Young Turks came into power, thereby infuriating the Old Turkish Muhammedans. When the telegram came reporting the Sultan's military coup, they fell upon the Armenians in all the

towns and villages of Cilicia. They looted, burned, and butchered, and their cruelties took fantastically horrible forms. About twenty thousand Armenians were killed. The local administration helped the murderers, allowed the soldiers to attack whenever the Christians defended themselves, and telegraphed to Constantinople that the Armenians were the aggressors. The attitude of the Young Turkish Government to these massacres does not seem to have been very clear, although they gave orders that the slaughter was to cease. Not only did Young Turkish officers and soldiery join in the looting, but the subsequent legal inquiries were a scandal. The known leaders of the massacres went scot-free, while a few murderers chosen at random were hanged—with some Armenians who had resorted to armed resistance in defence of themselves and their families. Now that victory was assured the Young Turks no longer needed their former comrades in arms ; it was far more important to avoid hurting the feelings of the Moslem Old Turks. The sequel was easy to foresee.

It soon became apparent that the programme of the Young Turks was to establish a pan-Turkish empire with the Turkish language and wholly Turkish Government everywhere ; even the Arabs were now to be excluded from the administration. Christians, especially the Armenians, were to be suppressed ; equality between the different races had to be definitely abandoned as impossible ; for it would mean that the Christians, with their higher standard of civilization and intelligence, and their greater industry and efficiency, would soon become the chief power in the country. Obviously the power must be retained by the ruling Turkish race, who had won it by the sword ; but having all the indolent laziness of a less civilized people they could not hope to hold their ground in fair competition with the others.

A carefully planned settlement of Moslems in the Christian parts of the empire, first and foremost in Macedonia and Armenia, was organized ; the Kurds were once more encouraged to make encroachments ; and the restoration of stolen lands to the Armenians was stopped. The Turkish defeat in the Balkan war made things still worse for the Armenian

Christians ; for the loss of European Turkey made it necessary to strain every nerve to consolidate the power of Asiatic Turkey, and thousands of Turkish emigrants from Macedonia and Thrace arrived in Anatolia full of hatred for all Christians, in which they were encouraged by the Government.

The main difference between the persecution of the Armenians by the Young Turks and by Abdul Hamid and the old regime was that the former was more methodically planned, and therefore all the more dangerous. Many of the new tyrants had studied in the Prussian school. In the long list of documents proofs have now been found that it had been decided to "thin out" the Christian population of Armenia even before the Great War.

The Armenian leaders felt what was coming, and appealed to the Governments of the Powers. To present the case and give all necessary information the Katholikos at Echmiadzin sent a delegation to Europe headed by the distinguished Armenian, Boghos Nubar Pasha. This "interference" infuriated the Young Turks ; they uttered violent threats against the Armenians, summoned Nubar Pasha before a court-martial, although he was not a Turkish but an Egyptian subject, and in his absence condemned him, as a traitor, to lose his honour, life, and property—a sentence which in reality applied to the entire Armenian people.

The Powers, some of whom had begun to view the irresponsible policy of the Young Turks with impatience, took up the matter and entered into negotiations upon it. Russia, which had now become extremely pro-Armenian, proposed European control of Turkish Armenia. Great Britain and France concurred. Germany, seeing that the Young Turks had reverted more and more to the policy of their old friend Abdul Hamid, thought it a good opportunity to support Turkey by suggesting a compromise—namely, that two European officers from disinterested countries should be sent as general inspectors to see that law and order were maintained in the Armenian provinces. This was agreed to in February 1914, and the inspectors appointed were Colonel N. Hoff, a Norwegian, who was to be stationed in Van, and Colonel Westenenk, a Dutchman, who was to be stationed in Sivas.

But when they reached their posts the World War broke out, and Turkey joined the Central Powers in November 1914.

#### THE ARMENIANS DURING THE GREAT WAR.

On the outbreak of the Great War the Armenians held, at the end of July 1914, a conference in Erzerum, at which they discussed their attitude in case of war, in view of the fact that their country was divided into two portions by the frontier. Then some Young Turkish delegates arrived and, stating that their Government intended to go to war with Russia, endeavoured by golden promises of future autonomy to get the Armenians to rebel against the Russians. But the Armenians refused, expressing themselves strongly against Turkey's participation in the war, though they promised to do their duty if war came.

The Young Turkish leaders were furious, and gradually evolved a plan for exterminating the intractable Armenian "vermin." A letter, dated February 18, 1915, from a member of the central committee of the Young Turks to Jemal Bey at Adana (Cilicia)—who was the dictator in Syria during the war—and written "by order of a responsible authority," states that the central committee had "decided to liberate the fatherland from the tyranny of this accursed race, and to bear upon its patriotic shoulders the disgrace which that step will bring upon Osmanli history. The committee . . . have decided to exterminate all Armenians living in Turkey, without permitting a single soul to escape, and have therefore granted the Government plenary powers. The Government will give to the *valis* and commanders of the army the necessary hints as to the arrangement of the massacres."<sup>1</sup>

Careful preparations were made for carrying this plan into effect. Forces of gendarmes, selected for their anti-Christian bias, were dispatched all over East Anatolia to look for arms in the houses of the Christians; numbers of the more prominent Armenians were arrested, some being examined under torture in order to force them to reveal information about stores of arms and espionage. Bands of all sorts of roughs

<sup>1</sup> See A. M. Benedictsen, *Armenien*, p. 246 f., Copenhagen, 1925.

and hooligans—afterwards notorious as *tyetas*—recruited from the prisons and elsewhere, were formed under Young Turk leadership. All the Muhammedan men who had not already been called up were organized as militia; and arms were served out to them—but not to the Christians. The Kurds, who had been much annoyed by the efforts of the Young Turks to introduce a regime of law and order which made their usual looting difficult, were appeased by hints that the new Sultan would not protect infidels.

By November 21, 1914, the irreligious Young Turks were able to proclaim a *Jihad*, or holy war, which made it a duty to kill all infidels who refused to embrace the faith of Islam. This step seems to have been taken at the request of the Germans in the hope of raising the Moslems of India and Africa against their Christian rulers, but it had the effect of increasing the Turkish hatred of the Christians in Anatolia. All Christian men between the ages of twenty and forty-three, and afterwards between the ages of eighteen and forty-eight, were gradually called up, although only those under twenty-seven were legally liable to service. Those who were incapable of work had to act as beasts of burden, and between Mush and Erzerum alone three thousand of them are said to have succumbed under the weight of their loads.

Accounts of the Turkish persecution and extermination of the Armenians in Asia Minor, Syria, and Mesopotamia during the Great War have now been received from many eyewitnesses—from members of the various American, German, Swiss, and Danish missions and organizations stationed there, and above all from the German consuls and officers in Asia Minor, and the German ambassadors. These accounts and documents have been collected and published by the well-known German friend of Armenia, Dr. Johannes Lepsius, in his book entitled *Deutschland und Armenien, 1914-1918, Sammlung diplomatischer Aktenstücke*, Potsdam, 1919. The following narrative is largely based upon these documents, which may presumably be regarded as reliable. The German officials would not have wished unnecessarily to blacken their allies the Turks, and they had no reason to represent the Armenians as being better than they really were.

The persecution of the Armenian population concentrated first on *Zeitun* in Cilicia, which had remained comparatively independent and had escaped Abdul Hamid's massacres. Under pretext of trying to capture a robber band in the neighbourhood, which had been joined by several deserters, four thousand men were sent against *Zeitun* in March 1915, and the whole Armenian population of between ten and twenty thousand people was deported to the marshy country in the vilayet of *Konja* and to the Arabian desert region of *Der es Zor* near the *Euphrates*. In similar fashion the men of the village of *Dörtjol*, on the coast of Cilicia—who had successfully defended themselves during the massacres in 1909—were deported to *Aleppo* to do forced labour on the roads, on the pretext that there had been some espionage in the town, which in any case was of trifling importance. The inhabitants of the village of *Suedije*, which had also escaped in the massacres of 1909, were to have been deported likewise, but made their escape to a cliff on the coast, where they defended themselves for several weeks with feeble weapons (even flint-locks!) against a superior force of Turks until a French warship rescued the whole number—4,058 men, women, and children. In East Anatolia the Armenians—mostly women and children, because the men had been taken to do military service—were grossly maltreated and expelled, and the distress and misery among these homeless people was terrible.

Then came the so-called "rebellion" in *Van*, which the Turks have tried to exploit as the best proof of Armenian treachery. The American and German missionaries who went through it all have now furnished authentic accounts of what actually happened.<sup>1</sup> In February 1915 *Jevdet Bey*, *Enver's* brother-in-law, who was the *vali* of *Van*, declared at a meeting of Turks that "We have cleared out the Armenians and Syrians in *Azerbaijan*, and we must do the same with the Armenians in *Van*." On the pretext of making requisitions for the army the Armenians were plundered in the most scandalous fashion, the peasants in the villages being robbed with brutal violence by Kurds and gendarmes. After some

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *J. Lepsius*, *op. cit.*, pp. xiii ff., 471 ff., 1919.

disturbances, in which gendarmes were involved, at a village called Shatak on April 14th, Jevdet Bey induced one of the chief Armenian leaders and three other Armenians, under the cloak of friendship, to go there and pacify the villagers; but on the way he had them murdered while they were asleep. At the same time (April 16th) he enticed another Armenian leader to come to him, and had him thrown into prison, and then sent away, and murdered *en route*. Next day he prepared to attack the Armenian quarters in the town of Van simultaneously with the commencement of massacres in Ardjesh and the villages in the Hayoz-dzor Valley. In order to save their women and children the Armenians fortified themselves in their quarters in Van. The *vali* had ordered them to surrender three thousand men for the army; but they knew only too well what the fate of these men would be, so they answered that it was impossible; they could raise four hundred, and would purchase the exemption of the rest by degrees. But the *vali* refused to agree in this proposal.

On the morning of April 20th some Turkish soldiers tried to rape an Armenian woman, and when some Armenian soldiers came to the rescue the Turks shot them dead. The German missionary, Herr Spörri, was an eyewitness. Thereupon the shooting began; the Turks shelled the Armenian part of the town, and swept it with rifle-fire. The Armenians defended themselves; they had some rifles, but not much ammunition, and had therefore to use this sparingly, while they encouraged the Turks to expend theirs. They made bullets, and manufactured three thousand cartridges a day, besides gunpowder, and even in the end a couple of mortars. Meanwhile Turkish soldiers and Kurds ravaged the country round, massacring or mutilating men, women, and children, and burning their houses. Some villages were unprepared, others defended themselves as long as they had anything to defend themselves with. Refugees and their wounded flocked to the mission stations in Van, which were soon filled to overflowing.

The siege and bombardment lasted for four weeks, until May 16th; then it suddenly came to an end, and Jevdet Bey and the Turks retired. It turned out that unknown to the

Armenians a Russian army was approaching ; and its outposts arrived on May 18th quite unaware of what had been happening, as the Armenians had not been in touch with them.

According to the Armenian computation twelve thousand shells were fired at the town, but with very little effect. On the Armenian side there were only eighteen killed, but many wounded, and the Turkish losses were probably about the same. When the Russian army shortly afterwards (July 31st) retired northwards for a time, the whole Armenian population of the Vilayet of Van, numbering nearly 200,000, fled to Russian Armenia.

This attempt of the Armenians to defend themselves against the Turkish attack in Van was promptly misrepresented in a communiqué which was sent by Enver Pasha and the Turkish Government to Berlin, and thence spread all over the world, as an attack by bands of Armenian insurrectionists who, in the rear of the Turkish army, had fallen upon the Muhammedan population. Out of 180,000 Moslems in the Vilayet of Van only 30,000 had succeeded in escaping ! In a later report issued by the Turkish embassy in Berlin on October 1, 1915, the story was further embellished : " No fewer than 180,000 Moslems had been killed. It was not surprising that the Moslems had taken vengeance for this." Some eighteen Turks, answering to the number of Armenians they had killed in Van, had turned into 180,000 ! This astonishingly impudent lie has a kind of foundation. According to statistics there should be 180,000 Moslems, including 30,000 Turks and 150,000 Kurds, in the Vilayet of Van. The Turks fled westwards when the Russian army advanced, while the 150,000 Kurds remained where they were, and were molested neither by the Russians nor the Armenians.

The whole episode is a typical example of the way the Turks treated the Armenians and tried to pretend that the Armenians were rebels and traitors. The other " proofs " of Armenian guilt produced by the Young Turkish Government in order to justify themselves are of the same kind. The reports of Germany's consuls in Asia Minor and ambassadors in Constantinople show quite clearly that there *is no proof whatever of Armenian treachery, or that they had any insurrectionist*

*plans.*<sup>1</sup> The latter would in any case have been out of the question, for they had no arms, and most of the men had been taken away to serve in the army.

A few days after the Armenians in Van had dared to defend themselves against the Turkish onslaught, Tala'at Bey, the Minister for the Interior, suddenly had all the chief Armenians in Constantinople arrested on the night before April 25th. Deputies, teachers, writers, doctors, lawyers, editors, and priests were seized; on the following night more arrests were made, and altogether nearly six hundred people were deported to Asia Minor without inquiry or trial. Tala'at declared it was merely a temporary measure of precaution—some of them *might* be dangerous—and promised that most of them should speedily be released. Only eight of them returned after suffering great hardships; the remainder disappeared. Thus all who were capable of pleading the Armenians' cause were conveniently put out of the way.

Then the Turks had what they considered the splendid idea of carrying out the whole plan of extermination as a "necessary military measure." They would have deportations of all unreliable elements from the neighbourhood of the front, on the lines of the German deportations in Belgium and France. Enver Pasha expounded to Baron Wangenheim, the German ambassador in Constantinople, his plan for carrying out these necessary deportations "of all not absolutely trustworthy families from the rebellious Armenian centres." The ambassador sent a telegram on May 31, 1915, to Berlin, reporting the project, and saying that Enver "earnestly begs us not to prevent him. . . . These measures will certainly involve great hardship for the Armenian population. I am, however, of the opinion that we can alleviate them in practice though we cannot prevent them in principle. . . ." He still believed in the Turkish accounts of the treacherous Armenian agitation, supported by Russia, which "threatened the existence" of Turkey. It was not until a later date that he, too, discovered that these accusations were baseless.

Then, in June 1915, the horrors began to which we know no parallel in history. From all the villages and towns of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. J. Lepsius, *op. cit.*, p. 1 xx f.

Cilicia, Anatolia, and Mesopotamia the Armenian Christians were driven forth on their death march; the work was done systematically, clearing out one district after another, whether the population happened to be near the scene of war or hundreds of kilometres away from it. There was to be a clean sweep of all Armenians. As the majority of men had already been taken for war work, it was chiefly a matter of turning women, children, and the aged and crippled out of house and home. They were only given a few days' or hours' notice. They had to leave behind all their property: houses, fields, crops, cattle, furniture, tools, and implements. Everything was confiscated by the Turkish authorities. The things they managed to carry with them, such as money, jewellery, or other valuables, and even clothes, were subsequently taken away from them by the gendarmes; and if any of them had been allowed to take their wagons and draught animals, the gendarmes appropriated them on the way. The poor creatures were rounded up from the different villages and driven in long columns across the mountains to the Arabian desert plains, where no provision had been made for the reception and maintenance of these herds of starving wretches, just as nothing had been done to keep them alive on the march. The idea was that those who did not succumb or get killed on the way should at any rate die of starvation.

As soon as the columns had fairly started, the callous indifference of the guards turned into vicious brutality. The few men and elder lads were assembled, taken aside and killed. The women, children, and old people were driven on, suffering agonies of hunger and thirst; the food, if there were any, was scanty and bad; those who could not keep up were flogged on till they collapsed, or were killed. Gradually the columns became smaller and smaller, as hunger, thirst, disease, and murder did their work. Young women and girls were raped or sold by auction in places where the Moslem population had assembled; 20 piastres (3s.) was paid for a girl who had not been violated, 5 piastres (9d.) for one who had been violated or for a widow, and children went for practically nothing. Often bands of *tyetas* and Kurds swooped down upon the

columns, robbing, maltreating, murdering, and violating the women.

A foreign witness has said that these deportation columns were merely "a polite form of massacre"; but in reality they were infinitely worse and more heartless; for instead of instant death they forced the victims to undergo all sorts of inhuman sufferings, while this cowardly and barbarous plan was to save the face of the authorities by posing as "a necessary military measure"! From June till August 1915, the hottest time of year, when the victims were most likely to succumb, these processions of death wended their way endlessly from all the vilayets and towns where there were Armenians, southwards in the direction of the desert. Strange to say, Constantinople, Smyrna, and Aleppo were spared—or practically so—no doubt because there were too many Europeans to see what was going on, and because the proceedings in Smyrna were stopped by German officers.

As an instance of what these marches meant I may mention on the authority of a German eyewitness that out of 18,000 expelled from Kharput and Sivas, only 350 reached Aleppo, and that out of 19,000 from Erzerum there were eleven survivors.<sup>1</sup>

According to the estimates of Dr. Lepsius, an average of more than two-thirds of the people in these doomed processions succumbed and disappeared on the way; of the survivors—emaciated, almost naked skeletons—who managed to struggle on to Syria and Mesopotamia, the majority were driven out into the desert, there to die in fearful agonies. The columns marched on for months, and even at the end of their death march they were not left in peace, but were driven round in circles for weeks. The concentration camps were filled and emptied again while the cold-blooded taskmasters allowed their unhappy victims to die of starvation and disease, or massacred them by the thousand. Typhus raged among them. The corpses by the roadside poisoned the atmosphere.

In several places the *valis* and the Turkish authorities considered it unnecessary to resort to the subterfuge of these

<sup>1</sup> Cf. A. N. Mandelstam, *La Société des Nations et les Puissances devant le Problème Arménien*, p. 44, note 1, Paris, 1925.

deportations and had the Armenians massacred without further ado, as, for instance, in Nisibin (July 1st), Bitlis (July 1st), Mush (July 10th), Malatia (July 15th), Urfa (August 19th and October 16th), Jesire<sup>Y</sup> (September 2nd), Diarbekr, Midiat, etc. This was at least more merciful than the unspeakable sufferings entailed by the other method. On June 10, 1915, the German consul at Mosul telegraphed that 614 Armenian men, women, and children, sent down the Tigris by raft from Diarbekr, had been butchered: only empty rafts had arrived at Mosul, the river was full of corpses and human limbs, and several other transports of the same kind were on the way. On the 18th of June the German consul at Erzerum reported massacres near the garrison town of Erzinjan: Government troops of the 86th cavalry brigade, aided by their officers and some Kurds, had butchered between 20,000 and 25,000 deported women and children in the Kemekh gorge. In the town of Bitlis most of the Armenians were massacred: 900 women and children were carried off and drowned in the Tigris. And so it went—a never-ending tale of the most disgusting cruelties. In some cases the Christians were burnt in their houses. The Armenian soldiers who had fought so bravely in the Turkish army that even Enver Pasha had to compliment them publicly on their bravery and loyalty were afterwards disarmed, set to hard labour behind the front, and ultimately shot by their comrades and by command of their own officers.

As soon as the German consular reports showed what the "deportations" really meant, the German ambassadors handed the Sublime Porte a series of vigorous notes of protest, but without result. The Turkish leaders partly denied the facts, and partly gave it pretty clearly to be understood that they did not consider their allies competent to instruct them in humanity. Tala'at Bey cynically remarked to Count Metternich, the German ambassador, on December 18, 1915, that he was sure that the Germans would have done the same thing in the like circumstances. For the rest, the Porte deprecated German interference in their domestic concerns. The German Government's efforts to put a stop to the atrocities came to nothing. But although the German

ambassadors and consuls could do little or nothing in that respect, their reports furnish a pitiless exposure of the misdeeds of their ally. The long list of ghastly documents and the unparalleled inhumanity of the atrocities committed make it perfectly clear that the whole thing was carried out in accordance with a plan carefully laid by the Young Turkish leaders and their committee. The cowardly fashion in which the Turks subsequently denied that there had been any atrocities, and that everything had been done intentionally and according to plan, does not make their case any better.

The German ambassador, Baron Wangenheim, wrote to Berlin on June 17, 1915, that "Tala'at Bey has . . . openly stated that the Porte wished to take advantage of the opportunity offered by the war to make a clean sweep of their enemies at home without being troubled by foreign diplomatic intervention." And on July 7, 1915, he writes again that the fact of the deportations also taking place in provinces which are not in danger of a hostile invasion, and the way in which they are being carried out, "show that the Government is really aiming at the extermination of the Armenian race in the Ottoman Empire." On July 10, 1916, Count Metternich telegraphed to Bethmann-Hollweg, the Imperial Chancellor, that the Turkish Government had refused to be deterred by the German representations "from carrying out their programme of solving the Armenian problem by exterminating the Armenian race."

A telegram in cipher sent on September 15, 1915, runs as follows :

To the Police Office at Aleppo.

It has already been reported that by the order of the Committee the Government have determined completely to exterminate the Armenians living in Turkey. Those who refuse to obey this order cannot be regarded as friends of the Government. Regardless of women, children, or invalids, and however deplorable the methods of destruction may seem, an end is to be put to their existence without paying any heed to feeling or conscience.

Minister for the Interior.

TALA'AT.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A photographic reproduction of this cipher telegram is given in Åge M. Benedictsens's *Armenien*, p. 259, Copenhagen, 1925.

By order of the same minister only the Armenian children under five years of age were to be spared. They could be brought up as good Turks.

On August 31, 1915, Tala'at Bey declared to the German ambassadors that "La question arménienne n'existe plus." His statement was fairly correct, inasmuch as nearly all the deportations had by then been carried out. Little remained but to see that any survivors of the death marches were wiped out, too. As we have seen, no attempt was made to receive or feed them; they were merely collected in concentration camps on the edge of the Arabian desert, practically without food and without any chance of earning a living.

In January 1916 between five and six thousand Armenians from Aintab were sent "into the wilderness"; and in April 14,000 deportees were massacred in the camp at Ras ul Ain. By order of the *Kaimakan*, companies numbering 300-500 were conducted every day by bands of Circassians to the river, ten kilometres away, and there killed, their corpses being thrown into the water.<sup>1</sup>

At Meskne on the Euphrates, east of Aleppo, where the Armenians were starved to death in one of the great concentration camps, 55,000 people, according to Turkish figures, lie buried. It is estimated that during 1915 60,000 deportees were sent to Der es Zor on the Euphrates; and the majority of them disappeared. On April 15, 1916, 19,000 were sent in four batches to Mosul, three hundred kilometres across the desert; but only 2,500 arrived on May 22nd. Some of the women and girls had been sold to Bedouins on the way; the rest had died of hunger and thirst. In July 1916 20,000 were deported to Der es Zor; eight weeks later, according to the testimony of a German officer, only a few artisans were left. The rest had disappeared—they had been sent off in batches of two or three hundred at a time to be killed by Circassian bands. But death by starvation was still worse; and an eyewitness has related that 1,029 Armenians died of it during two and a half days that he spent at Bab.

There are descriptions by eyewitnesses of the scenes among these starving and dying people which are so full of heart-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Lepsius, *op. cit.*, p. 256.

rending horror that they read like a nightmare. Miserable shadows of what had once been human beings—often men and women of high culture—would eat anything they could lay hands on, while the gendarmes sat indifferently gazing at their sufferings, keeping watch over them until they dropped dead. It was a hell. And the Turkish authorities did everything in their power to prevent any relief from being sent, even by Germany, to these unfortunate creatures. When Dr. Lepsius applied to Enver Pasha in Constantinople, as early as August 1915, for permission to bring relief to the suffering "deportees," the latter answered that the Turks would relieve them; if the Germans wished to help they could send gifts and money to the Turkish Government, which would see that they were delivered to the right address. What the "right address" meant, it is not difficult to guess. As for the Americans who brought relief, they were simply refused permission to land.

The Armenians who were still left were given the choice of conversion to Islam or death, and all Armenians in military service would have to be circumcised. Furthermore, all Armenians would have to adopt Turkish names. Many became Muhammedans and agreed to be circumcised; and the authorities made a point of getting hold of as many children as possible. The Turkish programme was to stamp out the Christian religion and replace all Christian names by Muhammedan names throughout Asia Minor from the Black Sea to Syria.

Enemies of the Armenians pretend to regard it as a proof of degenerate feebleness that such large numbers of people allowed themselves, without resistance, to be massacred or driven away to certain death; though this argument is directly contradictory to the trumped-up Turkish accusation that their victims were dangerous rebels. As most of the able-bodied men had already been taken for war service, and the entire Armenian population had been systematically disarmed, it was not such an easy matter for them to offer resistance to well-armed gendarmes, soldiery, and "volunteers." None the less, the Armenians defended themselves bravely and with a certain amount of success in some cases

where there was an opportunity, as for instance in Van (see p. 301), and in the mountains near Suedije in Cilicia (see p. 300), where some of them were armed with old flint-locks. In Urfa the Armenians perished after a gallant but hopeless struggle. For the rest, a people who could fight for what they believed to be a righteous cause with such reckless valour as the thousands of Armenian volunteers on the Caucasian and Syrian fronts can safely ignore all accusations of cowardice.

When the frightful events in Anatolia came to the knowledge of the peoples of Europe towards the end of the summer of 1915, the story raised a perfect storm of indignation—even amid all the horrors of the Great War—against the Turks, and against Germany, which was blamed for allowing such things to happen.<sup>1</sup> It found vent in strong words and solemn promises that, when the cause of justice and liberty was won, the Armenians should receive full compensation in the form of their independence and freedom, provided they joined the Entente and sent their able-bodied men to fight. From all parts of the world came a steady stream of Armenian volunteers. Armenian legions were formed in the Syrian army—and on this basis an independent State of Armenia was to be secured. On the Russian front in the Caucasus young Armenians, inflamed with fierce zeal by the Turkish atrocities, flocked to the colours. In addition to 150,000 Armenians in the Russian regular army, companies of Armenian volunteers were formed which fought magnificently under their own leaders, notably the heroic Andranik. After the massacres in Anatolia there were many Armenians from Turkey among the volunteers, and the Turks had the audacity to call these companies traitors and rebels because they fought against the executioners of their fellow-countrymen! Upwards of 200,000 Armenian volunteers gave their lives for the cause of the Allies.

Meanwhile the war dragged on. When the Russian army advanced and took in succession Van, Bitlis, and Mush, then

<sup>1</sup> When the intentions of the Young Turkish Government became evident, the Germans did what they could in the stress of war to stop these horrors, but in vain. America's energetic ambassador, Mr. Morgenthau, was equally unsuccessful in his efforts to restrain the Young Turks, although he was well informed as to the course of events.

Erzerum and Erzinjan in January 1916, and Trebizond two months later, it was the turn of the Turkish population to flee, lest the Armenians should take vengeance for past massacres. In a wild panic of fear the Turks streamed westward in the cold of winter, many of them dying after incredible sufferings and privations in the pathless mountain country. In some places, no doubt, the Armenian volunteer companies avenged their countrymen by killing Muhammedans; but certainly not to any extent that can be compared with the Turkish massacres. Thousands of Armenian fugitives now returned to their homes from the mountains where they had been hiding, from the Russian side of the frontier, and even from Mesopotamia. Without delay they set about rebuilding their devastated villages and farms.

Then came the Russian revolution of March 1917. In addition to the account given in Chapter IV (pp. 105 ff.) of what ensued in Transcaucasia, I may add here a few details regarding Armenia. At the beginning of 1918 the Turks advanced again to attack Turkish Armenia. The Armenian troops, abandoned by the Russians, resisted desperately, while the Georgians retired, unwilling to fight save for their own country. On March 11, 1918, the Turks took Erzerum, and after occupying the rest of Turkish Armenia advanced against Kars. Then the Transcaucasion Republic declared its independence—i.e. of Russia (April 22, 1918)—and agreed at last to accept the conditions of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, which handed over the Kars region to Turkey. On April 27th the Turks occupied Kars and looted it. New peace negotiations were begun at Batum on May 11, 1918; and the Turks now refused to keep the conditions they had accepted at the peace of Brest-Litovsk, demanding much larger concessions. They attacked Alexandropol and captured it on May 15, 1918. Wherever they advanced there were fresh massacres of Armenians and fresh horrors, notwithstanding the strongest protests from the German Government and the Supreme Command, which peremptorily demanded that the Turks should adhere to the peace conditions already accepted, and retire to the frontiers defined in them. But the Turks pushed on, looting and massacring as they went. The

atrocities became steadily worse, the sufferings and starvation of the Armenians were indescribable, and the country was overrun by several hundred thousand refugees. All the corn was carried off or destroyed, all Armenian property wrecked, all movables taken away. Clearly the Turkish leaders intended to exterminate the Armenians in Russian Armenia as well.<sup>1</sup>

Following the dissolution of the Transcaucasian Republic (May 26, 1918), Armenia proclaimed itself an independent republic. After the Tatars of Azerbaijan joined Turkey, the Armenians, who till then had borne the brunt of the defence, stood quite alone, and were obliged to make peace with the Turks on June 4, 1918. They were allowed to keep the Novo-Bajazet region and part of the districts of Alexandropol, Echmiadzin, and Erivan (9,000 square kilometres, with a population of 350,000); but in spite of the peace the Turks went on pillaging the country.

Aided by the Tatars of Azerbaijan they next attacked Baku, and took it on September 15, 1918. Nuri Pasha, the general in command and a younger brother of Enver Pasha, allowed the Tatars to sack the town for three days and massacre the Christians, who were chiefly Armenians. While the streets re-echoed to the shooting and the screams of the victims, Nuri Pasha held a review outside the town, and then sat down with his officers to a banquet in the Hôtel Métropole. Between 20,000 and 30,000 Armenians were massacred in Baku during the three days. This was done as a reprisal because the Armenians and Russian Bolsheviks had killed several hundred Tatars during the short time they were in power in Baku, and that in turn was a reprisal because the Tatar militia, after the dissolution of the Transcaucasian Republic (May 26, 1918), had looted the Armenian villages near Erivan.

Then came the collapse of Germany and Turkey; and after the armistice on October 30, 1918, the Turks had to retire behind the frontiers they had held before the war. The Armenians were able to return to Alexandropol, Kars, Ardahan,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the telegram of August 4th and letter of August 5, 1918, from Freiherr von Kress, the German representative in the Caucasus (Tiflis), to the Imperial Chancellor, quoted in Lepsius, *op. cit.*, pp. xlvi, 420 f., 424 ff.

and Ardanuch. But in order to secure to them the independent country and freedom from the Turkish yoke that the Allies had so often promised, the Allied forces would have had to occupy Turkish Armenia. This, however, was too much trouble for the Governments; there were no oil-wells in Anatolia. Accordingly the Turks got the upper hand in the country, which meant that the cause of the Armenians was lost. Soon a new and serious peril arose owing to the Turkish national revival under Mustapha Kemal's leadership, with its point of departure in Turkish Armenia itself. But this is not the place to explain how "rotten" Turkey, which the Allies in the flush of victory regarded as utterly paralysed, was able to regain sufficient strength to defy the victors, and once more to become a belligerent Power with which they had to negotiate.

Meanwhile the Armenians in Erivan, with their usual indefatigable energy, began restoring their sorely devastated country, crowded with homeless refugees. Under an enterprising Government, presided over by the Armenian doctor Khatissian, formerly mayor of Tiflis, they worked with great vigour, reintroducing order, cultivating the land, settling refugees, and restarting various industries. The Government obtained a loan of 20 million dollars, and received other help from abroad, especially from the American Near East Relief organization, which, under the direction of Mr. Vickrey, has saved the lives of thousands of Armenian children.

On the 28th of May 1919 the Government of Erivan proclaimed the independence and unity of the Armenian lands in what had been Russian Transcaucasia and in the Ottoman empire, declaring itself to be the Government of this united Armenian republic. But in July and August of the same year Turkish nationalist conferences called by Mustapha Kemal at Erzerum and Sivas declared that "not an inch of the land in our vilayets" should be given to "Armenia or any other State."

During this time the peace negotiations in Paris were slowly dragging on. A pan-Armenian conference of Armenians from all countries met in Paris under the joint presidency of *Avetis Abaronian*, the poet and popular leader, and of

*Boghos Nubar Pasha*, the indefatigable and self-sacrificing spokesman of the Armenians in the Entente countries throughout the war. An address to the Peace Conference, signed on February 12, 1919, by these two presidents, formulated the grounds for claiming the independent State that the Allies had pledged themselves to give to the Armenian people. On January 19, 1920, the Supreme Council of the Peace Conference decided to recognize *de facto* the Government of the Armenian State, and proposed that the League of Nations should protect this independent State as a Mandate. The Council of the League answered on April 11, 1920, that it had not the necessary means (e.g. military and financial) for undertaking such a duty, which, moreover, was not in accordance with the purposes for which it existed. The proper way to safeguard the future of the Armenian nation was to find a Power which would accept the Mandate under the control and with the moral support of the League. On April 25, 1920, the Supreme Council, through President Wilson, requested the United States to take over the Mandate for Armenia. On May 31, 1920, the Senate of the United States refused the Mandate; but President Wilson undertook to arbitrate on the question of Armenia's frontiers. Subsequent applications to other Powers requesting them to accept the Mandate were equally fruitless.

The Treaty of Sèvres between Turkey and the Allies, which was signed on August 10, 1920, with the President of Armenia as one of the signatories, recognized Armenia (*de jure*) as a *free, independent, and sovereign State*; and left to the arbitrament of the President of the United States the definition of the frontier between Turkey and Armenia in the vilayets of Erzerum, Trebizond, Van, and Bitlis. The Powers would "approve his decision and likewise all dispositions that he might recommend with regard to Armenia's access to the sea and the disarmament of the whole Ottoman territory adjoining the frontier in question," etc., etc. This sounds nothing short of ludicrous when we remember that they had not disarmed even the territories which were to belong to the Armenians. About three months later President Wilson defined the frontiers (made public November 22, 1921), and

Armenia received an area on the map embracing about 127,000 square kilometres. This was a good deal less than what had originally been contemplated; but it would have been sufficient for the Armenians. Unfortunately, however, the Turco-Armenian territories in question were still in Turkish occupation. The Allies did not explain how the Armenians were to get them; nor did they take any steps whatsoever to carry out the new obligations they had undertaken, and secure to the Armenians the area they had given them on paper. The whole transaction strikes one as a sorry farce—as if the statesmen of the Great Powers took it for granted that obligations undertaken in respect of a small people, with no natural sources of wealth, are of no importance if they prove inconvenient. Encouraged by their strange indifference, Mustapha Kemal refused to be bound by the treaty, although the legal Government of Turkey had signed it; and he attacked the Armenians instead. The Powers took no notice; they had allowed the Armenians to shed their blood in the Allied cause, and had rewarded them with a worthless document.

With the collapse of Denikin's "volunteer army" at the beginning of 1920, the position in Transcaucasia was entirely changed. On April 27, 1920, the Bolsheviks took Baku. When the British troops were withdrawn from Batum on July 6, 1920, Georgia and Armenia were left entirely to their own resources in their struggle for independence. In September of the same year the Turks advanced again from the west. The Armenians lacked ammunition, provisions, uniforms; and no one helped them. The Georgians had their hands full, and the Allied Powers, as usual, did nothing. Kars was taken almost without a shot being fired, and once more there were ghastly massacres; Alexandropol was also taken, the country was pillaged, and the people massacred. Erivan escaped the same fate at the last moment by forming a soviet and accepting an alliance with the Government at Moscow, while the Government under Khatissian fled to the mountains.

On December 2, 1920, the treaty of peace between the Governments in Erivan and Angora was signed at Alexan-

dropol, and the territory of the Armenian republic was reduced from 60,000 square kilometres to less than half that size, while at the same time it had been overrun by fresh hosts of refugees. This happened a few days after the President of the United States had with great solemnity defined the frontiers of the independent Armenian State; while just at the same time the League of Nations, in session at Geneva, was discussing the possibility of admitting that State to the League, and strong opinions were being expressed in favour of helping the hard-pressed Armenians in their unequal struggle against Mustapha Kemal and the Turks. But it came to nothing, except that two members of the League—Spain and Brazil—and President Wilson stated that they were willing to intervene in favour of Armenia in its struggle with Turkey. By an irony of fate this offer was communicated to the Assembly of the League of Nations at Geneva on the day the peace of Alexandropol was signed.

The new Bolshevik administration at Erivan under the Communist Kassian did not work well, and after a few months he was expelled and the old Government recalled. But in April 1921 the Red forces entered Erivan. A new Government, with an Armenian named Miasnikian at its head, was formed, and they acted with wise moderation; a general amnesty was proclaimed, and the educated classes were summoned to participate in the sorely needed work of regenerating the country. The distress was naturally great in a land devastated by constant wars and crowded with refugees; in the autumn it developed into a regular famine; hundreds perished, and the streets of towns like Alexandropol and Erivan were littered with corpses. But energetic measures were taken, and it is really incredible to see how much has been done in a few years with extremely limited means. Chaos, misery, and famine have been replaced by order, and even a certain degree of prosperity; and the nation is going ahead steadily, taking in hand many new and important undertakings under the direction of its capable Government.

A conference held at Kars in October–November 1921 settled the points at issue between the Angora Government and the Armenian Bolshevik Government, and Turkey was

allowed to retain Kars and Ardahan. By a decree of the Soviet Government in Moscow a federation of the three soviet republics of Transcaucasia—Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan—was formed. This federation is affiliated to the great Russian Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, with the seat of government in Moscow.

As previously stated (p. 107), this was the only solution which could save the peoples concerned from destruction. But, strange to say, the nations who failed to perform their obligations, who forgot all their promises, and did nothing to help the hard-pressed Armenians while there was still time to do so, have blamed them for accepting a soviet form of government in order to save their country and its people. This accusation is used as an excuse for doing nothing more; for these nations have lost interest in the Armenian people, as they lost interest in their own promises.

As time went on, many Armenians who had survived the deportations and massacres returned to the Armenian territories in Anatolia. With the encouragement of the Allies, 200,000 refugees had also come back to their former homes in Cilicia, where they were protected by French troops. But in February 1920 they were attacked by Kemal Pasha, and 30,000 Armenians were massacred at Hadjim and Marash. Then, when the French made an agreement in October 1921 to evacuate Cilicia—notwithstanding the previous promises of the Powers to protect the Armenians there—nothing could induce the population to remain, and there were mass emigrations to Syria and other countries.

Then came the last grim act in the sombre tragedy of the Armenians. In the autumn of 1922 the Turks, under Mustapha Kemal, drove the Greeks out of Asia Minor. Once more thousands and thousands of Armenians were driven out of the country like pariahs, and fresh scenes of cruelty were enacted. Stripped of everything, the fugitives arrived in Greece, Bulgaria, Constantinople, and Syria; while great numbers fled again to Russian Armenia. All the real property and movables that they had to leave behind has been appropriated by the Turks and their rulers!

The number of Armenians that the Young Turks managed

to exterminate in the persecutions of 1915 and 1916 cannot be ascertained with complete certainty. Starting from the statistics before the war, which showed that there were then 1,845,450 Armenians in Turkey, Dr. Lepsius came to the conclusion in 1919 that about *one million of these had been killed or had died* during the interval, as 845,000 were still alive. Of these latter, about 200,000 were living in their homes in Turkey, about 200,000 were scattered, about 250,000 had fled to Transcaucasia, and about 200,000 were supposed to be still surviving as famine-stricken beggars in the concentration camps of Syria and Mesopotamia. According to this computation the Turks exterminated, during the years in question, more than one-third of the whole Armenian people.

Not content with driving out and destroying endless hosts of despairing people, the Turkish authorities took all the property of the Armenians in Anatolia, valued at hundreds of millions of pounds. Their amazing inhumanity was due to no religious fanaticism either in the leaders or in the Turkish people. The Young Turks were indifferent to religion, and to give the Turkish-speaking population their due, they were not as ready to begin looting and massacring as the authorities wished; in some places they even resisted the deportation of the Armenians, and some Turkish officials refused to obey orders and tried to save the Armenian population. But the authorities soon overcame such difficulties, and too compassionate officials were either removed or murdered. The whole plan of extermination was nothing more nor less than a cold-blooded, calculated political measure, having for its object the annihilation of a superior element in the population which might prove troublesome. And to this must be added the motive of greed.

These were atrocities which far exceed any we know in history, both in their extent and their appalling cruelty. It could hardly be otherwise when a nation, whose public morality was that of the Middle Ages, became possessed of modern appliances and methods. The letter previously mentioned (p. 298) shows that the committee which issued the orders was ready to accept responsibility for "the disgrace which that step will bring upon Osmanli history" for

exterminating a people who were Turkish subjects (11). Enver Pasha declared, in response to the representations of the German ambassador, that he accepted responsibility for everything that happened in Anatolia. He and the other leaders must bear the whole blame for having added to the bloodstained history of Turkey a chapter so frightful that it puts all the rest into the shade. Abdul Hamid's massacres were trifles compared to the deeds of these "modern" Turks.

On June 30, 1916, Count Metternich, the German ambassador, writes to the Imperial Chancellor that "the committee demands the destruction of the last remnant of the Armenians. . . ." When nothing is left to take from them, "the hounds are already waiting impatiently for the moment when Greece, egged on by the Entente, will turn against the Turks or their allies," so that they may fall upon the Greeks and their property. "To Turkify (*türkisieren*) is to expel or kill all that is not Turkish, to destroy and misappropriate by violence other people's property. In this, and the blatant repetition of French phrases about liberty, consists at present the famous renaissance of Turkey. . . ." Such is the verdict of a friendly ally. To complete the picture, it should be borne in mind that the Armenians, whom the Young Turks exterminated in such a revolting manner, were their old friends and allies, whom they had made use of and co-operated with as long as they were struggling for power. And now they even murdered prominent Armenians who, at the risk of their own lives, had saved the Young Turkish leaders when Abdul Hamid regained his power in 1909 and massacred the Young Turks. Fortunately history does not offer many examples of such treacherous and unmitigated baseness.

But the Young Turks have done what they set out to do; they have wiped out the Armenian population of Anatolia, and can say with Tala'at Pasha that the Armenian question *n'existe plus*. No European or American Government or statesman troubles now about what has happened; to them the everlasting Armenian problem seems finally and definitely obliterated in blood.

We have seen that the Western Powers of Europe and the United States of America have given words, and nothing else,

by way of fulfilling the promises to the Armenian people which they made with such solemnity when they needed support in the war. And what of the *League of Nations*? Even its *first Assembly* in 1920 resolved unanimously that something must be done by the Powers "to put a stop to the terrible Armenian tragedy as soon as possible," and to safeguard the future of the Armenian nation. At the *second Assembly* in September 1921 Lord Robert Cecil's draft resolution was unanimously adopted, emphasizing the desirability that the Supreme Council of the Powers should "safeguard the future of Armenia, and especially to give the Armenians a national home (*foyer national*), completely independent of Ottoman rule." The *third Assembly* in September 1922 again passed a unanimous resolution declaring that "in the peace negotiations with Turkey the necessity of founding a national home for the Armenians must not be left out of sight. The Assembly requested the Council to take whatever measures it deemed necessary for this purpose."

Then came the peace negotiations at Lausanne from November 1922 to June 1923. The representatives of the Powers at once departed from the provisions about Armenia in the Treaty of Sèvres; but on their behalf Lord Curzon demanded an independent national home or country for the Armenians, and characterized the Armenian question as "one of the great scandals of the world." This proposal was categorically rejected by the Turks. After passing through various stages the demand was whittled away till it merely suggested a home for the Armenians "in Turkey," which would not even have an autonomous Government, and would practically be an area "under Turkish law and administration, where the Armenians could be assembled and preserve their race, language, and culture." But even this was rejected by the Turkish negotiators; whereupon the representatives of the Powers considered that they had done enough for a people which had shed its blood for them. When the Treaty of Lausanne was finally signed on July 24, 1923, it did not contain a word about a home for the Armenians. In fact, this treaty was made "just as though they had never existed," as their protest against it very justly observes.

Thus ended the feeble efforts of the West-European and American Powers to honour the promises of freedom and independence they had given to the Armenians when they wished to induce them to fight for their cause.

Why does the League of Nations set up committees to see whether anything can be done, at least for the homeless Armenian refugees? Is it meant as a salve for tender consciences, if any such still remain? But what is the good of it, when the proposals, made after conscientious inquiry and recommended by all the experts, cannot secure the support of the Governments of the Powers; and when the Powers coldly refuse to make even the most modest sacrifice to relieve the destitute refugees for whom they have promised to do so much? The usual answer is that it is unreasonable to expect people to make sacrifices for others in these difficult times, when it is all they can do to look after their own affairs. But ought not the Powers to have thought of that before, when by their golden promises and pledges of honour they induced these unfortunate people, who were far worse off than they were, to sacrifice not only their money and goods, but even their lives for the cause of the Entente?

Mr. Stanley Baldwin, the leader of the British Conservative Party and present Prime Minister, and Mr. Asquith, the leader of the Liberal Party, sent in September 1924 to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the then head of the Government, a warm-hearted address urging that Great Britain ought to give a large sum to help the Armenian refugees in Greece, the Balkans, etc. The reasons why this should be done were summarized in the following points:

1. Because the Armenians were encouraged by promises of freedom to support the Allied cause during the war, and suffered for this cause so tragically.

It is recalled that as far back as the autumn of 1914 the Armenians at their National Congress in Erzerum rejected the alluring offers of the Turks, and refused as a nation to work for the cause of Turkey and her Allies, though they were willing to do their duty; that partly because of this courageous refusal they were systematically massacred by the

Turkish Government in 1915; that they organized volunteer forces, and, under their heroic leader Andranik, bore the brunt of some of the heaviest fighting in the Caucasian campaigns; that the Armenians, after the breakdown of the Russian Army in 1917, took over the Caucasian front and delayed the Turkish advance for five months, thus rendering an important service to the British Army in Mesopotamia; that Lord Bryce's Blue book, entitled *Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire*, was widely used for Allied propaganda in 1916-1917, and had an important influence upon American opinion and upon President Wilson's ultimate decision to enter the war.

2. Because during the war and since the Armistice, the statesmen of the Allied and Associated Powers have given repeated pledges to secure the liberation and independence of the Armenian nation.

These obligations were undertaken on November 9, 1916, by Mr. Asquith as Prime Minister; on January 5, 1918, by Mr. Lloyd George; on January 8, 1918, by President Wilson; on July 23, 1918, by M. Clemenceau; on March 11, 1920, by the Marquis of Curzon as Foreign Secretary, etc.

3. Because in part Great Britain is responsible for the final dispersion of the Ottoman Armenians after the sack of Smyrna in 1922.

The Greek war against Turkey, which led to the final destruction and expulsion of the Christian minorities in Asia Minor, was initiated and protracted under the direct encouragement of the British Government.

4. Because the £5,000,000 (Turkish gold) deposited by the Turkish Government in Berlin, 1916, and taken over by the Allies after the Armistice, was in large part (perhaps wholly) Armenian money.

5. Because the present conditions of the refugees are unstable and demoralizing; and constitute a reproach to the Western Powers . . .

The document goes on to ask, "What can be done?"

We recognize with deep regret that it is impossible now to fulfil our pledges to the Armenians. . . . But there is open to us another method of expressing our sense of responsibility and of

relieving the desperate plight of the scattered remnants of the Turkish Armenians. The most appropriate territory for their settlement would surely be in Russian Armenia. Facilities are offered by the local Government. . . .

Here follows an account of the plan which was then under consideration, but which had not been so completely worked out as the present project, and was more difficult to put into practice. In conclusion the address says :

It is in our opinion the duty of Great Britain to give substantial support to this scheme. We desire to express our view that, as some compensation for unfulfilled pledges is morally due to the Armenians, the British Government should forthwith make an important grant. . . .

(Signed) H. H. ASQUITH.  
STANLEY BALDWIN.

One should think that this concise and challenging appeal by two of the leading statesmen of Great Britain could not be ignored ; and no doubt Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and the Labour Party would gladly have done what was asked. But he was shortly afterwards defeated, and the Conservative Party, led by Mr. Baldwin, came into power. Surely the time had come at last ! But Mr. Baldwin's Government refused to do anything whatsoever for the Armenian nation, or for the refugees to whom some compensation was "morally due."

In despair one can only ask what it all meant. Was it, in reality, nothing but a gesture—mere empty words with no serious intention behind them ?

And the League of Nations—has it no feeling of responsibility either ? By compelling its High Commissioner for Refugees, in spite of his repeated refusals, to take up the cause of the Armenian refugees, the League has almost certainly prevented others from organizing effective measures to help the Armenians ; for it was assumed that the League of Nations would not espouse a cause of this nature without being able to deal with it satisfactorily, especially after all the pledges given by the Powers. Does the League consider that it has now done its duty, and does it imagine that it can let the matter drop without undermining the prestige of the League, especially in the East ?

The nations of Europe and the statesmen of Europe are tired of the everlasting Armenian question. Of course. It has only brought them one defeat after another, the very mention of it recalling to their slumbering consciences a grim tale of broken or unfulfilled promises which they have never in practice done anything to keep. And after all, it was only a massacred, but gifted little nation, with no oil-fields or gold-mines.

Woe to the Armenians, that they were ever drawn into European politics! It would have been better for them if the name of Armenia had never been uttered by any European diplomatist.

But the Armenian people have never abandoned hope; they have gone on bravely working, and waiting . . . waiting year after year.

They are waiting still.



ARMENIA  
AND THE NEAR  
EAST



NANSEN

GEORGE ALLEN  
& UNWIN LTD

