

THE STORY OF THE DARDANELLES

March 16, 1920, a date preceding that of the Treaty of Sevres. The dispatches from Angora state that the Government has proclaimed the death penalty against the Turkish officials who signed the Treaty of Sevres.

While Mustafa Kemal, the President of the Angora Assembly, has been unofficially reported on several occasions as expressing a willingness to assent to the termination of Turkish control of the commerce of the Straits, the entire question of the attitude of the

By O. F. AUSTIN
Statistician, The National City Bank of New York

The problem of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus has been an issue among the nations of the world since before the discovery of America. In 1493, thirty-nine years before Columbus made his first voyage across the Atlantic, the Turks, who had long held the eastern shores of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus, obtained control of their western frontage by the capture of Constantinople and adjacent areas and thus asserted the right to control the navigation of that waterway in view of the fact that its entire length from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean fell within Turkish territory. When a few years later they extended their territorial control in Europe to include the entire area fronting upon the Black Sea, the Turks calmly informed all commercial and diplomatic inquirers that the Black Sea was a "chaste and pure virgin" inaccessible to commercial, military

fronting upon this vast body of water, the Black Sea, which of itself is double the size of all of the Great Lakes of the United States in combination, began to pass from Turkish hands to that of other nations, the protests against the control commercially, as well as otherwise, of that area itself, and of the only waterway by which it could be connected with the oceans, grew more numerous and especially so as the comparatively level land area through which the Straits passed offered the easiest route of access between the European countries and the Asiatic Continent, of which Europe is a mere peninsula.

include that comparatively narrow strait known as the "Dardanelles," 42 miles in length and from 1 to 5 miles in width, extending in a northeasterly direction from that arm of the Mediterranean known as the Aegean Sea to the "Sea of Marmora" about 160 miles in length, which in turn is connected with the Black Sea by the narrow waterway known as the "Bosphorus," 18 miles in length and from one-half mile to 1 1/2 miles in width. The entire navigable length of this complete waterway between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, geographically known as the "Straits of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus" is thus about 220

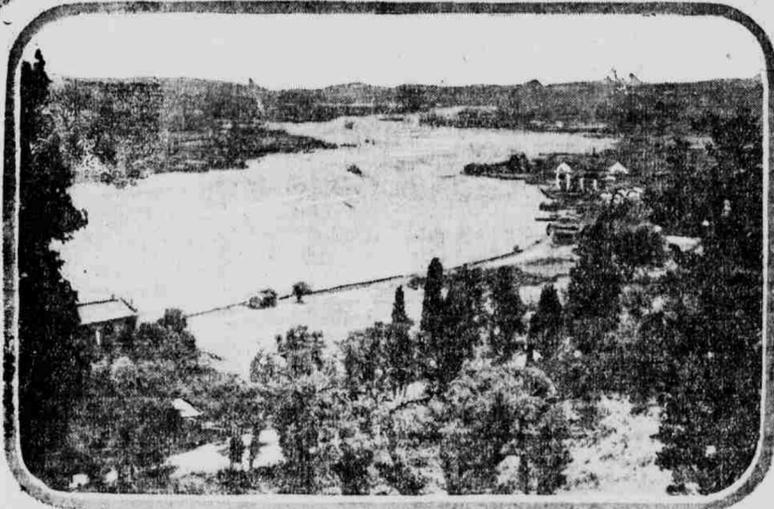
frontage by the Turkish Government.

Protests Against Turkish Control

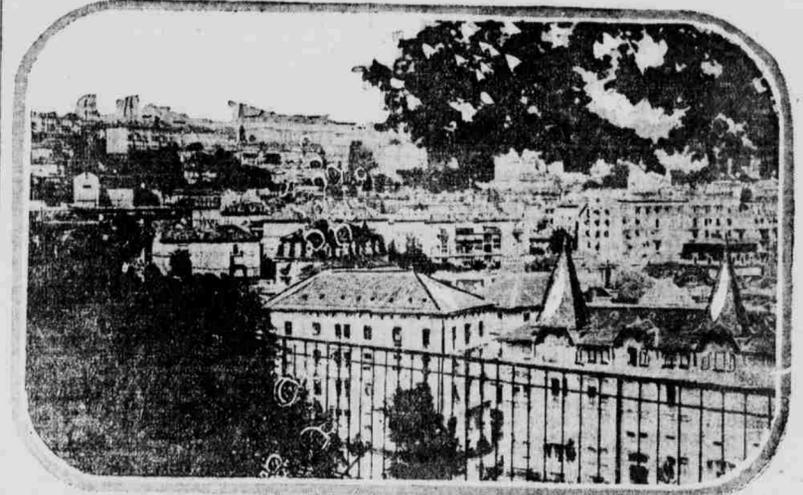
The continuous control by Turkey of this passage between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea has not been accepted without protests of European and other countries. Russia, for example, after obtaining a large frontage on the northern shore of the Black Sea became especially anxious that the sea and the straits which connected it with the Mediterranean should be thrown open to her commercial as well as military vessels or at least that she have special privileges for the movement of her great supplies of foodstuffs, mineral oils, and forest products to the waters of the Mediterranean by which they could be moved to the markets of southeastern Europe. Her wheat, meats, mineral oil, lumber, flax and other natural products were wanted by all of Europe and she wanted European manufactures in exchange. But as her territorial and commercial extension was creating commercial and political jealousies among certain of the European countries it was easy for them to form secret treaties with Turkey which would encourage her in insisting upon her claim to the control of the Black Sea and its exit, especially as the Turks were adepts in the art of diplomacy in maintaining their claim.

be suspended aggregated, as above indicated, 1,000,000 square miles, its population 100,000,000 and its normal trade prior to the recent

waterway in question over which this commission should have control in order to insure perfect freedom of commerce and including



View of the Golden Horn Looking Toward the Bosphorus.



Beautiful Lausanne Where Conference to Decide Question of Dardanelles Takes Place

Trade Privilege Treaties

It should not be assumed, however, from all this that all of the commerce of the Black Sea or of that passing through the Straits was actually carried by the Turks, a non-commercial people. The necessary trade and trade requirements of the countries fronting upon that body of water had grown so large that it demanded facilities of transportation and finance which the Turks could not themselves supply. This demand came especially from the several countries having large frontages on the Black Sea, notably, Russia, Bulgaria, Romania, and the sections of Turkey still occupying the southern frontage of that area, and later came also from the great commercial countries of western Europe which required the nat-

war more than a billion dollars a year, and of course accompanied by the necessary transportation, industrial and banking equipments, largely controlled by financial interests outside the area in question.

Treaty of Sevres

This international desire to terminate an unusual and abnormal control of world commerce by a non-commercial power, while it could not be successfully asserted by a single country, found opportunity for a joint expression upon that subject by several great commercial nations of the world when the League of Nations at the close of the World War met at the city of Sevres, France, to frame a peace treaty with Turkey. The principal participants in that con-

"every vessel of commerce or of war without distinction of flag," and the area thus outlined has been officially shown on maps of that area under the title of "Zone of the Straits." Under this treaty the Encyclopedia Britannica in its 1922 edition says:

"The Straits (Dardanelles and Bosphorus) were thrown open to all navigation in peace or war without distinction of flag, blockade of these waters was prohibited, an International Commission of the Straits was established to control the waterway, and a demilitarized Zone of the Straits created to embrace adjoining coastal territory."

Treaty Not Officially Ratified

This provision of the Sevres Treaty declaring specifically that "navigation of the Straits shall in future be open both in peace and war to every vessel of commerce or of war" was looked upon as likely to terminate the 467 years of Turkish control of that great waterway, and the provisions of the treaty for the freedom of commerce of the Straits have since been put into operation by the Commission appointed for that purpose. Recent developments, however, have made it apparent that the question as to the acceptance by the Turks of the Sevres Treaty is still an open one. The Government of the Sultan at Constantinople failed to ratify the acts of its Plenipotentiaries whose signatures were attached to the Treaty of Sevres, and the Statesman's Year-Book, an accepted authority, states in its 1922 edition that "The Treaty of Sevres although signed August 10, 1920, is not yet ratified by any of the parties."

Angora Government, which now claims to represent all of Turkey, upon this subject is one of the important factors of the approaching conference to be held at Lausanne, Switzerland, and which is to be attended by the Turkish Nationalist Foreign Minister, Ismet Pasha, and a staff of experts. Reports from Constantinople indicate that the Sultan, who does not accept the Angora decree for his abdication, has decided not to send delegates to the Lausanne conference. Recent dispatches also indicated that the Russian Soviet Government has been invited by the Allies to send delegates to Lausanne to participate in the discussion relative to the freedom of navigation in the Straits. Nothing is stated as to whether the recently organized governments on the northern frontage of the Black Sea, including Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, and the Don Republic have been invited to attend, but as the Statesman's Year Book of 1922 describes them as having close relations with the Government of Russia it is presumed that the Russian delegates at Lausanne will present their views on the question of freedom of commerce both on the Black Sea and in the Straits which connect it with the Mediterranean and the great oceans of the world.

or diplomatic adventures of foreign countries. This view was then accepted by the European na-

Against Single Nation Control

So it has happened that during the 467 years since Turkey asserted her claim of the right to control the navigation of the Straits of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, of which both frontages still lie entirely within her territory, there has been a growing desire that the products and commerce of the Black Sea area of 1,000,000 square miles, now including the homes of 100,000,000 people and an annual commerce of over \$1,000,000,000, should not be controlled by any one nation. The passageways between the other great inland seas of the world and the oceans over which commerce may pass freely have one by one been held as inviolable by the control of any one nation. The right of vessels of commerce or military service to enter the Baltic has not been questioned for many years; the entrance to the Mediterranean is open to the commerce and military vessels of all nations; the Suez Canal through which the Mediterranean is connected with the Indian Ocean is, by the Suez Canal Convention of 1888, "to be open in time of war as in time of peace to merchantmen or war vessels of all nations," and this same rule applies with slight modification to the Panama Canal. The Straits of Magellan, which connect the waters of the Atlantic and Pacific, at the southern end of South America although passing through the territory of Argentina and Chile were by the treaty of Buenos Aires in 1881 "neutralized forever and free navigation granted to the flags of all nations," while freedom of passage in the Strait of Malacca, connecting the China Sea with the Indian Ocean, does not seem to have been called in question. Even certain great navigable rivers which serve as carriers of commerce for several nations whose territory they touch have been subjected to international control as to freedom of navigation through the services of commissions appointed by the respective states through which they flow or which they touch. Among the rivers on which

miles, and its width ranges from one-half mile to 1 1/2 miles in the Bosphorus and from 1 to 5 miles in the Dardanelles, while the width in the Sea of Marmora is about 45 miles. The eastern frontage of this entire waterway had long been held by the Turks and when in 1453 they obtained control of its



Map Showing the Straits of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus and the International Zone, Established by the Treaty of Sevres.

western frontage through the capture of Constantinople and adjacent territory they assumed the right to reserve for their own ships of commerce or of the military service the exclusive privilege of navigation upon its waters over the entire length from the Mediterranean to the Black Sea, or to at

least establish rules under which the vessels of other nations might utilize its waters, and also those of the Black Sea, of which they were the only outlet and which subsequently became a "Turkish lake" through the occupancy of its en-

terence included on the one hand Great Britain, France, Italy, Spain and certain other of the members of the League of Nations, and on the other hand, the Imperial Ottoman Government (the Government of the Sultan) represented by certain officials appointed for that service and designated by the treaty itself as "Plenipotentiaries." The result of that conference of the victorious allies on the one hand, and the form of treaty which they handed to the Turkish representatives on the other, was the famous "Treaty of Sevres," laid before the representatives of the Turkish Government on August 10, 1920, and signed under protest by them. Its chief feature as relates to the subjects above discussed was as follows:

Article 37: The navigation of the Straits, including the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmora and Bosphorus, shall in future be open, both in peace and war, to every vessel of commerce or of war and to military and commercial aircraft, without distinction of flag. These waters shall not be subject to blockade, nor shall any belligerent or other be exercised nor any act of hostility be committed within them, unless in pursuance of a decision of the Council of the League of Nations.

Article 38: The Turkish Government recognizes that it is necessary to take further measures to ensure the freedom of navigation provided for in Article 37, and accordingly delegates, so far as it is concerned, to a Commission to be called the "Commission of the Straits," the control of the waters specified in Article 37.

Article 39: The authority of the Commission will extend to all the waters between the Mediterranean mouth of the Dardanelles and the Black Sea mouth of the Bosphorus, and to the waters within three miles of each of these mouths.

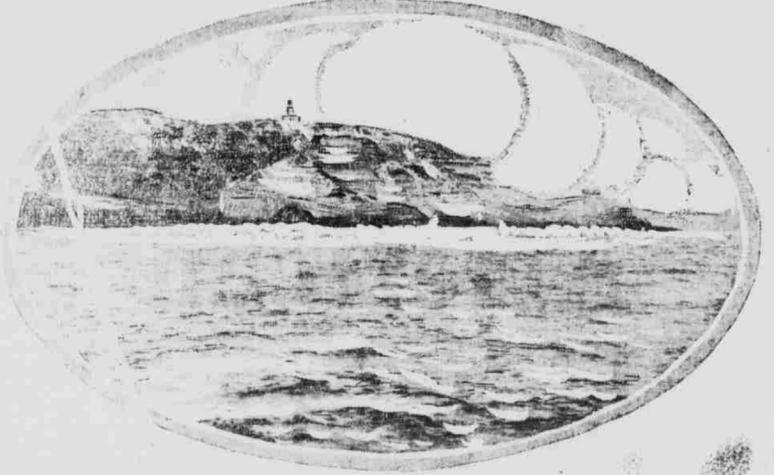
Article 40: The Commission shall be composed of representatives appointed respectively by the United States of America (if and when that Government is willing to participate), the British Empire, France, Italy, Japan, Russia (if and when Russia becomes a member of the League of Nations), Greece, Romania, and Bulgaria and Turkey (if and when the two latter States become members of the League of Nations).

The treaty further outlined the area on either side of the great



Kemal Pasha, Leader of the Turk Nationalists, Wore Reproduction of Treaty of Sevres at Conference at Lausanne Necessary

tions without serious protest, even though it included control of a waterway connecting the two greatest seas of the world, the Mediterranean and the Black, and placed under the absolute control of a non-commercial nation the



The Dardanelles, Showing One of the Forts Constructed For Its Protection

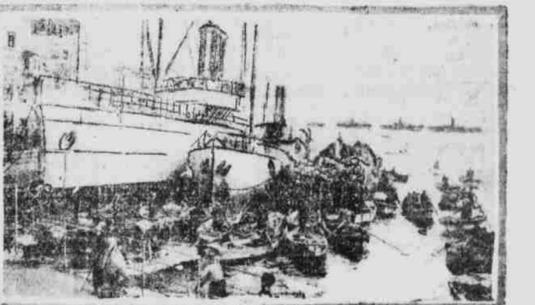
navigation, commerce and finance of an inland body of water representing a drainage area of 1,000,000 square miles of habitable lands, with enormous industrial and commercial possibilities.

Later, when parts of the area

navigation is so controlled are the Danube, the Rhine, and the Scheldt.

220 Miles of Waterway

The "Straits of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus," as is well known,



Harbor of Constantinople

the Turkish State to include all Turkish territory; also declaring void all treaties of the Constantinople Administration made since

in control of the "Zone of the Straits" despite the demands of the Angora Government for control of the area in question.