

# The Crisis for Armenia

**N**OW that Armenia has reached what looks like her final crisis, wherein is contained the decision whether she shall continue to exist as a separate and independent state, it is interesting to observe exactly what the Armenians have done since they became "free." It is almost the first time, possibly, that anyone has ever written of the Armenians as a state, and not as martyrs. This article has positively nothing to say about atrocities and therefore should be worth reading.

Just at present Armenia is facing some angry Turks on one front, some cynical Bolsheviks on another front, some uninterested British on another front and some extremely neutral and fearful Georgians on another front.

The reason the Turks are angry is because a good slice of Armenia was lately Turkey and because they have lost so much elsewhere that they are inclined to recover from the weakest enemy, which is Armenia.

The reason the Bolsheviks are cynical is because they don't believe in nationality, and think the state of Armenia is a thin joke which shortly will evaporate to the wealth and prosperity of those who may happen to be at hand.

The reason the British are uninterested is because British money is in Baku, the famous oil city, which the British selected for the capital of Azerbaijan; and the state of Azerbaijan is so very sick that the British officer in command cannot afford to sit by any other sick bed at all.

And the reason the Georgians are extremely neutral and very fearful is simply because there is no one particularly interested in their progress, although several are mildly interested in their dissolution.

The Armenian Republic was established in May, 1918. The treaty of peace the European

Allies later concluded with the Turks gave the Armenians 8,000 square kilometers, including Lake Seven. If you want to get Armenia on the map, look for Mt. Ararat; Mt. Ararat was the center of ancient Armenia and was the landmark where the Russian, Persian and Turkish divisions of Armenia met in 1914.

The 8,000 square kilometers given the Armenians did not comprise the equal in resources of any single state in the American union. It was largely in ruins, and its desolated country had been swept bare of cattle and grain. During two years the Armenians gradually added to this domain, until in May, 1920, it included 52,000 square kilometers and plans were on foot for another 8,000 or 10,000 square kilometers.

And at this point the Turkish Nationalists became interested. It is, however, a fact that ever since they declared their independence two and a half years ago the Armenians have been fighting. A former Armenian president has put it neatly enough: "There are times when guns and rifles go off by themselves." And the Armenian guns went off, simply because the Armenians found themselves surrounded by Turks, Tatars, Kurds, Georgians and a few other excited groups, all having ambitions, more or less defined. So the Armenians fought in May, 1918, and have been fighting since and are fighting yet, the rifles continuing to go off.

They first fought the Georgians, and it was following this (in which they were successful) that the Armenians stepped out a bit in the general direction of the Bosphorus and quietly absorbed the formerly Turkish cities, Kars and Aleksandropol. Here there is fighting now. They fought with the Tatars (always allies of the Turks) to conquer Shusha, an ancient Armenian province possessing extremely rich soil, and occupied it, to the utter and continuous discontent of the Tatar state of Azerbaijan. However, the Tatars know that the Armenians will only be permitted to push them just so far, because of British interests in Baku. Of course Britain fought the Turks and the Tatars. But it's a funny world.

Armenia, however, has made far more progress than is generally realized. Armenia now talks of Armenia Irredenta, just as Italy used to talk of Italy Irredenta when they wanted to recover the Austrian Tyrol. As Italy, as Serbia, as Greece, as Poland, as Lithuania, so now is Armenia, ambitious and eager to restore the full measure of ancient glory. Her government, to date, has been fairly harmonious. She has had three presidents, who succeeded each other

as events made it advisable. The first was Johannes Kachatzouni, who gave three sons to the battlefield, and was the outstanding figure of the declaration of independence. Mr. Kachatzouni resigned to come to America to stir up Armenians in the United States. Alexander Khatisian, who coined the happy phrase

quoted earlier in this article, succeeded him. Khatisian is a remarkable man; he was mayor of Tiflis when the czar ruled in Russia; Tiflis then was known as the capital of Caucasus, and a very prosperous place. Khatisian has made an enviable record since he led the Armenians astutely through their earliest and darkest hours of liberty. Mr. Khatisian resigned to tour Europe in the interests of the Armenian Republic, and has been succeeded by Dr. Ohanjanian. He was chosen as especially fitted to conclude a treaty with Soviet Russia, which he did; although there are confessed doubts as to how seriously the Bolsheviks regard the agreement. They are still camped on the frontier.

A definite program of reconstruction has been launched, even while fighting continues. The outstanding feature of this side of the work is an educational system, which so far includes one university and 758 schools. The chief difficulty seems to be the lack of funds, but as the Armenians plead for a loan chiefly on the ground of army needs there has been some reluctance, in Allied centers, in view of the generally speculative conditions of the Caucasus, to respond. The two ex-presidents are canvassing the Armenian colonies all over the world to raise this loan.

If Armenia is a long way from being a strong and stable state, there are not wanting signs of healthy effort and a sound direction on the part of her leaders. At

least, she looms up definitely, when you look close enough, and is actually creating the elements of good government.

This is sufficient to warrant general interest. And, as promised, this is all argued without any reference to atrocities.



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All England is now talking about Jessie Stephens, a pretty twenty-seven-year-old representative of the working classes, who at present dims in political interest the noted Lady Astor whose election to Parliament caused so much discussion particularly in this country because of her American birth. Miss Stephens warns men to beware, for she is boldly out and feels confident of being elected to Parliament at the General Election. She is considered one of the best organizers in England, and a fearless and capable speaker. She toiled for years at selling newspapers, as a domestic servant, a grocery clerk, a truck driver and many other menial tasks. At present Miss Stephens is a labor councillor of the borough of Bermondsey.

## It Has No Capital, Just a Stamp

**T**HERE is a new republic in Europe; it has no capital—in fact, has no territory at all; it has, therefore, no government, no army, no navy, no police, no taxes, and no citizens to pay them.

It has, however, a postage stamp.

This is the Republic of Alsace-Lorraine. It exists in the persons of a committee of three: Count Rapp, Rene C. Ley and H. Muth.

Messrs. Rapp, Ley and Muth started this business of a republic before the French occupation. So they were forced to cut and run at the armistice. They found a refuge in Switzerland, whence they directed two lengthy appeals to President Wilson, protesting against bestowing Alsace-Lorraine on France, and neither of these he acknowledged. M. Millerand, commissary general for the French Republic in Alsace-Lorraine, heard all about it and Messrs. Rapp, Ley and Muth were indicted, tried (in their absence) and sentenced to deportation for life.

The three republicans then lodged a formal complaint with the secretary-general of the League of Nations, Sir James Eric Drummond, suggesting that the League reverse the decree of the Peace Conference. They then (in July, 1919) placed the whole matter before Gustav Ador, president of the Federated Council of Switzerland. The only report of the result of this conference is by Count Rapp who quotes M. Ador as being extremely sympathetic while regretting very much that Switzerland could not complicate her position in foreign affairs by espousing it. The members of the Swiss foreign department also agreed that it was too bad the Federated Council of Switzerland would have to forego all intervention in so extremely difficult a question.

After flitting from Berne to Basle, and from Basle to Berne, the committee of three landed in Baden-Baden, which has been their headquarters. Here they are printing and distributing broadcast statements of their case; here, also, they designed a very pretty postage stamp which, however, for the present, they put inside their mail, using the ordinary stamps of existing predatory states for the outside.

Now, don't run away with a wrong idea. It is true the committee feels kindly toward Germany; but union with Germany is not their objective. They have good historic ground for their argument, and they have a crowning argument in the fatal weakness of the Versailles Treaty—the failure to provide a plebiscite in Alsace-Lorraine which, almost certainly, would have given the territory to France, and at the same time, would have removed the fluent cry now raised of annexation.

If the republic of three men could have its way it would unite with Switzerland, but the Swiss are too wise to consider or encourage such an ambition. Failing that, they want independence, even if as a French protectorate; with their own ministry, parliament, militia and so forth.

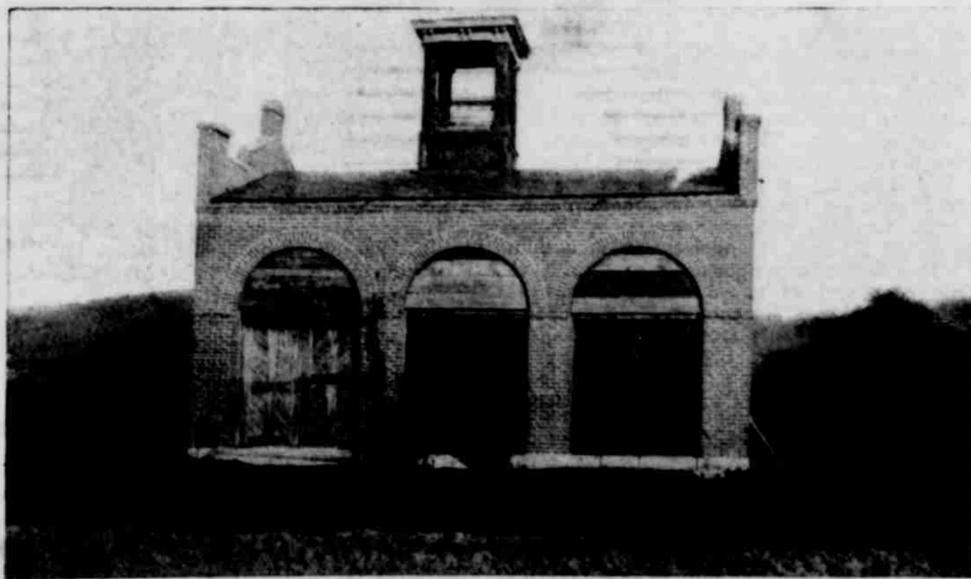
The committee of three claims to represent "Young Alsace." Some of its arguments are fatuous but they are not without good logic, and when that logic is founded on self-determination, it gains strength.

Of course the Republic is doomed to confine itself to the house in Baden-Baden.

But it is an interesting situation. And the postage stamp is easily the prettiest design in all Europe.



Stamp is nation's sole claim to recognition.



"John Brown's Fort" at Harper's Ferry, W. Va., is here shown in use as a fertilizer and farm implement storehouse. It has been torn down since this photograph was taken and removed to the campus of Storer College, which is a school for colored students, just above Harper's Ferry. In this building, John Brown the noted Abolitionist leader and a score of whites and Negroes fortified themselves. After an all-day fight Brown and 6 men were captured and subsequently executed. The "fort" itself stood where the Harper's Ferry railroad station now stands until it was torn down, sent to Chicago and there erected again as an exhibit for the World's Fair in 1893. The building was used merely as a storehouse for a number of years. Recently Storer College secured possession and now uses it as a museum.