

ՀՐԱՊԱՐԱԿՈՒՄՆԵՐ PUBLICATIONS

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ARSHAK SAFRASTYAN ABOUT THE ARMENIAN QUESTION AND ARMENIA

In 1904 at the age of 17, Arshak Safrastayan joined the service in Bitlis as a translator in the British Consulate and from 1907 to 1911 was appointed to the post of Vice-Ambassador. He bypassed the provinces of Bitlis, Van, Diarbekir, and collected information about the unbearable conditions of Armenians and the Armenian pogroms and massacres.

In 1912 Arshak Safrastyan went to England to continue his education and entered the Faculty of Law at the University of London. Later he studied political economy and civilization at Cambridge and Munich universities (1912–1914).

In 1915–1916 Mr. Safrastyan published the magazine “Ararat” and, in cooperation with Arnold Toynbee and Lord Bryce, undertook the publication of such works devoted to the Armenian massacres as the “Blue Book” and “Armenians in the Ottoman Empire”. In 1919–1920, Arshak Safrastyan participated in the Paris Peace Conference as a member of the Armenian National Delegation. In 1920, he participated in the first session of the League of Nations. In 1921, he became the General Secretary of the National Delegation and went to the United States with Gabriel Noratunkyan. Later, with the approval of the National Delegation, he traveled to the Caucasus and Armenia on behalf of the London Mayor's Foundation.

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In the years 1928–1937, Arshak Safrastyan edited and published the magazine “Masis” in English, which elucidated the achievements of Soviet Armenia, the history of the Chaldean language, cultural issues and the Armenian question.

Safrastyan also studied the ancient history of Armenians. Many times, he presented reports at the international congress of orientalists. One of his reports – “Khurin Land in Armenian Language and Literature”, presented at the International Congress of Orientalists in Paris in August 1948, was published in a separate pamphlet.

Having a perfect command of seven languages, Safrastyan was a member of the Royal Asiatic Society of London, the Institute of Archaeology, the German Oriental Society in Berlin, the Armenian Historical Society in London, and the Armenian Community Council.

In 1939–1945, during the Second World War, he served in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of England: at that time, he wrote articles about the composition of the Armenian and Kurdish states, where he criticized the insidious British policy in Asia Minor.

It is important to mention that in 1948 Arshak Safrastian also published the book “Kurds and Kurdistan” in London, and in 1957 started the publication of his monumental work “History of Armenia” in two volumes.

Arshak Safrastyan, the future representative of the “English Mission”, official correspondent of the newspaper “Voice of the People” published in Constantinople, the representative of the Armenian Red Cross in London, went to Armenia more than once; he dealt with the Armenian issue; collected documents on the ancient history of Armenians and based on the obtained facts, he wrote the articles “Armenia”, “Kurdistan”, “Asia Minor”.

Since the 70^s of the 19th century, the issue of carrying out reforms in Western Armenia under the rule of Ottoman Turkey became a subject of international diplomacy. The Armenian Issue, being an integral part of the Eastern problem, was regularly manipulated in the frame of the Near Eastern policy of the great powers¹.

The Armenian Issue became a matter of international diplomatic discussions in the international agreements adopted at the San Stefano Conference and the

¹ Ղամբարյան 2006, 3:

Berlin Congress after the Russo-Turkish war of 1877–1878. It was put forward in order to improve the situation of Western Armenians, to guarantee their security and to ensure a certain political and legal status².

Until 1918, the subject of the Armenian Issue was the liberation of Western Armenia, which bore the country name “Armenia” in international diplomatic documents. The geographical borders of Armenia (Western Armenia) were specified in the documents submitted by the Armenian Delegation to the Congress of Berlin in 1878, and especially the reform program adopted on May 11, 1895, by the representatives of the European powers – Russia, Great Britain and France. The May Reform Program marked the specific borders of Armenia (Western Armenia) within the six vilayets of the Ottoman Empire. However, on the eve of World War 1, when the task of partitioning the Ottoman Empire began to be on the agenda of the great powers, their diplomatic struggle ended up with the signing of a Russian-Turkish agreement on Armenian reforms as of January 26, 1914, in Constantinople, by the Grand Vizier Said Halim Pasha and the Russian Chargé d’Affaires Kostandin Gulkevich. According to that agreement, Armenia (Western Armenia) was divided into two regions: a) Sebastia, Trabzon, Erzurum vilayets and b) Bitlis, Van, Kharberd, Diarbekir vilayets. Thereby, Trabzon was added to the six vilayets of Western Armenia. Armenia’s independence on May 28th, 1918, and the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War 1 brought the vision of a United and Independent Armenia to the diplomatic agenda. At the initial stage of the Paris Peace Conference, it was discussed as a “Great Armenia” project, including Armenian Cilicia with access to the Black and Mediterranean seas. But the aggravation of the struggle between France and Great Britain led to the emergence of a project to create “Little Armenia” through joining with the Republic of Armenia most of the Van, Bitlis and Erzurum vilayets and part of the Trabzon vilayet to ensure access to the Black Sea. The peace treaty signed in Sevres on August 10, 1920, between the victorious States and the Ottoman Empire legally secured the rights of the Republic of Armenia over these territories.

The Treaty of Sevres was considered by Armenian socio-political thought exclusively in the context of Articles 88–93, which are directly related to Armenia. This was quite natural, as these articles restored the right of the Armenian people

² ՀԱԱ, ֆ. 412, գ. 1, թ. 3–4:

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to their homeland, a part of Western Armenia. The mentioned articles of the Treaty of Sevres de jure recognized not only the Republic of Armenia including the Armenian provinces of Transcaucasia, but also the United Armenia with Eastern and Western Armenias united. The signatory states, including the Turkish state that was defeated in World War 1, recognized the independence of the United Armenia and agreed to expand the borders of Armenia by annexing most of the territories of the provinces of Erzurum, Van and Bitlis, as well as part of the province of Trabzon, thus ensuring the exit of Armenia to the Black Sea.

Although the Treaty of Sevres was not ratified, some of its provisions were partially implemented by the signatory states. The Treaty of Sevres was not replaced by the Treaty of Lausanne since both the parties to these two documents and their subject matter are not identical.

Below we present Arshak Safrastyan's reflections on the status of Armenians living in Western Armenia, deprivations, massacres, the Armenian question. Of special interest is also his understanding of the situation in Eastern Armenia during those years, as well as the conditions Armenians lived in under the rule of Tsarist Russia.

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At the time when Abdul-Hamid came to the throne of Turkey in 1876, the condition of the Armenians was better than it had ever been under the Osmanlis; but with the close of the war of 1877–78 came the “Armenian Question.” By the treaty of San Stefano, Turkey engaged with Russia to carry out reforms “in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Kurds and Circassians”. By the treaty of Berlin, July 13, 1878, the engagement with the six signatory powers was substituted for the one with Russia. By the Cyprus convention (June 4, 1878) the sultan promised Great Britain to introduce necessary reforms “for the protection of the Christians and other subjects of the Porte” in the Turkish territories of Asia. The Berlin treaty encouraged the Armenians to look to the powers, and not to Russia for protection; and the convention, which did not mention the Armenians, was regarded as placing them under the special protection of Great Britain.

This impression was strengthened by the action of England at Berlin in insisting that Russia should evacuate the occupied territory before reforms were

introduced, and so removing the only security for their introduction. The presentation of identic and collective notes to the Porte by the powers, in 1880, produced no result, and in 1882 it was apparent that Turkey would only yield to compulsion. In 1881 a circular note from the British ministry to the five powers was evasively answered, and in 1883 Prince Bismarck intimated to the British government that Germany cared nothing about Armenian reforms, and that the matter had better be allowed to drop. Russia had changed her policy towards the Armenians, and the other powers were indifferent. The so-called "Concert of Europe" came to an end, but British ministries continued to call the attention of the sultan to his obligations under the treaty of Berlin. Russia began to interest herself in the Armenians when she acquired Georgia in 1801; but it was not until 1828–1829 that any appreciable number of them became her subjects. Russia found them necessary to the development of its new territories and gave them freedom within certain limits. They were permitted to develop their national life; many became wealthy, and many rose to high positions in the military and civil service of the state. After the war of 1877–78 the Russian consuls in Turkey encouraged the formation of patriotic committees in Armenia, and a project was formed to create a separate state, under the supremacy of Russia, which was to include Russian, Persian and Turkish Armenia.

The project was favoured by Loris-Melikov, who was all-powerful in Russia at that time, but in 1881 Alexander II was assassinated, and shortly afterwards a strongly anti-Armenian policy was adopted. The schools were closed, the use of the Armenian language was discouraged, and attempts were made to Russify the Armenians and bring them within the pale of the Russian Church. All hope of practical self-government under Russian protection now ceased, and the Armenians of Tiflis turned their attention to Turkish Armenia. They had seen the success of the Slav committees in treating disturbances in the Balkans and became the moving spirit in the attempts to produce similar troubles in Armenia. Russia made no real effort to check the action of her Armenian subjects, and after 1884 she steadily opposed any active interference by Great Britain in favour of the Turkish Armenians.

When Echmiadzin passed to Russia, in 1828, the Catholics began to claim spiritual jurisdiction over the whole Armenian Church, and Russia obtained the submission of the patriarch of Constantinople when she helped the sultan against Mehemet Ali. Subsequently Russia secured the submission of the independent

catholicus of Sis, and thus acquired a power of interference in Armenian affairs in all parts of the world.

During 1900 Russia showed renewed interest in Turkish Armenia by securing the right to construct all railways in it, as well as in Armenians by pressing the Porte to restore order and introduce reforms.

The Berlin treaty was a disappointment to the Gregorian Armenians, who had hoped that Armenia and Cilicia would be formed into an autonomous province administered by Christians. But the formation of such a province was impossible.

The Gregorians were scattered over the empire, and, except in a few small districts, were nowhere in a majority. Nor were they bound together by any community of thought or sentiment.

The Turkish-speaking Armenians of the south could scarcely converse with the Armenian-speaking people of the north; and the ignorant mountaineers of the east had nothing in common, except religion, with the highly educated townsmen of Constantinople and Smyrna. After the change in the Russian policy and the failure of the powers to secure reforms, the advanced party amongst the Armenians, some of whom had been educated in Europe and were deeply affected by the free thought and Nihilistic tendencies of the day, determined to secure their object by the production of disturbances. Societies were formed at Tiflis and in several European capitals for the circulation of pamphlets and newspapers, and secret societies, such as the Huntchagist, were instituted for more revolutionary methods. The revolutionary movement was joined by some of the younger men, who formed local committees on the Nihilist plan, but it was strongly opposed by the Armenian clergy and the American missionaries, who saw the impossibility of success; and its irreligious tendency and the self-seeking ambition of its leaders made it unacceptable for the masses. The object of the Huntchagists was to compromise the missionaries, and in this they succeeded. The Americans were accused of issuing placards; two Armenian professors were imprisoned; and the girls' school was burned down. Outbreaks, easily suppressed, followed at Kaisarich and other places.

One of the revolutionary dreams was to make the ancient Daron the center of a new Armenia. But the movement met with no encouragement, either amongst the prosperous peasants on the rich plain of Mush or in the mountain villages of Sasun. In the summer of 1893, an emissary was captured near Mush, and the governor, hoping to secure others, ordered the Kurdish Irregular Horse to raid

the mountain district. The Armenians drove off the Kurds. The vali now called up regular troops from Erzingan; and the sultan issued a ferman³ calling upon all loyal subjects to aid in suppressing the revolt. A massacre of a most brutal character, in which Turkish soldiers took part, followed; and aroused deep indignation in Europe.

The Armenians and Kurds have lived together from the earliest times. The adoption of Islam by the latter, and by many Armenians, divided the people sharply into Christian and Moslem, and placed the Christian in a position of inferiority. But the relations between the two sects were not unfriendly previously to the Russian campaigns in Persia and Turkey. After 1839 the relations became less friendly; and later, when the Armenians attracted the sympathies of the European powers after the war of 1877–78, they became bitterly hostile.

In November 1894 a Turkish commission of inquiry was sent to Armenia, and was accompanied by the consular delegates of Great Britain, France and Russia. To justify the action of the authorities they elicited the fact that there had been no attempt at revolt. Throughout 1894 the state of the country bordered upon anarchy, and during the winter of 1894–1895 the British government, pressed for administrative reforms in the vilayets of Erzerum, Van, Bitlis, Sivas, Memuret-el-Aziz (Kharput) and Diarbekir. The Porte made counter-proposals, and the officials concerned in the Sasun massacres were decorated and rewarded. On the May 11, 1895, the three powers presented to the sultan a complicated scheme of reforms which was more calculated to increase than to diminish the difficulties connected with the government of Armenia; but it was the only one to which Russia would agree. The sultan delayed his answer. Great Britain was in favour of coercion, but Russia, when sounded, replied that she “would certainly not join in any coercive measures” and she was supported by France.

At this moment, on June 21, 1895, Lord Rosebery's cabinet resigned, and when Lord Salisbury's government resumed the negotiations in August, the sultan appealed to France and Russia against England. During the negotiations the secret societies had not been inactive. Disturbances occurred at Tarsus; Armenians who did not espouse the “national” cause were murdered; the life of the patriarch was threatened; and a report was circulated that the British

³ Ferman (tur.) - Edict

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ambassador wished some Armenians killed to give him an excuse for bringing the fleet to Constantinople.

On October 1, 1895, a number of Armenians, some armed, went in a procession with a petition to the Porte and were ordered by the police to disperse. Shots were fired, and a riot occurred in which many Armenian and some Moslem lives were lost. The British ambassador now pressed the scheme of reforms upon the sultan, who accepted it on October 17. Meanwhile there had been a massacre at Trebizond (October 8), in which armed men from Constantinople took part.

The sultan refused to publish the scheme of reforms, and massacre followed massacre in Armenia in quick succession until January 1, 1906. Nothing was done. Russia refused to agree to any measure of coercion, and declared on December 19 that she would take no action except such as was needed for the protection of foreigners. Great Britain was not prepared to act alone. In the summer of 1906 (June 14–22) there were massacres at Van, Egin, and Niksar; and on August 26 the Imperial Ottoman Bank at Constantinople was seized by revolutionists as a demonstration against the Christian powers who had left the Armenians to their fate. The project was known to the Porte, and the rabble, previously armed and instructed, were at once turned loose in the streets. Two days' massacre followed, during which from 6000 to 7000 Gregorian Armenians perished. The massacres were apparently organized and carried out in accordance with a well-considered plan. They occurred, except in six places, in the vilayets to which the scheme of reforms was to apply. At Trebizond they took place just before the sultan accepted that scheme. The massacres were confined to Gregorian and Protestant Armenians. The Roman Catholics were protected by France, the Greek Christians by Russia. The massacre of Syrians, Jacobites and Chaldees at Urfa and elsewhere formed no part of the original plan. Orders were given to protect foreigners, and in some cases, guards were placed near their houses. The damage to the American buildings at Kharput was due to direct disobedience of orders. The attacks on the bazars were made without warning, during business hours, when the men were in their shops and the women in their houses.

Explicit promises were given, in some instances, that there would be no danger to those who opened their shops, but they were deliberately broken. Nearly all those who, due to their wealth, education, and influence, could have had a share in the government under the scheme of reforms, were killed and

their families ruined by the destruction of their property. Wherever any attempt at defense was made the slaughter was greater. The only successful resistance was at Zeitun, where the people received honorable terms after three months' fighting. In some towns the troops and police took an active part in the massacres. At Kharpout artillery was used. In some the slaughter commenced and ended by bugle-call, and in a few instances the Armenians were disarmed beforehand. A large majority of the Moslems disapproved of the massacres, and many Armenians were saved by Moslem friends. But the lower orders were excited by the reports that the Armenians, supported by the European powers, were plotting the overthrow of the sultan; and their cupidity was aroused by the prospect of wiping out their heavy debts to Armenian pedlars and merchants. No one was punished for the massacres, and many of those implicated in them were rewarded.

In some districts, especially in the Kharpout vilayet, the cry of "Islam or death" was raised. Gregorian priests and Protestant pastors were tortured, but they preferred death to apostasy. Men and women were killed in prison and in churches in cold blood. Churches, monasteries, schools, and houses were plundered and destroyed. In some places there was evidence of the previous activity of secret societies. In others none. The number of those who perished, excluding Constantinople, was 20,000 to 25,000. Many were forced to embrace Islam, and many had to face poverty. The destruction of property was enormous, the hardest-working and best tax-paying element in the country was destroyed, or impoverished, and where the breadwinners were killed, the women and children were left destitute. Efforts by Great Britain and the United States to alleviate the distress were opposed by the authorities but met with some success. After the massacres the number of students in the American schools and colleges increased, and many Gregorian Armenians became Roman Catholics in order to obtain the protection of France.

The Armenian revolutionary societies continued their propaganda down to the granting of the Turkish constitution in 1908; and meanwhile further massacres occurred here and there, notably at Mush (1904) and Van (1908).

In the following source, Arshak Safrastyan briefly compares the situation of Armenians during the Ottoman Empire, Tsarism, and the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenia. – The Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenia is a component part of the Federation of the S.S. Republics of Transcaucasia, itself a unit of the Russian Soviet Union (U.S.S.R.). The area of the

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republic is about 27,000 sq. km., and its population, 1,000,000, 86% of which is Armenian. It consists of the provinces of Erivan and Alexandropol, and lies between the Araxes and the Kura rivers. There are about 600,000 Armenians in Georgia and Azerbaijan, and another 500,000 in Northern Caucasus and in other parts of the Union of Russian Soviet Republics.

Under Turkish Rule. – In 1911 the Young Turk administration had produced noticeable improvement in the conditions of Armenian life in the Ottoman Empire. Although there were occasional disorders and acts of injustice, the general security prevailing in the vilayets bestowed economic and social benefits on the people. Freedom of movement and travel gave great impetus to agriculture, cattle-breeding and commerce. Tens of thousands of Armenian exiles had returned home and recovered their lands and properties. Military service by Armenian youth in the Ottoman Army and the presence of Armenian Deputies in the Chamber gave the nation a new status in the empire.

Armenians under Tsarist Rule. –As a counterpoise to the restoration of their lands to the Armenian peasants in Turkey, the Russian Imperial Duma voted a credit to enable Armenian and Tatar peasants in Transcaucasia to repurchase their lands and become independent proprietors. The comparatively impartial administration of Count Vorontsov Dashkov, the Viceroy of the Caucasus from 1905 to 1915, had given opportunities for national and economic development.

Yet at this period even the Armenian leaders of Transcaucasia looked across the frontiers to progressive Turkey as the rallying ground for the Armenian race.

“Reform Programme” of 1913. – After the overthrow of the balance of power in the Balkans by the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913, Russia, supported by Great Britain and France and reluctantly followed by the Central Powers and Italy, took the initiative in drawing up a scheme of “reforms” for the Armenian vilayets, Trebizond being added to the other six vilayets defined as Armenian in the Treaty of Berlin, 1878. No Armenian then asked for reforms. Fearing, however, that the European negotiations might compromise his people, the Catholicos of Ejmiadzin persuaded Boghos Nubar Pasha to visit Petrograd in May 1913 as his delegate.

The diplomatic representatives of six European Powers met on the Bosphorus in the summer of 1913 to discuss the Russian draft. A scheme emerged in the autumn, according to which the seven vilayets of Erzerum, Van, Bitlis, Diarbekir, Trebizond, Kharput and Sivas were to be divided into two sectors over each of which a European inspector was to supervise the carrying out of the reforms.

Between the watersheds of the Euphrates and the Kura, about 3,000,000 Armenians constituted a strong and healthy nationality.

Armenians in the World War. – When the Turks mobilized in Aug. 1914, Armenian recruits responded to the call. The Armenian ecclesiastical authorities and the party leaders assured the Turks of their loyalty, but could not vouch for their compatriots in Transcaucasia. The declaration of war between the Allied Powers and Turkey (Nov. 1914) immediately turned the thickly populated Armenian-Kurdish frontier districts into a battlefield. The harshness of Turkish requisitions and ill-treatment of Armenian troops in the Turkish Army increased the number of deserters and caused racial friction. Among the Russian forces operating on the Caucasian front were various volunteer units, as well as some Armenian regiments consisting mostly of Armenians from Russia but including Armenian political refugees from Turkey encouraged by the repeated declarations of Allied war aims.

The successful defense of the Armenians in Van strengthened Turkish suspicions. Armenian peasants in the war area were forcibly driven from their homes in April 1915 and many of them were murdered. Simultaneously with one of the worst defeats of Tsarist Russia in Galicia and the utter failure of the British naval attack on the Dardanelles, the three Entente Powers issued in the third week of May a joint threat to the Turkish Govt. to the effect that they would hold them individually and severally responsible for any further Armenian "atrocities". The Turks translated this official threat into the language they were accustomed to understand by past experiences and drew their own conclusion therefrom.

The Committee of Union and Progress, which had been wavering in April and May in their Armenian program, resolved at the end of May on the murder, deportation, and spoliation of the entire Armenian people in Turkey (see J. Lepsius, *Deutschland und Armenien*, 1919, page 19).

Telegraphic instructions were issued by the Turkish Govt. to provincial authorities to "evacuate" all Armenians from the military zones, where they represented "danger" to Turkish defense and deport them to the deserts of Mesopotamia and Syria. This scheme was carried out in June–July 1915, with unparalleled barbarity; men, women and children were murdered indiscriminately, and the remainder driven to the desert to fend for themselves. This "evacuation" of the Armenians produced a fundamental change in the attitude of Entente Powers toward the Armenian question. The Grand Duke

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Nicholas, who had replaced the former Viceroy, occupied Erzerum, Trebizond and the upper valleys of Euphrates and Tigris. This achievement enabled the Grand Duke to proclaim in the summer of 1916 "the liberation of Armenia from the Turkish yoke." He tried, however, to bar the native surviving Armenians from returning to settle in the occupied region, because Tsarist Russia had planned to plant Cossack settlements in the Araxes and Euphrates valleys on Armenian Kurdish fertile lands.

This "Euphrates Cossack" idea had its repercussion in Great Britain. In spite of the secret treaties concluded by the Allied Powers for the partition of Turkey, the British Prime Minister declared in his Guildhall speech in 1916 "that H. M. Govt. was resolved to secure the liberation of this ancient (Armenian) people".

Soviet Russia and Armenia. – The Russian Revolution of 1917 eventually resulted in the secession of Transcaucasia from Russia after the dispersal of the Russian armies. On his accession to power, Lenin proclaimed the unity of Armenian lands and sent Shahumian to organize it. By the Brest-Litovsk Treaty of March 1918, however, Soviet Russia was compelled to cede the Batum, Kars and Ardahan districts to Turkey. The Federated Republic of Georgians, Armenians, and Tatars, which was formed in consequence of the Bolshevik Revolution, attempted to resist the Turkish advance. But misunderstanding broke out among the three peoples; and the Turks occupied the three ceded districts.

After the Armistice the victorious Allied Powers again promised to reconstitute Armenian nationality. Some efforts were made to concentrate the surviving Armenians in Turkey in Cilicia, then occupied by British troops, presumably with the idea of making that area the home of the Ottoman Armenians, whereas in Transcaucasia the British military authorities in occupation were indifferent to Armenian legitimate rights. A small war between Georgia and Armenia was stopped by them.

Armenian Delegates at the Paris Conferences. – At the Peace Conference in Paris the Armenian Delegation was induced to demand a "great Armenia" extending from sea to sea. President Wilson was being urged to accept a mandate for this "great Armenia." Consequently, the two Armenian delegates, Boghos Nubar Pasha and Mr. Aharonian, presented a memorandum to the Supreme Council in Feb. 1919. The demand was conditional on the acceptance of a mandate by the United States, which the American Senate did not want. While the negotiations for peace with Turkey were dragging on, the Armenian delegates

concluded an Agreement with Sherif Pasha, the Kurdish delegate to the Peace Conference, in Oct. 1919. In the Conference held in London in March 1920, the Armenian delegates again pleaded their case. In April at the San Remo Conference the Supreme Council offered the mandate for Armenia to the League of Nations. The arrangements made with regard to oil at San Remo, however, hastened the reappearance of Russia at Baku.

This approach of Soviet Russia had its immediate effect in Armenia and Georgia, both of which negotiated peace treaties with her in May. The Armenian delegates in Moscow were offered assistance if the Armenian Govt. allowed the transport of Russian troops over the railway line of Alexandropol-Kars-Erzurum to go to the rescue of the Turks, who, hard pressed by the Greeks in the west, were willing to make any concession. The Armenian Govt., after consultation with the British representatives, rejected the Russian offer. In the summer of 1920, the Turkish Nationalist Govt. at Angora repeatedly invited Erivan to negotiate a separate peace, but the delegate of the Armenian Republic signed the Treaty of Sevres on Aug. 10, which provided a *de jure* recognition of the independent Armenian state.

Two months after the signature of the Treaty of Sèvres the Turks attacked Armenia. Abandoned by the Allied Powers and badly equipped, the Armenian Army put up little resistance to the Turks, who by the end of Nov. had occupied Kars and Alexandropol. After the Armenian Govt. had signed a treaty of peace, the troops of Soviet Russia led by Armenian Bolsheviks rushed to Erivan, and by an open telegram invited the Turks instantly to stop the operation.

S.S. Republic of Armenia. – A Soviet Armenian Govt. was established in Erivan in Dec. 1920 amid circumstances of famine and disruptions. Since that time the Armenian Communist party, has been governing the country. With the financial support of Soviet Russia and the Federated republics of Georgia and Azerbaijan, the Armenian Soviet Govt. established peace and a measure of prosperity. Barren land and marshes were reclaimed by a scientific system of irrigation, and considerable encouragement was given to cotton and tobacco growing. Copper mines at Allahverdi and Ghatar were in process of exploitation, and schemes of generating electric power were in progress.

Armenians Abroad. – The position of Armenians of Turkey stands to-day as follows: there are about 100,000 Armenians in Constantinople. When the French evacuated Cilicia in 1921, about 80000 Armenians migrated from that district to

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Syria under deplorable circumstances. There they still remain, insecure and helpless. The Greek rout at Smyrna in 1922 drove about 100,000 Armenians to Greece and the Balkans. There are large or small communities of Armenians in the United States of America, Persia, France, Egypt and smaller groups in various European and Asiatic countries.

Nansen Settlement Scheme. – After five years of discussion, the League of Nations at last sent a commission in 1925 to Armenia headed by Dr. Nansen to report upon the possibilities of settling refugees within the frontier of the republic. Dr. Nansen recommended a loan of 900.000 pounds to the Armenian Govt. for this purpose, and the Council of the League has set up a commission to arrange the loan.

(A.S.)

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