

air tainted with every imaginable deed of crime and shame. *That such things should be done once is a damning disgrace to the portion of our race which did them, that a door should be left open for their ever-so-barely possible repetition would spread that shame over the whole.*<sup>1</sup> Better, we may justly tell the Sultan, almost any inconvenience, difficulty, or loss associated with Bulgaria,

'Than thou reseated in thy place of light,  
The mockery of thy people and their bane.'

"We may ransack the annals of the world; but I know not what research can furnish us with so portentous an example of the fiendish misuse of the powers established by God 'for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the encouragement of them that do well.' No government ever has so sinned; none has so proved itself incorrigible in sin, or, which is the same, so impotent for reformation. If it be allowable that the executive power of Turkey should renew, at this great crisis, by permission or authority of Europe, the charter of its existence in Bulgaria, then there is not on record, since the beginnings of political society, a protest that man has lodged against intolerable misgovernment, or a stroke he has dealt at loathsome tyranny, that ought not henceforth forward to be branded as a crime."

<sup>1</sup> And yet England by the Cyprus Convention pledged all her resources to *keep the door open*, and the repetition thus made possible has occurred. Author.

## CHAPTER X.

### WHO ARE THE ARMENIANS?

THAT a field so rich in possibilities for the student of history, ethnology, or language as Armenia and Kurdistan should have remained as yet so little explored, is due, no doubt, to three causes<sup>1</sup>: first, the apparent loss of significance of the Armenian nation, which now, like Poland, seems but a stranded wreck in the stream of history; second, to her geographical isolation and the danger and hardship of travel in that region<sup>2</sup>; third, to the linguistic obstacles to be overcome.

So little clear and accurate information about the Armenians is readily accessible that the following brief outline is offered in the hope of meeting this want at the present time.

HISTORY—The Armenian race belongs to the

<sup>1</sup> "Kurdistan abounds in antiquities of the most varied and interesting character. . . . It may indeed be asserted that there is no region of the East at the present day which deserves a more careful scrutiny and promises a richer harvest to the antiquarian explorer than the lands inhabited by the Kurds from Erzeroum to Kirmanshahan."—Major-General H. C. Rawlinson, *Encyc. Britannica*, article on "Kurdistan."

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Isabella Bird Bishop, *Journeys in Persia and Kurdistan*, 2 vols. New York: Putnam's, 1891. London: John Murray.



Japhetic branch of the human family, falling under the same category as the inhabitants of India and Persia, who form the Aryans of Asia. The Armenian language proves this by its affinity with the Indo-Germanic tongues. Their physiognomy and physical constitution connect them with the best types of Caucasian stock. Their manners and customs, as well as their religious beliefs, in heathenism, were similar to those of the Assyrians and Chaldeans, of the Medes and Persians, and, still later, of the Parthians.

These people call themselves Haik, after Haig, the most celebrated of their ancient kings, and their land Haiasdan. Their national legends, fortified in their eyes by the Bible, make Haig descend from Ashkenaz or Togarmah, children of Gomer, a patriarch of the line of Japhet.<sup>1</sup> Foreigners applied to them the name Armenians, derived from King Aram, said to be a descendant of Haig, who made great conquests.<sup>2</sup>

The earliest biblical mention of this land is the statement that the ark "rested upon the mountains of Ararat," a term which evidently refers to a district rather than a peak.<sup>3</sup> Another scriptural allusion is in connection with Sennacherib, whose parricidal sons are said to have escaped, 681 B. C., "into the land of Armenia."<sup>4</sup> Ezekiel also refers to Armenia under the name Togarmah, as furnishing Tyre with

<sup>1</sup> Gen. x., 2, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Moses of Khorene, *History*, Bk. i., chap. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Gen. viii., 4.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. Ararat, 2 Kings xix., 37; Isa. xxxvii., 38.

horses and mules, a product for which it is still noted.<sup>1</sup> Tigranes I. is said to have been an ally of Cyrus the Great in overthrowing the Babylonians, and thus in liberating the Jews after their seventy years' captivity, 538 B. C. A foreshadowing of this event is probably found in the prophet Jeremiah: "Call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz, . . . to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant."<sup>2</sup>

In the famous inscriptions of the Achemenidæ, at Persepolis and at Behistun, the name Armenia is found in various forms, and the Armenian tributaries march after the Cappadocians to render homage to the great king.<sup>3</sup>

Herodotus mentions the absorption of the Armenian Empire in that of Darius, 514 B. C., and a tribute of four hundred talents exacted.<sup>4</sup>

Xenophon's account of the retreat of the ten thousand through this mountainous region, in mid-winter, and constantly harassed by enemies, is valuable, not only as a tribute to the splendid discipline and spirit of the Greeks, but for the light which it throws upon the ancient Armenians and Kurds, whose houses, domestic habits, and employments are the same in many respects even at the present day.<sup>5</sup>

Armenia was included in the conquests of Alexander, and afterwards submitted to the Seleucidæ of

<sup>1</sup> Ezek. xxvii., 14; also xxxviii., 6.

<sup>2</sup> Jer. li., 27-29; also l., 9, 41, 42.

<sup>3</sup> Christian Lassen, *Die altpersischen Keil-Inschriften von Persepolis*, Bonn, 1836, pp. 86, 87.

<sup>4</sup> *History*, Bk. iii., chap. 93.

<sup>5</sup> *Anabasis*, Bk. iv.



Syria. In 190 B. C., when Antiochus the Great was defeated by Scipio, Armenia revolted under Artaxias, who gave refuge to the exiled Hannibal. About 150 B. C., the great Parthian king, Mithridates I., established his brother Valarsaces in Armenia. The most celebrated king of this branch of the Arsacid family was Tigranes II., who, while aiding Mithridates of Pontus, was defeated by Pompey. After this, Tacitus says that the Armenians were almost always at war; with the Romans through hatred, and with the Parthians through jealousy.<sup>1</sup> Princes of this line continued to rule, however, until the Arsacidæ were driven from the Persian throne by the Sassanid Ardashir. Though frequently conquered by the kings of that dynasty, Armenia was enabled as often to re-assert her freedom by the help of Roman arms.

When Tiridates embraced Christianity, 276 A. D., the struggle became embittered by the introduction of a religious element, for the Persians were bigoted Zoroastrians. This condition reached a climax when the country was divided between the Romans and Persians, under Theodosius the Great, 390 A. D.

After the fall of the Sassanidæ, in the seventh century, Armenia was divided between the Greek Empire and the Saracens; but from 859 to 1045 it was again ruled by a native dynasty of vigorous princes, the Pagratidæ. This was brought to a close by the suspicious and short-sighted policy of the Byzantine emperors, one of whom, Constantine IX., at last overthrew the Armenian kingdom, thereby laying

<sup>1</sup> *Annales*, Bk. ii., ch. 56.



AN ARMENIAN TOMBSTONE OF A. D. 934.  
Evidence of a high state of art.



open the whole eastern frontier to the invasion of the Seljouk Turks, who shortly before had begun their attacks, and who might have been successfully resisted by these hardy mountaineers. The result was fatal, both to Armenia, which was overrun, and to the Greek Empire; for by the battle of Manzikert, 1071 A. D., when Romanus IV. was defeated and made prisoner by Alp Arslan, the whole of Asia Minor was left at the mercy of the Seljouks.<sup>1</sup>

Rupen, a relative of the last Pagratid sovereign, escaped into Cilicia, and established the Rupenian dynasty, which was not extinguished until the death of Leon VI., 1393, an exile in Paris, and the last of the Armenian kings. The Rupenians had entered into alliance with the Crusaders. They welcomed the Mongolian hordes under Genghis Khan, early in the thirteenth century, and suffered the vengeance of the Mamelukes, 1375.

A graphic account of the cruelties of Timour the Tartar, who devastated Armenia at the close of the fourteenth century, has been left us by Thomas of Medzop. The last great calamity which fell upon the mother country happened in 1605, when Shah Abbas forcibly transplanted twelve thousand families to Ispahan in Persia.

THE ARMENIAN CHURCH.—It is the oldest of all national churches. Their legends claim that our Lord corresponded with King Abgarus of Edessa or Ur, and that the apostles Thaddæus and Bartholomew preached the Gospel to them. But the historical founder of the Armenian church was St. Gregory

<sup>1</sup> Tozer, *The Church and the Eastern Empire*, pp. 22, 86.

“The Illuminator,”<sup>1</sup> an Arsarcid prince, related to King Tiridates (Dertad), who was consecrated Bishop of Armenia, at Cæsarea, in 302 A. D. The Armenian church is Episcopal in polity, and closely resembles the Greek in outward forms.

Misled by imperfect reports of the Council of Chalcedon, 451, which they were not able to attend on account of Persian persecutions, the Armenian bishops annulled its decrees in 536, thus gaining the credit of being Eutychians, which led to their gradual separation from the orthodox church, much to the satisfaction of the Persian ruler Chosroes. This estrangement was doubtless political as much as doctrinal, on account of the attempts at ecclesiastical supremacy by the churches of Constantinople and Rome. As far as her ecclesiastical writers are concerned, and her beautiful liturgy, the Armenian church is in general orthodox. Her heresy, in common with that of the rest of Christendom, is one of life rather than of doctrine. A schism in the Armenian church was brought about in the sixteenth century by Jesuit missionaries, who succeeded in detaching the community of Catholic Armenians from the mother church, of which the Catholicos at Etchmiadzin is recognized as the supreme head.

All Armenians—except perhaps the Catholic, whose allegiance has been transferred of course to Rome—still cherish a passionate attachment for the venerable church of their ancestors, to which they owe their identity as a people after the terrible vicis-

<sup>1</sup> Krikor “Loosavoritch,” from which title the Armenian Gregorian church calls itself Loosavortchagan.

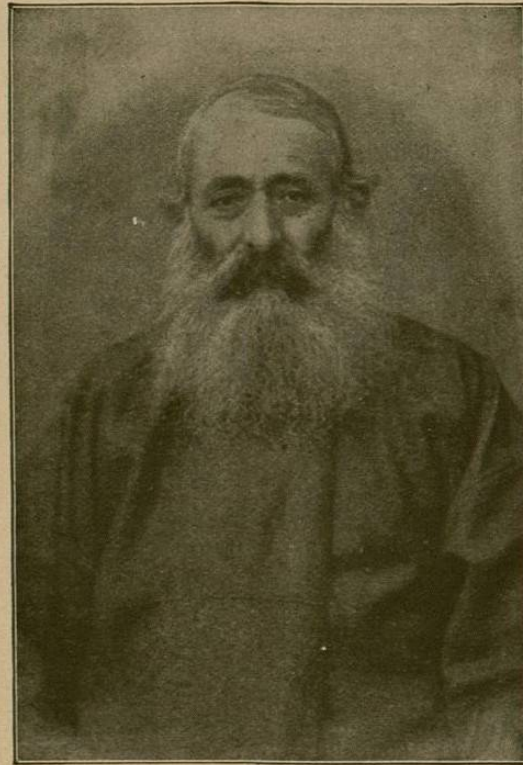


situdes of so many centuries. It is true that Armenians who have come under European influence, especially French, have to some extent become sceptical and indifferent to religion. But even such men still profess at least an outward loyalty, as a matter of sentiment, and because they believe the formal preservation of the Armenian church to be the condition of national union in the future as it has been in the past. It is, indeed, almost a political necessity, as the Ottoman Empire is now constituted.

It is to be hoped that the time will come when the children of the Armenian church of every shade will no longer look upon her as a mother frail and failing, yet to be treated with respect while she lasts; nor as a mother ignorant and bigoted beyond hope of reform; still less, as one heretical and to be abandoned for Rome. Rather, let all her sons rally around her and help her to fulfil her true spiritual mission. She will then renew her youth and again take her honored place in the front ranks of "the Church of the living God, which is the pillar and ground of the truth."

Would that the spirit of the grand and broad-minded man who is now the Catholicos at Etchmiadzin, His Holiness, Mugerditch Khrimian, might pervade the whole body of which he is the honored and beloved head. Less than a year ago, the author had the privilege of a long private interview with this venerable ecclesiastic, whose hand he kissed in oriental fashion, with respect for the man and for himself. His last words to me, found upon the title-page, were "*Husahadelu chenk*," meaning, "We must not despair"—a good motto for us all.

That the grand old church of "The Illuminator" should somewhat lose its hold on the mind and conscience of the rising generation at this stage of super-



THE CATHOLICOS OF ETCHMIADZIN, IN THE CAUCASUS.  
Religious head of the Armenian Church.

ficial enlightenment is not strange. Her real merits are concealed, unfortunately, under a growth of superstition and ignorance which even the clergy admit,



but lack the courage and ability to remove. These abuses, however, are not due to any demoralization of the Armenian race itself, but to its isolation, and to the repeated and terrible devastations that have checked its growth and reduced it to a condition of extreme poverty and helplessness.

No greater service could be rendered to the Armenian people than aid and encouragement in establishing institutions for the education of the clergy, who under present circumstances are their natural leaders. The twentieth century will bring, we hope, better political privileges. But unless, in the meantime, the ancient church has maintained her hold on the conscience of the rising generation, she is in danger of sinking into the position of the church in France.

By nature the Armenians are deeply religious, as their whole literature and history show. It has been a religion of the heart, not of the head. Its evidence is not to be found in metaphysical discussions and hair-splitting theology as in the case of the Greeks, but in a brave and simple record written with the tears of saints and illuminated with the blood of martyrs.

The seeds of a thorough and far-reaching reformation have been carefully sown and are already bearing fruit. The prospect of reform is brightened by three facts: first, the Armenian church is essentially democratic, and is not in bondage to any "infallible" human authority; second, her errors of doctrine and practice are not fundamental, and, having never been sanctioned by councils, but simply by custom and

tradition, can in due time be discarded; third, she has always acknowledged the supreme authority of



THE SUBORDINATE CATHOLICOS OF AGHTAMAR, A TOOL OF THE TURKS.

Wearing the Sultan's highest decorations for services rendered.

the Bible, which is no longer a sealed book, having been translated into the modern tongue by American missionaries, very widely scattered, and at last gladly



received by all classes. The demand for progress and reform is by no means confined to the so-called "evangelical" element, but is making itself heard even in the pulpits of the old church and in the secular press.

The Armenians, very numerous in ancient times, now number only about 4,000,000, of whom 2,500,000 are under the Sultan, 1,200,000 in Russia, 150,000 in Persia, and the rest widely scattered in many lands, but everywhere distinguished for their peaceable and enterprising character. They are the leading bankers, merchants, and skilled artisans of Turkey, and extensively engage in the various trades, manufactures, and agriculture as well. They love their native home and are yet destined to play an important part in the moral and material regeneration of western Asia.

The following estimate is from an experienced and discriminating authority, who is also a member of the Church of England:

"I have confessed already to a prejudice against the Armenians, but it is not possible to deny that they are the most capable, energetic, enterprising, and pushing race in Western Asia, physically superior, and intellectually acute, and *above all they are a race which can be raised in all respects to our own level, neither religion, color, customs, nor inferiority in intellect or force constituting any barrier between us.* Their shrewdness and aptitude for business are remarkable, and whatever exists of commercial enterprise in Eastern Asia Minor is almost altogether in their hands. They have singular elasticity, as their survival as a church and nation shows, and I

cannot but think it likely that they may have some share in determining the course of events in the East, both politically and religiously. As Orientals they understand Oriental character and modes of thought as we never can, and if a new Pentecostal *afflatus* were to fall upon the educated and intelligent young men who are being trained in the colleges which the American churches have scattered liberally through Asia Minor, the effect upon Turkey would be marvellous. I think most decidedly that reform in Turkey must come through Christianity, and in this view the reform and enlightenment of the religion which has such a task before it are of momentous importance."<sup>1</sup>

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE.—The Armenian grammar is analogous to that of other languages of the same origin. It has not the distinction of gender, but is rich in its declensions and conjugations. The accent of Armenian words is on the last syllable, and many of the strong consonantal sounds strike the ear of a foreigner with harshness, and defy his tongue. The rich native vocabulary has been increased by additions from languages with which it has come in contact. It possesses also, as the German, great facility in building compound words.

The earliest specimen of this language, though in the cuneiform character, is probably to be found in the tri-lingual inscriptions on the great citadel rock of Van, which have not yet been satisfactorily made out. The pre-Christian literature of Armenia, consisting of national songs, has entirely perished, ex-

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Bishop, *Journeys in Persia and Kurdistan*, vol. ii., p. 336.



cept a few quotations. All that has come down to us is subsequent to the fourth century, and refers exclusively to history or religion. Poetry and fiction never greatly flourished among this serious race, always in the midst of danger or suffering.

The ancient Armenian version of the Bible, made by Mesrob, the inventor of their alphabet, and his disciples, early in the fifth century, has been called the queen of versions for its beauty, and, though not based on the Hebrew, is of some critical value in determining the readings of the Septuagint, of which it does not follow any known recension. Hundreds of other translations from Syriac and Greek writers soon followed, some of which are extant only in Armenian.

The fifth century, their Golden Age, was adorned by such classic writers as Yeznig of Goghph, who wrote most eloquently, in four books, against the Persian fire-worshippers, the Greek philosophers, the Marcion heresy, and the Manichæans; Goriun, the biographer of Mesrob; David, the philosopher and translator of Aristotle; Yeghishe, who relates the heroic struggle of Vartan for the Christian faith against the Persian Zoroastrians; Lazarus of Parb; and Moses of Khorene, their national historian. There follows a period of four centuries of literary barrenness, due to political disorder and schism.

Under the Rupenian dynasty there was a second period of literary brilliancy. Then flourished Nerses Schnorhali "The Gracious," an orator grafted upon the poet; as well as Nerses of Lampron, whose hymns also enrich the beautiful Armenian liturgy. The

annals of Matthew of Edessa give interesting facts about the first Crusade. Samuel of Ani, John



THE ISLAND MONASTERY OF AGHTAMAR, IN LAKE VAN.

One of many similar Armenian Monasteries still existing, rich in parchment manuscripts exposed to decay and vandalism.

Vanagan, Vartan the Great, and Thomas of Medzop wrote succeeding chronicles.

A third revival of Armenian letters was begun by



Mechitar of Sebaste (Sivas), who established an order of Catholic monks at the monastery of St. Lazarus in Venice, 1717. These fathers have won the interest and admiration of European scholars by their publication of Armenian classics, together with many learned original contributions. Other centres of literary activity are to be found in Vienna, Paris, and the Institute of Moscow, as well as the schools of Constantinople and Tiflis.

A list of authorities on Armenian subjects is given in Appendix E.

## CHAPTER XI.

### AMERICANS IN TURKEY, THEIR WORK AND INFLUENCE.

THE American missionaries in the Turkish Empire are brought into the discussion of almost every question that arises in that land. Especially is this true at present, in connection with the Armenian problem. So many wild and contradictory statements are made in regard to them, and the Protestant communities which are the direct results of their labors, that the mind of the public is more or less confused on the subject. The missionaries, and the many thousands who have gladly followed their leadership in intellectual, moral, and religious reform, *are* an important, though not a noisy or conspicuous element. For this reason, as well as on account of popular ignorance and hostile misrepresentation, they cannot be overlooked in any fair and adequate survey of the situation. The writer has long been familiar with this phase of the subject, and has a large mass of evidence and statistics at his command. *But he is not connected with any of the various missionary societies involved, and is alone responsible for the statements made in this or any other part of the volume.*