

THE ROMAN EMPIRE  
ESSAYS ON THE CONSTITUTIONAL  
HISTORY FROM THE ACCESSION,  
OF DOMITIAN (81 A.D.) TO THE  
RETIREMENT OF NICEPHORUS III.  
(1081 A.D.)

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## **PART II**

**ARMENIA AND ITS RELATIONS WITH THE  
EMPIRE (520-1120)**

**THE PREDOMINANCE OF THE ARMENIAN  
ELEMENT**

## DIVISION A

### GRADUAL ADMITTANCE (540-740)

#### GENERAL INTRODUCTION

§ 1. UNDER the dynasty of the Heracliads the Balkan peninsula ceased to form an effective part of the empire ; but Lesser Asia was recovered and consolidated. The great nursery of warlike princes in the Danubian provinces sent no more champions like Decius or Diocletian, like Constantius and his heirs, or Justinian and his nephew. Africa is lost by the year 700 ; and by 750 the resolute Constantine V. seems to have abandoned all interest in older Rome, and submitted with a strange tameness to the loss of the Exarchate. The scene of the active and decisive movements, which only find an echo or a reflection on the smaller Byzantine stage, is shifted eastwards and comprises the new Regiments of Asia Minor and the newly risen nation of Armenia. It is a matter of no great importance to decide whether Conon is an Isaurian or a Syrian ; what is of interest is his undoubted connection with the land between the Caucasus and Lake Van. Now the eighth century witnesses a significant revival in the nationalities lying on the Eastern frontier. And the spring of their fresh and energetic vitality may be traced to the stir and commotion which followed the overthrow of the Persian Colossus and the establishment of the militant caliphate about the year 650.

*Interest of eighth century: Eastern dynasties of Rome and Armenia.*

An Armenian, Artavasdus, contended for the Byzantine throne just a century before the Bagratid dynasty arose under Ashot I. on the ruins of the

*Interest of  
eighth  
century:  
Eastern  
dynasties of  
Rome and  
Armenia.*

Caliphate: and an Arzrunian, Leo V., actually reigned for seven troubled years over the Roman Empire, long before his own family had established themselves in independence in their own country. The weakness of the successors of Harun gave a welcome opportunity for revival to the Armenian nationality, and enabled them to preserve a feudal liberty, to play a new and serious part in the politics of the East.

The Bagratid dynasty, with the rival family of Arzrunians in Vasparacania (908-1080), will provide two strong Christian principalities on the east of the "Roman" Empire down to the very last years of the period we are undertaking. A third fraction indeed, to the west of Lake Van, fell under the Muslim,—the Merwanidæ; and the relations of all three portions of Armenia oscillated between autonomy and vassalage to Byzantium or to Bagdad and his lieutenant at Melitenè. All were extinguished together at the close of our epoch (1080); and only in the mountain-fastnesses of Cilicia, in the safe asylum of Mount Taurus, did there linger on a semblance of Armenian sovereignty, expiring about fifty years before the fall of Constantinople (A.D. 1400) in the person of Leo VI., a refugee in the Parisian metropolis. Such is a hasty outline of the fortunes of the Armenian provinces from the advent of the "Isaurians" to the accession of Alexius Comnenus.

*Early  
Armenian  
history:  
Arsacids and  
conversion of  
Tiridat (c.  
300).*

§ 2. It will be necessary to cast our eyes backward as well as forward if we wish to have a clear notion of the place occupied and the part played by this singular nationality. Armenia owes its renown and its integrity to the same family that so long bore sway in Parthia, the Arsacidæ. In 150 B.C. a Parthian sovereign established his brother there, and the line continued to the reigns of Theodosius II. and Valentinian III. (150 B.C. to A.D. 430). Such a State, midway between two great empires and often bearing the brunt of their quarrels, would bear a

doubtful allegiance to the courts of Rome and of Ctesiphon. It was to Armenia that the pride and tradition of the Arsacids retired after the triumph of the Sassanids in the reign of Severus II. (226). There the national or dynastic opposition to the new family (or tribe) sustained itself for some six years; and we may notice that the kingdom was reconstituted in the latter part of the century by Roman aid, and after a brief hostility under Tiridat accepted the Christian faith and practice. Himself of royal Arsacid descent, Gregory the Illuminator works for the conversion of his people; and before the great tenth persecution in the Roman Empire (*c.* 304 A.D.) Armenia had its Patriarch or Catholicus, and the Church could claim more than half the subjects as believers. Towards the close of the fifth century a division of interests or "spheres of influence" (such as divides Persia to-day between Russia and England) became necessary; and Theodosius authorised an amicable settlement with Persia; by which Persarmenia had its Arsacid governor, owing allegiance to the State, and Roman Armenia, a similar native chieftain, owing fealty to Byzantium (*c.* 400 A.D.). The high-water mark of Roman influence was reached in the reign of Maurice, nearly two hundred years after (*c.* 600 A.D.), when, as Georgius of Cyprus clearly shows, a considerable advance of imperial frontier was made in the North and the Euphrates valley. In Persarmenia, indeed, the Arsacids were soon superseded by princes or satraps of Persian birth, who continued for just two centuries (*c.* 430–630 A.D.). The disastrous rupture in the orderly succession of the empire, and the internecine conflict of the Heraclian revival, tired out the two combatants in profitless warfare. Armenia in 650 yielded greatly to Saracen influence; and in the loose federalism of the early political system of Islam retained its native princes owing obedience to the caliph. The reign of Justinian II. is memorable for an attempt to

*Early Armenian history; Arsacids and conversion of Tiridat (c. 300.)*

*Decay of Roman influence in seventh century.*

*Decay of  
Roman influ-  
ence in  
seventh  
century.*

recover independence, or rather to exchange the Arabian suzerainty for a Roman protectorate. But before the close of his first reign (by 695) the country is entirely subjected and Arab emirs replace the suspected native chieftains. Thus the last years of this century witness the loss of the African province and a curtailment of the "sphere of Roman influence" in the nearer East. For one hundred years all is confusion and disorder; and we again take up the records of this "ambiguous" people, as Tacitus calls it, in the renewed activity displayed under the Jewish (?) family of Ashod, who in the reign of the third Michael founded a power, which, with numberless vicissitudes and sundry changes of abode, lasts five and a half centuries till the latter days of the Palæologi (843-1393).

*Armenian  
Non-  
conformity,  
obstacle to  
union.*

§ 3. A strange fortune overtook this doubtful land and nation, belonging properly neither to West nor East, siding with the empire in general Christian belief, yet severed from a full sympathy and communion by an accident or a misunderstanding. For the Armenian Church remained in touch with Orthodoxy for barely a century and a half (300-450 A.D.). It did not accept the Articles of Chalcedon (451 A.D.) in the reign of Marcian; and so great was its detestation of the Nestorian heresy that it distorted some uncertain phrases in this Council's decisions into an acceptance of the hateful "Adoptianism," used language which savoured of Eutychianism (*συνμιξις*, not *ἕνωσις*), and gradually drifted away from the great Establishment into a kind of provincial isolation. (And from this it may be said never to have successfully issued. Evangelised by the Jesuits and protected by the Russian Church and Government, it still preserves its solitude and its independence, and now and again extends tentative offers for reunion to the Protestant sects in Western Europe.) It was a feature of later Persian diplomacy to foster these religious schisms. The supposed Eutychians of



Armenia, and the followers of Nestorius, found the same favour and protection; and the advisers of the Shah were quite aware of the political value of an opposition to Byzantine orthodoxy. It was the first endeavour of Heraclius, warrior and theologian, to revive religious unity in the East, and rally the flagging patriotism of Armenia, Egypt, and Syria in the new crusade (c. 625). His failure belongs rather to the records of religious history than to my present design; and I am content here merely to remark the abortive effort,—which will be described more fully in a later section. But whatever the schism between the churches and the cleavage between Armenia and Byzantine speculation, nothing hindered the widening influence of the Armenian stock on the destinies of the empire. We may hazard the conjecture that in the singularly democratic or purely official society of the capital, *this* definite title to noble birth gave weight and influence. Plagues had decimated Byzantium in the middle of the sixth and eighth century. An artificial capital, artificially recruited, is exposed to violent changes and vicissitudes. In the reigns of Theodosius II., of Justinian I., of Constantine V., an entirely different population thronged the cities. The official nobility were subject to the same law of sterility and decay, inexorably awaiting comfort and opulence and that secure transmission of hereditary wealth, which was the chief pride (and perhaps the chief danger) of the empire. A primitive society is keenly alive to the claims of birth; and the Armenians might boast to find among themselves the “oldest and most illustrious families of Christendom.” It is no wonder that Asiatic influence eclipsed the moribund traditions of Greece and Rome. The eighth century tells of the internecine conflict between Hellenism, enthroned in the Establishment, and the new Asiatic militarism, which, as the spirit of Cromwell’s soldiers, represented a practical and Puritan piety. The newly stirring movement makes itself

*Armenian  
Non-  
conformity,  
obstacle to  
union,*

*not to entry  
of Armenian  
into Roman  
service.*

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Non-  
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obstacle to  
union,  
not to entry  
of Armenian  
into Roman  
service.*

felt first perhaps in the revolt of Simbat or Sempad, under Justinian II.,—corrupted into some resemblance to a native Greek name, as Sabbatios or Symbatios (just as the titles of Gothic kings were insensibly accommodated to classic etymology as Theodoric, Theodatus). Under Constans III., an "Armeniac" general of Persian birth, Saborios had invited the Arabs to subdue Romania; and Sempad, although a Roman patrician and commander holding the same rank, exchanges his allegiance, and allows Southern Armenia to fall to the Arabs.

*Armenian  
pretenders  
and  
sovereigns  
(700-850) at  
Byzantium.*

§ 4. We may suppose that the Romanising party emigrated into the empire and the imperial service from a land overrun by unbelievers. At any rate, the influence of Armenia is henceforward continuous and consistent. Armenian birth seems to have been the chief recommendation of the idle and luxurious Vardan or Bardanitzes (Anon. Cod. Coislin.), who reigns as Philippicus (711-713); Leo III., if not a native in descent, possessed strong connection and affinity in Armenia, and his son-in-law, Artavasdus, is a typical Armenian noble. In 790, Alexius Muselè, governor of the Armeniac *theme*, is suspected of conspiring with his mutinous legions, and was flogged, tonsured, and blinded by the order of Constantine VI. These native(?) levies were the determined opposers of the claims of Irene; and the too dutiful emperor deprived himself of strong Armenian support when he insisted on the recognition of his Greek mother's title. Vardan, another compatriot, rebels against the first Nicephorus, and Arsaber, patrician and quæstor, who revolted in 808, belongs to the same race. Armenia has its first legitimate ruler in Ghevond, who ruled as Leo V. from 813 to 820, son-in-law of Arsaber. And in this connection a citation from Father Chamich's history<sup>1</sup> should not be omitted:

<sup>1</sup> St. M. on Lebeau, vol. xii. 355, 409, 431.

“In this age, three Armenians were raised at different times to the imperial throne of the Greeks. Two of them, Vardan and Arshavir, only held this lofty station for a few days. The third, Levond, an Arzrunian, reigned seven years. Not long after Prince Manuel, of the Mamigonian tribe, won great renown with the emperor Theophilus for his warlike skill and valour.” This Arzrunian family with which Leo V. claims connection was supposed to have issued from the parricide sons of Esarhaddon, Adrammelech and Sharezer.

*Armenian pretenders and sovereigns (700-850) at Byzantium.*

The Mamigonian Manuel became a member of the Council of Regency during Michael III.'s minority; and it was necessary to support the claims of that extraordinary upstart, Basil “the Macedonian,” by appealing to his ancient descent from Armenian royalty. This curious fiction was a concession to the Asiatic and aristocratic prejudice then dominant in Constantinople; and is the strongest testimony that we possess to the complete seizure of the government in the middle of the ninth century by Armenian personality and tradition.

§ 5. After this short and general survey we shall examine each period in detail, from the age of Justinian to the last years of our allotted span, and even encroach on the Comnenian period, and surpass the limits of the eleventh century. From this inquiry we invite adhesion to the following conclusions: (1) That the Armenians succeeded to the place and functions of the Pannonian or Illyrian sovereigns (250-678), and became the defenders of the imperial frontier on the East; (2) that this race, strenuous, prolific, and feudal, formed a compact military party, in whose eyes the prestige of the empire and the survival of Roman culture depended on the generous nourishment of national armies and defence; (3) that to the scanty and precarious barbarian levies of the time of Belisarius succeeded a native force of provincial militia, recruited in the

*Summary of conclusions.*

*Summary of conclusions.*

countries they defended (during the development of the *thematic* system, *c.* 650–800); (4) that the vitality of the empire was due not so much to the useful rôle of the civilian prefect and judge (a class almost extinct by 650), as to the new vigour and loyal allegiance of the Armenian immigrants and settlers; (5) that this warrior-class, handing on military skill and valour from father to son, maintained a silent but truceless conflict with Greek orthodoxy, monachism, and the civilians who starved the war-chest; (6) that later Byzantine history becomes an interesting spectacle of the vicissitudes of this contest, and culminates (it may be said) in the scandalous treatment of Romanus IV. (1071); (7) that the whole spirit of this invading race was “feudal,” that is, attached great weight to descent, family connection, landed possessions, and vassals; (8) that feudalism infects (or transforms) the Roman institutions, presenting us with the glorious epic of Phocas, Zimisceus, and Basil, and the constant pretensions of certain noble families, if not to sovereignty, at least to actual and responsible control; (9) that, while as a rule nationality and local prejudice vanish in the lofty atmosphere of the throne, the Byzantine monarchs are Armenian in actual birth or unmistakable sympathies; (10) that the strong armies of the Eastern frontier are the chief (if not the invariable) arbiters of the succession, and are seen to dictate heirs to a failing, or policy to an incompetent, dynasty, from 700 to the accession of the Comneni.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Feudalism implies a union of land-tenure, warlike exercises, and that personal loyalty which attaches the strong to the service of an individual, at a time when the notion of the abstract State or Commonwealth is incomprehensible. Gelzer (in his “Abstract of Byzantine Imperial History”) may indeed complain that under Zimisceus (969) we have to note a retrogression of empire and an expansion of feudalism, while the Roman *military* and *civil* State takes on a *military* and *aristocratic* aspect. But he might have placed this obvious and significant symptom much earlier. The Pretenders of the ninth century belonged to the new military caste, enriched by ample allotment of vacant land in the east of Lesser Asia. The throne of the Amorion sovereigns (820–867) is supported by heroes

## I

EARLY HISTORY OF ARMENIA DOWN TO THE  
FIRST PERIOD OF JUSTINIAN I. (540 A.D.)

§ 1. The real centre and interest of this period in the imperial history lies in the East. The connection with the West is largely artificial. Justinian reconquered the ancient capital, and Leo III. lost it; but these events had little influence on men and society in the East, certainly none upon the political development which we are now attempting to trace. Never did the city of Constantine look westward; she preserved, and still maintains to-day, her persistent Orientation. The men who by adoption joined the Roman Commonwealth, and entered into the Roman tradition with eager loyalty, were not Italians, will soon cease even to be Thracians and Illyrians, or even Dardanians and Pannonians of the hardy Balkan stock of Decius, Diocletian, Valentinian, and the house of Justin. The empire (as we so often have occasion to remark) was *specialist* and *supra-national*. It knew nothing of race or family, of Asiatic breed and Roman traditions. Nor, again, is it possible for the historian to regret the new anti-centralising and anti-civil tendencies. Great posts became once more almost sovereign, at least vassal, States. The peace-party of menials and officials offered no substitute for an aggressive policy which was also the most prudent course. Praise has been lavished on the civil service of the empire; yet it is but just to apportion the merit carefully between the two rival departments. The conquests of the feudal or chivalrous party enabled the civilians to enjoy and monopolise the world's riches (960-1025) for half a century unchallenged. But the war-party alone understood the true needs of the State, and, judging from their actual experience, would not be put off by the real or affected ignorance of a historian like Psellus or a dilettante like Constantine Ducas (1059-1067). The strong arm was still indispensable for the maintenance of law and order, for that civilian procedure which existed nowhere else on earth except in China. There is little sign of mere feudal anarchy and individualism in the great Armenian champions of the empire; but the official class and the clergy hated and feared them. Feudalism gave the empire a long respite and a glorious sunset; and it was not the fault of the Comneni, but of the age, that they became the unwilling destroyers of the old Roman system.

*Armenia in  
the new  
expert service  
of Rome.*

*Armenia in  
the new  
expert service  
of Rome.*

and at this time little of creed or religion—for the ministers and historians of Justinian are dubious Christians—and the great code is singularly free from all traces of Christian influence. Work had to be done, and it mattered little who performed it. But it must be well done; continuous training, and a sort of school—of law, of arms, or of letters—became the rule. The army-corps in the anarchy of 235–285 kept alive the memories of Roman discipline, a certain patriotic simplicity, and some rough rules of honour. Constantine's civil service, and the punctilious ranks and duties of the court, had inculcated a definite and immobile routine. The growing demand for central supervision resulted in a body of civilians without initiative, but singularly faithful to a corporate spirit which dictated all their phrases and acts. The ecclesiastical caste naturally existed as a thing apart, and drew to itself those who were excluded from the other branches of State service. The unhappy curial colleges were kept alive and compact not merely by direct and tyrannical force, but by the whole tendency of a specialising age. The military caste (of which Justinian, perhaps not unwisely, showed some distrust) formed another well-trained corps, solid and continuous in method, precise in promotion. Who are the new actors on the scene? Who, in the dearth of recruits or violent depopulation of the empire, will take up the different posts as representatives of the imperial tradition? It will be found that at least in one department of State the land of Armenia is closely concerned. From the time of Justinian onwards, the best soldiers of the empire will be Armenians. Usurpers and pretenders, too, will belong to the same race, and when the throne is vacant there will seldom be wanting an Armenian candidate. The customs and beliefs of this remote country will exercise the strongest influence on "Rome." Here will be learned the lessons of defence from a feudal military caste

which had long been extinct within the borders of the empire. There will enter into Roman life a foreign element not to be gainsaid, which will take the place of the Teutons, Heruls, and Gepids who had once formed the heart of the Roman armies. There will be witnessed a silent but resolute duel between the Hellenic spirit, now orthodox-Christian, and the simpler Protestantism of the Armenian mountaineers. The eighth and ninth centuries will be the chief scene of this conflict; the attempt of Iconoclasm to revert to a religious practice and belief, simpler and more Roman. From Armenia came also (1) the tendency to hereditary succession in the imperial title, and in the great feudal estates of Asia Minor; (2) the strong military and aggressive spirit which awoke in the Basilian house the fires of old Roman conquest; and (3) that strangely un-Roman principle of the *Shogunate* that would reserve the chief dignity to a certain family, but deliver effective control to a colleague or recognised generalissimo. The competition for this latter post, not to be settled but by the sword, will lead to that clan-rivalry of warlike families which issues in the victory of the Comneni. And it is here I have ventured to place the extinction of the genuine imperial tradition. It is my present purpose to inquire into this gradual admission of Armenians into the armies and society of "Rome"; to trace in the tedious wars with Persia the real cause of the futile and inconclusive strife; and to examine the part played by this new nationality in the East, that succeeded to the championship of the empire which was undertaken in the West by the Teutonic race.

§ 2. The turning-point in the relations of Armenia and Rome was the conversion of King Tiridat in the third century. In this acceptance of the Christian faith Armenia took the lead, and set an example which Rome under Constantine was not slow to follow. It is undoubted that this community of

*Armenia in  
the new  
expert service  
of Rome.*

*Christianity,  
source both  
of alliance  
and of  
estrangement.*

*Christianity,  
source both  
of alliance  
and of  
estrangement.*

creed brought the country into closer connection with the Romans, and severed it from its natural allies and neighbours. Yet the peculiar form finally taken by Armenian Christianity served rather to isolate than to bring their Church into a full Christian fellowship. Especially under Heraclius are the separatist tendencies of all Eastern Christians apparent. Neither Syria nor Egypt nor Armenia recognised the established church of the capital with its Hellenic orthodoxy; and it was disunion and jealousy between these branches that admitted the infidels so easily. Still, the immigration of the warrior class, and the constant interference of Rome in Armenian affairs, were largely due to this common belief. The Arsacid Christian monarchy confronted the new Sassanid dynasty, predominant since 226 in Persia, a Magian revival, and entirely hostile to the Arsacid house. The extension of Persian influence implied the propaganda of fire-worship and the persecution of converts to the Gospel, sometimes even of native and hereditary Christians. These were thrown into the arms of Rome; and Armenia was an occasional *casus belli*, and a constant source of suspicion and disquiet between the two empires, as will readily be seen in the ensuing sketch. Thus religion partly united and partly severed this debatable country from the body of the empire. But in spite of the curious vassaldom and imperial investiture under early Cæsars, the real intercourse did not begin until both powers had adopted a common religious belief. To make clear the character of this preponderating influence on the Eastern world, I shall have to go back to very primitive times to account for the peculiar features of Armenian society and civilisation.

*Origin and  
early history  
of the  
Armenians.*

§ 3. Various modern writers (amongst others Wilmowitz-Möllendorff) refer the origin of this people to a great Phrygio-Thracian immigration from the West. The rough "Dorians" had ousted an earlier



culture, and established themselves in its place; survivors who escaped serfdom travelled eastwards. But the Phrygio-Thracian tribes went farther, and became the ancestors of the Armenian race.<sup>1</sup> Their own traditions, wildly improbable as history, are curiously typical of their native belief; they sprang from Haik, son of Thargamus—the Togarmah of Scripture, grandson of Noah, and were thus Iapetids, their earliest indigenou dynasty being certainly traced to Japhet.<sup>2</sup> But two chief clans boasted of a singular and perhaps discreditable descent; from the intercourse of David and Bathsheba, as yet illicit, or from the parricides of Sennacherib, Adrammelech and Sharezer, “who fled into the land of Armenia” after their father’s murder. Clan-feeling, intense pride in families developing into tribal chieftaincy, and finally into feudal principality, such is the chief note of Armenian society. And it is little wonder that in such an assembly of equal tribes no one family should have attained supremacy; in a proud and feudal community a foreign dynasty must rule, because no one single member will submit to an equal. The difficulties as well as the vitality of the Armenian race will be due to strong, jealous, and exclusive pride. It has a sense of nationality unknown in the artificial “Roman” commonwealth, which asked no questions about birth. It was ruled by turbulent nobles, full of vigour and public spirit; whereas Rome, since the adoption of an *imperial* government, had set itself to weaken the pride of caste and the power of families, substituting for claims of descent an

*Origin and  
early history  
of the  
Armenians.*

<sup>1</sup> The Armenians were not without affinity to the Phrygians in the central plateau of Asia Minor, and these again are allied to the inhabitants of Thrace and Macedonia. These peoples are *non-Oriental* in their character and culture; and Armenian history is the struggle of an outpost of the West.

<sup>2</sup> The Seljukian Turks are equally confident of their origin from the scriptural patriarchs. The Ghuss (Οἰζοι) tribe traced back to Ghuss, son or grandson of Japhet (Yafeth), son of Noah (Nuh). The enemies of the Ghussidæ believed that this early hero had stolen the *rain-stone*, which Turk, also a son of Japhet, inherited from his father.

*Origin and  
early history  
of the  
Armenians.*

official hierarchy where personal cleverness went for everything. It is easy to foresee the result of the fusion of the two. The later period of Roman history is the record of a long contest: on the one hand, the ministry of isolated instruments, the eunuch-celibate or the priest; on the other, the closely knit family: the ideal state and the feudal clan. Victory will lie with the more natural association; the last two centuries before Alexius are just the chronicle of notable generations, not merely on the throne, but in the military class, in the great land-holding section which was now refusing to be a mere payer of taxes.

*Rivals of  
Assyria.*

As late as the accomplished Orientalist, Saint Martin, the old legend of Semiramis, her visit, conquest, and death in Armenia had to be fitted in somehow. Instead, modern research gives us the historic kingdom of Urartu, round about Lake Van, wresting provinces from Assyria during the throes of revolution (c. 750 B.C.); Tiglath Pileser marching in reprisal against Sarduris II. at the head of a powerful confederacy, and defeating (744), with a capture of 73,000 prisoners; ten years later assaulting Turushpa, Sarduris' capital city on Lake Van; Rusas, the new King of Ur, again, under Sargon, stirring up the Hittite neighbours to rivalry (716, 715), and even sowing sedition in the northern provinces of Assyria; seeing his allies one by one reduced, flying to impenetrable mountain-plateaux in Armenia, and at last falling on his sword in despair. This Haikian (or earliest native) dynasty was not without its mythical or actual glory. Tigranes (Dikran) is the equal ally of Cyrus, as Barvir had revolted against Assurbanipal.<sup>1</sup> It was

<sup>1</sup> A general summary of chief events: Assault of Assyria under *Tigl. Pil. I.* begins 1100. *Shalmaneser II.* first to plan annexation, 860, and Arame's dynasty ends. Sarduris I. begins a new house, and resists Assyria, 850-830. *Shalm. III.* makes six ineffectual expeditions, c. 780. Argistis and Sarduris II. continue to humble Assyria and annex territory. *Tigl. Pil. III.* curbs and reduces to old limits, c. 735. Argistis II. reduced to a small district round Lake Van.

brought to a close only by the irresistible march of Alexander (328). Subject to the Seleucid monarchy, Armenia broke into rebellion and secured a short period of autonomy (c. 318-285 B.C.), and just a century later declared its independence of Antiochus the Great under its governor Artaxias (190). Fifty years later again, the Parthian sovereign put his brother Val-arsaces on the throne, and the great Arsacid dynasty begins in the latter branch, which far outlasts the better-known house of Persia. Tigranes, son-in-law of Mithradates of Pontus, reigns over Syria, Greater and Lesser Armenia, and some Parthian provinces; is entangled in the quarrel with Rome (which first brings the two powers into connection); and is allowed by Pompey, the capable reorganiser of the East, to retain the North and Centre, resigning to his son the accretions in the South-west, Sopenè and Gorduenè. About the middle of the first century B.C. Armenia came into collision with the curiously assorted sovereigns of Egypt; Artavasdus, defeated and taken to Alexandria by Antony, is put to death by Cleopatra in 30 B.C. Then ensued a time of feudal anarchy, one hundred and seventy princely families fighting with each other and raising up (as Tacitus tells us in "Annals," ii.) some fitful shadow-kings in rapid succession. Germanicus solemnly invests one with the diadem at Artaxata in A.D. 17; and already the country is more akin to Rome than to Parthia *nimum vicina*. Yet it was ready enough to give welcome to the cast-out Arsacid Artaban (possibly on account of his Roman education as well as his undoubted lineage). Under Nero and Vespasian, Erovan I. (c. 60-80), Arsacid on the female side, unites Armenia and builds two cities, Erovantoshad and Pakaran; and Ardashir (of a more legitimate Arsacid line) appears later under the alternate suzerainty of Rome and Parthia, scarcely recognisable in the historians as Exedarus.

*The Arsacid  
dynasty (150  
B.C.-200  
A.D.).*

*Romans and  
Persians in  
Armenia :  
independence  
extinguished  
(385).*

§ 4. In the first quarter of the third century A.D., the northern branch of the Arsacids had been more powerful than the southern. Chosroes the Great of Armenia takes up arms on behalf of his cousins against the Sassanids (226) ; but on his murder by a renegade member of his own clan, Armenia passed under the victor's yoke (250), easily yielding to foreign sway owing to its feudal distractions. Tiridat of the ousted line, son of Chosroes, flies to Rome, common asylum, like Paris to-day, for displaced monarchs ; and the burlesque Augustan historians of this period say nothing to the point on an event so pregnant with grave issues. It was perhaps this restoration to his father's throne by Roman help that explains the extreme bitterness of Sapor against the empire ; the captivity and death of Valerian. The new king, at first, like Decius and Aurelian, a persecutor of the Christians, meets Gregory the Illuminator, national hero of the story of Armenian evangelisation. The saint cures the king, and converts the people. For just a century onwards, until the "first partition" under Theodosius (385), Armenia is a scene of perpetual conflict between Rome and the Sassanids. It cost the lives of two emperors, Valerian and Julian (261, 363) ; and Jovian, after the latter's death, has to purchase a safe retreat by the disgraceful surrender of five provinces beyond the Euphrates, with the important and thoroughly Roman frontier-towns, Nisibis and Singara, and the fertile lands of Arzanenè and Gorduenè. The treaty of Theodosius definitely ceded all fanciful or legitimate rights over Eastern or Greater Armenia, and incorporated Lesser Armenia into the empire (385). But neither province received an alien viceroy ; in both a scion of the Arsacids was set up as a governor or vassal-prince ; Arsaces III. in Roman, Chosroes III. in Pers Armenia, as it is henceforth habitually called. From this year may be dated the gradual infiltration of the Armenian

race into Roman territory, expelled by religious intolerance or encouraged by the military prizes of the empire. The century (400-500) from Arcadius to Anastasius passed without any protracted warfare between the two great powers; and we are prepared to accept the story that Arcadius begged Isdigerd (succ. c. 400) to become tutor and guardian to his son, in spite of Agathias' denial; did not Heraclius appeal in like manner to the chivalrous feeling of the Avar Khan, when he left young Heraclius-Constantine as regent in a capital almost denuded of garrison? Did not Cabades propose in vain to the prosaic Justin I. that he should adopt Chosroes, and did not the refusal precipitate the war, long preparing, between the two rivals? Armenia, "perpetual source of annoyance" (as Bury rightly calls it), was undoubtedly the cause of the brief war under Theodosius II. (420-1). It was the old story; Varanes II. had attempted to proselytise Persarmenia, and had begun a persecution of Christians. Nothing happened of any consequence; it rarely did in these interminable and purposeless wars on the Euphrates. Peace for a hundred years was finally proclaimed by the optimistic diplomats of the two kingdoms (422). In 428 the government of Persarmenia was altered; instead of a native prince, a Persian governor or *Martzban* was sent. It is possible to explain this in two ways; (1) either (as Bury supposes) the Armenians begged the king to send a polite foreigner in place of an unpopular member of the old royal line (a request by no means uncommon or unnatural); or (2) the tyrannical sovereign extinguished the last embers of independence by annexing on the same footing as all other Persian provinces. Isdigerd II. (440) is very anxious to convert Armenia to the Zoroastrian faith, but meets with no success, chiefly owing to the staunchness of the Mamigonian clan (a notable house throughout Armenian history, and, if rumour may

*Romans and  
Persians in  
Armenia:  
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(385).*

*The religious  
difficulty  
(400-500).*

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(400-500).*

be believed, deriving descent from a Chinese outlaw and immigrant of the dispossessed Han dynasty!)<sup>1</sup> Balas, the next Sassanid, wisely gave back liberty of conscience and worship in Armenia, and restored the status to that of vassal-ally; Vahan (Βαάνης) the Mamigonian is made prince-governor, and the step taken in 428 (whatever its significance) reversed. Balas died in 487, four years before Zeno the Isaurian, bequeathing peace to the rival empires and internal contentment to Armenia.

*Cabades the  
Socialist  
renews the  
war with  
Rome.*

§ 5. Plato's dream and prayer has rarely been realised or granted; a philosopher-king is happily a rarity, and invariably a disappointment. Neither Marcus nor Julian could encourage (by their example or success) the exercise of reflection upon a throne; for while their virtues were their own, their failures may be distinctly traced to their creeds. But it is recorded of one Roman emperor and one Sassanid king that they desired to put in practice the theories laid down in Plato's ideal commonwealth. Gallienus was prepared to assent to Plotinus' request for the loan of a ruinous Italian city, that a model community, like the Quakers or Oneidists, might be tested. Cabades, the new king of Persia, fell under the influence of a convinced and earnest Socialist, a strange and repulsive amalgam of the Socrates and the Thrasymachus of the "Republic." He bears a curious resemblance to a certain Chinese statesman, Waganchi, who likewise converted a despot, and received license to put his views in force over the vast and silent population. This alliance of despotism with Socialist visions is therefore no novelty; indeed it is perhaps the only expedient by

<sup>1</sup> Colonies of Chinese are by no means unknown in Armenia. Was the famous Georgian royal family Chinese in origin? About 250 A.D., when the Goths, sweeping Europe, were about to annihilate Decius and his army, comes into the western part of Asia a Han of royal descent; in 260, Tiridates gives him the province or district of Taron, of which mention will be frequent. His name was Mam-kon, and he became the head of the Mamigonian clan.

which these views can ever be imposed on mankind, in themselves curiously unsatisfying to every human instinct. Men are neither born equal, nor do they believe themselves to be so; and it is only under a despotism where all are alike slaves, that the automatism and docility, requisite for the Socialistic order, can be found. Cabades, carefully preserving his own autocracy, like Frederic of Prussia or Joseph II., posed as the enlightened foe of privilege, the apostle of Liberalism. "Women and property must be held in common; so-called 'crimes' are merely the artificial creation of an unjust society; and right and wrong lie elsewhere than in the conventional standard." The nobles, about the close of the century, united to depose a monarch holding such views, and left him ample leisure to enjoy a practical application of his own tenets. Restored (not unlike Justinian II. two centuries after) by the aid of the Huns to his "unequal" and privileged rank (500), he showed more caution, reserved his free-thought and anarchic dreams for private, and perhaps seized with eagerness an occasion for renewing the Roman war. The pretext was the arrears in the Roman subsidy, promised for the joint defence of the Caspian gates or passes of Caucasus. Tradition made out that Cabades was offended, because the prudent old money-lender Anastasius refused a loan, intended to pay off his dangerous "Ephthalite" allies. At any rate, in 502, eighty years after the hundred years' peace, hostilities broke out; and Persia was soon in possession of the cities of the march-land, Martyropolis, Theodosiopolis, and Amida. Competent authorities believe (and I am content to accept their judgment) that in the next ensuing three years of war the Roman side was at a disadvantage, chiefly owing to the jealous policy of dividing the supreme command. Still, Celer the Illyrian, *magister officiorum* (why not *militum*?) achieved some success in Arzanenè and recovered

*Cabades the Socialist renews the war with Rome.*

*Cabades the Socialist renews the war with Rome.*

the fortress of Amida ; while in 507 Anastasius built the great citadel Dara on the site of a tiny village. (We may perhaps here notice the last Roman champions from the Balkans. We have this Illyrian ; twenty years later we find Belisarius in command in Persia, a Slav from "Germania," a Teutonic colony in Illyricum ; nearly forty years later (544) we find in an Eastern command Nazares from Illyria, τῶν ἐν Ἰλλυρίοις στρατιωτῶν ἄρχων. But in spite of Heruls and Gepids in the hasty levies of the famous general, the day for Goths or Teutons is over in the Eastern empire. We shall read of no more Thracians, Dacians, or Dardanians ; the house of Justin, extinct in 578, is succeeded by an Asiatic, Maurice the Cappadocian, from Arabissus, almost within Lesser Armenia. So on the palace-guard of sturdy Thracians have followed levies of strange Isaurians and Armenians, who to the number of nearly 4000 keep watch in Justinian's palace.<sup>1</sup>)

*Feudal policy of Justin, 520, and eastern campaigns of Belisarius.*

§ 6. It was Justin I., about 520, who initiated or rather revived the policy of welcoming ethnic kings as vassals under the suzerainty of the empire ; Tzath, king of the Lazi of Colchis, being received under its protection, after paying a kind of feudal homage. Persia found a new motive for war in this interference with her natural allies or subjects ; under Justinian I. a great army 30,000 strong invaded and ravaged Mesopotamia, while Belisarius, now appearing for the first time, suffered a defeat. In 529 Persians, with their Saracen ally Alamundarus, plunder the country up to Antioch ; and Belisarius in the Roman reprisals of the ensuing year wins his first laurels at Dara,—notable as the first defeat of the Persians for many years. The new emperor had started his Eastern policy by appointing a *magister militum* for Armenia (στρατηλάτης) ; Sittas, husband of Theodora's sister, Comito, held the office, but in 530 Dorotheus was

<sup>1</sup> Though when the dignity was sold to peaceable but conceited civilians, the guard was found to exist only on paper.



acting as his lieutenant. Nor was Justinian backward in securing other loyal and gratuitous allies for the frontier; he gave the title of *patricius* (as Anastasius to Clovis) to Arethas (Harith), king of the Ghassanid Bedawins and ancestor (?) of Emperor Nicephorus I. (802-811). This chieftain continued a faithful ally of Rome during a long reign (530-572), as a contemporary of Chosroes (530-579). Once more Persians and Alamundar raid in 531, and after the doubtful result of the battle of Callinicum, Belisarius was recalled; it is difficult to say whether justly. For clearly the suspicious policy of divided command thwarted any united action. Mundus the Gepid succeeds him; and the new king Chosroes is quite content to make an Endless Peace, while the subsidy (11,000 lbs. of gold) is faithfully promised on the part of Rome for the defence of the Caucasian passes. But the brilliant successes of Justinian's early years, over faction at home and Goth and Vandal abroad, roused Chosroes' envious fear (540). The Gothic king Vitiges sent envoys to the Persian court to implore help against the common danger, the universal autocrat; and the two distant wars have an appreciable influence on each other. The despairing struggle of Gothic freedom is lengthened out by the diversion of troops to the East; it is hard to say in which quarter the efforts of Rome's "only general" were the more needed.

§ 7. It is possible to trace to the fiscal system of Rome the reaction of the middle period (540-550) which set back the triumphs of Justinian in East and West. Alexander the Logothete estranged loyal Italy and let in the Goths again; Armenia is found denouncing the exactions of the collectors, and professing her willingness to acknowledge Chosroes. It does not become one who lives under the perils of a democratic budget and the costliness of popular government to speak hastily of Roman imperial finance. Where we have accurate figures the amount would

*Feudal policy of Justin, 520, and eastern campaigns of Belisarius.*

*Cause of Justinian's failure in East and West: fiscal system.*

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not seem excessive ; but it is clear that the passage from the intermittent suzerainty of barbarian king or even Sassanid to an expensive system of centralised officialism must seem vexatious and oppressive. It would be mere impertinence for any modern writer in a "free" State to blame the empire (or censure a "despotic" form of rule) for showing the natural and inevitable tendency of civilised society ; namely, to centre in the State all the resources of citizens, all the springs of action, all the natural riches of the country. The Roman Empire in this sixth century was absolutely *modern*, and indeed democratic in tone and attitude ; it overrated its strength, and undertook the colossal burden which mischievous dreamers to-day would have us transfer from collective shoulders to an irresponsible centre. It multiplied its duties and functionaries : the subject class paid. Italy, under the mild control of Gothic king or the benevolent pauperism of the Holy See, was ill-prepared for the new demands. Armenia, a feudal society (as we must again repeat), regarded even a modest contribution to imperial needs as an imposition and a disgrace. Amazaspes, the Roman governor, was slain by Acacius, and such was the Roman weakness or preoccupation elsewhere, that he was allowed to succeed his victim. But the demagogue in responsible office is a curious spectacle (as we may learn from Sardou's *Rabagas*). Money had to be collected, and the indignant and protesting Acacius was now the collector ; he too was killed, and Sittas, sent on a message of conciliation, shares the same fate. Armenia appeals to Chosroes for help ; and could point to the encroachments of Rome, as proof of a real danger to Persia ; for Justinian had reduced the wild Pontic tribe of the Tzanni and had set a *dux* over the military forces of Lazica. For the next few years the real centre of the eastern cyclone lies in this remote kingdom.

The details of this Lazic war, told with leisured

and scholarly grace by Agathias, passed over with weariness by Gibbon, retold with redundant minuteness by Lebeau, and again with critical judgment by Bury,—need not detain us now. Like most episodes in the long feud of Rome and Parthia, it has no conclusion, no meaning at first sight; a mere desultory skirmish over a “sphere of influence” claimed simultaneously by two great powers. Yet grave interests were at stake. It was a part of the great imperialist policy of Justinian to secure vassals and allies on the outskirts of the realm. His uncle had set the example; and perhaps the astute nephew had secretly inspired. The friendship of the Lazic king would secure Roman Armenia and act as a set-off to Persian influence. Justinian was penurious in the extreme of the lives of his citizen-soldiers, of the number of troops on a foreign expedition, of the initiative or responsibility entrusted to individual commanders. He welcomed gladly any substitute for his own dear troops or suspected generals. The Lazi, the Tzans, the Apsilians become dependent on the empire; chieftains of Herul and Hun are baptized, the emperor, as it were, standing sponsor; the Caucasian Abasgi and the Nobadæ are converted, and to complete the isolation of Persia, bishops and clergy are sent to the Axumites. The king of Iberia comes to the capital and is received with rich gifts by Justinian and Theodora. The spread of Christianity was part of Justinian’s imperialism: he was pope as well as Cæsar.

*Cause of Justinian's failure in East and West: fiscal system.*

## II

### RELATIONS OF ROME AND ARMENIA FROM JUSTINIAN TO HERACLIUS (540-620)

§ 1. Such a policy of Imperialism, flattering to these remote princes allied to the majesty of Rome, bore immediate fruit. An Army List of Justinian’s later years would display in a striking manner the

*Loyal service of Armenia to the empire: in the East and Italy.*

*Loyal service  
of Armenia  
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and Italy.*

predominance of Armenians. In 540, the garrison of Sura on the Euphrates is under an Armenian commandant; so too with the fleet of Thrace two years later. Phazas the Iberian prince has an important post in the Eastern armies; he is nephew of Peranes, the son of the Iberian king Gourgenes, at this time a refugee at Constantinople (in whose name it is difficult to avoid tracing the later name of the inland Caucasian country). In the same year (542) Belisarius sent on a mission in the East Adolius, son of the assassin Acacius; and we wonder that Armenian families should have given up their own names and adopted the weak quadrisyllables of the later empire. In 543, when Chosroes thought of attacking the Roman province by way of Persarmenia, we find in the Roman army, 30,000 strong, Narses of the Camsar clan, and Isaac, brother of Adolius.<sup>1</sup> In the familiar weakness of the Roman command, the two confederate generals have little chance; Narses is killed in battle, and Peranes the Iberian seeking to ravage Taron (*Ταραντων Χώρα*), on south and west of Lake Van, has to return from a successful foray on news of the defeat.—The result of the confederacy of East and West against Rome is evident when the Lazic troubles begin (545). The costly system of frontier forts, Martyropolis, Satala, Sebastè, Colonia, and others, overtaxed Justinian's treasury, and an expensive restoration relaxed the vigour of the Italian war. But the emperor was perhaps more than indemnified by the loyal service of Armenians far from their homes. Isaac an Armenian, of Camsar and Arsacid families, brother of Narses

<sup>1</sup> It is at this point that we may notice the emphatic witness of Procopius to the prosperous state of Armenia under Persian sway; Dovin, or *Δούβιος*, the capital, is eight days' journey from Theodosiopolis (Arzeroum), and stands in a smiling and fertile plain, covered with thriving villages at short intervals on a high-road busy with mercantile traffic between India and China and the West. Dovin is near the site of ancient Artaxata and lies north of the Araxes: it maintained its dignity as the capital for eight hundred years.

(who fell fighting in the East); Gitacius with a small band of Armenian fellow-countrymen, "who knew nothing but his native tongue" (as Procopius tells us); Pacurius, grandson of Gourgenes, the Iberian ex-king, and son of Peranes; Varazes with a little cohort of eighty; and Phazas, cousin of Pacurius, already seen in Roman service in 542;—such are the Oriental officers in Italy.—But we must turn once more to the East (549) and the Lazic entanglement. Gubazes the king is the son of a "Roman" wife; it being a long-established custom (*ἐκ παλαιού*) for the Lazic dynasty to accept honorary posts in the imperial palace and to marry with the daughters of senators on the emperor's choice or approval. It is quite possible that Gubazes may have actually served in person as a *Silentiarius*; though in a later age similar posts, as that of *Curopalat*, were purely titular and implied no duties. Indeed, though he had been for long a vassal of Persia, he demanded, naïvely enough, the payment of arrears of salary as Usher of the Palace since his accession to the throne! For the Persian yoke was unpopular (*οὐκ αὐτογυμνοῦντες*, Procop.); and when Chosroes tried to murder Gubazes, the country flung itself into the arms of Rome. Mermeroes a Persian, forced to retire, begins tedious intrigue (551) against the Romans; and until 555 there are ceaseless and indecisive hostilities.—We may notice here the subinfeudation then prevalent; the little peoples of Scymnia and Swania, in the interior of the Caucasus, are subject to the Lazic king, but are governed by native princes bound to homage (*ἄρχοντες . . . τῶν ὁμοεθνῶν*). When the tribal headship is vacant, word is sent to the Lazic king, who is then empowered by the Roman emperor to invest whom he will, provided it be one of the same tribe. It is clear that the ascending hierarchy of feudal obligation was well known to the Eastern peoples of the sixth century.

*Loyal service of Armenia to the empire: in the East and Italy.*

*The Vassal State of Lazic and sub-infeudation.*

*Armenian  
valour in  
Africa: first  
Armenian  
plot: recall  
and con-  
spiracy of  
Artaban  
(548).*

§ 2. Meantime, Armenian bravery had not been without employment in Africa. Here, as in Italy, the first rapid successes had been followed by disastrous reaction. In 543 we find the two sons of John the Arsacid despatched, John and Artaban; and this family would seem to have passed into the imperial service when Arzanenè had thrown off the Persian yoke and surrendered to Rome. John was soon killed by the mutinous Moors; but for Artaban was reserved a romantic and troubled career. With his nephew Gregoras and Ardashir (Artaxerxes) he joins, or pretends to join, the curious rebellion of Gontharis the *τύραννος* in Carthage. But seizing a fit moment they murder the rebel and his friends, and shout the loyal salutations to Justinian. As a reward of this service Artaban is allowed to leave his post and return to the capital, lured by the fascinating Prejecta, a member of the imperial family. But disappointed passion or ambition made him a conspirator (548). Theodora, finding that he is already married, disposes otherwise of Prejecta, and forces him to take back his earlier and rejected spouse, also of Arsacian descent (*ὁμόφυλος*). Artabanus in high dudgeon listened to the murmurs of a youthful kinsman, Arsaces, who had been publicly whipped and paraded through the streets on a camel for treasonable correspondence with the Persian court. Smarting with the disgrace, Arsaces dwelt lightly on his own wrongs, but dilated rather on national grievances, the unhappy condition of those Armenians who fell a prey to the Roman tax-gatherer. They decide to assassinate Justinian; the plot is discovered; and the mild emperor is content with despoiling Artaban of his dignity and confining his impetuous relatives within the palace for a time. I would throw no doubts on the mercifulness of an untiring prince and a good man; but we may well suppose that a fear of offending the powerful Armenian contingent would reinforce the "imperial clem-

ency,"—one of the most glorious and truthful titles in use for the later Cæsars: six years later (554) "Chanoranges," a member of the conspiracy (perhaps a title of honour at the Persian court), would be found serving in Italy against Buccelin's marauders. Such was the first Armenian plot against the life and majesty of an emperor; it will not be the last. Generally devoted, like the Swiss, in their impersonal attachment to the empire, and displaying more manly qualities than any desire for intrigue, the Armenians on occasion can become dangerous competitors for the sovereign dignity. In the next century we shall have the brief and obscure "tyranny" of Mejej or Mizizius (668), and with increasing frequency candidates will propose themselves for the purple: until in one century there are few pretenders who are not of this race, and in the next an entire dynasty will be Armenian in origin and sympathies. We may complete here the record of the empire's debt to Armenians on the African shore. Artaban's own successor was probably a fellow-countryman, John Troglita, the hero of the epic of Cresconius Corippus. Now John's brother is a certain Pappus or Bab, a name common among Armenians, and especially with the clan of Arsacids. He was the son and the husband of a princess; his wife "*filia regis erat; mater quoque filia regis*"; and his own Christian name, John, is a favourite with the Armenians, who have ever held in especial veneration the memory of the Precursor, "Karabied." Such was the tale of Armenian prowess in Africa.

§ 3. Again turning to the East, John Guzes is very valiant at the siege of Petra in 550, and loses his life there the next year in a similar assault. In 551, too, Aratius appears (Hrahad), Arsacid and Camsar, in control of Armenian and Illyrian troops. Armenians command the punitive expedition which exacted vengeance from Rome's seditious subjects in the Caucasus, the Misimians, and the disorderly Tzanni

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of Pontus ; the army obeyed Varazan the Armenian and Pharsantes the Colchian, one who held the office of master of the troops in the Lazic court (*μάγιστρος τῶν ἐν αὐλῇ ταγματῶν*). This title, like those of *patrician* and *curopalat*, will meet us often, and sometimes in curious disguises, till the close of our history and the subjugation of the free Christian kingdoms between the Black and Caspian Seas.—In 562, another sonorous title was invented for the short and suspicious armistice between the two powers ; this time the peace is not “ endless ” or “ for a century,” but “ for fifty years.” Menander gives with his usual minuteness the exact terms of a compact so soon to be violated.—Justin II. (565–578), who showed an equal desire to lighten the subjects’ burden and to raise the dignity of Rome, assumed a loftier tone towards the Sassanid than Justinian, mild but persistent, had ever adopted. Once again the northern lands, *ambigua gens mortalium*, as Tacitus well styles them, supplied an incentive to war. While Swania, to the great annoyance of the emperor, decides for union with Persia after a kind of plebiscite, like Rome on Garibaldi’s entrance in 1870 ; Persarmenia, on the other hand, begged to be transferred to the Christian power. This country, once Great Armenia, had been surrendered, if we may trust the solitary evidence of Evagrius, by Philippus (244), after the murder of Gordian III., *πρώην Ῥωμαίοις κατήκοος* ; and if this be true, it forms doubtless an episode in the obscure revolutions which placed Tiridat on the throne. Definitely recognised as Persian by Theodosius, it had taken little part in the recent wars, and since the reign of Justin I. at New Rome (518) had been under the benevolent rule of Mejej (the later Greek *Μιζιζιος*), a Gnounian prince. He repaired the mischief of the past, paid regular tribute, saw that the Christian faith and practice were respected, and taught Armenians to forget their light vassalage by securing a greater prosperity than in the days of



independence, both in numbers and rich commerce with India. He remained in charge for thirty years (518-548); but Chosroes did not give the succession to a native Christian prince but to a Zoroastrian. The church was persecuted: magians were introduced for a subtle or violent propaganda; fire-temples were built, even in the especially loyal Reshdounian canton. Envoys were sent (532) to remonstrate with the Persian king, and to demand the strict terms of the compact between King Valasch (or Balas) and Prince Vahan the Mamigonian. Chosroes, alarmed at the Gothic successes of Rome, was prepared to conciliate; and Ten-Shahpour (*cf.* later name Ten-Chosroes, Ταμχόσδρω) was recalled. Veshnas-Varanes (552-558) and Varazdat (558-564) succeed; and Souren follows them, a member of the Surenian family, a branch of the Arsacids, to whom Theophylact gives the title κλιματάρχης τῆς Ἀρμενίων πολιτείας (the Armenian *Goghmanagal*). Once more persecution became a settled policy; and Vartan, head of the Mamigonians, set himself forward as the leader of a revolt, his patriotic feelings roused by a private wrong,—the murder of his brother Manuel by Surena. He was distinguished in birth as in military skill, προύχων γένει, ἀξιώσει, ἐμπειρία στρατηγικῆ—just those characteristics to be expected in a race which forced a chivalrous feudalism upon the reluctant institutions of imperial Rome. The patriarch Moses II. leads a rebellion at Dovin, the record of which is strangely preserved to us by Gregory of Tours. Vartan and Vard (Bardas) complete the attack; Dovin is taken; Surena killed; and by the end of March 571 Persian soldiers and priests of the alien creed were exterminated in a general rising.

§ 4. Armenia, struggling towards independence, sought alliance of her northerly neighbours (πλησιόχωροι . . . ὁμοεθνεῖς . . . ἀλλόφυλοι, Evagr.) and the powerful protection of Rome. Justin II. wel-

*Persarmenia under religious persecution joins the empire.*

*Doubtful issue of the quarrel over Persarmenia (575-580).*

*Doubtful  
issue of the  
quarrel over  
Persarmenia  
(575-580).*

comes the envoys, promises to defend as his own subjects, and pledges never to abandon the authors of the revolt to the tender mercies of Persia. Iberia follows the lead, and crosses over to the Roman side ; for the king of that country we should probably read Stephen rather than Gourgenes (Γοργενός), with Theophilus of Byzantium. Chosroes sent Deren, the "Constable of Persia" (*Sparabied*), to reduce the disaffected provinces. Being defeated in the first engagement, he gave way to Bahram (or Varanes) (the pretender eighteen years later to the throne of Persia), who at once availed himself of the dissension invariably prevalent in a feudal society of peers, even when the common liberty is in peril. Vartan, soon despairing of his venture, retired with his kinsmen to the Roman capital, and was there treated with the generous courtesy always extended to dispossessed princes. Nothing can well be more tedious and unedifying than the record of the next seven or eight years. Anarchy prevailed ; fire and sword ravaged the country, from which all traces of former prosperity vanished. The Persian army, under Mihram and Bahram, is swelled by Caucasian tribes, Dilemites and Sabirians. Under Marcian the Roman commander fight Vartan the refugee, the Alans with their chieftain Saros, Colchians and Abasgians. Neither great power seemed anxious to push matters to a final settlement ; Chosroes is glad in 575 to make peace with the regent, Tiberius II., but wishes to except the rebels from its benefits. The Roman generals, Kurs the "Scythian" (or Goth) and Theodosius, attack the Albanians and Sabirians, take hostages, and secure their brief surrender to the empire : on their default they return, ravage their land, and transplant across the Cyrus the faithful Romanisers, *πανοικία μετοκίζοντες* (Menander),—an early instance of that wholesale change of a settlement which is an interesting but disconcerting feature in the later history. The Roman army twice

disbands, either in dislike of a new general or in fear of the emperor's displeasure: it seems a significant symptom of the contempt of authority which marks the fifty years from Justinian to Heraclius. In 576, the Great King marched out in person to Armenia; Taron (an appanage of Vartan's family) he finds a vast wilderness; and, losing the great battle of Melitenè, is said to have forbidden a Persian king to lead his own armies—a prohibition very unlikely, but singularly parallel with the tendencies of China and Rome about this time, where Maurice and Heraclius and Lichi found it difficult to revive the military side of kingship. Next year (577) the humiliated kingdom was exposed to Saracen raiders, acting under the instructions of Rome. Yet the emperors do not follow up their successes, and indeed on both sides of the long struggle we observe merely a temporising and spasmodic policy, no constant aim. There now appeared on the Eastern scene a general whom Armenian writers claim as a fellow-countryman. Maurice was, according to Evagrius, a native of Arabissus in Cappadocia; but others say he was born in the province of Ararat; in either case it is more than probable that he was in some way connected with that district, which gave strength and military leaders to the empire after the failure of the Balkan or Illyrian stock. He may well have belonged to one of the families who migrated into Roman territory during a persecution. In 579, Tiberius II. agreed to give up the imperial claims in Persarmenia and Iberia, but refused to surrender those who wished to join the empire. But Chosroes especially insists on the extradition of those feudal clan-leaders (*γενεάρχαι*) who had initiated the revolt; and dies during the ineffective conferences, after a reign of nearly half a century.

§ 5. We are now on the threshold of the most stirring scene in a somewhat wearisome duel; the last fifty years of the wars between Persia and Rome

*Doubtful  
issue of the  
quarrel over  
Persarmenia  
(575-580).*

*Tiberius'  
offer to resign  
Roman  
claims to  
Persarmenia.*

*Tiberius' offer to resign Roman claims to Persarmenia.*

are crowded with incident. A Persian general de-thrones his sovereign, who is restored by a Roman emperor; a Roman centurion murders his emperor, and is attacked by the Persian, grateful to the prince only, not to the commonwealth. Rome, lately so triumphant in its favourite rôle of arbiter of justice and the world's peace, is helpless before the Persian vengeance; and, after an inglorious and desperate interval of some sixteen years, suddenly awakens to crush her rival in the campaigns of Heraclius, and in the end to expose two exhausted powers to the irresistible Arabs. To the new Shah, Hormisdas (579), Tiberius renews his offer to surrender Persarmenia and Arzanenè, but not the heads of the rebellion. (It is to this epoch that we refer the curious counterpoise of Tiberius to the seditious and untrustworthy legions of Rome; he purchases barbarian slaves (*ἀγοράσας σώματα ἔθνικῶν*), and thus began or revived that policy of slave-armies so eagerly imitated by the Moslem in the cases of Turkman, Janissaries, and Memlukes.) The last year of Tiberius was signalled by a great Roman victory at Constantia; but John Mystakôn, a Thracian, under the new emperor Maurice, 582, suffered a defeat, and yielded his place in 584 to the emperor's brother-in-law, Philippicus; for it might well seem hazardous to entrust an important post to *any* but a member of the imperial family. At the great battle of Solacon, it is said that half the Persian army perished, and this success was followed up by the ravage of Arzanenè. But Philippicus, like Heraclius later, was of a highly strung and neurotic temperament; seized by panic he fled, and, filled with shame, remained in retirement during the rest of his command. The active duties were handed over to Heraclius, father of the future emperor; and the armies of Rome obeyed in addition two Arabs and a Hun (*ὑποστρατηγός*). The mutinous and malcontent spirit of these Roman troops was well displayed in 588, when Priscus was sent out as general-in-chief;

*Mutinous state of Persian and Roman armies alike.*

they broke into open revolt, forced him to fly for his life, and, refusing to be propitiated by the offer of Philippicus' return, proclaimed Germanus their leader. The Senate condemns Germanus to death; but Maurice, naturally clement, and at this time helpless, pardons him. Finally, on the pleading of Gregory, bishop of Antioch, the troops take back their old commander, Philippicus, and almost at once secure an important victory in a pitched battle near Sisarban, adjoining Nisibis (590). We read with some surprise of this success of soldiers thoroughly mutinous and demoralised; but the armies of Persia were in a worse, at least a similar, plight. Bahram, the new pretender, came of Arsacid stock, and of the family of the Miramians (*τῆς τοῦ Μιρράμου οἰκαρχίας*); that is, he belonged to a branch of the old regnant house which enjoyed the feudal appanage of Rey in Hyrcania down to the middle of the seventh century. During this time Persarmenia had become Roman in its sympathies; Maurice had also appointed a *στρατηγὸς* for Colchis, who, taking measures with the patriarch (*κοινολογήσας τῷ ἐκείσε ἱεραρχοῦντι*), had gained a victory over the Persians near Ganzac, the Albanian capital. But a settled policy was out of the question. Opinion began to veer round to Persia: Sembat raises a Persian party, murders John, *Ἀρμενίας ἡγεμὼν*, is reduced by Domentziolus, condemned to the beasts in the Byzantine arena, and finally reprieved by the clemency of Maurice. It is curious to speculate on the long train of results from this act of pardon. Sembat the Bagratid returns a free man to become a resolute "medizer," the favourite of Chosroes II., the Persian governor of Armenia. From him issued the well-nigh interminable line of Armenian and Georgian kings, who ceased only with the opening of the nineteenth century.

§ 6. In 590 Chosroes displaces his father, and is himself dethroned by Bahram. He flies to the secure and honourable protection of Rome. The Armenian

*Mutinous  
state of  
Persian and  
Roman  
armies alike.*

*Dethrone-  
ment of  
Chosroes.*

*Chosroes de-  
throned and  
restored by  
Rome in  
concert with  
Armenian  
nobles.*

nobles, with that warm and chivalrous interest in a legitimate line which is so prominent in Byzantine history, supported the cause of Chosroes. Among their number are conspicuous Mouschegh, prince of Daron or Taron,<sup>1</sup> a Mamigonian, Sembat the pardoned rebel of the Bagratid stock, and Khoutha, prince of Sassoun, a canton near Daron belonging to the Mamigonians, and giving its name to-day to a notable friend of our English royalty. With Mouschegh emerges a family well known in Roman history—one Alexius Mouschegh (Μωσσηλῆ) is a trusted Armenian captain under Constantine VI. (c. 790); and another, victor in Sicily, will be Cæsar and emperor's son-in-law for a brief space under Theophilus. Comentiolus has a certain success at Martyropolis, where the garrison are compelled to surrender by the bishop Domitian, another determined Eastern prelate, who mingles in political affairs; Sittas, a rebel, is given up to condign punishment, and burnt alive in the barbarous fashion of those days (we may see such a penalty inflicted under both Phocas and Heraclius). But Chosroes did not like Comentiolus. By the king's influence he was recalled, or rather put in a subordinate place under a general of undoubted Armenian descent, Narses, an Arsacid and a Camsar (541), who six years earlier was governor of Constantia. After a brilliant victory over the pretender Bahram in Aderbaijan, near the modern Tabriz, Chosroes is re-established as king. He cedes Dara, Anastasius' well-placed citadel, and a large strip of Armenia, stretching along Lesser Armenia; it has been long since the Romans had a frontier on the East so safe or so honourable. Armenians are in favour for their loyal support; the sons of Sembat, Ashot and Varazdirot, receive the rank due to the children of the Great King; their father, a vassal of Persia on specially advantageous

<sup>1</sup> Tchamtchian believes that this captain may be identified with John Mystakôn, an early general under Maurice, but there seems little reason.

terms, is made *Marzban* of Armenia and Hyrcania, lying south-west of the Caspian. Mouschegh, or "Musel," the Mamigonian, alone is envious and disappointed; like some feudal noble of Western Europe, he retires sullenly to his own estates. Ten years of peace and silent recovery (591-601) were a welcome relief to the peoples of the near East, hurried along against their will in the aimless quarrels of the two great powers. Only the Saracen free-lances seem to have distressed Chosroes by their raids; and on his remonstrance (601), Maurice sent George, "prefect of the East," and comptroller of the revenue (*φορολογίας ἐπιστασία*, Thph. Simoc.), to propitiate his offended ally. It was very typical of the disintegrating and individualist spirit then abroad, that the envoy boasted, openly and with impunity, that to his tact alone was due the success of a delicate business which the emperor could not have carried through. Meantime, as we know, "*urgentibus imperii fatis*," disaffection had penetrated the Western armies of Rome; the Avar campaigns were a failure; the toiling emperor could do nothing right in the eyes of his subjects. For a moment the destiny of the commonwealth hangs in the balance; but the evil genius prevails, and Phocas is elected by the troops. He was joyfully accepted by the capital and its factions (602), to their eternal shame and remorse.

§ 7. At this the unnatural and incredible peace was roughly broken. In 604 policy and the *manes* of his murdered friend drove Chosroes into a declaration of war, and the last and most dismal scene opens in the long fight. For eighteen years the Romans suffer indescribable hurt and ignominy (604-622); in six years their majesty is amply vindicated, and the exhausted combatants succumb to an unexpected foe. At this dramatic crisis in our history, we can readily forgive the turgid metaphors of the historian; the Persian king sounds the trumpet which announces the doom of a world, and over-

*Chosroes de-  
throned and  
restored by  
Rome in  
concert with  
Armenian  
nobles.*

*Welcome  
peace broken  
by the murder  
of Maurice.*

*Chosroes' war  
of vengeance  
against Rome.*

*Chosroes' war  
of vengeance  
against Rome.*

throws the well-being of Roman and Persian alike (κοσμοφθορον σάλπιγγα . . . λυτήριον ἐνπραγίας). The now pacified frontier had been denuded of troops, and all available forces had been sent over for the pressing needs of the Avar campaign. These were now hastily collected and despatched eastwards, under a eunuch, Leontius, soon to be supplanted by the new emperor's own brother (or nephew), Domenzoius, the *Curopolat*; for Phocas, like Maurice, seems to trust only a near relative in high command. A conspiracy of perhaps honourable silence among the historians disguises the details of this war; Theophylact is scanty, and the Oriental writers alone give us some tidings of a crisis, which forms such a signal refutation of *elective* monarchy. The Armenian princes, living in a spirited feudal society, careless like the later Teutons of any tie but personal loyalty, were not backward in offering themselves for the war of righteous vengeance. When Sembat dies in 601, Chosroes appoints a nominee recommended by the nobles—David, the Saharhounian. Ashot, his son, accompanied the king on an expedition into Roman Armenia; and being made lieutenant of Persian forces in that district, begins to ravage a country just reviving under the blessings of peace. Mouschegh (Μωσηλῆ), alone in his private appanage of Taron, remained, like Achilles in his tent, deaf to the call to arms; and in the truceless enmity of the two forces believed he had found the best guarantee for his own autonomy. Mihram sent against him a nephew of the Great King himself; is absurdly deceived by Vahan the Wolf, heir to the principality, and meets with woeful discomfiture; his army is divided and lured to its destruction piecemeal, and the independence of Taron seems secured. Vahan, succeeding to the chieftaincy in 605, still defies the might of Persia, and set an example which the unwieldy and dissolving empire of Rome could not imitate. Chosroes, indignant at the failure of his

*Mutinous  
independence  
of Taron.*



expedition and his nephew's death, sends his uncle, Vakhtang, against the rebel. But David the Marzban eludes the order to send reinforcements, and Vahan is completely successful. He dies in glory and independence at his capital Moush; and his son Sembat, having killed the second kinsman of the Great King, is for the present left alone in his precarious freedom. Such was the feudal atmosphere of Armenia; such were the centrifugal tendencies which rendered sovereign authority everywhere helpless at the beginning of the seventh century.

*Mutinous independence of Taron.*

### III

#### THE DYNASTY OF HERACLIUS AND THE EASTERN VASSALS

##### (a) TO THE DEATH OF CONSTANS III. (620-668)

§ 1. During his distant campaign in Persia, Heraclius had no reason to complain of the services rendered by Armenia in other parts of the empire. His unexpected vigour and success had reunited those scattered limbs and interests which had been falling apart in the years that followed Justinian's death. When the soldiers, despising a sexless rebel, saved him the trouble of punishing Eleutherius' revolt, the exarchate was given to Isaac, an Armenian (probably of the Camsar clan), 625 (?), whose epitaph, written by his wife Susannah, can still be read in St. Vitalis at Ravenna. He belonged to that princely caste who offered themselves to the emperors almost on equal terms—to that feudal and warlike nobility which still surrounded the Sassanid throne and tempered its despotism, only to vanish utterly in the democratic equality of Islam and the unchecked autocracy, its necessary consequence.

*Heraclius' attempt to secure religious conformity in Armenia.*

Ἄρμενιος ἦν γὰρ οὗτος ἐκ λαμπροῦ γένους  
ὁ τῆς ἀπάσης Ἀρμενίας κοσμὸς μέγας  
Ἰσαάκιος τῶν βασιλεῶν ὁ σύμμαχος.

*Heraclius' attempt to secure religious conformity in Armenia.*

(These lines show clearly the proud and independent spirit in which he served Rome, governing the curious patchwork which composed the imperial districts in Italy for eighteen years.) The problem of Heraclius in dealing with Armenians in their own country was one of religion, as will be seen in the sequel. David, lieutenant-general in Persarmenia since 601, and Prince of the Saharhounians, escaped to the Romans in 625, finding it difficult to conceal his sympathies in the crusade, or convince the king of his good faith. Varazdirot the Bagratid, son of Sembat, is his successor as *Marzban*; but exposed to the plots of an envious governor of Aderbaijan, Roustem, he follows the precedent set and takes refuge in the emperor's capital, after nearly seven years' command in Armenia (631). On the peace (628) Heraclius gave Roman Armenia to Mejej the Gnounian (*Μεζζέζιος*), a great-grandson of that Mejej who had long controlled Persarmenia under Cabades and Chosroes Nushirvan. Heraclius now tried to secure religious unity and persuade Armenia to accept the council of Chalcedon. The patriarch Esdras and Mejej consent, but are indignantly repudiated by the rest of the prelates; and the rupture of the churches has lasted to the present day. Meantime the independence of Sembat the Mamigonian, Prince of Taron, was secured by the weakness of Persia and his own craft. Surena, demanding the surrender of his brother Vakhtang's wife and children, is defeated; and Vahan or Baanes deceives and cuts to pieces some Persian troops under Dehram in a fashion strangely recalling the earlier successes of this house. Taron was now safe from interference, and this immunity from foreign control was shared with the adjacent districts of the Balounians, of Haschtiang, and of Ard-Shont.

§ 2. The flight of Varazdirot to Byzantium drove Armenia into alliance with the emperor. Rustem,

who had attempted to oust the late governor, was hindered by troubles at home and could not profit by his disappearance. Anarchy prevailed everywhere. The Patriarch Esdras, taking the lead like Moses, Domitian, Cyrus, Sergius (statesmen-pretates of the age), summoned a conference of peers, and with their consent despatched envoys to Heraclius (c. 632). The emperor, hoping for better fortune in political than in his recent religious intervention, sent out David, the ex-governor, with the high title *Curopolat*: this is the earliest instance of its use for an Armenian governor, and it will meet us at every turn in Armenian history together with the name *μάγιστρος*. But the attempt to rule independent nobles by a vassal prince of their own rank could not succeed; feudal pride was too strong. The nobles league and chase David from his post (c. 634), and civil war ensues till 636. Then Theodore, Prince of the Reschdounians (like Taron, near Lake Van), acquires sufficient force to exercise the precarious office of *Marzban* without authorisation from either monarch; quite in the fashion of some mediæval count, doubtful vassal of a German emperor and a French king. Meantime the Arab onslaught on the prostrate rivals had begun, and in the Roman service and in their own country Armenians are conspicuous. It is said that Vardan commanded a Roman army at the siege of Damascus (634), where the Greek writers give Theodore, the emperor's brother; while Vardan's son is on duty at Emesa. If it is true (and the two accounts are quite compatible), he will be a Mamigonian prince. In the same year of disaster (634) Heraclius sent a Vahan (or Baanes), also a Mamigonian, in joint command with Trithurius. (Of this Vahan Arab writers know nothing, but use consistently the name Vardan both for this colleague and for "Theodorus"). It is not difficult to see why he supplants the emperor's brother in the eyes of the

*Ambiguous position of Armenia between the two powers.*

*Advent of the Arabs.*

*Patriotic  
resistance  
under the  
Vahans.*

Arabians ; for he actually displaced him in a mutiny of the troops and was saluted emperor, curiously foreshadowing a very similar sedition of the Persians under Theophobus exactly 200 years later (*προχειρίζονται βασιλέα τὸν Β. καὶ Ἡράκλειον ἀπεκήρυξαν*, Thpl.). But the revolt of "Emperor" Bardanes comes to the same untimely end as that of his Armenian kinsman under Nicephorus I. (804): he retires to Mount Sinai and becomes a monk.<sup>1</sup> Another Armenian Vahan is killed at Tarmouk (636), where some read in error "Manuel": this officer, a Mamigonian Romaniser and a eunuch (according to Elmacin), was sent by Heraclius as governor of Alexandria and *Ἀγυοστάλιος*. But Armenian valour was sadly needed at home. Arab raids became frequent ; Abderrahman with 18,000 ravages Taron, raises tribute, and carries off women and children as slaves or hostages. Prince Vahan (a Camsar and Arsacid on the mother's side), son of Sembat of Taron, raises half this number to defend their country ; he aroused a Mouschegh into arms, and unhappily Sahour, Prince of the Andsevatsians, from the southernmost part of Vasparacan and the heart of Kurdistan mountains. This traitor ruined the patriotic enterprise and passed over to the foe, the loyal Armenians suffering a terrible rout and losing Mouschegh (*Μουσηλὲ*) and Diran, Vahan's brother, who enjoyed the rich satisfaction of slaying the renegade before his own death.

*Nationalism  
ruined by  
feudal  
paralysis :  
Sack of Dovin  
(640).*

§ 3. Theodore, Prince of the Reschdounians, tried without success to rally the nationalist cause ; feudal jealousies prevented any cohesion in the party.

<sup>1</sup> If we may trust an anonymous Syriac chronicler at the beginning of the fourteenth century, this was not the only instance of Separatism in the East, where private ambition defended in name the cause of the empire which had already been surrendered by the emperor : a certain Joseph makes himself master of Byblos, maintaining a petty State against Persian and Arab alike under the unauthenticated title of defender of the empire on the Phœnician coast ; Job succeeds and extends his dominion to Cæsarea Philippi.

The country lay open to the marauders, for the Arabs had as yet no idea whatever of empire. So pitiable was the condition of the land that Patriarch Esdras dies of grief (639) after a primacy of ten years and eight months; and at this signal the Arabs close in round his see-city, the capital Dovin, taking it by assault early in 640 (Epiphany, according to Asolik). It was burnt and laid waste, and 35,000 captives may attest past prosperity and present misfortune. Habib, ironically termed the "friend of Rome" (he was no doubt a constant but unwelcome visitor), was the author of this crushing blow to Armenian freedom. Believing resistance to be fruitless, the "Batrik" (*πατριτικός*) of "Basfouradjan" acknowledges the caliph; or rather surrenders through Habib to Moawiah, governor of Syria for Othman. In this anonymous official with a Roman title some have recognised Theodore, who had so lately tried to marshal his national army. Habib passed northward through Sisakon beyond the Araxes, seized Waïs, a strong fortress, and advancing into Iberia, seized Tiflis. All the princes of North Armenia and Iberia, and the chieftains of the Caucasus, pay tribute. Salman, his lieutenant, captured Bardaah, the capital of Otenè (in Albanian hands since the fall of the Arsacid monarchy in Armenia), and Schamkor, a citadel and district in the north (which comprised a separate lordship until the fourteenth century). The Arabs' success was continued into the fastnesses of Albania; Cabalaca (or Cabala), the capital, fell into their hands; and the petty Albanian chiefs in Schaki and up to the Caspian Sea were reduced to vassals. (But a terrible Nemesis awaited them (651), which we may here anticipate. The Khan of the Khazars proved an unconscious avenger of Rome and of Armenia; the Arab commander and his troops were confronted and exterminated, few escaping with the story.) Such was then the state of the country in the middle of the

*Nationalism  
ruined by  
feudal  
paralysis:  
Sack of Dovin  
(640).*

*Steady north-  
ward advance  
of the Arabs  
(640 sqq.).*

*Steady northward advance of the Arabs (640 sqq.).*

seventh century when Constans, grandson of Heraclius, was just issuing from tutelage into a wayward and headstrong manhood. Both powers claimed the suzerainty of Armenia (for in neither case did it amount by a direct administration); the Arabs, though continually ravaging, never made any permanent conquest; and the strange slave-dynasties of Turkmans, alien military oligarchies, Taherids, Sofarids, Bowids, Samanids, had no better success. It was reserved for the pacific avarice of the Byzantines and for the ruthless courage of the Seljukian Turks to overpower this sturdy outpost of eastern Christianity—or rather to drive its last representatives, like the Gothic remnant in Saracen Spain, into the fortresses of Cilicia and Georgia.

*After the visits of Constans III. Nationalists aim at autonomy.*

§ 4. But meantime affairs in Armenia had not stood still. Once more Theodore tries to confederate the nationalists. The Roman Senate had, in the name of the youthful Constans (642), sent the old *Curopolat*, Varazdirot, to resume whatever power he could over the turbulent local chiefs, who were quite out of sympathy with the uniform and centralised control of Rome. On his death Sembat, his son, succeeded to a vain dignity. Sembat (in a well-marked triple division of authority and department) was at the head of the civil administration; Theodore commanded the troops; and the new Patriarch Narses, or Nerses, showed all the vigour and capacity of an ecclesiastical statesman. These three, acting in a rare and happy agreement, endeavoured to restore order to the Church and State. But on a fresh inroad (646) through Peznounia (north-west of Lake Van) to the remote province of Ararat or Uriartu, Theodore and Sembat are forced to pay tribute once more. This news of his defaulting vassals reached the inflammable emperor, who seemed more anxious to punish this defection than prevent it by timely reinforcement. Constans III. arrived at Dovin, now recovering from its desolation, and was wel-

comed by the conciliating patriarch, Narses (c. 646). Valuable time and patience were exhausted in profitless theology. Constans, like his grandfather nearly twenty years before, attempts to force the Council of Chalcedon on the belief of Armenia. To secure a barren religious uniformity, he gave up a valuable occasion for establishing Roman suzerainty over a grateful people. On his retirement (647) the old feuds break out again, and the Symbol is repudiated. He now from a distance orders the three heads of the civil, military, and ecclesiastical society to convoke a council at Dovin and to urge the acceptance of the distasteful creed. Narses, finding himself in an untenable position between prince and people, and unable to satisfy either party, abdicates. In 649 Theodore secures John the Doctor for his successor, and the two convene an assembly at Mandzikert, in Central Armenia (651). But the fortunes of Armenia have taken an unexpected turn for the better. News of the defeat and overthrow of Habib's lieutenant may very likely have reached the conclave; the emperor was far off, and Roman troops were scanty. The princes believed themselves able to dispense with the support of Rome, its churches, its orthodoxy, and its imposts. They anathematise the creed of Chalcedon and all its adherents. Political and religious separatism had triumphed; and it may be that the lords were always more favourable to the loose suzerainty of the Arabian caliph.

§ 5. In this crisis Constans III. sent the gallant veteran, Mejej the Gnounian, commanding in Western Armenia, to conciliate his countrymen; but speedily replaced him by a certain Pasagnathes, "Patrician of the Armenians" (Thpl.), who is by no means so loyal to the Roman interest. Imitating the feudal princes around him and the example of Joseph and Job in Coele-Syria, of Eleutherius in Italy, he attempts to seize autonomy, and gives hostages to Moawiah.

*After the visits of Constans III. Nationalists aim at autonomy.*

*Waning of Roman influence; Armenia tributary to caliph.*

*Waning  
of Roman  
influence ;  
Armenia  
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caliph.*

Constans was roused to indignation ; unstable and precipitate, he advances to Cappadocian Cæsarea to punish his viceroy or his vassal, is seized with despair of reducing Armenia (*ἀπελπίσας τῆς Ἀρμενίας*), and beats a hasty retreat to the city of Constantine. Moawiah now determines to reduce Armenia, where he counts on the support of Pasagnathes. Abulpharagius speaks of a great expedition, of a double siege of the Cæsarea before mentioned, of an honourable tribute and capitulation ; and of the amazement and regret of the Arabs at the rich splendour of the city they had held to ransom. But the onslaught of Moawiah had produced a reaction in Greater Armenia ; Pasagnathes had made little progress in detaching the nation from the Roman alliance. In 653 another effort was made, this time with better success. Habib, "friend of Rome," was sent thither and defeated a Roman general, Maurianus, who was present with reinforcements for the loyalists. He chased him to Caucasus ; ravaged the country, burned the towns, and came home laden with booty and captives. The Armenian writers, John Catholicos and Asolik, believed that over 7000 hostages were carried off from the richer families as a pledge of their inaction. Theodore the Reschdounian, lieutenant-general and patriot, at last abandons the Roman cause. With his troops he passes over to Damascus, dying there the next year (654) ; his body is brought back and buried in his father's sepulchre in Vasparacan. The civil governor Sembat, *Curopolat*, dies about the same time ; and of the two only Narses is left. He comes out of his seclusion, and concert measures with the grandees of Armenia, to secure order and protect the country from a foe whose method of conquest was a mere raid. Hamazasp, son of David the Mamigonian, is now raised to the supreme civil dignity ; and Vard or Bardas, son of the late commander-in-chief, as the new general, divides with him the government.



Armenian authorities style these leaders "*Patrician*"; and with this Roman title they continued tributary to the Moslem.

*Waning of Roman influence; Armenia tributary to caliph.*

## IV

## UNDER THE HERACLIADS AND ISAURIANS

## (β) FROM CONSTANTINE IV. TO THE DEATH OF LEO III. (670-740)

§ 1. It seems abundantly clear that the Armenian soldiers in the immediate service of the empire were dissatisfied with the treatment of their country by the Heracliads. After the great opportunity in 628, the Roman policy had been vexatious and intermittent. It had neither protected Armenia as a friendly ally, nor governed her as a subject vassal—neither defended nor administered. The imperial visits had been unwelcome; for they had turned on points of religious difference, not on the urgent need of reinforcements against the unbeliever. While the Council of Chalcedon was pressed on the people with angry zeal, the country was left exposed to a ruthless power which recognised neither Chalcedon nor any other. In 667 Constantine IV., as yet beardless, was regent for his father absent in Sicily. The *στρατηγὸς Ἀρμενιακῶν*, Sapor the Persian-born (*Σαβῶριος Περσογένης*), revolts, an Amadounian prince; allied with Moawiah's troops he agrees with the caliph to pay tribute to him if he wins the empire. Sergius, "*magister militum*" (*στρατηλάτης*), was sent to Damascus to draw up the contract. But Rome was saved from the disgrace of becoming vassal to the caliph, under an Armenian, by a eunuch of the court. Andreas had been bold enough to refuse leave to the empress to accompany Constans westwards; just as the Patriarch Sergius had prevented a similar flight of the Emperor Heraclius himself. Before the caliph, at Damascus, the two

*Revolt of Armenian princes in East and West; Sapor and Mejej (668).*

*Revolt of Armenian princes in East and West; Sapor and Mejej (668).*

emissaries explain their terms—his favour is to be given to the highest bidder. Sergius, full of the true Byzantine hatred for a palace-chamberlain, insults Andreas; and the latter hurries off to arrange for a warm reception of the general from the Clisur-rarch of the Taurus (in the neighbourhood of Arabissus). Sergius, elated at his triumph, returns from his mission to be rudely seized in the moment of success. Andreas mutilates and hangs the rebel, not for the personal abuse but for his treason to the empire. Sapor dies of a fractured skull in an accident with a restive horse, while Nicephorus, patrician, is sent against him to Adrinople (which we must suppose to be some unknown spot within the limits of the Armeniac *theme*). The sedition of the Περσογένης had collapsed; but within a year an obscure cabal at Syracuse had procured the assassination of Constans at the bath, and the elevation of the handsome Armenian, Mejej, to taste for a brief season the cares rather than the delights of sovereignty. He is Μιζίζιος in Theophanes, Mizius to the barbarous translator in the *Miscella*, Mecetius to Paul the Deacon, Mezzetius to Anastasius. Michael, the Syrian patriarch, styles him a patrician; he was certainly a Gnounian prince; in no other family do we find this name. We may well ask whether he was not the son or grandson (εὐπρεπῆς κ. ὠραιότατος) of the aged Mejej, partner of Heraclius and governor of Roman Armenia? The entanglement of Justinian (patrician) and his son Germanus might persuade us to accept another hypothesis;—was this another attempt to transfer the throne to the survivors of a dispossessed dynasty, who had treated Armenia with greater fairness than the Heracliads? We may note that Germanus is castrated, and becomes later—like Ignatius, son of Michael I. (813)—patriarch of the capital city.

*Recovery of Armenia under suzerainty to caliph.*

§ 2. During the contest of Ali and Moawiah for the caliphate, Armenia recovered her lost independence and placed herself under the protection of

Rome. We find again the title "*Curopalat*"; but when Moawiah became recognised head of Islam, the Armenian again veered round against Rome, remembering the scanty aid rendered by the empire and the constant religious friction. Vard or Bardas, the Reschdounian, was prominent in the anti-Roman party. Hamazasp died after a principate of four years in 658; and the caliph "invests" his brother and successor, Gregory, on the demand of the grandes and the patriarch. It cannot be denied that under the infidel suzerain the country enjoyed a new life of peace and prosperity. The lords were harmonious; the prince tactful, pious, and enlightened; the tribute punctual; and the contingents of Armenia regularly figured in the muster-roll against the Roman Empire. In 683 (John Catholicos and Asolik are our authorities) this tranquil development was suddenly arrested. The Khazars, unconscious saviours of the Armenian State thirty years before, crossed the Caucasus on a pillaging enterprise, slay Gregory, and expose the land to two years' anarchy. In the last year of Constantine IV., a prince more fortunate in West than East, Ashot the Bagratid, rallying the forces against the northern raider, is recognised as "patrician." He gives (according to a sacred custom) the control of the troops to a brother, Sembat, and secures his position by dutiful tribute, the only indispensable incident in the condition of a Moslem vassal. The young Justinian II. and the caliph strike a peace for ten years in 686, which gives signal proof of progress and quiet recovery in the empire during the reign of the fourth Constantine. The caliph gave 3000 pieces of gold a day, one horse, and one slave, while the two powers shared equally (*κατὰ τὸ ἴσον*) the revenues of Cyprus, Armenia, and Iberia. But behind this apparent humiliation of the tributary caliphate lay a secret understanding of the utmost importance, which explains the sudden advantage of Rome in

*Recovery of Armenia under suzerainty to caliph.*

*Secret compact of Just. II. and the caliph: removal of the Mardaites.*

*Secret compact of Just. II. and the caliph: removal of the Mardaites.*

the negotiations. For some time past the Mardaites in the Cœle-Syria had been a thorn in the side of the Damascene court. Under a nominal allegiance to Rome, they had kept their autonomy and played off one power against its rival. Justinian II. now agreed to the removal of this inexpensive bulwark. A local chronicle of later date tells of the behaviour of Leontius, general of the East, and afterwards emperor (695–698), towards these gallant mountaineers: advancing to Cabbelias, their stronghold, with protestations of amity, he lured and killed John their chief. He appointed as successor the nephew of the dead prince, administered the oath of allegiance to the empire, and somehow contrived to appease their resentment. He then achieved the sole object of this sudden imperial interest in the Mardaites: he removes 12,000 of their best soldiers to Lesser Armenia, to Thrace, and to Pamphylia (where, like the Gotho-Greeks in an earlier age, they formed a military settlement or colony detached from the native populace, under their own commander at Attalia, the *κατεπάνω* (*Constant. Imp. ad imp.*, § 50; this would seem to be the work of Tiberius III., who sprang from those parts, and it is not beyond possibility that Leo the "Isaurian" was the son of one of these Apêlatic brigands). Without distracting attention to the origin and fortunes of this remarkable community, we may note that Roman opinion looked on these unauthorised defenders as a "brazen wall" (*χάλκεον τεῖχος*); and regarded Justinian's act as the capital error of his reign, whereby he permanently exposed the eastern frontier and mutilated the empire (*τὴν Ῥωμαϊκὴν δυναστείαν ἀκρωτηριάσας*). The Arabs, now relieved from fear, sought again and fortified anew the strongholds from Mopsuestia to the north of Edessa and Nisibis, and the parts round Martyropolis (*Miafarekin*).—The same Leontius was sent on as general *κατὰ τὴν Ἀρμενίαν*, with a force of 40,000 to overawe the

inhabitants and remind them of the mighty claims of Rome. He advanced right up to Albania to Mongam, the rich alluvial pastures and marshes at the mouth of the Cyrus, ravages twenty-five provinces or cantons, carries captive eight hundred families to be sold as slaves, and massacres the Saracens there.

*Secret compact of Just. II. and the caliph: removal of the Mardaites.*

§ 3. Armenia had then, by the end of Justinian's first reign, passed through the following vicissitudes since the rise of Islam, the collapse of the Sassanids, and the decay of Roman influence or continuous policy in the East. Arab invasions begin as early as 637; they capture and lose Dovin, 639; reduce a large part as Saracen province by 650, but soon, after the defeat by the Khazars, are driven out, 652-656; recover their footing by 657, and during the reign of the Roman emperor, Constantine IV., control the land by tributary princes; are challenged by Justinian in a restless but impatient policy, 686-693; and in 693 send governors to take the place of the native rulers. For in 692 Justinian had lost the great battle of Cilician Sebastè by the defection of his Slavonic mercenaries (*λαός περιούσιος*, to the number of 30,000, an unhappy imitation of Tiberius II.'s bodyguard). The caliph shakes off the tribute, and reasserts his sway over Armenia (693), since the inroad of Leontius a prey to anarchy and invasion. The Arabs had raided and carried off booty and slain Ashot the patrician, after four years' rule. In 690, Justinian had himself visited the East, with an army, divided into sections, for Armenia and for Albania. His presence compels the submission of the lords, tribute is paid and promised, and Roman control seems to revive. The government is entrusted to Narses of Camsar descent, son of Vahan: and he is honoured by the dignities of Patrician and *Curopalat*. The troops and military matters, with the title *πατρίκιος τῆς Ἀρμενίας*, are given (according to the familiar division of labour) to Sembat the Bagratid,

*Troubled state of Armenia after the visit of Just. II.*

*Arab inroads  
and removal  
of the capital.*

brother of the murdered Ashot. On the retirement of Justinian, who could intimidate but not defend, Abdallah, on behalf of the caliphs, marched to Dovin and secures the persons of the rulers by a trick, including the patriarch Isaac,—the chief pastor exercising (as we have often seen) in this feudal society very great political influence. Sembat manages to escape, and after opening a secret and hesitating intrigue with Leontius, general of the *Anatolics*, flies to Albania with Ashot his cousin, and Vard the son of Theodore, Prince of the Reschdounians. The Armenian cause is upheld only by a Roman resident or commissioner (*παράβουλος ὀνόματι Σαβίνοϛ*), who, indignant at the flight of Sembat, harasses and defeats the Arabs. His troops take Dovin, burn the renegade governor's palace, and march to Vartanakert, where the refugees were besieged; the siege is raised, the Arabs defeated and drowned in the breaking of the deceptive ice, which a frost of exceptional severity had formed on the Araxes. Leontius, well known in the East, has now become emperor (695), and he sends a namesake as *Curopalat*. Sembat moves the capital northwards to the fortress of Toukhars in Daïk (or Taïk), on the Lazic frontier, and for some time kept the country inviolate from Arab incursions. To this period (? 692 or earlier) must be referred an obscure alliance between the Khazars and the empire, resulting in a joint inroad from the north into the caliph's lands. Othman defeats the united force of 60,000 with 4000, if the figures are correct; and the caliph's nephew, Mohammed, at the head of 100,000, after a preliminary failure, defeats the Khazars; while his son Maslemah attacks and completely routs 80,000 at the gates of Tzour (or defiles of Derbend), and achieves a complete victory. It is hazardous to assign this event to any precise year in the caliphate of Abdalmelik, but the inroad would seem to show (1) the exposed and troublous state of Armenia

proper ; (2) the security or insolence with which the Arabs penetrated across it to attack the northern foe.

*Arab invasions and removal of the capital.*

§ 4. Meantime in Byzantium, Leontius gives place to Tiberius III. (698) ; and once more an Armenian pretender gives anxiety at court. Bardanes, son of Nicephorus, a patrician, is troubled with an early legend of an eagle shielding him from the sun in infancy. The same tale is narrated of Marcian and of Basil ; but the court was justifiably suspicious of Armenian immigrants of royal descent and imperial auguries, and he is exiled (c. 700) to Cephallenia, to reappear as first undoubted Armenian Cæsar in 711. Armenia, as was her wont, vacillated between the two powers ; Vahan, "*he of the seven devils*," a Mamigonian governor, was a faithful henchman to the caliphs, and reduced forts in Lesser Armenia for the use of Arabs. But on his retirement, the lords in secret conclave (*οἱ ἄρχοντες Ἀρμενίας*) decide to extirpate the Saracen intruder. Narses the Camsarid and Sembat the Bagratid lead the new revolt, always believing their late more tolerable than their present masters. Roman influence revives during this not discreditable reign of an obscure Cibyrrhæot (698-705) ; the northerly people of Vanand, by the Araxes, join the confederacy ; and it is proposed to welcome a Roman garrison for Greater Armenia,—an expedient which would have been long ago suggested but for the incurable feudalism which could neither brook tutelage nor dispense with foreign aid. At the same time, dread of the nearer power forces the insurgents to open negotiations with the caliph in case of failure ; and it is probable that the captive patriarch Isaac, dying (703) at Harran in Mesopotamia, was engaged on a conciliatory mission. But the day of vengeance was near : Mohammed entering Armenia with a large force massacres all Romans ; convenes through Cassim, his lieutenant, all the grandees (*μεγιστᾶνες*), and burns

*Terrible vengeance of caliph (705) against Romanising party.*

*Terrible  
vengeance of  
caliph (705)  
against  
Romanising  
party.*

*Armenian  
exiles flock  
into Roman  
service.*

them alive! Dovin is given to the flames; noble families are enslaved; pillage and desolation last for several years; and the poor remainder of the Christian nobility take measures for deserting their country and finding asylum on Roman ground. In 706, the *curopalat* Sembat, with two Arzrounian princes, Gregory and Gorioun, fly to Lazica, where Justinian II. allotted towns for their occupancy: but finding it difficult to live under official supervision, these feudal princes return to the despairing business of brigand- or guerilla-warfare. The silence which falls on Armenian history in the opening of the eighth century tells us emphatically of the decay if not of the extinction of national life. A feudal peerage, rent by jealous factions and supporting severally, like the Japanese Daimios, a warlike retinue of vassals and kinsmen, could not accept the control of either despotic or democratic monarchy. While they felt themselves free to join either party at pleasure, the sovereigns of New Rome and of Damascus regarded them at each default in the light of traitors and apostates. The sole administrative measure of these suzerains was a punitive expedition, brutal ferocity, a hasty nomination, and a hurried retreat. No attempt was made to annex or incorporate; and though both powers are to be blamed for a policy of slave-drivers, it may be confessed that the most prosperous years in the troubled century were passed under Arab allegiance. Yet the results of this most recent and vindictive act (705-6) desolated Armenia and sent her soldiers and captains wholesale into the ranks of Rome. Even more conspicuously than before, Armenian influence prevails in the imperial society and government. Alone the Greek Church maintains its independence and its suspicious attitude.

*Early adventures of  
Conon in the  
East.*

§ 5. The early experiences and success of Conon (or Leo III.) sufficiently attest his Armenian connections. He was sent by the restored Justinian II.



to subdue a revolt of Abasgia, Alania, and Iberia, which the greed of governors had roused during the impunity granted by the weakness of the central government (695-705). He was also (it was said by the malignant) despatched by a jealous prince upon an errand from which he would never return alive. But Conon falsified this secret hope. Known to us as an able leader and an implacable persecutor, he displayed all the arts of a tactful diplomat. Deprived of his military chest (it was said with Justinian's connivance), he secured the cordial help of the Alans against the mutineers. 'The Alans deceive them by a profession of sympathy, surround their forces, and at his orders exterminate them. Another Roman detachment was defeated by the Saracens (?) before Archæopolis in Lazica. Conon is now cut off by his relentless foes ; and only manages to slip through by a perjured guile, by which Pharasmanes, governor of the Iron Fortress in the Caucasus, consents to capitulate and join the Romans, but is seized and his citadel razed to the ground. Leo gained Absilia, was received with honour, and sailed from Trebizond for the capital, to find that Anastasius II. was fixed on the throne (713). We make much of these early stories of great men, but this series of incidents throws perhaps little light upon the state of feeling in the East. It is clear that exchange of suzerains was easy, that Abasgia and Lazica were in the main loyal to the Romans, but that the Saracens (?) found no difficulty in penetrating to the very capital of Colchis. Yet it is from this half-mythic exploit that Leo III. won the command of the *Anatolics*, and the reputation which made the caliphate recognise in him the future emperor.—About this time the authorities supply us with conflicting rumours on the behaviour and policy of Rome towards the Armenians, which make it difficult to discover the truth : at the close of his reign Justinian (in Syrian accounts) is said to drive out these natives from his dominion,

*Early adventures of Conon in the East.*

*Two Armenian emperors: problems (1) of Armenian settlements and (2) origin of Leo III.*

while the Arabs gave them a home (c. 709). This (unless two accounts are given of a single event) was repeated under the Armenian Bardanes, now the Emperor Philippicus, in 712: "He chased them from his territory, and the Arabs gave them settlements in Melitenè." So Abulpharagius and Michael Syrus, and even Theophanes, seem to agree, *οἰκῆσαι ἠνάγκασεν*, which might easily be applied to one who made them shift their quarters. The natural and accepted account is of course exactly the reverse: Philippicus established his fellow-countrymen, expelled from their domiciles, in Melitenè, and in Fourth Armenia. History is, alas! not so explicit as to the respective power of Rome or the caliphate to allot land in these districts; and we are obliged to leave an obscure transaction with this remark:—the settlers seemed in the end to become rather the friends of the caliph than partisans of the empire. So confused are the homesteads and the population by the shifting of entire countrysides in this era, that it is not surprising if we cannot assign the birth and descent of Leo with any accuracy. Did he belong to the Mardaite borderers? Was he born, like Artavasdus, his son-in-law, at Marach, near Germanicea, on the confines of Syria and Cilicia? Technically, the name "Isaurian" means little; Leo III. was not a compatriot of Zeno. But the name *Syrian* means still less. It is incontestable that he represented Armenia in character and creed, that his chief allies and relatives came from that nation, and that he believed himself closely united with it.

*Unqualified submission to the caliph (from 710).*

§ 6. Still we find Arab intervention in the north stern and imperious. In 710, Othman seized Camakh, or Ani, the ancient capital of Armenia, with its images of the old Armenian gods and its sepulchres of the kings of the Haik dynasty. About 720, the country was once again aroused by the din of war, and became the scene of a renewed struggle of Khazars with the Moslem. Maslemah, the son of Caliph

Abdalmelik, who failed in the great siege of Constantinople, now *governor of Armenia*, has to repress the invaders: Armenia has no longer native and tributary rulers, but a prince direct from Damascus. In 722, he carries the war across the Caucasus into the homes of the enemy. For the next ten years Maslemah appears and disappears in an Armenian command, according to the caprice of his brother, Caliph Hischam. We find him in 728 laying siege to Derbend, but suddenly retiring (*δειλανδρήσας*) by one of those inexplicable panics, which seem common enough for Roman and infidel generals in the East about this time. He is again displaced in 731, to make room for Merwan, an Ommiad, and son of Mohammed, who long governed a contrite or suppressed Armenia. Under him "order reigned in" Armenian "Warsaw"; the country was consolidated; the Khazars repressed or conciliated; the petty princes along the Eastern Caucasus reduced to order. It was the era of unquestioned Arabian supremacy.

*Unqualified  
submission to  
the caliph  
(from 710).*

## DIVISION B

### PREDOMINATING INFLUENCE WITHIN (740-1040)

#### V

### ARMENIANS WITHIN AND WITHOUT THE EMPIRE FROM CONSTANTINE V. TO THEOPHILUS (c. 740-840)

*Revolt of  
Artavasdus  
and trans-  
plantation of  
Constantine V.*

§ 1. IT becomes difficult in the period before us to keep distinct the streams of political development and of Armenian infiltration. Deprived of local life, Armenia poured the best treasures of her warlike or feudal temper into the empire, and contributed largely to its internal history. The revolt of Artavasdus must be once more treated under this heading (742, 743). To the line of Baanes and Mizizius and Bardanes-Philippicus is added a new pretender, son-in-law of the great Iconoclast by Anna his daughter, and father of Nicephorus. A civil war at this juncture was little short of disastrous for the fortunes of the commonwealth; Constantine to the end of his reign was hampered by the losses of this needless family quarrel. But it was more than a contested succession or a domestic sedition; it was a national movement. The troops concerned are *Armenians* and *Armeniacs*—that is, troops supplied by the princelings (like Hessians in the eighteenth century) serving as allies under the imperial standard, and troops stationed in the *Armeniac theme*, by origin and sympathy equally Oriental. At Modrina, on the Bithynian frontier of Phrygia, the patrician Tiridates lost his life, an Armenian and cousin of Artavasdus; and his soldiers refuse to yield, determined not to survive their compatriot or accept

quarter from aliens. These troops had long formed the flower of the Roman armies; and their obstinate valour led to a serious loss (Constant. Imp. *ad: imp: i. 2*). The Domestic sent to gather provisions for the beleaguered capital bears the same Armenian name as his master; and the chief minister and companion of Artavasdus' flight (743) is the patrician Βακταγείος (or with Zonaras better, Βακτάγγιος) in which we can easily read Vakhtang. Almost two centuries had elapsed, when the revolt was at last subdued, since Artaban's attempt on the life of Justinian in 548.—Ten years later, when Abbassid caliphs have supplanted Ommiads, and Pepinids the effete line of Clovis, when the Exarchate had been torn from the empire,—the East awakens to life once more. Chusan revolts against the Emir of Mesopotamia, at the same time Governor of Armenia; with the help of Roman troops he takes Melitenè and Theodosiopolis; Camakh (or Ani) as well, if we accept the account of Abulpharagius. Constantine V. adopts the transplanting policy of Justinian II.; from these towns he takes large numbers of heretics, and with them replenishes the terrible gaps left in his capital by the Great Pestilence. Scylitza (Cedrenus) calls them "kinsmen of the emperor; Armenian and Syrian schismatics" (*συγγενεῖς . . . Ἀρμεν. κ. Σύρους αἵρετικούς*), following Theophanes, the violent hater of the Iconoclasts. Probably they were Paulicians; and we shall find them later arguing with Alexius Comnenus at the close of the eleventh, and still existing in the nineteenth century, as a suspected but tolerated community in Thrace. Caliph Mansour fights with varying success; his forces are beaten back with discredit from the siege of Camakh (Ani), but he manages to rebuild Arsamosata (767) on the Euphrates, and in 771 he captures Samosata and Germanicea, the birthplace of the reigning dynasty, "decanting" the population into Palestine (*μετεποιήθη εἰς Παλαιστίνην*).—In 772 a Vardan is

*Revolt of Artavasdus and transplantation of Constantine V.*

*Armenian monopoly of military command.*

found in command of the Roman *theme* of the Armeniacs; and six years later (778) a great force of 100,000 men is raised under Leo IV., in which all the four generals of divisions are clearly of Armenian descent; Artavasdus of the *Anatolics*, Tatzates of the *Buccellarians*, Caristerotzes of the *Armeniacs*, Gregory, son of Mazalacius, of the *Obsicians*; the entire army being placed under the control of the famous old monk-hunting Michael Lachanodracon of the *Thracians*. Tadjat is a favourite name with the Arzrounian and Gnounian princes; and it is interesting to notice that, thirty years after the rising of Artavasdus, his compatriots monopolise all the chief military posts, and as a consequence the entire government of Asia Minor. Little was accomplished by this vast and unwieldy host: but more Jacobite Syrians were transferred to Thrace; perhaps to act as a counterpoise or solvent to the Hellenic orthodoxy, against which the Armenian camarilla had declared a truceless war.

*Vigorous policy of Harun; constant duel at Byzantium between Armenian generals and Orthodox reaction.*

§ 2. In 780 a new and romantic figure claims our notice. Harun enters for the first time on the stage as governor of Aderbaidjan, a post in our own day allotted to a Persian heir-apparent. But the position included the control of Armenia; and by the side of the inexperienced prince was a faithful Barmecide as Secretary of State. With this year then begins a more vigorous and vexatious policy towards the lands of the empire; and at home a long and obscure series of conspiracies takes its start, aiming at the dethronement of Constantine VI. and Irene. Incessant intrigue and suspicion was the atmosphere in which moved the unfortunate half-brothers of Leo IV. Decorated with the empty titles of Cæsar or *Nobilissimus*, they became for more than thirty years a storm-centre and a rallying-point for the malcontents. The last intimation of their existence is found in the reign of the first Michael, when their dynasty had irretrievably passed away; though

a few who recalled the services of the "Isaurian" house looked with regret at the blinded princes, the blameless instruments or pretexts of revolution for so long a time. This year (780) sees the earliest attempt to place Nicephorus on the throne; and the plot includes the father of a future emperor, Bardas, general of the *Armeniacs*. Now in the dim light which fitfully illuminates a dark period we are left to surmise, and may often be led astray by an excessive interest in the meagre detail. But it seems impossible to avoid the following conclusions: that since the time of Leo the whole imperial forces in Asia had been in the hands of a small band of devoted Armenian adherents, who thoroughly sympathised, like Cromwell's Ironsides, with the policy of image-breaking and monk-hunting; that the Orthodox reaction looked to Irene the Athenian, strangely-mated consort of Leo IV.; that the last twenty years of the dynasty were not a mere household quarrel between a capable mother and a wayward son, with designing uncles in the background: rather was it a serious contest between two rival creeds, two rival methods of government. Irene represents Orthodoxy, pacific principles, and palace-control; the leaders of the army represent a bluff and jovial worldliness, anti-clerical and undoctrinal, and an aggressive frontier policy. These incidents are treated elsewhere, in our estimate of the imperial position and its dangers. We must here restrict our attention to their *Armenian* aspects; yet it will not be easy to keep the threads apart, so closely interwoven is the national, the religious, the political issue. The Saracens' inroads, menacing all Asia Minor, begin anew in 781, the annual tournament, or rather purposeless slave-raid, which excites the impatience of the historian and the reader. Chief command of the imperial troops is entrusted to the eunuch John, significantly enough; not for the first time had the court found security in supplanting

*Vigorous policy of Harun; constant duel at Byzantium between Armenian generals and Orthodox reaction.*

*Vigorous  
policy of  
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stant duel at  
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between  
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generals and  
Orthodox  
reaction.*

a too popular general by a pliant agent of the palace, and some of the great Roman successes had been won by the latter. Eleutherius the exarch (619) was a eunuch, and perhaps owed his failure and death to the circumstance, and in 782, another, Theodore, was sent in command to Sicily. This is the first occasion for many years that we read of such an appointment, and no doubt it marked a deliberate purpose in the regency of Irene. The civil service, or rather the palace-clique, were to be pitted against the strength of the Armenian general, the military caste; and from this moment dates the tedious duel which fills all our later records to Alexius (1081). Michael Lachanodracon (who held command in Asia for forty years) and the Armenian Tatzates defeated the Arabs under the vigilant supervision of the eunuch, who desired, with the court, that the result of the battle should be neither too disastrous nor too triumphant; in the victory there must be a discreet and moderate exultation, and no single personality should stand out before the public gaze. Elmacin tells us that certain Greek troops fled to *Damsak*, lord of Malch (*Μάλλος*, in Thph. *Μήλον*; in the *Miscella*, *Milium*); this will be, as *Batrik* of Patricius, an equivalent of *Domesticus*, already used for the chief commander in the East. We cannot avoid the conclusion that this *new* title implies that change of policy which placed all large forces under direct central control. In the next centuries the name *Domestic of the Schools* will be the invariable appellation of the generalissimo; but the *Schools* are the household troops, and their commander an emissary or a satellite of the palace.

*Treason of  
Tatzates  
owing to hate  
of courtiers.*

§ 3. The want of harmony between the two departments may well have emboldened Harun; he advances to Chrysopolis, near Chalcedon, without let or hindrance. Nicetas, a eunuch and a chief favourite with Irene, defended the town (called by Elmacin *al-Koumas*, the Count, by Ibn-al-athir, *Koumas-al-*



kawamis, Count of counts, on the analogy of Emir of emirs). Lachanodracon suffered a reverse, and turned to fly on the plain of Darenig in Lydia; 15,000 Romans perished. Nor was the panic at Constantinople allayed by the next item of intelligence—that Tatzates had passed over to the caliph, finding the insolence of the eunuch Stauracius insufferable. Long ago the *pretorian prefect*, despoiled of direct military command, had taken his revenge by controlling the stipends and the commissariat; now (true to the civilian policy) the accountant (*λογοθέτης*, whether of post or of exchequer) could harry the army corps by interference, formalities, and delay. Nor need we betray surprise if an Armenian Christian *magarizes*; it may well be that the crude belief of a Paulician or an Athingan was in fuller sympathy with Islam than with Christianity. In the dearth of evidence, we need not refer Tatzates to one or other of these heterodox sects: yet there is reason to think that, among the military caste, such views were more prevalent than the Greek Church would have us believe. And it is well to remind those who see in the Albigenses or Cathari the forerunners of Protestantism and the pure gospel, that in the Western sects, as in the Oriental, there was little distinctively Christian at all, either in dogma or in practice. The treason of Tatzates bore immediate fruit; invited as if to an honourable conference, the chief minister of Irene was seized by his advice, and held to ransom by the unscrupulous Harun. Disgraceful terms were dictated, and the empire paid 65,000 pieces of gold for the liberty of some menials of the court. Harun, contemptuous, gave the commonwealth a breathing space, which was employed by Irene (785) to reverse the Iconoclast policy at a formal council. The guard, whether from Puritan conviction or loyalty to the Isaurian memory, violently interrupted the conclave and menaced the Greek bishops with death. Irene treated the revolt

*Treason of  
Tatzates  
owing to hate  
of courtiers.*

*Violent  
Armenian  
and military  
opposition to  
Images (785).*

*Violent Armenian and military opposition to Images (785).*

*First deposition of C. VI. frustrated by the Armenian troops.*

with adroitness and clemency. A feint of a Saracen inroad allows her to transfer these Armenians across the Bosphorus, where they are at once disbanded; their wives and effects are sent after them, and they are forbidden to set foot in the capital city again. Meantime, Stauracius enrolled loyal Thracians in their place as the bodyguard of the sovereigns. So turned out the first attempt to roll away the Armenian incubus, as this court-party and the Orthodox Church without doubt believed. It is clear that the removal of the anti-Hellenic element could not have been complete; for the Armeniac guards play a considerable part in the revolution of 790. In the interval, Constantine VI. had emerged into manhood, and resented the trifling and ceremonious part allotted to the legitimate Augustus. He had suffered the great disappointment of his life in losing his romantic Western bride Rotrud (*Ῥοτρούδω*), and being forced to wed Maria, a beautiful and pious but humbly-born Paphlagonian. He was embittered and dangerous; Irene removed him, by her act exciting the deep displeasure of the Armeniacs. Alexius Mouschegh (*Μωσσηλῆ*), *Spathaire* and *Drungaire* of the night-watch, being sent to appease them (with singular shortsight), merely places himself at the head of a movement of his countrymen with which he felt in complete sympathy. The rest of the *Thematic* troops, curiously massed as it would seem within sight and reach of the capital, assemble and salute Constantine VI. sole emperor, who at once confirms Alexius in the captaincy of the *Armeniaks*. The fierce delight of old Michael Lachanodracon may be imagined, in the pleasing duty of administering an oath to the troops never to receive Irene as ruler: two years later he closed his restless career in battle against the Bulgars, 792.

*C. VI. estranges his Armenian supporters.*

§ 4. A third intrigue of the discontented with Cæsar Nicephorus enables Stauracius to implicate Alexis Mouschegh in the plot. Constantine blinds

his faithful servant on a false suspicion; and the superstitious noted with satisfaction that exactly five years later, in the very month of August, and on the same day of the week, he suffered the same penalty. The pent-up fury of the Armeniac troops broke out at this treatment of their general; they imprisoned Theodore Camulianus, sent to remonstrate with them, and cut to pieces a detachment, no doubt of Thracians (and amongst these we may note with some astonishment the commander's name, Constantine Ardashir, an Armenian). Terror prevailed at Constantinople; but the storm-cloud suddenly dissolved under the influence of money, as the violent factions had been appeased under Justinian. The year 797 is signalised both by the second and final dethronement of Constantine VI., and by two abortive attempts to elevate his uncle Nicephorus; the fourth plot of this unhappy puppet of a losing faction was followed by his banishment to Athens, whither the eunuch Stauracius sent him, lured from the safe asylum of S. Sophia. Here his partisans once more meditate revolt; but the citizens, devoted to Irene, and led by her brother the patrician Constantine Serantapêchys, save the government further trouble by inflicting blindness on all the brothers.

*C. VI.  
estranges his  
Armenian  
supporters.*

*His removal;  
plots of the  
sons of C. V.*

The presence of an insolent foe, in the heart of the empire and within sight of the capital, cannot have implied in those days the ignominy and panic, the paralysis of trade and government, which it would entail to-day. The reign of Irene was by no means wanting in dignity; but the strong Asiatic contingents must have been seriously weakened, and the frontier defence imperilled, when we read that in 798 the stables and horses of Irene and Stauracius, on the shores of the Bosphorus, were plundered by the Arabs, and that Peter, Count of *Obsicians*, was cut to pieces resisting with his band. It was perhaps in the same year as Charles' coronation as Western emperor, that the strange veto was placed

*Peril of the  
capital*

*and re-  
moval of  
Irene by the  
Stauracian  
party.*

*Peril of the capital and removal of Irene by the Stauracian party.*

by Irene on the intercourse of the military caste with this minister; and we only mention it here as a proof of the jealous separation of departments prevailing at this time, or perhaps inaugurated by the first female sovereign. Meantime, a plot was forming (800) within the precincts of the palace and the ministries, to deprive Irene as she had deprived her son. The historian is prepared to see in Nicephorus (descendant of the Ghassanid king Djabalas), a kinsman of the powerful eunuch, and to explain the sudden elevation of a civilian comptroller of the finances by the same unseen agency as raised Michael IV. to the throne in 1034. Masoudi and Abulpharagius agree in calling his father Istibrak, which may well be a version of Stauracius; and his son and successor bore the same name. Yet we must allow that the minister was by this time dead, and that his crafty brother looked for other supporters in his venture. On the disgrace or demise of his rival, the eunuch Aëtius divided between himself and his brother Leo the chief military command near the capital; he unites the colonelcy of *Obsicians* and *Anatolics*, giving Leo the European troops of Thrace and Macedonia. But the Stauracian party was not extinct. Seven eunuchs combine with rare unanimity in the cause of Nicephorus: Nicetas, already named, with three eunuch brothers of the Trefoil or Triphyllian family; and in the remaining three is found Gregory, son of Musalacius, who may be kinsman to the general of the *Obsicians* in 778.

*Exceptional post created for Armenian general in Asia.*

§ 5. It is hard to believe that the throne was quietly transferred, not from an individual but from a dynasty, without the connivance or approval of the strongest factor in the State. At all events Nicephorus took a very strong step in appointing Bardanes (Vartan) the Mamigonian to an exceptional position in Asia, or at least in confirming him in the post (*μονοστρατηγὸς τῶν πέντε θεμάτων*, says Thph. and

his continuator) charged with (ἐφορεία and πρόνοια) the full oversight of all. It may be well surmised that on the death of Staurace a bolder policy was welcomed in regard to the East, and that in spite of the *civilian* jealousy of these exceptional military commissions, something like a dictatorship in Asia was invented to secure the frontier and restore peace to the interior. This office either dated from the latter days of Irene, or it was bestowed by Nicephorus,—in either case, Bardanes could not have been wholly ignorant of the revolution of 802, or wholly acquiescent unless he consented. Constantine Sathas has perhaps too sweepingly pronounced that changes on the throne from 700 to the Venetian capture in 1204 were invariably the work of the Asiatic troops. If so, the elevation of Nicephorus the Arabian provides a notable exception, unless we suppose that here, once more, an Armenian officer preferred to delegate rather than usurp the chief place. But his approval of Nicephorus was soon changed into hostility. His soldiers hurried along a path of perilous ambition a general who was brave, equitable in dividing the spoils, and animated by no friendly feeling towards a hated civilian exactor. Like some general in the third century, or like Julian in the fourth, he is forced to take the dangerous step by the urgent entreaties and threats of his men. Only the *Armeniacs* stood out, and their refusal is somewhat puzzling. Bardanes the Turk (ὁ τοῦρκος), who was no more an orthodox Christian than Nicephorus or Michael II., took the precaution (so runs the story) of consulting a wizard. The purple is promised to his two companions-in-arms, Leo and Michael, but he and Thomas are classed together as pretenders destined to fail. The two obscure captains, on whom rested the shadow of coming greatness, lost no time in separating themselves from a countryman who had aimed too high. Leo was the son of Bardas, who after holding com-

*Exceptional post created for Armenian general in Asia.*

*His discontent and revolt.*

*His Armenian officer Leo joins Nicephorus.*

*His  
Armenian  
officer Leo  
joins  
Nicephorus.*

mission as στρατηγός in Armenia under Leo IV., had joined the unsuccessful plot of 780, and had been whipped and cashiered. But his disgrace had not prejudiced his son's promotion in the ancestral art of the *condottieri*. His family claimed Arzrounian descent (κατήχθη γὰρ ἐκ τῶν Σεναχηρείμ, says George Monachus), a family or princely dynasty owning vast territory in Southern Armenia, towards the mountains of Kurdistan and Assyria. (The prevalent passion for tracing descent from Assyrian, Persian, or Armenian stock appears clearly in Leo, in Theophobus, and Theodora; lastly in Basil, the so-called Macedonian, whose pedigree was written up by Photius, to show a clear lineage from the Arsacidæ.) Nicephorus welcomed the friends of the pretender. Each received a post of trust and an estate of good emolument; Leo became chief of the *Federates* (φοιδεράτων), and enjoyed the imperial domain (βασιλικὸν οἶκον) of Zeno and Dagistheus; Michael was appointed count of the court (κομῆς κοόρτης), or seneschal of the imperial tent, and received the rents of the estate of Carianus. Once more, the only way to overcome an Armenian competitor was to depend on Armenian aid. The revolt ended in the flight of the regretful Bardanes, his entrance into a convent, and the sinister story of his loss of sight at the hands of some wild Lycaonians (λυκάνθρωποι, says Thph.). Public rumour asserted that these were sent by Nicephorus himself, though he not only denied complicity, but mourned seven days for his unhappy rival. Even if the worst side of the story be true (and we have every reason to distrust contemporary witness about Nicephorus I.), it says much for the humanity of the times that he thought it worth while to pretend sorrow for a punishment, which in any other age would have been deemed ridiculously inadequate.

*Armenian  
conspirator  
only overcome  
by Armenian  
aid.*

§ 6. Harun in 803 advanced right up to the Bosphorus, and this time he carried with him a tame

aspirant to the legitimate purple, Thomas, the son of Mousmar. This person has been supposed to be identical with the companion of Bardanes and the later rebel whose sedition wrought havoc throughout Lesser Asia. But the foreign authorities state that he claimed to be the "son of Constantine VI.," palpably impossible by computation of age, and wholly irreconcilable with the later "white hair" of the pretender of 823. Constantine VI. himself might have been just over fifty in the time of Michael II.; and we cannot conceive that one who claimed to be his son should then show marks of old age. No doubt he gave out that he was Constantine himself, a legitimate scion of a successful dynasty, still popular with a large number of the subjects of Rome. Harun knew, and in secret scorned, the imposture, but he outwardly treated the pretender Constantine with the respect due to his dignity. But this bold enterprise, like all the incursions of Harun, had no result; and the militant caliph of romance died in 809, having wrought great and purposeless mischief to the Roman commonwealth. In 806 Bardanes Anemas, clearly an Armenian minister, was charged (so the authorities report) to reduce the settlers in Thrace to the level of imperial serfs, tilling imperial demesne-land. Once again in 808, an Armenian appears as plotting against the emperor, Araates, of Camsar extraction, and *quæstor* (or chancellor); Nicephorus, with the tired or ironical clemency characteristic of his reign, cut his hair and sent him to meditate in a Bithynian monastery. Our accounts of Nicephorus come from garbled and prejudiced sources; and it is from Abulpharagius that we learn that he was a gallant prince, by no means despised by his Oriental foes or invariably unsuccessful in warfare. It cannot be denied that his attachment to Hellenic orthodoxy, or even to Christianity, lay under deserved suspicion. I am not inclined to dismiss summarily, as the unscrupulous

*A false Constantine VI. supported by Harun.*

*Armenian ministers and conspirators.*

*Armenian  
ministers and  
conspirators.*

scandal of political or religious partisans, the stories of his heretic sympathies or pagan practices. He was the cordial friend (διάπυρος φίλος) of Manichees, that is, of Paulicians, whom he allowed to found a little State in Armenia. Like Michael, he consorted with the mysterious Athingans of Phrygia; his Lycaonians were not merely rough henchmen but disseminators of heresy. He consulted gipsies and soothsayers; he submitted to a rite resembling the Mithraic *taurobolium*. If he was not, like Leo, a determined Iconoclast, it was merely because he was devoid of religious conviction; himself of Arabian descent, he reminds one of the Morescoes—an outward conformity concealing an utter indifference. Leo the "Assyrian" was made by him στρατηγός of the *Armeniacs*, and, like his greater "Isaurian" namesake just one hundred years earlier, he lost his military chest—not this time through treachery, but by carelessness. The emperor is content with a beating and a sentence of exile. He owed his advancement to a victory over Thebith in an Arabian inroad; and to a curious act of perfidy at the great battle of Adrinople, in which, following so soon after the death of Nicephorus, every other empire but the Byzantine must have succumbed (June 22, 813). It is perhaps unwise to trust the biassed and clerical historians; and the same doubtful tale is told of Decius' successor, Gallus (251), and of Romanus I. (919). In any case, Leo had not lost the affection of his Oriental troops, or the confidence of the capital. It is more than likely that the *Armeniacs* were determined to make something out of their employment on a European shore, outside their own province, and to claim the usual prerogative of the troops of Anatolia in creating and unmaking princes.

*Success and  
elevation of  
Leo the  
Armenian  
(813).*

§ 7. Over these important forces, at least over the *Armeniacs*, Leo V. placed Manuel, an Armenian and a Mamigonian. His own son Sembat he created



colleague and Augustus, changing his name to the ever-popular Constantine, like Leo III., whom he set before him as his model. John the Grammarian is made patriarch of the Morochorzenian clan; his father Bagrad or Pagrat (Παγκράτιος), and his brother Arsharis (Ἀρσαρήης) sufficiently display their nationality. Leo is displaced by another bold and ignorant soldier of fortune, Michael of Amorium; and in the absence of any legal ruler, the succession is contested with equal right by Thomas, son of Mousmar. I will not here dwell on the peculiar character of this revolt (821-3). The *Obsicians* and *Armeniaks* did not join the pretender, but his ranks were swelled not merely by needy Socialists but by Saracen subsidies and detachments of Parsee dualists. It was a strange assortment; Thomas himself was called indifferently a Slavonian, a Scythian, or the son of a Byzantine emperor; and his host represented every race, creed, and nation of the East. Twice he attacked the capital; and fell at last, no doubt because he could not undermine the loyal attachment of the Armenians to the candidate who was first in the field. The short reign of Michael II. gave little prognostic of the future splendour of the dynasty. Crete was torn away (824), and continued in detachment until its recovery by Phocas under Romanus II. (962). Sicily was almost entirely lost to the Saracens (827), and the slender cord of sentiment or tribute which bound the remote Dalmatian coast was snapped, if we may trust the terse and summary dictum of Scylitza (Cedrenus) (Ἀπεστάτησε πᾶσα ἡ Δαλματία). Indeed, like Gallienus (260-268), the emperor merely joked about the loss of territory as modifying the toil of his office. There were not wanting those who reminded him that with a few more such lightenings of labour, the imperial dignity would become superfluous. Indeed, it seems quite clear that the heart, the vigour, and the policy of Rome lay solely in the Armenian mountains. The

*Success and elevation of Leo the Armenian (813).*

*Serious menaces to the State under Michael II.*

*Armenian help and alliance indispensable to Rome.*

*Armenian  
help and  
alliance  
indispensable  
to Rome.*

steadiness of the Eastern frontier during the reigns of Leo V. and Michael II., the restoration of order and plenty after Thomas' destructive insurrection, were due to the loyalty of Asiatic troops under Manuel; and the true inner history of the empire should be written rather from some frontier citadel in the East than from the palace in the capital. The real and serious happenings might be told by tracing not the series of pageant emperors but the records of Manuel, John Curcuas (920-942), or Nicephorus Phocas and Zimisces: and these do less for the commonwealth in the purple than as simple generals of the East. So indispensable was the Armenian influence that we may at once discount the pleasing legend of the marriage of Theophilus. Policy, not whim or accident, dictated such an alliance. Theodora is a niece of the brave champion of the East, and the whole family are staunch Armenians and marry husbands of the same nation; her sister Mary is found united to Arshavir, a *μάρτυρος*, possibly the brother of the patriarch John. Throughout the reign (829-842), Manuel and Theophobus the "Persian" are the principal commanders; Theophobus is rewarded by the highest dignities of the realm, the hand of the emperor's sister, Helen, and at last by suspicion, disgrace, and death.

*Services to  
the empire of  
Armenia  
under  
Theophilus;  
Alexis and  
Theophobus.*

§ 8. From Persarmenia too comes Babec, for five years rebel against the suzerain caliph (c. 831), with 7000 men of his own country. These settled at Sinope, like the Mardaites at Attalia, formed an independent military commonwealth, raised their numbers to fourteen and subsequently to thirty thousand, and gave the court anxious moments when they desire to restore a *national* monarchy in the person of Theophobus. For he succeeded to the captaincy of the formidable band on Babec's death; and the "Persians" are loaded with favours and legal privileges; intermarriage is permitted and encouraged; and the soldiers rise to the highest titles and places in

the military service of the empire (*βασιλικοῖς ἀξιόμασιν, κωδιξι στρατιωτικοῖς*). Theophanes' continuator tells us with pardonable hyperbole, ὄλον ἔθνος ὑπήκοον, and Leo Grammaticus adds the significant item that down to his day there are detachments called *τοῦρμαι περσῶν* in all the *themes*,—whose origin we shall presently have occasion to remark. These troops surround Theophilus the "unfortunate" in the disastrous battle of 835; and Manuel saves his life. In the same year Manuel, more an ally than a subject, crosses over to the caliph; and having repented him of his *magarizing*, is welcomed with open arms by Theophilus and obtains the title of *Magister* and *Domestic of the Schools*. This easy exchange of masters must excite our surprise; but the "Persians" or Pers-armenians had brought their traditional policy with them into the imperial service. Naturally desirous of independence, they had played off one illustrious power against the other, had received an Arsacid ruler of alien race, had coquetted with Sassanids, and had paid tribute to the caliph. Religious disputes had prevented a genuinely cordial attachment to their proper suzerain. A purely *feudal* system of society had put annexation under a centralised bureaucracy out of the question, and had rendered suspicious the proffers of Armenian help or the entreaties of Armenian distress. It is not unlikely that the perplexing and meteor-like career of another compatriot may be traced to the suspicions of the court and ministries; and we may assume that the young Alexis Mouschegh (*Μωσηλῆ*) owed his elevation and his downfall to the indirect influence of the Armenian faction. Might not Theophilus, alarmed not without reason at the rising fame of his wife's brother, burdened with a debt of gratitude to her uncle, desire to find a rival to this coalition, and find it only in another Armenian? Distinguished in the defence of Sicily, Alexis was summoned home to receive the successive steps of *patrician*, *proconsul*,

*Services to the empire of Armenia under Theophilus; Alexis and Theophobus.*

*Services to  
the empire of  
Armenia  
under*

*Theophilus ;  
Alexis and  
Theophobus.*

*magister* (always an especial honour), and lastly Cæsar : revival of a title not employed since Constantine V. gave it charged with misery to his cadets. He is betrothed to the emperor's daughter, and sent again to Sicily as its *General* and *Duke*. But on the death of the infant princess, and on the birth of a son, afterwards Michael III., Theophilus, amidst the envious voices of courtiers, had no longer the same need of his services or the same confidence in his loyalty. He was recalled, whipped, and immured in a dungeon ; and as speedily reinstated in favour and dignities. But Alexis and his brother Theodosius were weary of such vicissitudes, and retired at the moment of the final triumph of innocence into a cloister. In 837 occurred the famous proclamation of Theophobus as king not of Rome but of the Persians : the troops were distributed through the older *themes* of Asia, and the suspicion leads in the end (842) to the murder of Theophobus, the last act of the dying emperor. Next year we find Armenia wholly attached to the caliphate : following its armies are the chief of the Bagratids and the leader of Vasparacan, the former bearing the title " Prince of princes," while the latter, Ashot, Arzrounian, and therefore kinsman of Leo V., bore that of simple " Prince." With this rapid increase in Armenian influence in the high places of the empire, this practical monopoly of Armenian defence in the imperial military system—this curious antipathy to Rome in the land itself—we pass to a new age, an established dynasty, and the altered policy of pretenders or rather regents, all of Armenian birth.

*Armenia  
itself attached  
to caliphate.*

## VI

ARMENIANS WITHIN AND WITHOUT THE EMPIRE  
FROM MICHAEL III. (842), TO THE END OF  
ROMANUS I. (944)—(840-940)

§ 1. Theoctistus the eunuch, chief minister of the young prince, looked eastwards for the warrior's laurels which always eluded him. In 843 he led an expedition to the eastern shores of the Euxine to bring succour to the people of Lazica, or rather, if we look more closely, to punish a revolt. For the Arabs had not in effect penetrated so far; they held in vassalage, especially when the emir of Melitenè took the lead (838), the feudal princes of our Oriental Poland, but they had not yet challenged Roman supremacy on the Black Sea or among the tribes of the Caucasus. Yet the Roman Empire was very weak in those climes, and the abolition of Chersonese autonomy under Theophilus, so much regretted and censured by historians, may well have been a necessary act. It involved a permanent garrison and military law in a district threatened by Patzinaks and Russians, and half-way between the capital and its dubious vassals or allies in Abasgia. Some years before, 832, Bardas and Theophobus had been sent on a similar enterprise; and neither seems to be attended with any conclusive results. It would appear that all loyal Armenians had sought refuge and settlements on Roman ground, leaving the *magarizing* faction to swell the armies of Islam. This alone can account for the diversity of feeling between the trustworthy officers of the Roman army (if we except Manuel's lapse), and the antipathy of the natives in their own country. We have now arrived at the most notable instance of Armenian success,—Basil the Macedonian, Armenian and Arsacid; whose mother's family descended from the great Constantine; who boasted on both sides Alexander of Macedon

*Roman expeditions to N.E.; Bardas and Theoctistus.*

*Rise and elevation of Basil the Armenian.*

*Rise and  
elevation of  
Basil the  
Armenian.*

as ancestor. His forefathers (deriving from the Christian king Tiridates) claimed the hospitality of the Roman Empire, either, as was then believed (Genesius), in the days of Leo I. (457-474), under whom they settled in Macedonian Nice; or as Saint Martin with more likelihood, under the great Justinian, when Artaban and his kin entered the imperial service. That the story of Armenian colonists is not purely mythical is clear from the mention of Cordylus and his son *Bardas* at the time of Crum's ravages, 810-820 (during which time the latter, obviously of Armenian birth, was chief of a Macedonian settlement beyond the Danube); from the name of Basil's brother, Sambat (*Συμβατίος*, Geo. Mon.). And it must be obvious to the student that "Macedonian" is a *vox nihili*; there was no settled population of the Balkan peninsula that predated the Slavonic incursions except in the towns; and it is clear that Basil was not a Slav, and that his elevation was not a revenge for the failure of Thomas (823). On the other hand, we must not press unduly the serious motives or deliberate policy which raised the handsome groom who was neither soldier nor civilian. It was no military nomination such as we have in other Roman and Byzantine pretenders, called in to retrieve the errors or neglect of a worn-out dynasty. We must leave it as an instance of capricious selection by a legitimate monarch of a colleague, whose tact disarmed envy and hostility and enabled him to rise to an unchallenged and sovereign position from the murder of his benefactor. The first act of Basil was to display his veneration for his ancient fatherland; in 867, he heard from an Armenian bishop that a Bagratid prince had the right to crown the head of the house; just as in later time the solemn act of coronation has become the privilege of certain archiepiscopal sees. Basil despatched Nicetas to Ashot I., founder, amid the disorders of the caliphate, of the Bagratid

*Basil invested  
by the new  
Bagratid  
monarch.*

line of kings; he sent him in reply a rich crown, and Nicodemus carried back a grateful letter from the emperor addressed to "my beloved son." This interchange of courtesies was maintained during the reign of Leo VI. *Basil invested by the new Bagratid monarch.*

§ 2. In the plot against Bardas the regent (866), Sembat, his son-in-law, Armenian and Bagratid, was an accomplice with his own brother Bardas; and the truly Oriental list of conspirators includes besides, an Assyrian, a Chaldean (from near Trebizond), and a Bulgarian. In the same year the disappointed schemer Sembat rebelled against the influence of Basil, now a full associate in the empire and charged with all its serious business. He is reduced by Nicephorus Maleĭnus, an Armenian noble of one of those prolific and warlike families which produced the Phocas and Zimisces of the next century. In 872 Basil in an Eastern expedition receives, like some German emperor, the repentant homage of a brigand chief, Curticius, who from the safe fastness of Locano's castle had secured wide territory and wrought havoc on Roman land; this petty feudal tyrant brings over his men-at-arms with him. In 879 occurred another Armenian conspiracy which introduces us to a notable name. John Curcuas (Gourgenes?) captain of the *Hicanates* (*ἱκανᾶτοι*, a corp dating from c. 800), lured, like many other usurpers, by a lying soothsayer, attempted to secure a throne, for which, as it seemed, the sole condition was Armenian descent. He lost his sight, and his partisans were whipped. One cannot wonder at the severity with which divination was pursued in the empire (e.g. under Valens, c. 370), when designing men worked on empty and credulous brains with such hopes. The treason of Bardas had not harmed the career of Leo V., his son; and it is a pleasing trait in Byzantine manners that military promotion was bestowed on the sons of traitors. Curcuas the younger, in the next century, hero of a prose-epic in eight books, is the guardian of the *Notable Armenian families emerge; Maleĭnus, Curcuas, Phocas, Argyrus.*

*Notable  
Armenian  
families  
emerge ;  
Malēinus,  
Curcuas,  
Phocas,  
Argyrus.*

Eastern frontier and fitting companion of the great warriors of his nation, Phocas and Zimisces. And, indeed, about this time (880) emerged the first Phocas (Nicephorus) to attain renown; he had served with ability and courage against the Western Saracens in Sicily, and about 886 was sent to curb their Eastern kinsmen. Leo VI. pays him a generous tribute for his ready inventiveness in strategy: and for over a century there will be few years unmarked by the valour or the revolt of a Phocas. He desolated Cilicia up to the gates of Tarsus; for the border wars were still merely forays, raids of *vendetta*, without fixed policy. In 891, he is "Governor of Lydia"; and for many years formed an iron bulwark to the east frontier, ravaging Syria and checking any advance of Islam. He left three sons, Michael, Leo, and Bardas. Another family of repute emerges at this time, that of Argyrus;—Leo was sent by Michael III., c. 850, against the Paulician stronghold of Tephricè; his grandson Eustathius is a great territorial magnate in Charzianè (Cappadocia), whither after good service to the State he is banished: his recall or rather exile to his lands being procured by the envy of a friend Himerius. He may well have belonged to a family of settlers originally Armenian; but he is at any rate a good instance of a type meeting us with increasing frequency,—the military leader and feudal lord, having great possessions in a certain district; in the intervals of warlike duties exercising there the functions of a clan-chieftain among kinsmen, of a landlord among serfs.

*Intimate and  
tactful  
relations of  
Leo VI. with  
Armenia:  
expansion of  
empire to-  
wards East.*

§ 3. Leo VI. continued the policy of his (putative?) father, and drew closer the bonds of Roman-Armenian alliance. Ashot I. visits the Roman court at some time early in the reign (perhaps in 888) and left a detachment of troops, who were employed against the Bulgars. The captain was Melric or Mel (and I am unable to sympathise with M. Brosset in identi-



fying him with Curticius); we shall hear again of this captain. Escaping from this unsuccessful encounter, Mel is reported to have returned with his band to Lesser Armenia, founded a fort in Lycandus (district of Dchahan) and enabled Leo VI. to boast that another *theme* was added to the empire under his sway: (when somewhat later we find Arabians writing of "*Mleh Demeslicos*" it is impossible not to connect the name with this captain). In 893 Leo received envoys from Sembat, the new Bagratid king, to apprise him of his succession; they paid homage, and it is said that the two sovereigns exchanged gifts each year during this reign. Towards the close of the century (perhaps in 898), Gregory (*Γρηγόριος*), son of Vahan, the Bagratid prince of Taron, came into somewhat peculiar relations with the empire: like many of his peers, he was careful to keep on friendly terms with both powers. His doubtful faith was reported at court; and he imprisoned the two Armenians who, as he supposed, had carried the tale. But they had a powerful advocate in King Sembat, their kinsman; and he asks the emperor to secure their deliverance from duress. Gregory sends a hostage to court, and is so charmed by his treatment there, and the kindness of Leo, that he releases the two captives under escort of his brother Apoughan. He came himself to Constantinople and received the title *μάγιστρος*, while his brother was made patrician; and the firm alliance was ratified by a marriage within the imperial house. In the latter years of his reign, Leo achieved a similar diplomatic triumph, and once more added a *theme* to the provinces of the empire: three brothers, owners of land beyond the Euphrates, north of Melitenè, gave themselves up to the emperor as his "men"; and, like Melias or Mel, received back their canton as the *theme* of Mesopotamia, of which one of the three became the first governor. Private enterprise thus became the pioneer of Imperialism.

*Intimate and tactful relations of Leo VI. with Armenia: expansion of empire towards East.*

*Multi-  
plication of  
petty  
sovereignities  
in Armenia  
in decay of  
caliphate.*

§ 4. To the student, it is clear that the principles and methods, the rules and conditions, of feudalism were perfectly understood and practised by the Roman court long before the Crusaders brought eastwards the name "liegeman" (λιζιος) and the formal constitution of the kingdom of Jerusalem. Evidently Leo VI. took full advantage of the disorders and incoherence which these feudal tendencies produced in Armenia. Everywhere the example of the disintegrating caliphate was eagerly followed by the princelets. Kingdoms (of the smallest extent and most precarious tenure) are multiplied; every noble claims for clan or manor complete immunity; and family divisions increase the number and weaken the power of minute sovereign states. The Roman Empire was the residuary legatee amid such confusion. It alone stood upright in the ruins of the Orient,—an orderly, amiable, and peaceful commonwealth, mild in its laws, Christian in its belief, tactful and courteous in its dealings with lesser potentates. Greater Armenia was portioned out, like mediæval Germany, between nobles who strove to maintain independence against Roman and Saracen alike. Such was "Cricorice" of Taron, between Taurus and Euphrates, in whose strange name we recognise the diminutive of Gregory, Gregoritza (as from Theophilus we have Θεοφιλιτζης, the early patron of Basil). There is "Symbaticius" (a similar Grecized form for "little Sembat") who might claim to be the chief of these petty sovereigns; he bore the title "Prince of princes" and ruled undisputed from Kars to Lake Van, a district henceforth called Vasparacan. There is besides the northerly Iberian prince, Adranasar, still enjoying, of hereditary right rather than by direct imperial collation, the dignity of "*Curopolat*." The relation between these feudal princes and the empire strongly resembled the nominal vassalage of the Mongolian or Tibetan chiefs to the court of Peking. The emperor in each case received presents, or

perhaps "tribute"; but was expected to surpass the costliness of these gifts by lavish munificence, and to pension superannuated scions of the princely houses and dignify the rural clan-leader with some imperial dignity. He provided wives (as under Justinian I. in Colchis) from noble and senatorial families at home: he exchanged lands inside the safer circuit of the empire for districts of peril beyond the Euphrates. To this policy must be largely attributed the extension of the empire to the shores of the Caspian, which took place quietly enough in the next hundred years. Of these records we hear little amidst the din of the Bulgarian campaign and the more brilliant and less durable victories in the lower East.

*Multiplication of petty sovereignties in Armenia in decay of caliphate.*

§ 5. In 911 (the year of Leo's demise) Sembat I., king of Armenia, was reduced to hopeless impotence by the insubordinate nobles. He had recourse to the empire; and John Catholicos is in error in naming *Basil* as the object of his entreaties. But Leo dies, and Alexander was by no means inclined to venture on a distant enterprise. To the troubled dignity his son, Ashot II., succeeds in 914; who, like some chivalrous Gothic king in Spain, forms a chosen band and harries the Moslem. He secures the crown rather in virtue of his exploits against the unbeliever than as a birthright. He chases Arabs from Tiflis, and ravages Aderbaijan. He allied with "Aternerseh" (the Adranasar mentioned above), Bagratid king of Iberia, who had secured the kingly title (c. 900) by the direct recognition of Sembat I., happier in his external relations than in his domestic policy. This coalition, joined by Gourgenes, king of Abasgia, reduced or overawed the petty feudal tyrants and secured the coronation of Ashot II. in 915. Royalty saw in the emperor a suzerain and a champion, fount of honour and legitimate dispenser of dignities; aristocracy preferred the Moslem alliance. Under the not incapable regency of Zoe (914) a Vasparacanian prince offered aid against the

*Appeal of Armenian king to empire (911).*

*Appeal of  
Armenian  
king to  
empire (911).*

Saracens ; and Constantine VII. in his first brief rule follows a sympathetic policy with regard to Ashot II., confronted with a perilous confederacy of Moslem governors and his own unruly nobles. The emperor was astonished that the willing assistance of the empire had not been solicited. A Greek patriarch condescends to write to the heretical Armenian *Catholicos* a letter of friendly sympathy and advice : "The emperor is sincerely concerned at the distress of Armenia, and begs you to rouse the kings to united efforts on its behalf." John the *Catholicos* succeeded with Adranasar II. and obtained his aid ; while Gourgenes wrote in reply to the emperor a letter which is curiously typical of the attitude of these kings of the East to Rome : "Only give us an asylum in the empire and all Armenians will follow us across the border and will settle there and become loyal subjects." The emperor (who was now Romanus Lecapenus, 920) invited Ashot the "Iron" and John to Constantinople ; the latter refuses, not wishing to scandalise his flock by communicating with heretics who accepted the detested Council of Chalcedon ; the former is warmly welcomed, and returns with prestige and hopefulness enhanced to an enthusiastic people, already beginning to repair the damage of successive Moslem inroads. A small Roman force secures the submission of two recalcitrant cities or forts ; and are then sent back with a wise confidence in the native allegiance. Ashot is now joined by his brother Abbas, returning from his refuge with the grand prince of Abasgia, whose daughter he married. With this the fortunes of the little kingdom began to revive. But the same hindrances stood in the way of any certain alliance ; the distaste of the feudal nobility for the methods of Rome ; the prejudice of the people at large against the "heretical council." We may anticipate a few years in order to supply another instance—in 926, Gagig or Cakig, king of Vasparacan, earnestly desired

*Consistent  
Imperialism  
of Armenian  
royalty ;  
nobles and  
people thwart  
alliance.*

to conclude an alliance with the empire. But the lords protested, and hurled at the diplomacy and arms of the "Greeks" those taunts of faithlessness and cowardice, which have been re-echoed down to the present day. The clergy insist on a reconciliation of the Churches before a national alliance is suggested. The king therefore wrote to the Byzantine patriarch, pointing out the trivial points (as he considered them) of disagreement between the hostile creeds, and the greater and nobler issues at stake in a confederacy of two Christian powers against a common foe. But the letter remained unanswered; the tolerant and broad-minded monarch was before his time; and an immaterial discrepancy on a subtle point of metaphysics prevented the alliance. In the latter days of the Eastern empire the reunion of the Churches failed for a similar reason.

*Consistent Imperialism of Armenian royalty; nobles and people thwart alliance.*

§ 6. Once more the Taronites on the hither side of Lake Van claim our attention. Here, as elsewhere in feudal and limited monarchies permeated by family feeling, a system of patrimonial subdivision was in vogue. At Gregory's death, the province of Taron was portioned between his children; and in 926 (the same year we have just been considering) Bagrat, a son, visits the Roman capital and marries a daughter of Theophylact, a close kinsman of the regent-emperor Romanus I., whose father (it will be remembered) bore the same name. He was also created a *patrician*, and received investiture for that district of the Taronite principality (the Armenian "Saxony") which recognised suzerainty. About the same time his cousin Thornic (in which we clearly see the later title *Tornicius*, a rebel under the tenth Constantine) surrendered his hereditary lands to the empire, on condition of receiving an equivalent at the Byzantine court,—Constantinople being not merely the goal of barbarian greed, but the Mecca or (if it be preferred) the Paris of Armenian nobles. Sambat, his brother, followed the pre-

*Submission of the Taronites to the empire (c. 930).*

*Submission of the Taronites to the empire (c. 930).*

*Extension of Roman influence by diplomacy and by war.*

cedent, and sank into a dignified pensioner in the capital; only Vahan, the third, remained in his native province; thus the Taronite family divided its members between the luxurious comfort of Byzantium and the exacting duties of clan-chieftaincy.— But the empire was not merely a diplomatic dealer in alliance, pensions, and orders, it could maintain its cause in the last resort by force of arms. Desultory warfare (not easy to distribute in years or campaigns) meets us from the last year of Leo VI. Lalacon, with the *Armeniac* troops, is sent to ravage Colchis; and Catacalon, his successor, recovers Theodosiople (near Arzeroum), sacks Phasianè, and humbles the pride of some mysterious foe, variously supposed to be the Colchians or the Saracens: neither purport nor event of these expeditions is clear. A dispute ensued with the king of Iberia, who quietly occupied Theodosiople on the retirement of the Roman troops under Catacalon. Remonstrance was made on the part of the empire, but it was finally agreed that the Araxes should be the limit of Roman authority, and all territory to the north should be surrendered to Iberia. Curcuas, soon succeeding for his brilliant twenty-two years' defence of the frontier, turned his attention rather to the southern district and to Vasparacan. In the neighbourhood of Lake Van many cities seemed to be occupied chiefly by Moslem; and when he reduced the towns of Akhlat and Bitlis he granted terms to the inhabitants on this curious and significant condition—that a cross should be planted in the middle of the mosque. We may well pause for a moment to contrast the demands of a strong central government with the fanciful and trivial stipulations of feudal tenure, flattering to vanity, but useless as a guarantee of service or fidelity. Religious piety about this term dictated a somewhat costly bargain, when very substantial concessions (both of captives and advantages) were made by Romanus I. (942) to secure the miraculous veil of Edessa.

§ 7. Such, then, were the relations of the empire with the petty Christian kingdoms and principalities of the East down to the retirement of the regents (944, 945). The period had been prolific in bringing to birth fresh independent sovereignties. The country from the Caucasus to Kurdistan was a motley patch-work (like mediæval Germany), not merely of immune baronies but of full-blown royalties, multiplying and vulgarising the regal title. Over all these miniature kingdoms or principalities the Roman Empire exercised a potent charm. Except by the sovereign, the masterful and methodic system was not beloved; the nobles disliked its rigour, the clergy its doctrine. But it was the secure and dignified asylum for the dispossessed exile; it was the sole fount of honour in bestowing those empty titles and positions which from Clovis onwards had secured the homage of powerful kings. Certainly at the end of this epoch the ties are very much closer than at the beginning; and there is no waning in the preponderating influence which the Armenian race exercised *within* the empire and in the imperial service. Lecapenus is a member of this militant caste or aristocracy, inured to arms from childhood and invariably following the ancestral craft: his father Theophylact saved Basil's life, and one of the last acts of Leo VI. was to appoint the son High Admiral. Like Nicephorus Phocas (963) and Romanus IV. (1067), he rises to place and power against the anxious interest of the courtiers, by the favour of an empress and his own troops. He upheld, not unworthily, the repute of Rome, and after a quarter of a century gave way to a "legitimate" monarch, whom at one time he could have displaced without peril. The chief Armenian hero of the time is John Curcuas, who in his long Eastern lieutenancy quietly prepared the way for the more familiar achievements of Phocas and Zimisces. Son of the blinded pretender, whose failure we have noticed (879),

*Universal suzerainty of Rome in Armenia.*

*Exploits and success of Curcuas the Armenian.*

*Exploits and  
success of  
Curcuas the  
Armenian.*

he became sergeant of *gendarmerie*, and arrested some conspirators in 919. In 920 he went eastward with wide and ample powers: defended Syria and Euphrates, repressed the Moslem, and overthrew a significant plot of Bardas Boilas to erect an independent Armenian governorship within the empire and imitate the emirs of the caliphate, who like the imperial counts of the West were daily claiming independence. (This is variously referred to the years 924 and 936.) This rebellion again excited the infidel to reap profit from Roman dissensions. But Curcuas never lost a battle; he carried fire and sword into their country, recovered Malatiah, and employs its colleague-emirs as trusty allies. When on their death the town again closes its gates against the empire, Curcuas with Melias of Lycandus (a feudal warrior-chief, but also a loyal subject) again reduces and razes it to the ground. Once more the Euphrates flowed "under Roman laws." The troops of Curcuas were recognised as the flower of the army, and the most efficient force in the empire; in a Russian peril they are hastily summoned across the continent to take part in the capital's defence (941). It was Curcuas who really began the great work of consolidation on the Eastern frontier with a resolute design which never faltered. Himself born in Lesser Armenia, son of a soldier, he is the father of Romanus Curcuas, a captain of distinction under Nicephorus in the pursuit of the same policy. His brother Theophilus, Δοῦξ of Chaldia, is noticed as a strenuous provincial governor, and was the grandfather of Zimisces. Curcuas became a popular hero (his life was written by Manuel in eight books, unfortunately lost), and he suffered at the close of his career the usual penalty reserved for Armenians of warlike ability. Here the envious or vindictive influence is not a secluded sovereign warring against private wealth or merit (as in some Eastern court), but the Byzantine official world. He was accused of treason-



able designs, and perhaps the idle sons and colleagues of Romanus were induced to join in the charge. The emperor refused to believe, and despatched secret (and happily impartial) envoys to inquire on the spot into the behaviour of Curcuas. Their report disposed of the cabal, and reinstated the general. Romanus, to mark his approval and delight, proposed to ally the houses of the sovereign-regent and the generalissimo; Constantine VIII.'s son was to be betrothed to Euphrosyne. Once more, the autocrat is helpless and overborne; the court is again aroused to bitter hostility; and Romanus, with the deep regret of Charles I., sacrifices his brave defender to a lighter fate. He is cashiered and supplanted by Pantherius, a kinsman of the reigning house: according to a custom in favour at Rome, Damascus, and Bagdad alike, of entrusting the highest posts only to those who had nothing to gain, and everything to lose, by disloyalty.

*Exploits and success of Curcuas the Armenian.*

## VII

RELATIONS OF ARMENIA AND ARMENIANS TO THE  
EMPIRE, FROM THE SOLE REIGN OF CONSTANTINE  
VII. (945) TO THE DEPOSITION OF MICHAEL V. (1042)  
—(940-1040)

§ 1. The close of the reign of Romanus I. had been marked in Armenia by religious disputes which left their sting and trace. About 940, Ber, king of Georgian Abasgians (another puzzling subdivision), presented himself with a large force before Kars, where King Abbas, son of Sembat the Bagratid, was about to consecrate a patriarchal church; and requested that the rite employed should be Georgian. Suspecting his motive, Abbas, after fruitless parleying, attacked and captured Ber. In the following years the unappeasable enmity of Greeks and Armenians

*Religious differences separate Armenia from Rome.*

*Religious  
differences  
separate  
Armenia  
from Rome.*

became apparent and gave rise to serious dissension, such as we may witness to-day in Liverpool or Belfast. Devout Armenians fly from disorder to the lands of Shirak and Little Vanand; and to end the conflict, once more a patriarch Vahanic has the courage to propose the acceptance of Chalcedon, so that Armenia might worship in communion with the Greek and Georgian rite. As with the complaisant Esdras under Heraclius, the popular indignation vented itself against the renegade and compelled him to flee into Vasparacan. About the same time, religion had led to a singularly disadvantageous compact; at the price of the Saviour's letter to Abgarus of Edessa, the emir had secured the Roman promise (for what it was worth) never to war against Edessa, Hara, Sroudj, and Samosata. The reigns of Constantine VII. and his son were free from Armenian complications; but the influence of the emigrant nobles who formed the military caste in Roman society was daily increasing. When Bringas (963), the civil minister, cannot induce Marianus Apambas, general of Italy, to compass the overthrow of Nicephorus Phocas, he applies to Zimisces and his cousin, Romanus Curcuas,—the one, patrician-general of the East, and related in some way to Nicephorus; the other full of hereditary valour, and son of the brave defender of the border from 920–942. (*Tchemchkik* is an Armenian word of doubtful meaning, which may be found in our maps to-day, but *-kik* is a diminutive, and *Tchemch* is a Persian word meaning "majestic"; and the whole might imply a humorous oxymoron. Ducange believes that the reading in Leo Diaconus should be *μοιρακίτης*, and that the Greek equivalent means "youth.") Of noble family or clan, his mother was in some degree connected with Nicephorus (as cousin?), and he was the great-nephew of the famous Curcuas and grandson of his brother Theophilus, governor of Chaldia. (It is curious to note that Curcuas becomes *Gourgen* in

*Rise and  
elevation of  
Zimisces the  
Armenian.*

the Armenian chronicles.) Six years later, Zimisces consented to be an accomplice and agent in the plot he so indignantly rejected in 963; to Phocas succeeded an Armenian regent. He took the young emperors, aged 11 and 8, from their retreat in Vasacavan, which under Nicephorus had been chosen for their exile or their safety; and he surrounds himself with a special bodyguard of Armenian *fantassins* (Asolik on 971); of the services of the Armenian infantry under Phocas we have already heard in Leo Diac. and Abulpharagius.

§ 2. As the object of Basil, his ward and pupil, was the consolidation of lands in Europe, so before the eyes of Zimisces floated the ideal of a crusader. He aimed at the recovery of Jerusalem, Syria, and Mesopotamia. A great force is collected under "Mleh Demeslicos" (is not this a scion of the family of Melias, creator and governor of Theme Lycandus under Leo VI.?<sup>1</sup>); and in spite of the covenant of Romanus I., the army ravages the lands of Edessa, takes Nisibis and Amida (Diarbekir), and fills the country with carnage. A reverse before Amida brings the emperor out in person; he penetrated into the Taron district and encamped near Adziatsberd, where he finds himself confronted and opposed by a notable coalition of Armenian nationalists, numbering 80,000. Yet once again the kings display their Romanising proclivities; and Ashot III. and his namesake the king of Vasparacan act as peacemakers, and end by lending him reinforcements. Alarmed at these preparations, the people of Bagdad loudly accuse the sloth of their rulers, and insist on urgent measures. We must elsewhere attempt to trace the political development of the caliphate and the causes which led to the seclusion of a Caliph-Mikado; here we must be

*Rise and elevation of Zimisces the Armenian.*

*Zimisces and the Crusading Ideal; his eastern exploits and close relations with Armenian royalty.*

<sup>1</sup> Or does Mleh stand for Melek or Malech, *Lord* or *chief Domestic*? Or, again, is it in any way connected with the later family of Melissenus?

*Zimisces and the Crusading Ideal; his eastern exploits and close relations with Armenian royalty.*

contented with noting the institution by Rahdi<sup>1</sup> (934-940) of the Emir-al-Omra's office, which some years before these events had centred all effective authority in this Shogun,—minister or generalissimo. But (as sometimes in Japan) the chief emir was himself an indolent man of pleasure; and public indignation had to summon, from the useless pastime of the chace, a delegate who had in turn delegated all serious business. Bokhtiar set himself to defend the capital and raise troops; he compelled the unfortunate Commander of the Faithful to sell his furniture for the purpose. But the Roman peril vanished like a summer cloud; while their armies wrought havoc up to Miafarekin, an imprudence of the mysterious *Domestic* Mleh exposed the weakness of their position and lost at once the advantages of the campaign. (Indeed, it is disheartening work for the student to trace the thousand-years' conflict on the Tigris and Euphrates, and to reflect that in that long period no serious change was effected in frontiers or influence, except in the middle of the seventh and the middle of the eleventh centuries.) In 974, Zimisces retaliated and reduced the caliph, or rather the emir, to the payment of tribute, which we find still paid twelve years later—even amidst the civil discord and insecurity which filled the early portion of Basil's reign. We notice, with amusement but without surprise, that the prudent emperor refuses to open negotiations on the reunion of the Churches, suggested by the ex-Patriarch Vahanic, on the ground that he had been canonically deposed by his own people. In 975, during the great and comprehensive expedition into Syria, Zimisces sent Ashot III., his old ally, a full narrative of his visit to Jerusalem, with a gift of 2000 slaves and 1000 horses, decorating at the same time two Armenian envoys with the titles "rabounapet" (rabboni) and philosopher in one case; and in the other, μάγιστρος

<sup>1</sup> Or by his immediate predecessor?

or *protospathaire*: so at least run the native accounts of an enterprise and a compliment otherwise unknown.<sup>1</sup>

§ 3. In the troublous year 976, after the death of Zimisce, the revolt of Sclerus takes on an entirely Armenian character. His headquarters were in Dchahan and Melitenè; there he was saluted emperor, and there he was joined by Armenian horsemen. The seat of government and the resources of the rebellion lay in Mesopotamia; and while 300 Arab cavaliers fought under his standards, the neighbouring emirs of Diarbekir, Amida, and Miafarekin cordially assisted the cause. Nor are the native Armenian princes behindhand; a brother Romanus and the two sons (Gregory and Bagrat) of Ashot, prince of Taron, were to be found amongst his allies. The rebel fleet was under the command of Manuel Curticius. The attitude of a certain David in this civil war is more doubtful; he is variously represented as a king of Iberia, or as a prince of Taïk and *Curopalat*; as an ally of the legitimate emperor, or as acting in concert with the pretender. One account tells us that, in exchange for his support, Basil II. promised to surrender all towns depending on the empire, in Hark (or Haïk?) and Apahouni provinces, and in the district of Mardal. But whatever may have been the aid of this dubious ally, we cannot doubt that, on the whole, Basil had good reason to be displeased with the Armenian attitude during the rebellion. He was angry with the race and the Church; and he empowered the metropolitans of Sebastè and Melitenè to persecute the Eutychians. They fail in a design to seize the Patriarch Khatchic, but succeed so well in stirring up the bitterest feelings between the two nations that, in 977, St. Gregory of Narec loses all his popu-

*Armenian actors and influence in rebellion of Sclerus (976).*

*Displeasure of Basil and outbreak of religious persecution.*

<sup>1</sup> Schlumberger does full justice to these Oriental sources in his diffuse history of the time. But the shapeless and straggling plan of his meritorious labour of love makes the narrative very difficult reading to the eager student.

*Displeasure  
of Basil and  
outbreak  
of religious  
persecution.*

larity and is subject to insult, on the mere suspicion of a desire for reunion with the hated "Greeks." But the emperor was eminently placable, and has gained an undeserved renown for merciless cruelty by a single action during a Western campaign. Twelve years later (989) he accepts graciously the surrender of the four princes who had taken part with Sclerus. One last ember of sedition broke into flame in the revolt of George, *μάγιστρος*, in Taron, quickly overthrown by John, general of the Imperialists, on the plains of Bagarij. When Sclerus accepted from his generous rival the title of *Curo-palat*, and retired into the dignified privacy which that title now entailed, Basil had no more competitors to fear. In this same year (989) we read of an isolated fact which raises our sympathy for the gallant Armenian struggle for freedom and worship, between the infidel and the still more suspected Greek. The emir of Akhlat (near Lake Van), governor of Hark and Apahouni (mentioned above as offered by Basil to an ally), once more elevates the defences of Manzikert, which Bardas Phocas had destroyed, captures Moush, and massacres the priests there; Asolik, our informant, having himself seen the gory traces on the church-wall. But the chief interest of Basil's reign and subsequent exploits is now finally transferred to the West; and we shall find Armenian characters figuring conspicuously either in actual records or in the romance of History.

*Legend of  
Armenian  
origin of  
Samuel the  
Shishmanid.*

§ 4. In 988 (here too we depend on Asolik) Basil compelled many Armenians to emigrate into Macedonia and settle there; an instance of that transplanting policy which the Byzantines for divers reasons so often adopted. Carrying into their new home the hostility and resentment which they had felt in the East, they lost no time in defaulting to the Bulgarians; and in the number of these defaulters were found Samuel and Manuel, two members of a

great Armenian family in Derdcham. When in the next year (989) Basil, accompanied by the Armenian annalist, went to the wars and captured Curt, the Bulgarian king, the following strange tale went round : that it was the Armenian Samuel who placed himself at the head of the despondent Bulgars, chased the imperial troops, accepted the title of king, and proposed peace on the terms of marriage with Basil's sister. Being deceived, like Jacob, by a lady-in-waiting, he swears undying hatred and commits the episcopal go-between of the mock marriage to the flames. It is difficult to say what element of truth lies embedded in this astounding myth ; perhaps we may pardon the national conceit of a writer who sees a compatriot in every gallant foe of the powerful emperor, an Arsacid on every throne.

*Legend of  
Armenian  
origin of  
Samuel the  
Shishmanid.*

Yet Armenians are not wanting to the imperial cause ; and several facts point to the noble confidence of Basil, and his ready acceptance of Armenian proffers of loyalty. He placed in command at Thessalonica Gregory the Taronite, a Greek patronymic for that family of princes who, having surrendered their territorial right between Taurus and Euphrates, were content to live as pensioners of the Roman court or captains in the Roman armies. Some members of the clan had followed Sclerus ; but all were pardoned and taken into the confidence and intimate service of the emperor. Again, in his retinue on this occasion, Basil takes with him a Gregory *μάγιστρος* and his son Ashot, with Sahak, prince of Handzith. Meantime, in the East the mysterious David, prince of Taïk, had been enjoying great success against the various emirs ; he had reconquered land in Vasparacan and Ararat. But this success aroused envy, and he was poisoned in the Eucharist—a rare instance in this history of treacherous or brutal crime so familiar in Western annals. He has time to make a will, bequeathing his little realm to the mighty empire, much as kings of Pergamus or Bithynia had

*Armenian  
officers of  
Basil II.  
(990).*

*Taïk bequeathed to Rome; Basil II. removes religious disabilities.*

done in earlier days. At this moment Basil was at Tarsus (991), and on the news flies northwards with his habitual impetuosity. Met on the way by the remonstrances of the Armenian clergy against the vexations of the Sebastene prelate, he at once annuls all their religious disabilities, and restored amongst other privileges the use of bells. At Erez, in the canton of Archamouni, he received the homage of the Emir of Neferkert, and, oddly enough, seems to have ordered his Armenian princely neighbours to lend him their support in case of need. We may believe that Basil saw in this nominal vassal of the imprisoned caliph a useful renegade for his own purposes; and it is clear, both for the Christian nobles and the Moslem governors, that independence could only be preserved by playing off one great power against the other.

*The Great Durbar of 991; Basil II. receives fealty of Armenian kings.*

§ 5. The Caucasian monarchs also came to pay their respects; Bagrat, king of the Abasgians (a minor royal dignity, held as apprenticeship by the Iberian heirs), and his father, Gourgenes, king of Iberia. Meeting Basil near Mount Hadjitch, they were decorated severally with the titles *curopalat* and *magistros*; and Gourgenes discovered later, to his chagrin, that he had enjoyed a vastly inferior dignity. Several Taïk princelets do homage, and the harmony is only broken by the quarrels of a Russian and a Georgian. On the charge of stolen fodder the whole Russian contingent make common cause against the purloiners, and defeat the Georgians after slaying their Taïk generals, John and Gabriel, sons of Otchopentir, and Tchortovanel, son of Abou-Harp (Abel-kharp?). Abbas, king of Kars (the hero of the cathedral-dedication), renders fealty at the same time with Sennacherib, king of Vasparacan, and his brother Gourgenes, loaded with gifts. The absence of Gagic I., king of Ani, from this imperial durbar excited adverse comment; a nephew instils into Basil's ear suspicions of his uncle's motive, while the emperor



waits with increasing impatience at Bagrevad (in the province of Hark). Basil orders the district of Cogovit and Dzalcot to be ravaged. Some difficulty arose, too, out of the envious discontent of the Iberian king at his inferior title; he works havoc in Taik, and, after recourse to arms, Basil finds it prudent to cede a portion of this district to Georgia at a convention agreed to at Mount Medzob. (This king, Gourgenes, left to his son, Bagrat, whose superior dignity had incensed him, the joint kingdoms of Abasgia and Iberia; and he dying ten years before Basil, in 1015, is followed by his son Georgi, heir to both crowns.) According to Arabian writers, Basil occupied at this time (before the close of the century) the towns of Akhlat, Malazkert, and Ardjich; and this famous expedition is followed in the East by a long peace and silence. It is not until 1016 that we resume the thread of Armenian history, interrupted for a quarter of a century. The scene of events is Vasparacan, where, since Phocas and Zimisce, a part had been incorporated into the empire, part being occupied by petty chieftains, allied or directly vassals, part still acknowledging an independent king, Sennacherib. Upon this little realm fell the brunt of the Seljukian invasion in its earliest attacks. Countless Turks invade and penetrate into the Reschdounian canton. Sapor (who would seem to have controlled the military resources of the country) marches to meet them. With him went the valiant youth David, son of the king; while the sovereign himself, charged with the civil and central government, watched anxiously from his capital at Van, or at Ostan. The Seljuks carried their ravages to Dovin and the canton of Nig, actually securing a portion of Vasparacan. Vasak of Betchni (father of Gregory, *μάγιστρος* by imperial favour, of whom we shall hear later) joins in defending the country, falls on the Turks besieging a church, and cuts their detachment to pieces, cleaving in two a very Goliath

*The Great Durbar of 991; Basil II. receives fealty of Armenian kings.*

*Valiant resistance in Vasparacan to Seljuks.*

of stature at a single blow. In the very moment of victory, while he was uttering words of pious thankfulness, a stone ended his life, and he was venerated as a martyr in the cause of his religion and his country. His brother Varanes succeeds as generalissimo of independent Armenia; a post, like the Byzantine shogunate in the past century, sometimes equal in dignity, and generally greater in authority than the kingship itself. The Armenian troops more than held their own against the raiders, but Sennacherib, remembering a prophecy of Nerses about the fate of their country, convened the grandees, persuaded them to endorse his proposal of a surrender to Rome, and despatched his brave son David to the imperial capital. He was accompanied by the clan-bishop of the Reschdounians, who could from his own eye-witness testify to the havoc wrought by the Turk in his canton: three hundred horses laden with presents followed in the retinue. David, a prince after Basil's own heart, was welcomed with fatherly affection, and solemnly adopted by the childless monarch in St. Sophia; 1000 villages or hamlets, 11 fortresses, and 10 cities were transferred to the direct sway of Rome. Convents and their lands were only excepted; but many of their inmates, together with 400,000 of the people, followed the king into the safer territory of the empire. They rapidly build cities for their own use on the Euphrates, Akh, and Arabkur; while Sennacherib, made patrician, is given Cappadocia to govern as an imperial lieutenant, and receives an appanage very palpably feudal, in the city and surrounding district of Sebastè, for his own hereditary usufruct. We know that Basil distrusted the great Asiatic landlords who "joined field to field" and emulated the *latifundia* of an earlier age; he had removed Eustathius Maleïnus from his "more than civil" demesnes in 991, and part of the principality assigned to the ex-king may have comprised the estate of Maleïnus (which had at his

*Sennacherib of Vasparacan surrenders to the empire.*

*Feudal fiefs within the empire.*

death reverted to the State). The new province was entrusted to Basil Argyrus (a brother of the future Emperor, Romanus III.); and on his estrangement from native sympathies, Nicephorus Comnenus was despatched to consolidate and to pacify. Sennacherib (according to Armenian accounts) showed his loyalty to Basil in a peculiar way, for it was he and not Xiphias who killed Nicephorus Phocas (last pretender of the famous clan) and sent his head to Basil (1021).

*Feudal fiefs within the empire.*

§ 6. But the Far East gave the veteran emperor endless trouble: in 1022, he sets his face towards Iberia, and marches on Vanand (or Phorac). The whole country was up in arms against the Roman aggression; the Abasgians were in force, and all the neighbouring tribes of the Caucasian district joined the coalition. Basil after some anxiety wins a decisive engagement, and proceeds to ravage twelve cantons (according to Samuel of Ani, twenty-four). He winters in Marmand on the Euxine, and crosses thence into Chaldia. On September 11th a second battle was fought, in which Liparit, Abasgian general, was slain. George, the king, flies and sues for peace, which is granted by Basil in exchange for the cession of a large district and the surrender of a son as hostage. Basil treated this youth with the well-known kindness and whole-hearted confidence of Byzantine rulers; he was to him as a son, and received the now uncommon title, *magister militiæ* (*στρατηλάτης*). John, king of Ani, who had also been a moving spirit in the anti-Roman league, finding his allies surrendering, hurriedly made terms with the empire. Like Sennacherib, he proposed to give up Ani to Rome on condition of a life-interest reserved to himself, and an imperial promise to defend Armenia from the Turks. The Patriarch Peter, charged with the precious documents, the title-deeds of a kingdom, arrived at court. Basil treats him with great respect, enhanced by a miracle of which

*Discontent and rebellion in Georgia (1022).*

*Proposal to surrender Kingdom of Ani to Rome.*

*Proposal to surrender Kingdom of Ani to Rome.*

the emperor was witness. (There are references to an obscure campaign in Persia in 1022, in which Basil suffered some reverses, but gained the citadel of Ibrahim through the cleverness and loyalty of a native woman in that part of Armenia which was occupied by the Moslem.) It is uncertain if the deed of

*Curious delay in completing the transfer; varying accounts.*

gift or donation of Ani was given up by Basil II. or by Constantine IX. during his brief reign (1025-28); nor is the transaction entirely clear. Cyriacus, chief of the Armenian patriarchal hospital, was sent, at the emperor's request, on a delicate mission; and in his hands was placed an important document which transferred a large district to the direct rule of Rome. This was to be delivered to the new King of Ani, John Sembat; was it to remind him of the precarious tenure, or to surrender the deed? Cyriac (Κύρακος) at any rate kept it, and appears to have delivered it over again to Michael IV., and the mild and conscientious prince waited till Sembat's demise to enter upon a legitimate possession. John Sembat of Ani, and his brother Ashot, king of Tachir, died about the same time, previous to 1039, probably in 1038. An interregnum, or rather anarchy, prevailed

*Anarchy and treason in Ani.*

for two years. The nobles do not agree upon the choice of a successor; for Sembat was childless, and Gagic, his nephew, son of Ashot, was too young. Thus the boy of fourteen years had to wait until a loyal general put him in possession of his heritage two years later. In 1039 the bailiff of the king profited by political disorder to pillage the royal treasure-house, to entrench himself in a strong castle of his own, and to return in force to Ani, prepared to offer himself as a candidate for the vacant throne; his name was Sargis-Vestes<sup>1</sup> of Siunia (or Swania). Then at length Michael displays the letter, conveying Ani as a gift to the empire; and sends an

*Michael IV., 1040, prepares to enforce the claim.*

<sup>1</sup> It is possible that, in the profuse distribution of Byzantine court-titles, Vestes stands for βέστης, a somewhat obscure dignity, perhaps Master of the Imperial Wardrobe.

army to enforce the claim, reaching, according to the historian, the incredible number of 100,000. Mean-  
 time the military resources of independent Armenia, at least of Vasparacan, were under Varanes (or Bahram), a brother of that General Sapor who had met and defied the first Turkman onslaught. It is not easy to define his position exactly; he was certainly in some respects the peer of kings, and pursued a free policy of his own choice, as a strong nationalist. With an equally incredible force of 50,000 he falls on the negligent Roman troops, who had hitherto met with no resistance. The infuriated natives slay the Romans without quarter, in spite of the imploring appeals of their own more merciful general. Sargis had played a double part: he had betaken himself dutifully to the Roman camp, and, now that fortune had declared against them, he returned to the city and gave the best account he could of his absence.

*Michael IV., 1040, prepares to enforce the claim.*

*Furious resistance of Bahram the Nationalist.*

§ 7. But the chief Armenian throne was now open to the adventurer. Under Michael V. (1041), David Lackland, a Bagratid "king" in Albania, descends into Shirak (possibly at the instigation of Rome), to seize the vacant crown. Here again Varanes interposed, challenged his ambitious aim, and forced him to retire. Sargis-Vestes had not given up his pretensions, and Varanes guarded the rights of a scion of the royal house against these claimants. At length he succeeds in placing the youthful Gagic (or Cakig) on the throne, aged sixteen, destined to be the last independent sovereign. In this restoration Varanes was warmly assisted by his own nephew, Gregory *μάγιστρος*, lord of Betchni, in Ararat (who would seem to have received the title during a sojourn at Constantinople, and to have there written works in verse and prose in his native tongue; also to have converted a Moslem by the literary *tour de force* of embracing in a thousand distichs the history of the Old and New Testaments. He left behind him a

*Bahram raises Gagic, last King of Ani (1042).*

*Bahram  
raises Gagic,  
last King of  
Ani (1042).*

son, who was destined to become Prince or Duke of Antioch under the Romans). Gagic was a youth of excellent qualities, and fought with courage and success against the hordes of the Turkmans now returning to the charge. In 1042 (the limit of our present inquiries) they are found near Betchni, the residence of Gregory *μάγιστρος*; Gagic secures the victory by a clever ambushade, and many are lured to death and drowned. They return soon after to the coveted soil of Vasparacan, and are confronted by Khatchic-Khoul the Lion (an Arzrounian prince), in the Canton of Thorounavan.

*Straight-  
forward  
dealing of  
the emperors.*

It may not be out of place to give another instance of the good faith and feeling of the Byzantine sovereign, at a time when the title seems to modern ears to imply the hypocrite, the thief, and the assassin. David, the son of Sennacherib, Arzrounian "king" of Sebastè, died after ten years' reign. Here is an excellent example of the *official* turning into the *hereditary*, the transformation of a functionary holding a certain post at pleasure into a continuous feudal family seized of an appanage on condition of a trifling homage. Atom, his brother, succeeds, but is accused at court of treasonable intentions by an Armenian prince, jealous of their house. Michael IV., credulous and alarmed, sent troops, and a summons to appear before him. The royal brothers wisely decide to obey. At the tomb of the great emperor Basil they read out his deed of investiture with the sovereign principality of Sebastè, and protest their innocence of the charge. Michael at once believes them, embraces them with tenderness and remorse, and imprisons the calumniator.—The reign of the same prince was also signalled by the amazing vicissitudes of the little town and fortress of Bergri, on the borders of Lake Aghthamar near Ardjich. The governor, Khtric, was captured by the Roman governor in Vasparacan, Nicholas Cabasilas, who seized the town. He again recovers his liberty and his post, loses again to the

Armenian lords Gardzi and Tadjat, wins it back, celebrating his triumph with a horrible bath of gore, and yields at last to the empire.

Leaving then independent Armenia in the hands of a generous and able prince, and united in loyalty by a common danger, we may perhaps establish the following conclusions. The native dynasty had emerged again out of trouble and conflict, and thanks to the services of Sapor, of Bahram, of Vasak, and of Gregory, had reasserted its rights. The claims of Rome, founded on an authentic document, had been overlooked, tacitly surrendered, or mildly enforced. The Turkish onset had largely contributed to the success of the loyalist or nationalist party; Roman governors and native princes lived side by side in suspicious amity, in open hostility, and occasional alliance. One great armament had been launched in vain against Armenian autonomy; and time was preparing a last and final conflict in which the lesser power would vanish like Poland in thralldom to the empire, itself already approaching the term of its real sovereignty in Asia. We reserve for notice, under the important reign of Constantine X., the final conclusion; following, as it does, the familiar lines of those historical events, by which the independence of smaller states is wont to be extinguished.

§ 8. There remains only to notice briefly some disconnected details in the general relations of Rome and Armenia, which serve to illustrate the time between Basil II. and the tenth Constantine. Romanus III. (of the notable family of Argyrus) was strongly Armenian in his sympathies; he married two nieces and perhaps a daughter to their princes. It may be suspected that his death arrested the development of friendly relations and a wise policy of conciliation. I do not attach weight to the supposed insult imposed on the Armenian reinforcement at the Black Mount, when

*Relations of  
the Armenian  
kingdom to  
the empire  
(c. 1042).*

*Close  
connection of  
Iberia with  
empire under  
Romanus III.  
(† 1034).*

*Close  
connection of  
Iberia with  
empire under  
Romanus III.  
(† 1034).*

during his ill-starred expedition of 1030, he enrolled them among his regular troops. The actual loss of the day was retrieved by Maniaces (himself of Eastern descent); though nothing could ever obliterate the personal disgrace and shame of the emperor, who, perhaps for a century, was the first to suffer defeat in the open field. Magniac was given command of the riparian cities and forts along the Euphrates, with a chief residence at Samosata and a roving commission. He seized Edessa, then occupied by a lieutenant of the emir of Miafarekin, and sent home an annual tribute of 50 lbs. of gold from the single city. He was soon transferred to the control of *Roman* Vasparacan, while Leo Lependrenus succeeded him in the Mesopotamian viceroyalty. The brother of Michael IV., the eunuch Constantine, was the next governor of Edessa, or at least appears in its defence, with the title of Domestic of the eastern troops. The technical successor to Lependrenus was an undoubted Armenian, born, it was said, of an Iberian mother, Varazvatch.—It would appear that the death of Romanus III. (1034) stirred the ill-feeling and suspicion of these Iberians. Romanus and Zoe had married a niece, daughter of Basil Argyrus, to Bagrat, son of George, king of Iberia and Abasgia; and it is said that Bagrat broke a long peace with the empire to avenge the murder of Romanus. This would seem to be (like the scandalous yet circumstantial story itself) very problematic: in 1036, the same monarch sent a reinforcement of 4000 men to David Lackland against the emir of Dovin. The tendency to appoint natives to the imperial commands in the East is evinced by the name Khatchic, a native governor under the empire for *Roman* Vasparacan, a post in which the official and the feudal element must have been very evenly balanced. We read of two sons, Hassan and Zinziluc, being despatched to offer gifts and homage

*Armenian  
governors for  
the empire:  
Principality  
of Tarsus.*



to the emperor Michael IV. During their absence the Turks kill father and brother, and they return with 5000 Romans to take vengeance. Quite in the spirit of mediæval chivalry, the murderers are challenged to single combat, and the right prevails in the province of Her. But the petty Armenian principalities or governorships have become increasingly insecure; the tide of Roman influence is fast ebbing in the east, or rather the Armenian nationality is being driven westwards. On Hassan's death, the emperor gave his son, Abel-Kharp, the principality of Tarsus, in Cilicia, with its dependencies, and thus paved the way for that romantic sequel to the Armenian monarchy in the country of St. Paul. Once more, under Romanus III. (1034), Alda, widow of George of Abasgia, had handed over a strong fortress to Rome, Anaquoph; and Demetrius, brother of the Bagrat above, who married the emperor's niece Helena, received the distinction of *magister militum*. Thus hither and thither flowed the stream of Romanising sympathy among the Armenians at this time.

Armenian  
governors for  
the empire:  
Principality  
of Tarsus.

KINGS OF IBERIA (or Georgia or *Karthli*) of the Bagratid line, established as fifth dynasty since 575 by Gouaram, *curopalat*:—

Adranasar (Aternerseh) II., 890. (Bagratid king of Georgia; a grandson of Ashot I., Bagratid king of Armenia; crowned by Sembat I.)

David II., son.

Gourgenes I., nephew of David.

Bagrat II., son of Gourgenes, the Fool.

Gourgenes II., son of Gourgenes, 998.

Bagrat III., son of Gourgenes, 1008.

Georgi I., son of Bagrat III., 1015.

Bagrat IV., son of George, who married niece of Romanus III., whose brother Demetrius received title *magister militum*, whose mother Alda received Roman garrison in Anaquoph. There follow: Georgi II., 1072; David III., 1089; Demetrius I., 1125.

The new line of Abasgian kings provides several members of

the Iberian Bagratids, though sovereigns are not invariably chosen from that family: in 915, there is a Gourgenes, grand prince of the Abasgians, nephew of David II. (above); his son Bagrat served, as it were, an apprenticeship in Abasgia for the more important crown of Iberia, which he obtained in 958, at the close of Constantine VII.'s reign. At that time Abasgia served, like Naples or Tuscany, as a stepping-stone to a higher dignity. But the barbarous names of Thothos and Ber (927 and 945) prove that the Abasgian chieftains were not always chosen of this stock.

KINGS OF ARMENIA (of the Bagratid line) :—

Ashot (son of Vasak), created ruler of Armenia by  
Merwan II., last Ommiad Caliph, 748.

Sempad, 758.

Ashot, 781.

Sembat, Confessor, 820.

Ashot I. the Great (first independent ruler), 856.

Sembat I., Martyr, 890.

Ashot II. (*iron-arm*), 914.

(An Ashot not counted, nominee of Arabs, 921.)

Apas, 928.

Ashot III., the Pitiful, 952.

Sembat II., the Powerful, 977.

Gagic I. (*\*king of kings*), 989.

John Sembat III., 1020–1042.

Gagic II., 1042 (+1080).

## DIVISION C

### ANNEXATION, RIVALRY, AND ALLIANCE

WITHOUT (1040-1120)

#### VIII

ARMENIA AND THE EMPIRE FROM CONSTANTINE X.  
TO THE ABDICATION OF MICHAEL VI. (1040-1057).

§ 1. THE reign of Monomachus is perhaps the zenith of Byzantine influence and extension, and the first moment of rapid reaction and decline. The chief event in the Eastern world was the extinction of the Bagratid kingdom in Greater Armenia, and the annexation of a vast territory, which stretched the realm from the Danube (or even the Straits of Messina) to the Caspian Sea. In 1045, Michael Jasitas, Roman governor in Iberia, has small success against the recalcitrant Gagic, nephew of the deceased monarch; and Constantine X. does not scruple to request the aid of Aboulsewar, Arab emir of Dovin, against a Christian sovereign. The emir bargained to retain his conquests. Gagic was alarmed at this unholy alliance; and Sargis-Vestes, working on his fears, induced him to make peace with the mighty yet placable rulers, whose arms and allies were ubiquitous. At last the distressed king decides to repair to the well-known asylum; he binds his nobles of the Romanising party by terrible oaths not to surrender the city of Ani in his absence, and exacts from the emperor full and express safe-conduct and immunity. The treacherous faction at once despatched the keys of citadel and palace to

*Voluntary  
cession of  
King of Ani  
(c. 1045).*

*Voluntary  
cession of  
King of Ani  
(c. 1045).*

Constantine ; and to his credit he refused to accept the advantage. Meantime a notable Armenian peer set the example of capitulation ; Gregory μάγιστρος, friend of the aged Basil II., versifier and paraphrast of Scripture, gave up his possessions in Ararat in exchange for land in Mesopotamia, and the coveted title of Duke (which now became the chief honour bestowed by the empire on its foreign adherents). Gagic hesitated no longer ; and with the entrance of Jasitas into Ani the Bagratid kingdom comes to an end, leaving only the prince of Kars in complete but precarious autonomy, under the hereditary sway of the son of Abbas. Gagic is granted the now archaic title of *magister militum*, with a large fief in Cappadocia. The first dependent governor of Ani was Catacalon Catacecaumenus, the burnt (*cf.* Fabius Ambustus), a general of the Armenian military caste, who will bulk largely on the scene in the next twenty-five years. Catacalon at once suspected the patriarch Peter and his nephew Khatchic of very doubtful attachment to the new suzerain ; he seizes them both. Constantine X., entirely faithful to the gracious and trusting policy of the later emperors towards alien princes and possible allies, received Peter at court, and (while compelled to acknowledge the fairness of his lieutenant's suspicions) gave him the high dignity of *Syncellus* to his own "Chalcedonian" patriarch. He orders the reinstatement of Khatchic in the see of Ani, and even dismisses Peter after three years from his honourable detention, at the request and with the personal surety of Gagic the ex-king, and the two princes or "kings" of Sebastè ; thither the patriarch retired, to die in 1060.—The two following years (1046) witnessed more desultory conflicts in the farther East. Aboulsewar, the emir of Dovin, was discontented with the good faith of the "Greeks," and loudly bewailed the violation of the compact by which he was to

*Exploits of  
Catacalon,  
Roman  
governor,  
against emir  
of Dovin.*

retain whatever he won from Gagic. It is customary to believe implicitly such charges in the case of the decadent Byzantine monarchy, the "Lower" empire; in this case, we will only remark that Gagic had already detached the emir from his imperial ally and thus rendered the treaty void; and again, he had ceded his kingdom of his own free-will. Nicolas Cabasilas,<sup>1</sup> in command of the troops, despatched a large force, under Jasitas and an Alanian vassal of his own, which is badly defeated under the walls of Dovin. The two generals are at once recalled, and Catacalon transferred from Iberia; while, with the true Byzantine caution so often fatal to rapid and concerted action, the control of the army was entrusted to a Saracen eunuch, Constantine, in whose loyalty the emperor had every reason to confide; we are reminded of the influence of Samonas under Leo VI. But this strangely assorted pair of yoke-fellows, the bluff general and the emasculated renegade from Islam, acted throughout in perfect agreement. They close in on the emir's capital, carefully occupying all places of supply and commissariat. (The Armenian writers give Catacalon the name Telarkh or Teliarkh: is it possible that under this lurks concealed, the ironical title τέλειος ἄρχων, or τελειάρχης?) Aboulsewar retaliated (as was usual in these border forays) by carrying desolation up to the walls of the new Roman centre, Ani. He destroyed the churches, martyring the faithful priests and bishops; and amongst the number we find the name of Vahram, the aged Arsacid general and patriot, who had com-

*Exploits of  
Catacalon,  
Roman  
governor,  
against emir  
of Dovin.*

<sup>1</sup> We may perhaps suspect that the name Basil is not strictly of Greek origin, either at this time or earlier, when it is illustrated by the great Christian dogmatist. The Armenian form might be Vasel or Barshagh; the Greeks would force its Hellenic equivalent into some kind of intelligible form. In this spirit and intention, they make Γοργυνόνης (alert mind) of Gourgenes, Συμβάτιος of Sembat, Παγκράτιος of Bagrat. In the West they attempted a derivation of Thiudat and Thiuds-reich, by words which reminded the hearer or reader of the gift of God (Θεός, δῶρον).

pleted his eightieth year. He still lives as a canonised saint in the grateful memories of his scattered countrymen.

*The Seljuk  
advance: its  
significance  
in world-  
history.*

§ 2. The year 1048 saw the beginning of the Seljukian wars, which destroyed in a few years the caliphate and the traditional form and territory of the Roman Empire, extended a Turkish conquest from the neighbourhood of Byzantium to Cashgar, vanished before the still more terrible onslaught of the Mongols, and gave birth in dying to the Ottoman supremacy. The founder of the line was a brave captain in Turkestan, very probably of Christian belief, who, in the disturbed and incoherent realm which we call the caliphate, retired affronted from a petty court, set up an independent authority, and died full of years and booty as a brigand chief or mercenary captain in Bokharia at the age of eighty. It is fitting to compare for a moment the fortunes of Rome and Islam. Both systems were anti-national, impersonal, democratic (or rather equalitarian), and therefore despotic. There were no gradations of authority, no distinct and balancing centres of influence; the Caliph and Cæsar were all or nothing; the popular delegation of power was plenary and (at first) irrevocable. Rome leant successfully on the nations who entered her pale; the provinces were summoned one by one to send their sons to the capital and revive its dwindling vigour. As in Rome, Spaniards and Africans, Syrians and Dacians had played their part in sustaining the empire which recognised no distinction of race, so in Islam we can trace the successive stages by which the real power passes from Arabia to Syria, Persia, and Khorasan; how the caliphs, recruiting their armies farther and farther from the seat of government and the home-country, became the victims and the slaves of the Turkish mercenaries whom they had invoked against their own subjects. In the widespread theocracy of Islam any believer might become, not

indeed Cæsar—the prophet's kin were sacred—but his tyrant or his assassin. The difference between the two parallel systems may be seen in the greater efficiency of the successors of Constantine, who are continually awoken from the slumbers of the puppet to become the active controllers, first ministers, and generals of the great commonwealth. Elsewhere, the members of a privileged house of sacred and immemorial descent sank into nonentities; but at Old and New Rome there are no Mikados, *rois fainéants*, or Abbassid caliphs. By the middle of the eleventh century, the original force of Islam had been exhausted; its noonday was long past. The three great movements which created our modern world were just happening: the Norman conquests of England and of Southern Italy,—the arrival of the Seljukids as militant exponents of the principles of Islam. It is at this time that the kingdoms of the ancient and the modern world fall into that shape and system which has lasted until the present day. For the Seljukids are the ancestors and pioneers of the Ottoman Turks.

*The Seljuk advance: its significance in world-history.*

§ 3. The first embroilment of these redoubtable foes with the imperial forces occurred in 1048, for a miserably inadequate cause. Stephen, governor of Vasparacan and son of Constantine Lichudes, a favourite minister of Constantine X., refused leave, like Edom of old, to Cutulmish, Togrul's cousin, to pass through while retiring before the Arabs of Diarbekir. The arrogant governor is defeated, captured, and sold as a slave; but the glowing reports of Cutulmish on the fertile province influence the greed of the Sultan (as we may now call the representative of the imprisoned caliph, in distinction from the official emirs of the Arabian system). Twenty thousand men under Assan are sent to reduce and ravage Vasparacan; for if Harun himself had no higher ambition than a successful slave-raid, it was not to be expected that these gross recruits

*First pillage of Vasparacan.*

*First pillage  
of Vas-  
paracan.*

to Islam, perhaps Christian renegades, had any idea of political consolidation. The new governor was Aaron, son of Ladislas, Bulgarian king, and brother of Prusianus (the duellist); so strangely on the outskirts of her empire did Rome bring together the different nations, tongues, and creeds of the world. He sent to Catacalon for aid, who had during the rebellion of Tornicius been summoned to the defence of the emperor against the usurper, and afterwards transferred to his old post as governor of the Iberian frontier of Armenia. Local report assigns a creditable victory and successful ruse to Catacalon: the camp was deserted, and while it is rifled by the enemy the ambush falls on them, drowning them in the river Strauga (?). It must, however, be remarked that the incident and the plan bear a suspicious resemblance to the tactics of king Gagic; and that while the Byzantines know of *one* incursion of the Seljuks, the Armenians, with better chances of accurate knowledge, speak of *three*. But the further success of the Roman arms and perhaps a long reprieve for the Asiatic provinces of the empires, were hindered by the Byzantine safeguards of a divided military command, by a college of equal generals. Their unanimous voice was requisite for any joint action, and a single veto (as in a Polish Diet) could indefinitely postpone action at a crisis. Aaron the Bulgar wished to act on the defensive and await further imperial commands, when Togrul's brother, Ibrahim Inal, advanced against them with an enormous host of 100,000. Catacalon, merely a warrior and not a courtier, bluntly declared for an immediate attack. The emperor sent in reply a cautious direction to wait for the further reinforcements of the Iberian Liparit.—This ally or vassal or subject of Rome (we are approaching the feudal uncertainty of legal status) is an excellent type of a common class in these latter days of the Eastern empire. A trained warrior, and descending from a military

*Division in  
the Roman  
councils;  
they wait for  
Liparit.*

*(Feudal  
character of  
Liparit.)*



family, he stands, like Vasak or Bahram, a powerful general by the side of the throne, or on its steps, and often of more consequence than its occupant. Twenty-six years before (1022), his grandfather had died fighting against the empire with the Abasgians ; and under Bagrat, king of Northern Iberia, he was established there and enjoyed great influence. But the king insulted his wife, and was expelled by an exasperated husband. Seizing the throne like the Persian general Bahram of old (in a rare interruption of a strictly hereditary line), he sought to establish himself by the friendship of Rome. Constantine X. willingly accepted his proposal, and recognised the successful pretender ; but Bagrat escapes from his exile, passes to Trebizond, and secures the emperor's permission to visit Constantinople. There the legitimate sovereign complained of the countenance given to a rebel and usurper. And on this occasion, if on no other, the emperor acted a truly imperial part, as judicious arbiter of the quarrels of lesser men, such as Dante vainly portrayed to the turbulent West as the ideal of an earthly monarch. He mollified the two rivals, and prevailed with wonderful tact on Liparit to rest content with the life-enjoyment of the province of Meschia, acknowledging Bagrat as his sovereign.

*(Feudal character of Liparit.)*

§ 4. While the generals each in good faith proffered and upheld their different views, the forces of Liparit were slowly assembling and descending southwards, and Ibrahim, reaping a full advantage from the respite, attacked Arz-Roum (near the ancient Theodosiopolis), and burns and sacks an opulent town, where the number of victims of fire and sword was said to reach 140,000. Still Aaron believed that nothing could dispense from the letter of the imperial instructions ; and his veto paralysed the action of the Roman forces while Catacalon chafed at the delay. But the arrival of Liparit only brought a fresh obstacle. He came with 26,000 Georgians and

*Defeat of Liparit ; negotiations for peace with Rome.*

*Defeat of  
Liparit;  
negotiations  
for peace  
with Rome.*

Armenians and 700 of his own immediate retainers and vassals ; but he refused to fight on a Saturday. When the engagement does in the end take place, both Roman generals accounted for the detachment that confronted them, but Liparit was defeated and taken captive. The Sultan displayed an even greater generosity towards his fallen foe than Alp Arslan to Romanus Diogenes. He dismissed Liparit without ransom ; and gave to the released prisoner for his own use the sum which the emperor had sent. Events seemed to point to a truce in the hostilities between the two powers ; but the *Sherif*, sent to the Roman capital to discuss the terms of peace, made extravagant demands, required tribute from the empire (which was as yet insensible of its secret decay), and broke off negotiations on refusal. In consequence, Togrul resumed the war next year (1049) by an attack on Manzikert, some twenty years before the famous and fatal battle. (Earlier in the year he had appeared before Comium in Iberia, but was deterred by the news of a great Roman force which Constantine X. had collected. The defection of the emperor's Patzinak allies or recruits altered the whole complexion of affairs. Like the Slavonian mercenaries of Justinian II. they abandoned their forts with one consent, refused to go on a distant expedition to the rocks of Iberia, and swam the Bosphorus on their horses beneath the eyes of an amazed and perhaps affrighted capital.) The patrician Basil forces Togrul to retreat ; and the great army collected at Cappadocian Cæsarea was free to turn its attention to Aboulsewar. The Roman arms and designs were crowned with complete success. The emir's territory was ravaged, the old treaty renewed, and a hostage was offered and accepted, in the person of his nephew Artasyras. But this concentration of troops on the Eastern frontier had left the capital exposed. The days of the great Justinian were recalled when, victor from

*The  
Patzinaks  
create a  
diversion in  
Europe ;  
eastern  
armies  
weakened.*

Gades and the Straits of Hercules to Colchis and the Euphrates, he trembled in the palace before a raid of disorderly barbarians. Neither then nor now could the empire support more than one fully-equipped host; Belisarius had to leave his task in Persia to fly to Italy. In recent times a Russian scare had brought up Curcuas with all his men from their proper post; and we shall soon see how the revolt of Tornicius disorganised the military defences by a contemptible domestic sedition. The Roman armies had followed strange leaders of every nation under heaven; but never perhaps a combination so curious. At the head was a retired priest, Nicephorus, who had abandoned his orders to follow active military service; a Western bishop would have united the two professions of arms and prayer. Catacalon, not without a smile or a murmur, assumed a subaltern post; and Hervey the Norman (*φραγγόπουλος*) occupied a powerful but indeterminate position as ally or *condottiere*: here first we meet with a notable name among the foreigners, Russians, Germans, and English, who since the days of Basil and Constantine had formed no mean reinforcement to the decaying (or suspected) native armies. Successive defeats had broken the spirit of the soldiers. Nicephorus was routed; Catacalon was taken, still breathing, among the heaps of slain; like Liparit, he was tended by the foe, restored to health, and finally released, to act once more as the guardian of the empire, the veteran hero and spokesman of the military party, and the "king-maker" in the revolution of 1057. The Patzinaks were a third time victorious over the cowed and demoralised forces (1050); but by one of the rapid turns from peril to security, so familiar in Byzantine history, they were repressed and rendered harmless by the end of the next year.

*The Patzinaks create a diversion in Europe; eastern armies weakened.*

*Strange trio of generals against Patzinaks (1050).*

§ 5. Meantime, the court and advisers of the benevolent emperor were agitated by perpetual sus-

*The courtiers  
charge  
Armenian  
Princes of  
Arkni with  
disloyalty.*

picion of Armenian loyalty. Once more a charge was preferred (1051) against the vassal-princes, who lived so strangely in the midst of the uniform officialism of Rome, on the border-line between subject and ally. The province of Baghin, in Fourth Armenia, had long enjoyed peace under a college of amiable brethren residing at Arkni, Abel Harpic (or Aboul-Kharp), David, Leo, and Constantine. The emperor listened to their accusers, and sent Peros with a force to investigate. He summons all the lords to attend a durbar and publicly renew their profession of loyalty. Intending to abstain they were betrayed; and found it prudent to present themselves and tender allegiance. Of the guilty designs of the eldest brother Peros was reluctantly convinced; with unusual and almost unique severity in this age of tenderness to traitors and renegades, he set a price upon his head; but wept at the spectacle of accomplished justice. The remaining three princes he brought home with him, to be banished into an island in the ensuing year (1052), not because their innocence was again doubtful, but by the kindness of the emperor. Our authorities at this juncture tell us that "a decision was taken at court to annihilate the entire Armenian race," and we are left in darkness as to the motive and scope of this curious proposal, which has found in our own times a parallel in the policy of Abdul Hamid II. The emperor (always the most clement man within his own dominions) saved them from the tempest; there was no Armenian Bartholomew, no Sicilian Vespers; and the gracious and capable sovereign, Theodora, sent them back to their own land, conferring the responsible control of their province to Melusianus.—But it is abundantly clear that the court-party and civil ministers entertained a profound distrust of the Armenian warrior-class. From certain vague intimations we might almost surmise that the great army of the East was no more. In 1052, we find Franks and Varangians dispersed in

*Curious plot  
to annihilate  
Armenian  
'Huguenots.'*

*Normans  
posted in  
East owing to  
distrust.*

various posts of Iberia and Chaldia, under Michael the Acolyth. He was successful in inducing Togrul to desist from his savage reprisals for the escape of his rebel brother Cutulmish. But in 1053, the Sultan again returns to Lake Van, round which in earliest and latest time alike clustered the homes of the true Armenian race. He captured Bergri and begins the *second* siege of Manzikert, still ruled by Basil the patrician (scion of a noble family of Taik by a Georgian mother), a clear proof that the wisdom and justice of the emperor had arrested the fatal policy of eliminating the Armenian element from the service of Rome. The Turks had the usual successes of a ferocious and undisciplined horde. The districts of Ararat, Vanand, Khorsenè, Chaldia, and Taik were ruthlessly ravaged. Thatoul, the general of Abbas, king of Kars, was put to death in captivity for having killed in battle a Seljuk prince. But the Sultan retired baffled from the walls and bastions of the citadel; an Armenian and a nameless but ingenious Frank diverted the force of his batteries and set fire to the engines which, stolen from the Romans, they employed with clumsy art against their inventors. After receiving in his camp from a catapult the gory head of a general who had counselled persistence in the siege, Togrul hesitated no longer. He strikes his camp and plunders the vulnerable portion of Arzké, a town in the Pesnounian district, and on the borders of Van. The not inglorious reign of Constantine X. was wearing to its close; two acts of imperial generosity must be recorded; Basil, for his meritorious defence, was created Duke (or Prince?) of Edessa, and Catacalon, returning safe and whole from the kindly Patzinaks, received the still prouder title, Duke of Antioch, which had for a hundred years shed added lustre on the highest official rank.

§ 6. During the short reign of Theodora (1054-1056) decisive and significant movements took place in the East. On the one hand, the Seljuks

*Normans posted in East owing to distrust.*

*Attack of Togrul fiercely renewed (1053) but baffled.*

*Catacalon, Duke of Antioch.*

*Fresh Seljuk attack; treason of the son of Liparit.*

*Fresh Seljuk  
attack;  
treason of the  
son of  
Liparit.*

gathered courage, assaulted Ani (1055) by the united armies of Togrul and Aboulsewar, once more hostile to the empire; ravaging the district of Basen, massacring the whole populace of Ocom to the number of 30,000, scared or stupefied by the fires kindled by the savage foe. (Another band of mutineers, despising the commands of the Sultan but recognising the same prey, killed a Roman commandant Theodore, in the province of Taron.) On the other hand, we have a signal instance of that restless feudal spirit which excited the distrust of the ministers in the capital against the Armenian race, whether as vassal-princes or as troops enrolled in the imperial service. Ivan (or Ivané), the son of Liparit, the superstitious general who had failed against the Turk in 1048, had been gratified by the investiture of the provinces of Hachtéan and Archamouni; he had found this substantial recompense for the very doubtful services of his family inadequate to his own deserts. He coveted the addition of the province of Carin; and to secure his purpose, allied with the Turks. Terrified at his crime, he guides them into Chaldia, away from his own territory; and they are gluttoned with the rich booty of a defenceless country. This was the signal for a more determined and ferocious onslaught. Anarchy broke loose in the Asiatic provinces. A band seizes Erez, and massacres all its people.

*Pillage of  
Chaldia.*

*Emir of  
Akhlát  
extinguishes  
revolt of  
Hervey the  
Norman.*

Michael VI.'s reign was marked by the revolt of Hervey, an excellent instance of the dangers of mercenary aid, and the aversion of strong and youthful individuality to serve an impersonal cause. Neither Norman nor Armenian (amid many signal points of unlikeness) could appreciate a state, a commonwealth, or public welfare. All life was for them comprised in personal honour, in detached acts of prowess, and in allegiance to a personal chief. Hervey at least would have been contented if his vanity had been flattered by the title *magister militum*,

which he asked as the price of his services. The boon was refused with some scorn ; and Alaric had sacked Rome to avenge a similar slight. Hervey was no historian, but the same Teutonic spirit, covetous of honour and careless of gain, worked in him as in his Gothic cousin six and a half centuries before. He dissembles his resentment and asks a furlough. He passes into Armenia, where he had an estate or a citadel ; and communicates his discontent to the other Franks, who had been established there in military colonies to counteract the Armenian influence. The empire had reason to repent of its decision ; the Norman mercenaries were less trustworthy and more dangerous than the Armenian natives. Like Russell some years later in the empire, like the Seljuks themselves in their early days, he became a brigand-chief, a robber-baron of the Western type, a captain of raceless and creedless *condottieri*. In Vasparacan, he does not scruple to court the alliance of Samukh, Togrul's general, and with his aid to harass the lands of the empire. But the infidel put small faith in these blonde barbarians ; and Michael VI. owed to the prudence and friendliness of the Emir of Akhlat the easy extinction of the mutiny. Apolasar posed as the host and ally of Hervey's company, but it was against the wish of their leader that the Franks entered the city. They were all assassinated ; and Hervey himself thrown into chains. The emir wrote to Michael VI. with almost dutiful glee at the deserved fate of the rebel ; and the emperor, terrified at the renown of any successful general in his employ, must have been profoundly thankful that he was not required to provide the military class with a chance of distinction. But the emperor could not avert his fate. He was destined to fall before some member of the warrior-class, and it was the veteran general, Catacalon Catacecaumenus, who became the arbiter of the due moment of the insurrection and the qualifications of the new emperor.

*Emir of  
Akhlat  
extinguishes  
revolt of  
Hervey the  
Norman.*

## IX

ARMENIA AND WESTERN ASIA FROM ISAAC I. TO  
THE RETIREMENT OF NICEPHORUS III. (1057-1081)

*Catacalon  
and  
Armenian  
military  
faction again  
in power  
(1057).*

§ 1. The forces of the East had recovered their influence, their numbers, and their prestige; or at least the great magnates knew where their disbanded soldiers were chafing in enforced inaction. The troops, gathered at Castamouni in Paphlagonia, joyfully proclaimed Isaac Comnenus, to whom the choice of Catacalon had pointed, on June 8, 1057. From this moment the conflict between the Pacifists and the military caste is continual and embittered, and ceases not until the accession of the second Comnenus, twenty-four years later, puts an end for ever to the civil tradition of Rome. Like any feudal prince of the West, summoned by his peers to a precarious throne, Isaac is well aware of the doubtful benefit of a military backing. The constitution had not yet lost its archaic and yet venerable lineaments; the wearer of the purple was not yet a pure military dictator, nor a feudal prince among his clansmen or his serfs. Michael VI. had dismissed with irony and studied insult the generals who had assembled to pay their Easter homage and receive the usual gifts and honours. Isaac was not so imprudent; but he took occasion to send his late allies far from the capital to reside on their own estates. Catacalon became *Curopalat*, but the office was perhaps, for the first time, divided between a brother, John Comnenus, and a subject. Henceforth, the emperor relies only on his kinsmen; a Comnenus is the power behind the throne even during the interval between the abdication of Isaac and the emergence of Alexius; and the nomination of a new emperor is the triumph of a feudal clan.

*Armenian  
influence on  
Rome.*

I have dwelt thus on the *political* aspect of the revolution of 1057, because it bears out the influence ascribed to the new feudal forces at work throughout



the empire, and especially in the East. Armenia had no doubt preserved her independence by means, rather than in spite, of her feudal turbulence. But she had done more; she had permeated the socialistic system and government of Rome with the spirit of a bellicose hierarchy: and the influence which destroyed the reality of the empire, while it kept alive its phantom for 500 years, came from the East and not from the West.—For our present purpose, we must now resume our inquiry into the sequel of the Turkish inroads and the Roman civil war. Blour, in Carin (which Ivan had coveted), submitted to terrible cruelties; Khorzenè and Andzitenè are ransacked; and the attention of the warrior-class was distracted from the needs of the State to their own real or imagined grievances (1057). In 1058, a Turkish force came against Melitenè and sacked and burnt according to their custom; but with a curious nemesis, the retreating raiders are snow-bound among the gorges of the Taurus for five months, while the scanty but resolute defenders hold the passes. The death of their general and the news of a Roman reinforcement threw the Turks into confusion near the village of Mormran; and, though during their retreat through Taron they burn Elnout's cathedral and belfry (built by Gregory *μάγιστρος*), Thornic the Mamigonian assembles the levies of Sassoun against them, rescues their prisoners, and sends them back in safety to Melitenè. So far at least the Turkish war is a mere record of havoc, slaughter, and burning; broken only by some instance of patriotic daring. There is no steady policy, no advance to any certain goal. The Seljuks harry and destroy but they do not annex, and seem at the very moment of signal triumph to repent suddenly of their aggression.

§ 2. The estrangement of Armenia was assisted by theological hate. Constantine XI. Ducas had succeeded, and he summoned the Ani patriarch Khatchic (nephew of Peter) to appear in the capital

*Armenian influence on Rome.*

*Desultory raids of Seljuks with varying success (1057-9).*

*Religious and political dissensions of Armenia and the empire*

*Religious and political dissensions of Armenia and the empire.*

*Armenian alliance with infidel and Seljuk advance.*

(1059); he was retained in polite captivity for three years, importuned to accept the creed and rites of the Greek Church, and (if an odd report be worthy of credit) to supply the emperor with an annual tribute or subsidy. Application is made also to Atom and Abousahl, princes or "kings" of Sebastè (Sivas), and to Gagic, the king of Kars. But the suggested submission was intensely distasteful to the Armenian nation; nor did the behaviour of the "Greeks" serve to mollify these prejudices. Insults were meted out to the Armenians, on account of their religion; George coming from Ani to Antioch suffers the crowning and unpardonable indignity of a pulled beard. In revenge he asks aid of the Turks, and plunders twelve adjacent villages belonging to the empire; no doubt frightened, like the rest of his countrymen, at the success of his unnatural vengeance. Yet Constantine XI. himself trusted Armenian loyalty and valour; he appointed Khatchatour, a native of Ani, whom Zonaras calls *Χατατούριος*, Duke of Antioch in 1060. But nothing could heal the breach between the two nations; jealousy impeded the successes of the camp as well as the harmony of a common worship. When (also in 1060) the duke levied his men and marched out to meet Slar-Khorasan (a title, not a name, "General of Khorasan"), a Greek, envious of Armenian success, sounded a trumpet in the dead of night, and thus informed the Turks, encamped near Nchenic, of the approach of foes: the emperor punished the culprit with the extreme penalty. If the duke by this expedition saved Edessa, he did not escape calumny; whisperers were always ready to insinuate suspicions of Armenian intrigues. He is relieved of the high office and replaced by Vasak, son of Gregory *μάγιστρος*, the pious poetaster: the emperor afterwards (with the keen desire to be just, which we have learnt to expect in Byzantine sovereigns) compensated him with the command of the fort Andrioun. At a *second*

siege of Edessa, bad feeling again broke out: 4000 Greeks leave the city and encamp beyond the river in comparative safety and complete uselessness; only a few Armenians, performing prodigies of valour, kept the bridge, and a Frank died bravely in the defence. Togrul follows this up by an order to three generals, including Samukh, to attack Sebastè. Atom, helpless and dismayed, retired with his brother to an impregnable fortress, Khavatanek, and witnesses or hears of the burning of his capital, the murder of his subjects. After eight days' wanton havoc and destruction, the Turks leave behind them a mere scene of ruin, and Atom, like all Armenian princes in distress, seeks the asylum of the Roman court. This blow carried the horrors into a part of the empire which had long enjoyed peace. In 1061, another trio of captains, including the nameless "General of Khorasan," were ordered to Baghin, where Arkni, the chief town, falls before their fury, only intermitted for a brief space out of respect for religion during a service in church. The "Frankish colt" and the Duke of Edessa were sent against them too late to save the town.

*Armenian alliance with infidel and Seljuk advance.*

*Fall of the Principalities of Sivas and Arkni.*

§ 3. Alp Arslan succeeded Togrul, or Ταγγρολίπιξ, in 1062, being the brother or the nephew (Abulpharagius) of his predecessor. Next year he invades and reduces Albania, forces David Lackland to give his daughter in marriage; and takes the province of Gougarkh and Dchavakh (dependent on Iberia), together with the town of Akhal-Kalaki, "the new city." With Arslan, the Seljukian sovereign ceases to be a captain of brigands and raiders, and assumes the generous air and serious policy of a more civilised ruler. In 1064 he attacks the favourite and coveted citadel of Ani (with its lofty ramparts of Sembat II., and its circumfluent river, the Akhourian). This town had been in Roman hands since 1045; but was still entrusted to the care of native Armenians as lieutenants and officers of the

*Serious aggressive policy of new Sultan (1062).*

*Capture and sack of old Armenian capital, Ani.*

*Capture and sack of old Armenian capital, Ani.*

empire. Bagrat was in chief command as duke ; and Gregory, a Georgian, held a subordinate post. Here again the Sultan was disappointed, and preparing to retire, was unhappily brought back by the news that the inhabitants were leaving the city, in the very moment when their safety was assured, the host of fugitives amounting to 50,000. Arslan returns and sacks (June 6, 1064). Part of the citizens were sent home as slaves, part set to rebuild the shattered walls and houses. With a strange population transplanted into it, Ani soon recovered from its ruins ; for the Sultan had something more than a destructive aim. The king of Kars, sole surviving independent State now left between the old monarchies and the new barbarian inroad, averted the impending storm by wearing mourning, as if for Togrul ; and the generous Arslan accepted without suspicion this hypocritical compliment. But the king followed the precedent so often set by Armenian princes ; he handed over his land to Rome, by secret compact rather than open agreement, and was promised in exchange a fertile district and one hundred villages, near the Pontic towns of Amasea, Comana, and Larissa. But the trusted and venerable asylum of the oppressed would very soon be unable to protect the refugee. The eastern peril pressed gradually westwards. While jealousy at home starved the Roman armies, the Turkish troops under Samukh and the Slar-Khorasan had laid waste Iberia, Mesopotamia, Chaldia, and Melitenè ; from the Euphrates northward to the Caucasus spread a scene of uniform desolation. Greater Armenia and Vasparacan are now to experience the horrors of this destructive war. Roman influence ebbs in Ani ; and the natural defenders had lost their spirit in servitude (as they supposed) to a foreign power. The emperor gave liberty to the Patriarch Khatchic, at the prayers of the refugee princes of Sivas ; but he survived but a short time,

*Secret cession of last independent state to Rome.*

*Further range of Seljuks unhindered.*

and died at Cucusa in this year (1064). Would there be a new patriarch, it was anxiously asked? At last, through the good offices of the Empress Eudocia and Abbas, prince in (or of) Amasea, permission was extorted from Constantine XI., or rather his Greek orthodox advisers; a son of the *μάρτυρος* Vahram was chosen under the title of Gregory II. In 1066 a Turkish army ravages the district near the Black Mountain, on the confines of Asia Minor and the modern province of Caramania: while another column penetrates to the province of Telkhoun, and plunders the district of the confluence of Euphrates and Melas.

*Further  
range of  
Seljuks  
unhindered.*

§ 4. The short regency of Eudocia (1067) was scandalised by another proof of the ill-feeling between the "two nations." At Melitenè a Roman force was stationed in the garrison, and another detachment (perhaps the more important) on the opposite bank; the latter refused to cross to the aid of the town. The inhabitants, deserted by their allies, bear the brunt and the town is taken. Arslan advances without check to Cæsarea, pillaging along his route, and despoiling the shrine of St. Basil in his metropolis. He returned by Cilicia and Aleppo, guided by a Roman renegade. Amerticius, claiming descent (like most ambitious men in the East) from the old line of Persian kings, had served the empire under Michael VI.; accused to Constantine XI. of some crime, he had been punished with exile, but, his innocence soon established, he had been taken back into fullest confidence and sent against the Turks. But the disastrous policy of the *civilian* ministers of war transformed a loyal servant into a foe: he became desperate owing to the default of pay, subsidies, and commissariat, and was glad to conduct the Turks to the ready plunder of a country which for the past hundred years had been singularly free from ravage. The Roman cause was undermined, as we see, by national and religious animosities; but its

*Armenian  
disaffection;  
treason of the  
captain  
Amerticius.*

*Evil effects of  
civilian  
parsimony.* armies, still capable and brave, were honeycombed by discontent. Nicephorus Botaneiates, the future emperor (1078–1081), commanded a considerable force in Northern Syria; but his men disband in tumult like the soldiers under Tiberius and Maurice; and the new levies in Antioch, without cavalry, arms, uniform, or rations, soon follow their example.

*No adequate  
Imperial  
forces on  
Eastern  
frontier.*

It was impossible for the blind to mistake the signs of the times. Under a series of princes full of good intentions and generous impulses, but imperfectly informed and unduly influenced, the civilian and military duel was being fought to a finish. The inner history of this movement belongs to that parallel and complementary section, which narrates the shifting of authority under the nominal autocracy of the Cæsars. But the Eastern annals of these last fifty years betray unmistakably the outward symptoms of the disorder. To the short-sighted civilians this real Eastern danger lay in independent commands, such as had been confidently bestowed on Curcuas, on Phocas, or on Catacalon: the Turkish inroads, by the side of this formidable domestic menace, sank into mere border-forays, and the submission of the Armenian princes (which should have aroused the deepest anxiety) flattered the ignorant pride of the pacific and luxurious courtiers. The choice of Eudocia may well have been dictated by a nobler purpose than mere sentimental attraction. Against the advice and the perpetual intrigues of the palace and nobility, Romanus Diogenes was elevated to the throne as colleague of the young heirs and husband of the empress. The last military regent of Rome now appears on the scene, the son of a rebel and a pretender, and the most tragic figure in later Roman history, the Regulus of the empire.

*Lukewarm  
support  
extended to  
R. IV.*

§ 5. The campaigns of Romanus IV. belong to plain historical narrative; and it is idle to speculate on the possible results of the loyal and consistent

support of his lieutenants and of the court. His difficulties belong to the domain of political intrigue, which is elsewhere explored; and all that here concerns us is the inquiry into the general issue of the war. Its failure was by no means a foregone conclusion. The war-party and the upholders of "peace at any price" were no doubt evenly divided; and had the Byzantine empire enjoyed the blessings of universal suffrage and "popular" control, there is no reason to believe that the consequences would have been different. The civilians honestly took up much the same attitude as the opponents of the Boer war in England: and both (if mistaken) were sincerely convinced of the evils of imperialism and a military ascendancy. (In the actual conduct of the campaign we note the same strange anomaly as in Heraclius' Persian war. When in the second year (1069) Romanus proposed to advance to *Akhlat*, on Lake Van, the Turks were deciding to ignore his inroad and attack Iconium.) In 1068 we see that Romanus leaves an Iberian Pharasmanes in command of Hierapolis; and in 1070 the generals include Manuel Comnenus (a *curopalat* on his father's death), Nicephorus, of the illustrious family of Melissenus, and Michael the Taronite, of the old princely house so long domiciled in Constantinople. He performed a notable feat in bringing his captor to the Roman court (*captus ferum victorem cepit*), a hideous dwarf, boasting the ancient Persian dynasty among his ancestors, like all who claimed or attained high position in this age. It is possible that the favour shown to this renegade exasperated Arslan. In 1071 he collects all his forces, seizes Manzikert, and lays ineffectual siege to Edessa and Aleppo; at least the empire had not forgotten the arts of defence with which her valour has been so often reproached by the historians of the closet. Romanus was at Sebastè (or Sivas), where once more the misunderstandings of court and Armenians broke out.

*Lukewarm support extended to R. IV.*

*His campaigns and Armenian officers; suspicion of Sivas princes.*

*Catastrophe of Manzikert (1071).*

*Catastrophe  
of Manzikert  
(1071).*

The princes, Atom and Abousahl, of this feudal appanage or vassal principality, received him with respect; but the familiar charge of disloyalty being preferred, the emperor believes it and treats the town as a foreign conquest, refusing the title "king" which soothed the vanity of the exiles. Advancing to Manzikert he recovered it and put all Turks to the sword; and in his train we note the Armenian captains, Nicephorus Basilacius and Kbatat. The great battle of Manzikert follows, the capture and release of the emperor, the vindictive measure of the "political" party under the Cæsar John, the removal of Eudocia, the disastrous civil war, and the final defeat of Romanus at Amasea. Once more, as under the emperor Phocas, can an eastern monarch plead a righteous vengeance for his wars. Henceforward the Turkish Sultan might urge an honourable motive, the requital of Romanus' death. There is no reason to distrust the sincerity of his intent; and it is clear that the sultan had been deeply impressed by the fortitude of his gallant foe.

*Scanty results  
of Manzikert  
(1071).*

§ 6. But even while we recognise this change from a brutal raid to a solemn punishment of guilt, it is impossible to submit these ancient campaigns to any rules of modern warfare. It is difficult to understand what took place in Arslan's councils or camp during the earlier years of Michael VII. But little capital was made out of the victory of Manzikert, at least by the central authority; the sultan seemed content to denounce the murderers. The emigration of Armenian princes westward still continues, and we are left in astonishment at finding that Cilicia is still considered a safe asylum. In 1072 we find once more a close connection of the exiled nationality with Cilicia. In this year Abel-Kharp, grandson of Khatchic (who called for our notice in 1048), became a friend of the gentle and studious emperor who so fitly represented the civil party. Michael gave the prince command in Tarsus and Mamistria;



he raises the fortification, and prepares to dwell in the strong fortress of Paperôn, like any feudal noble in the West. The province becomes by degrees Armenianised ; and there is a steady influx of the race. His daughter is married to a younger son of Gagic. Soon after, Ochin ("chased by the Turks," according to Samuel of Ani) obeys the invariable rule ; he cedes his lands to the empire (which was perhaps almost helpless to defend them), and, joining Abel in Cilicia, receives from him (with the imperial sanction) the fort of Lambrôn (in the extreme west of the ancient province), where he too exercises wisely a petty feudal sovereignty.—Meantime Ani, now definitely in Turkish hands, is placed under Emir Phatloun, an aged warrior who soon resigned in favour of a grandson. This government must have been as mild and tolerant as the earlier rule of the Arabs in the countries they so rapidly annexed. Gagic, the ex-king of Ani, tried to rewin his crown when in 1073 Malek Shah succeeded to Alp Arslan : but among the Armenian princes he finds no sort of sympathy ; and we may wonder whether this indifference was due to lack of patriotism, to a genuine contentment with the control of Phatloun, or to dislike for the character of their late sovereign (about whom a curious story is told of cruelty to a bishop, set to fight in a pit with his own dog).—The record of the next few years is unexpectedly scanty and interrupted. The Romans seem to have had an unfortunate respite for the growth of rebellion, which diverted their thoughts from the defensive measures so urgently needed. Michael VII. seems to have reigned in 1074 over a territory which nominally touched the Danube and the Euphrates, and included an effective control over Asia Minor. The merchant grandees of Amasea were emboldened to refuse subsidies to Alexius Comnenus, the future emperor ; the rising of Oursel or Russel could be repressed without causing undue alarm ; and the

*Michael VII. still receives cession of land and awards principalities.*

*Ani, content with Seljuk rule, refuses to restore royalty.*

*The interval used by Rome for domestic sedition.*

*The interval used by Rome for domestic sedition.*

military party must have been slowly recovering strength and prestige for the dignified "*pronunciamentos*" of Bryennius and Botaneiates. In the last year of Michael VII. (1077) we read with surprise of an imperial army quartered at Nisibis, Amida, and Edessa, and find that it sustained a defeat at the hands of the Turk, General Gomechtikin: our astonishment reaches a climax when we discover (1078) Soliman, another Turk, acting in concert with the imperialists against the rebel Botaneiates. But the star of Nicephorus was in the ascendant. He mounted the throne with the approval of the more energetic section; and the seventh Michael, like three of his predecessors, the first, the fifth, and the sixth of the name, retired from the palace, to become the non-resident Archbishop of Ephesus.

*Triumph of the Military faction over House of Ducas (1078).*

*Revolt of Armenian Basilacius in Macedon.*

§ 7. The last Armenian pretender within the limits of our period now claims our attention; also a Nicephorus, and surnamed Basilacius (or Vasilatzes). The scene of the fruitless revolt was Macedonia; engagements took place near the Strymon and the Axios rivers, and the decisive blow that ended the sedition came from the mace of *Curticius* (called a Macedonian, but of obvious Armenian descent), who killed Manuel, nephew and chief lieutenant of the pretender. Five centuries and a quarter had elapsed since the first conspiracy of Artabanus against Justinian.—Two or three incidents in Armenian history seem to show (1) how poorly the Seljukids had followed up the victory of Manzikert and the political dissensions of the Romans; (2) how Turkish influence or example had corrupted the manners of the Armenians. About 1077, a generation of Turkish atrocities might appear to have prompted or excused the murder of Khatchatour, once Duke of Antioch, now commander of Andrioun.<sup>1</sup> When he fell ill, a Greek monk stifled

*Revolutions at Antioch; seizure by Armenian Philaret.*

<sup>1</sup> Is this Andrioun the *Adrinople* of an earlier Armenian revolt? Rebellions of Armenian pretenders are not uncommon in the Macedonian or Thracian colonies (Nicephorus Basilacius, Tornicius, Basil the "Mace-

him with a mattress. The faithful troops avenge their master by throwing the assassin from the top of a lofty tower. At the same time Antioch became jealous of the renown of its Armenian Duke, Vasak; he is stabbed in the street under cover of offering a petition; the soldiers appeal to Philaretus, a character and a type that deserves some notice. He came from Varajnouni in Vasparacan, and, after the death of Romanus IV. (1071), aimed at the creation of a small independent state. With 20,000 men devoted to his cause he ousts the "Greek" garrisons in several towns, encamps before Marach, and begs Thornic (Tornicius) the Mamigonian, a prince of Taron and Sassoun, to join him in recovering Armenian autonomy. Thornic, like all the Taronites loyal to Rome, not only refuses but prepares to thwart Philaret's ambitious schemes. But the latter, indifferent as to the creed of his allies, invokes Turkish help, overthrows his rival, and makes a drinking goblet of his skull: it is long since we have to chronicle such an act of barbarity in the mild annals of Byzantium, and for the peculiar form of this savage exultation we must go back to the Lombards in the middle of the sixth, to the Bulgarians in the beginning of the ninth century. The rest of the body was sent to the prince or emir of Nepherkert, a personal enemy of the dead man. In such a society we cannot wonder that every attempt to rebuild a national kingdom should fail. Philaret, long independent with his Armenian troops, and seemingly undisturbed by the Turks, secured his reconciliation with the empire by meting out punishment to the murderers of Vasak; the indulgent emperor gave him a complete amnesty and the reversion of the Duchy of Antioch (c. 1078).—In 1080, the third Armenian Bagratid dynasty came to an

*Revolutions  
at Antioch;  
seizure by  
Armenian  
Philaret.*

*Events in  
Armenian  
kingdom  
of Cilicia.*

donian," Samuel, King of Bulgaria and Armenian Colonist (!); but it is not possible to locate the rebellion of Sapor, 667, in Europe, and Andrioun may well have been altered to the better-known name (*cf.* pp. 380, 452).

*Events in  
Armenian  
kingdom  
of Cilicia.*

end, extinguished in the person of Gagic. This ex-king, unsuccessful in his hopes of recovering his sceptre, went down into Cilicia (almost re-peopled with Armenian settlers), and demanded the surrender of his young son David at Fort Paperôn, son-in-law, and perhaps hostage or prisoner, of Abel-Kharp. Having received his son he disbands his followers, and, wandering with a small retinue, is murdered by obscure treachery. Both David and Abel follow him to the grave; and the Paperôn principality falls to Sahak or Isaac, son-in-law of Ochin, who by the cession of Abel had (as we saw) received in fee the castle of Lambrôn. Fortune was severe at the time on the scions of Bagratid royalty. John, Gagic's eldest son and David's brother, after marrying the daughter of the Duke of Ani (?), fled to Iberia, thence yielding to an irresistible attraction to the Roman court with his son Ashot. From the Emir of Gandzac, by a somewhat discreditable covenant, Ashot (leaving his party) secured the government of Ani as a subject, where his family had so long ruled in independence. He was poisoned by the clan of Manoutché;—so ran the tale of crime and violence in the East during a short period of five years.

*Disappearance of  
natives in  
Armenia.*

§ 8. There now remained but three scions of the house of Bagrat—Gagic, the son of Abbas, and the two princes of Sebastè, who seem to have outlived their contemporaries, the jealousy of their countrymen and peers, and the suspicion of the Roman ministers. From this year (1080) may be dated the disappearance of the Armenian race in its native land. A tiny principality, Parisos in Onti, struggled in vain to preserve its freedom, and soon vanished. Religion fell into decay; and the Armenian Church was nobly distinguished by its apostolical poverty, its uncompromising but ignorant loyalty to its creed and traditions. The remnants of the once powerful race escaped into Cilicia, and founded there the last and most romantic monarchy in Armenian history.

Reuben, a companion of Gagic, betook himself on this king's murder to a canton peopled by his race —Constantine, a son, was with him. He seized the forts Cositar (or Conitar, in south of *Ani*) and Bardzerberd; then penetrating the inaccessible Taurus, and joined by Armenian refugees, he established himself as king. Basil the Robber possessed a separate realm at Kesoun, near Marāch (or Germanicea): while the several authorities seem to have acted in concert against the common foe and to have maintained to the end an indefinite kind of vassalage to the empire. But Reuben could not carry the patriarchate with him. Ani was still the centre of Armenian native tradition: and Barsegh (Barsel or Basil), already bishop, is elevated to the supreme title (but, as we shall see, he will not rule without a rival over an undivided Church till some years later). The consecration of the patriarch took place at Haghpat in 1082, and Stephen, Albanian patriarch of Gandzac, performed the ceremony at the request of Manoutché, governor of Ani (after young Ashot's untimely death), and Gorigos, king of Albania, from his capital Lori.

*Foundation of independent kingdom of Cilicia.*

*The Patriarchal Sees.*

§ 9. We have just overstepped the boundaries of the period marked out, but it is needful to advance even further into the unknown domain lying beyond. We shall trace the fortunes of the Armenians in the next section during the reign of Alexius, 1081-1118; for it is impossible to leave the actors in the drama without inquiring into their later fate. Let us, at the strict limit of our appointed task, resume the state of the empire and its dependants up to the success of the Comnenian clan. In the ten years between Romanus and Nicephorus, Asia Minor was overrun by roving and predatory bands of Turks. Destiny, or the motion of the globe, forced a constant stream of immigrants westwards, spoilers and refugees alike; just as six hundred years before the integrity of the Occidental empire had crumbled

*Western migration of Oriental Christians.*

*Western  
migration of  
Oriental  
Christians.*

*Asia Minor  
overrun.*

*Cilicia an  
outpost of  
Armenian  
nationality  
and Imperial  
tradition.*

before the steady inrush of Northern barbarians. Central Asia stood now to the Roman Empire as Scandinavia, Denmark, and Germany to the realm of Honorius or Valentinian III. Armenia had pressed westwards and yielded only to the irresistible momentum of the Turkish tribes. While Antioch still remained an imperial fief or duchy, with its broad territory carefully defined as in Boëmund's treaty of investiture, Smyrna, Ephesus, Laodicea—in a word, the Seven Churches of the Revelation—and the western coast-line fell into Turkish hands. Certain strongholds, like Pergamus and Philadelphia, may at times be found tenanted by a Roman garrison; but the population that filtered in to occupy the wild sheep-runs and vast feudal solitudes was Turk or Turkoman, rightly claiming or usurping affinity with the great Mongolian family. Meantime, as with the empire of Attila (*c.* 450) or with the later Mongol horde (1200), nothing gave cohesion to the new Seljuk power, and every emir fought for himself. The central authority betrays all the well-known traits of barbarity in the first onset, followed by tolerance and clemency toward conquered peoples and their rulers. Armenia proper was not discontented with the government of Malek Shah; but the irreconcilable patriots fled with Reuben or with Basil, and repeopled a territory where the inhabitants had been often shifted since the days of St. Paul. The emperor was not without power in these distant and outlying parts; while (like Justinian or Phocas) he watched with alarm the manœuvres of barbarian squadrons within sight of his own capital. Armenia preserved a measure of independence under a suzerain who had not yet learned how to administer. The new kingdom enjoyed a prosperous development; and the captains and pretenders of the empire, those who defended and those who sought to destroy, will be found still to belong to the constant rival of the Greek nationality and religion.

## X

ARMENIANS UNDER THE EMPIRE AND IN CILICIA  
DURING THE REIGN OF ALEXIUS I. (1080-1120)

§ 1. It is impossible to take leave summarily of the race whose firm native characteristics impressed the empire with their own ineffaceable stamp, more than half replaced the population, and enabled the great feudal revival of the Comneni and Palæologi to continue the "Roman" sway for nearly half a millennium. And as the sequel shows the significance of events, as later exponents of a philosophical school the latent drift of the early masters, so we can understand the period already surveyed by the light thrown back upon it by the ensuing years.—The elevation of the Comnenian clan meant the triumph of a vigorous policy and the feudal aristocracy; the dream of the "pacifists" was over. The army, and indeed the whole military system, had to be reorganised: the sovereign has to learn once more to fight in person, and display not merely the strategy of a captain but the valour of a knight. It is difficult to realise the Asiatic situation. Turks appeared in sight of the city, and their earliest capital was Nice, within the hundredth milestone; they manœuvred on Damalis and ravaged Bithynia. Yet Alexius defeats them, chases to Nicomedia, graciously accords peace, exacts the promise not to pass beyond the Dracon, and makes use of Turkish reinforcements, which the Sultan is glad to provide. In spite of this early success which gave hopes of the recovery of the great wrong, the Turks, giving their name by 1085 to the whole country (*Τουρκία*, instead of *Ῥωμανία*), have made Asia Minor a heap of ruins, and the inhabitants are carried off wholesale as slaves or settlers beyond Oxus and Jaxartes. In their hands lay the once fertile pro-

*Anomalous position of Empire under Comnenians.*

*Fluctuating success of Seljuks in Asia Minor.*

*Fluctuating  
success of  
Seljuks in  
Asia Minor,*

vinces of Pontus (with some reservation), Paphlagonia, Bithynia (south of Nice), Ionia, Phrygia, Cappadocia, Lycaonia, Isauria, a portion of Cilicia, and the Pamphylian coast to Satalia. The conquests of Soliman (Suleiman), first Sultan, or perhaps viceroy of Rûm,<sup>1</sup> were confirmed by the sanction and recognition of Malek Shah, head of the conquering clan, and by the treachery of Philaret, Duke

<sup>1</sup> A few words on the Seljukian kingdoms may not here be out of place: as in later Mongolian empires a certain family bore unquestioned sway; the law of succession was uncertain; brotherly feuds frequent; local emirs apt to assert independence; and the various centres of the hereditary branches constantly at feud. The term "Sultan" may be said to apply to the princes of the blood, while Emir implies a mere lieutenancy, often in practice independent. There was the Great Sultan in Irak and Khorasan, like Kublai in Cambaluc in later times (the last representative being Sinjar, †1157); but Aleppo and Damascus (as well as Nice and Iconium) were seats of petty sovereignties in the family of Seljuk. The Sultan of Aleppo was a son of Toutoush, and the other city was occupied by his cadet. This constant subdivision and the resulting jealousy rendered joint action impossible, and gave the empire respite from the fate which only came with the Ottoman Turks.—As for the dominion of Rûm, it achieved its zenith in its early years under Soliman, after the conquest of Antioch had relieved it of a constant source of anxiety in the rear. When in 1097 Nice surrendered, and the capital was transferred to Iconium, the Romans recovered a large district inland and many walled towns; Turkish emirs, in vague allegiance to the Seljuk prince, were expelled from Smyrna, Ephesus, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, Lampes, Polybotus: so overpowering had been the early inroad, so disastrous the effects of Melissenus' insurrection. When Arslan (1092-1106) fell back on the north-east of Asia Minor, he counted on the faithful help of the emirs in that region. But the Danishmand (from Tailu the "Schoolmaster") effectually hindered his plans. These had probably entered the district of Sivas soon after the death or defeat of Romanus IV.: on Soliman's death (imitating Aboul Cassim) they had seized Sivas, Tokat, Nicsar, Ablastan, Castamouni, and Malatiah (the ancient seat of the bitterest foe of the Romans). This rebel vicerealty formed an effective counterpoise to the adjoining legitimate dynasty of Rûm, and was of valuable help to the Roman revival: not until the extinction of the Danishmand (1175), after a century of power, did Iconium become the residence of a free and dangerous monarch. "Saisan" is unknown to Orientalists; he is Khahan Shah set free by the Grand Sultan Mohammed, murdered towards the close of Alexius' reign after his treaty with the empire, and succeeded by Masoud, who enjoyed or regretted his long reign of nearly forty years (1155). The Danishmand were reduced by his son, Kilig Arslan II., in 1175.



of Antioch, the Armenian of many parts. We have spoken of the anomaly, by which Antioch and its environs remained loyal and imperial, while Ephesus and Nice belonged to the enemy. This possession kept the nearer Turks in check by a perpetual menace in their rear. Whatever raids changed the aspect of the continent to ruin, while the Romans held part of Armenia, Trebizond, Cilicia, and Cœle-Syria, the Seljukian kingdom formed an *enclave* shut off from the central frame of their empire. In 1083 Basil (Barshegh), an Armenian, governor of Edessa, was replaced by an illustrious compatriot, Sembat, who at once excited the rage and hatred of the citizens. Philaret fished in troubled waters: he advances to Edessa, seizes Sembat and certain other native princes, carries them to Marach (Germanicea), and blinds them there; while he makes his own son, Barsames, governor. He soon allies with Soliman against his father, and takes Antioch (1084). Philaret escapes to Honi in Dchahan, but expelled by Emir Poltadji, returns to Marach: and to console himself in a mean retreat he consecrates a fourth Armenian patriarch for this new ducal residence. (Some accounts give as the reason for the unfilial treachery, the horror which Barsam felt at his father's apostasy to Islam; but his own alliance with Soliman is beyond doubt, and it was a lieutenant of the Sultan, Aboul-Cassim, who occupied Antioch.) Sinope was also seized about this time: and the further advance of Soliman was abruptly stopped by the jealousy of his kinsmen.

*severed from East by Roman territory.*

*Strange exploits of Philaret, Duke of Antioch.*

§ 2. Fraternal feuds and the independence of the emirate, out of sight of central control, made the consolidation of the Seljuk empire impossible. The Emir of Aleppo and Mosul claimed from a prince of the blood the same tribute that guilty Philaret had paid; and, met with arms instead of compliance, had invoked the aid of Toutoush, the Great Sultan's brother. He, long envious of his cousin Soliman's

*Adroit diplomacy of Alexius; jealousy and divisions of Seljukids.*

*Adroit  
diplomacy of  
Alexius;  
jealousy and  
divisions of  
Seljukids.*

fame and wide dominions, drove him to suicide, and became the foremost figure among the Seljuks next to the throne. Asia Minor breaks up like Germany at the Great Interregnum into numberless petty emirates; and at Nice Aboul-Cassim disposes at will of the late Sultan's power, creates his brother Pulchas emir in Cappadocia, and assumes the airs of an independent Sultan. This was now the opportunity of Alexius. Malek Shah, in his turn, was suspicious of his brother's rising renown, and allies with the empire. Alexius, adroitly tampering with the envoy sent to arrange terms, secures the restoration of Sinope, and creates the now Christian emissary, Duke of Anchialus, to shield him from his master's resentment on the unknown continent of Europe. He converted Aboul-Cassim, taught prudence by two defeats, into a friend and ally, indulged him (on a visit to the capital, still splendid and inviolate) with all kinds of pleasures and sights, and invented for his vanity the unmeaning title *σεβαστότατος*! Meantime (while Alexius restored, owing to this alliance, the Roman power in Bithynia), Malek Shah attempted to convince Aboul that he was but a subject, a lieutenant, and a rebel. Attempting to appease him, he is strangled by his orders in far Khorasan.—Such, then, was the state of affairs in the early reign of Alexius; he had recovered large districts by personal prowess or diplomacy, and the intestine discords of a quarrelsome and suspicious family allowed him to complete his success. Meantime, Armenians are still prominent as ever in the imperial armies. His most trusted generals were natives; Nicolas "Branas" or Varaz, and Pacurian, who is Bacouran in his own tongue. We are not in the least surprised to find Taticius (? Tadjat), (the Saracen son of a brigand-captain, reduced to slavery by Alexius' father), in command of a Persian colony in Macedonia: these bore the name *Βαρδαριῶται*, or Vardariots, from the

*Armenians  
high in the  
Imperial  
service.*

river Bardar, not far from Achrida. These claimed descent from the Persian contingents of Babec and Theophobus, prudently distributed among all the Roman *themes* (c. 840); gave an Armenian name to the classical stream; and sustained in this foreign land the tradition of the corps. Similar Eastern reinforcements came from the isolated Paulician centre of Philippopolis, where heretics of Armenian descent kept up their faith and customs. Nor was the voluntary aid of the semi-independent Cilician princes behindhand; the prince of Lambrôn, Ochin, joins Alexius' armies, is nearly killed at the engagement of Dyrrhachium, owes his recovery to the devoted care of the emperor (admirable friend and placable foe), and procures the appointment of Prince (or Duke) of Tarsus, with the title of Augustus (*Σέβαστος*). Ochin, father of Haiton (Haythonus), is the ancestor of St. Narses of Lambrôn.

*Armenians  
high in the  
Imperial  
service.*

§ 3. Meantime, how fared the Armenian population, as yet true to their native soil? The rule of Malek Shah over the vassal-princes was mild and indulgent to the Christians throughout the East, with that true indifference to religious forms which marks the Turk and the Mongol. A great part of Armenia was still in Roman hands; and perhaps Ani did not finally leave the empire until 1086. The government was left to the Manoutché; and the Sultan advancing without opposition to the shores of the Black Sea, drove his horse into the waves; thereby solemnly claiming possession, like the Spanish loyalists in the early times of American discovery. To the *manes* of his father he uttered a proud and pious boast: "Your little son, once an infant, now reigns to the uttermost ends of the earth." His general, Pouzan, laid siege to Edessa (1087); and Barsames (son of Philaret), unpopular with the citizens, threw himself from a tower over the wall, and sustaining terrible injuries, was tended till death ensued in the enemy's camp. The Edessenes capitulated; and the town

*Mild rule of  
Malek in  
Armenia  
proper.*

*Mild rule of  
Malek in  
Armenia  
proper.*

continued under Turkish influence, and *perhaps* under a Roman governor, until the coming of Baldwin and the creation of the first independent Latin principality. In 1088 Gandzac was taken by assault, and Phatloun (grandson of the first emir) was taken prisoner and replaced by another governor. While the realm was extending, internal administration was not without merit. The patriarch Barsegh (or Basil) applied to the Sultan for the diminution of imposts and tributes (1090) and also of the number of patriarchs, no less vexatious.

*Concilia-  
tion of  
Armenians.*

The scattered faithful of the Armenian Church recognised four metropolitan sees, and it seemed probable that with each new principality of refugees the archiepiscopal control would be further divided. Basil secures the resignation or submission of the patriarch of Honi (after a fourteen years' rule) and of the patriarch of Edessa. About this time, such was the favour extended by the Sultan, Liparit (no doubt kinsman of the earlier broken reed) embraced Islam; and Gorigos (already named as Albanian king in Chaki), visits the Persian court and returns loaded with gifts. Sometime before his death (the computation of time being obscure in Samuel of Ani and others), Malek Shah, significantly accompanied by this Albanian king and a certain George II. of some petty Caucasian monarchy, advances from Khorasan to capture Antioch; Philaret, who seems to have maintained friendly terms with the various masters of the city, was indemnified by the charge of Marach, the price of his conversion to the Mahometan faith. Malek, from Antioch as his headquarters, pushed forward to the Mediterranean, and there in the same dramatic fashion took possession of the Southern Sea. The death of this wise and tolerant potentate (1092, but according to Samuel of Ani, 1095) was the signal for civil war, and the disruption of the empire which he had done so much to consolidate. Toutoush was suspected of poisoning his brother,

*His wise  
reign followed  
by civil strife  
(1092-1097).*

and his claim (natural enough in Turkish tradition) was not recognised. Pouzan, the great general, like Bahram the Persian, rebels, but is defeated and killed; the sceptre was not to pass out of the line of Seljuk. The four years of civil war dissolved the strength of the military caste; many rebel captains tender homage, and Barkiarok, son of Malek, is able to establish himself in Armenia and Persia, and finally to remove his uncle Toutoush in 1097.

§ 4. But to return: the death of Malek had immediate effect on the Sultanate of Nice (1092) and the fortunes of the empire. Two sons of Soliman escape from their honourable captivity as hostages for their father's allegiance; and David Kilig Arslan I., the elder, is welcomed by the Nicenes with genuine heartiness. He secures the permanence and contentment of the Turkish garrison by sending for their wives and children, and replaces the suspected Pulchas (brother of the late rebel governor) by Mohammed, with the title "first of Emirs." Alexius had not been able of late to pursue his persistent policy of recuperation. The Comans and Patzinaks spread more terror in the capital than the nearer yet less deadly Turks. In 1091, Alexius was exposed to yet another Armenian plot: Ariebus (Ariev, *Arm.* = sun) conspires with a Frank to kill the hard-working prince; the plot was discovered and the conspirators treated with that excessive leniency which is a standing marvel in all Byzantine rulers, and Alexius in particular. Trebizond now begins to enter into serious history and give an augury of its future fame. Malek might ride proudly into the Euxine, but the empire still possessed the seaports and convoys of the northern coast of Asia Minor. It had shown a stout resistance to the Turks, and it may be surmised that Pontus was still independent. A native, Theodore Gabras, recovered it from their hands and received his own conquest in fief from the emperor with the ducal title; while Gregory, his son, was invited to

*His wise  
reign followed  
by civil strife  
(1092-1097).*

*Seljuks at  
Nice.*

*Armenian  
plot against  
Alexius; the  
Duchy of  
Trebizond.*

*Armenian  
plot against  
Alexius; the  
Duchy of  
Trebizond.*

the capital for an alliance with the imperial house and formally betrothed to Mary, then aged six years. (The impetuous and ungrateful youth was involved in a plot against his benefactor and sovereign; but was merely confined among the Paulician colony at Philippopolis.) We may inquire, without requiring or expecting a reply, whether at some time Trebizond did not fall under the sway of David III. the Repairer, king of Georgia from 1090—1130? His sway extended over all Lazica; but if he controlled Trebizond it was for a brief space. Theodore Gabras chased him as he had chased the Turks.

*General state  
of East on the  
arrival of the  
Crusaders.*

The Armenian emirs, relieved of the control of a firm yet benevolent Sultan, oppressed their subjects after 1092. A fresh exodus transported many natives into the artificial Armenia of king Reuben, and still further denuded the original home of the race. Monks above all fled from the wrath to come. Yet Ani still remained a centre of patriotic sentiment: Gregory, father of the patriarch Basil, repelled an assault on Ani, and followed up his victory by using the troops of Emir Manoutché to obtain possession of Gagsovan, himself falling in the successful assault. Meantime, the Armenian servants of the empire showed the old aptitude for conspiracy, to be met by the consistent clemency of the Cæsar; in 1093, Michael the Taronite, brother-in-law of Alexius, dignified by the title Πανπερσέβαστος, joined the futile conspiracy of Diogenes (son of the late emperor). A *second* Catacalon Catacecaumenus (from Phrygia?), who had served gallantly at the Calabrya engagement, was also found among the insurgents. Exile and confiscation follow discovery; but John Taronite, son of Michael, is continued in office and favour.—On the eve of the first Crusade, there was peace in the East; and the undisputed realm of David Kilig Arslan I. stretched from Orontes and Euphrates to the Bosphorus. (We may note in passing that about this time Alexius entertained a

proposal to welcome the English refugees from Norman tyranny at the seaport of Cibotus, near Nicomedia. Saxon guardsmen were not uncommon, but an English settlement was never an accomplished fact on the shores of the cosmopolitan empire.)

*General state of East on the arrival of the Crusaders.*

§ 5. The Crusaders arrived and the Roman world was thrown open to the foreigners, like the Middle Kingdom in our own day. They came not as recruits or settlers, but as visitors, doubtful allies, finally as foes and conquerors. We will only follow events in the familiar campaign so far as they concern our purpose, the re-establishment of Roman authority in the peninsula, and the condition of the Armenian race. The fall of Nice in 1097 implied the removal of the Seljuk capital or rather headquarters from the immediate vicinity of Constantinople; and from this fateful moment Roman influence steadily revived. The next conquest of importance was Edessa, where Baldwin fixed the earliest independent principality. There was still a shadow left in that city of Roman power; as in the cities of Northern Gaul in the time of Clovis and Syagrius. Thoros (Theodore) had received his commission from Romanus IV. (c. 1070); and after the manifold vicissitudes of Oriental fortresses, with their almost annual change of masters, he had somehow managed during the inroads of Philaret, Barsames, and Pouzan to retain a delegated, or acquire an independent, authority.<sup>1</sup> Edessa welcomed the Latin; perhaps the Frankish settlers had made a better impression in the East than their countrymen elsewhere. The aged Thoros adopted Baldwin as his son and shares the govern-

*Reconquest of Nice; Latin replace Armenian principalities.*

*Latins fraternise with Armenians.*

<sup>1</sup> He is Gibbon's "Greek or Armenian tyrant, who had been suffered under the Turkish yoke to reign over the Christians of Edessa." He was of course an Armenian; and the Turks, without regular method of government, employed harmless officials or native princes, much as the Western invaders availed themselves of the existing methods of Roman bureaucracy and finance. In the constant Seljukian feuds there was every opportunity for such a viceroy to assume an independent rôle.

Latins  
fraternise  
with  
Armenians.

ment; but he perishes in an obscure popular rising, and the whole-hearted allegiance of the citizens is transferred to the Latin adventurer. Armenians aided him; a certain Bagrat was a warm supporter (probably not a member of the dynasty); and Constantine I. added his help, king in Cilician Armenia, who had succeeded on Reuben's death after a reign of fifteen years (1080-1095).<sup>1</sup> It was this first inheritor of a romantic crown who moved the capital to a fortress newly acquired, Vahca in Cilicia, aided by the loyal support of Bazouni, Prince of Lambrôn, and Ochin his brother, governor and Duke of Tarsus (in virtue of a direct imperial commission).

Their services  
to the  
Crusaders.

It would appear that the forms of feudalism and aristocratic independence were carefully preserved in the new kingdom; that the lesser princes warmly supported a tactful and courageous monarch; and that over all, the empire threw a vague halo of suzerain influence and honorific titles, as it had done (for instance) on the Lazic and Iberian sovereign in happier days. Nor were the Armenians unfriendly either to Turks or to Crusaders: so efficient and opportune were the subsidies of king Constantine to the famished Latins that, on the capture of Antioch, he was richly recompensed, and believed his royal dignity further augmented, by the grateful titles, *marquis*, *aspēt*, and *ὑπάτος*. The Western powers did not forget this seasonable aid; Gregory XIII. mentions his services to the cause of Christendom in a Bull of 1584.—In this same year, 1097, we read of the succession of a grandson of Gregory *μάγιστρος* to the feudal fortress of Dzophk in the old Fourth Armenia: he was an Arsacid on his mother's side (a sister of the patriarch Gregory); and while his brother attained patriarchal rank in Egypt, his son Narses was celebrated for his elegant Armenian

<sup>1</sup> It is fair to say that some authors cannot identify this Constantine with the king, but suppose him to be a feudal prince of Gargar, a district near Marach.



writings,—a taste which was a family gift from his ancestor in the days of Basil II.

§ 6. Boëmund (the constant foe and at last the humble vassal of the adroit emperor) founded the principality of Antioch in 1098, destined to survive for nearly two hundred years under nine princes. It was in vain that the Sultan sent a great force of 360,000 men under Korbouga.<sup>1</sup> Anna Comnena's ἀναρίθμητοι χιλιάδες were swept away or annihilated by the courage of famished despair. Armenia proper was exposed to an invasion of Soliman, son of Ortukh, who marched into Vanand. But the Seljuks were already enfeebled by contested claims and the revolt of lieutenants; the curious and obscure power of the Danishmand had been established in the neighbourhood of Sivas.<sup>2</sup> He was a *lettered* Armenian apostate (such were the careless or democratic methods of the Turks) who governed the territory of Sebastè (lately occupied by Atom and his brother), and had joined the district of Malatiah (Melitenè). Lying between Rûm and the suzerain-sultanate he

*Rivals to  
Seljuks;  
Latins at  
Antioch and  
Edessa; the  
Danishmand.*

<sup>1</sup> This dignitary is oddly named by Matthew of Edessa, *Couropaghat* (the Armenian transliteration of *Curopalat*): his full name would seem to be Kawām ad-Dawlā (pillar of the State) Kurbughā; and if in the Chanson d'Antioche he is termed *Carbaran d'Oliferne*, I am inclined to believe some legend compared him to Holofernes, and told (no doubt untruly) of some feminine stratagem by which he was overcome.

<sup>2</sup> This obscure dynasty, at first helpers of Kilig Arslan and then rivals or foes of his house, are perhaps the only family who have gloried in the scholastic title of "pedagogue." The name means schoolmaster, and is borne not only by the founder Tailu but by his successors, to the despair of the numismatologist of princely series. His eldest son, Khazi, speedily learnt the *Turkish* lesson, "the slaughter of the innocents" (or did he set the terrible precedent?). He mounted the throne (1104) in the same year that removed Soliman, son of Ortukh, Toutoush, Seljukian prince of Damascus, and the Great Sultan Barkiarok. But he at once murdered his eleven brethren. On the death of Soliman, the family possessed the centres of Sivas, Tokat, Nicsar, Ablastan, Malatiah, and perhaps Kastamouni; and may well have begun their ambitious career directly after the death of Romanus IV. (1071). Ahmed Khazi (†1135) was succeeded by the short reign of his son, Mohammed (†1143), and it was only on the extinction of this house, after a century's power (1175), that the kingdom of Rûm again revived.

*Rivals to  
Seljuks ;  
Latins at  
Antioch and  
Edessa ; the  
Danishmand.*

*Imperial  
recovery in  
East ; expedi-  
tion to  
Cilicia,  
1103, 1104.*

reigned as an independent prince, coerced the former power as it was closed in by the judicious advances of Alexius, and perhaps atoned by this unwilling service to the empire for the sin of apostasy. But in no way did he deserve so well of the emperor as in his imprisonment of the Prince of Antioch. He captured him on a field, where two militant Armenian prelates are said to have met their fate, held him to ransom, and accepted the price of 10,000 gold pieces from another Armenian, the general Basil (Barshegh) the Robber, Prince of Kesoun. Tancred, regent for the absent prince, repudiated the debt, and increased the bounds of the principality ; yet while he thus despoiled the robber by a mean evasion, he contrived to secure the alliance of the Armenian princes. But meantime the empire was just preparing to make good its suzerain-rights over the vassal-kingdom. The imperialist generals Butumites (1103) and Monastras (1104) established once more Roman prestige ; the one by seizing Marach and leaving troops there, the latter, by the occupation of Tarsus, Adana, and Mopsuestia (Mamistria) ; and, as some would convey, of the entire province. Seven years before, William of Tyre may well be pardoned for supposing Tarsus to be in *Turkish* hands, though it was still under an imperial lieutenant, Ochin : for the allegiance to the far-off emperor was a mere shadow of servitude. But the early years of this twelfth century witnessed a great and welcome reaction in the tide of Roman fortunes ; and, if to use Gibbon's *suppressed* simile, the jackal (Alexius) followed the lions, it is certain that he knew how to turn to advantage both his own victories and their mistakes. In 1105, there are to our surprise two efficient imperial armies in the East, in Syria under Cantacuzen, and in Cilicia under Monastras ; and when the latter is relieved, his successor is known by an Armenian title not a name,—*Aspet* (Ἀσπέτης), constable, which to the Greek

ears may have suggested some Homeric adjective, the "immense" or "unspeakable." Constantine I. had died in 1099; and Thoros or Theodore had succeeded to rule in the "land of Thoros." Under Roman influence and approval, he enlarged his mountain-realm, added Anazarbus to the important fortress of Kendroscavi, and (with the Moslem loyally obedient) ruled over a mixed population and a tract of two days' by sixteen days' journey. It is hard to say whether the imperial army superseded, or supported, or competed with the royal authority. Certain it is that the Aspetes gained a peculiar notoriety for somnolence and excess; and in a drunken slumber was transported unconscious to Antioch by Tancred, who secured Mamistria and predominant influence in Cilicia. (It is only fair to add that the incident is unknown to Armenian writers, and may be as apocryphal as Anna Comnena's legend of Boëmund and the cock in the coffin.)

*Curious treatment of the Roman general.*

§ 7. But the province was unsettled and tempting enough to attract the Great Sultan himself. In 1107 or 1108, Taphar (Barkiarok's successor) ravaged the land of king Thoros. Basil sets on him and defeats, returning in patriotic joy to his fortress-capital Kesoun. But Taphar comes back ashamed and angry with a larger force, and lays siege to Harthan. Once more Basil achieves a notable victory, and receives a petition for reinforcements from Baldwin of Edessa, to which he assents. But to his surprise he learns that his men are to be used against Tancred; he sharply refused to go against one "who had always been friendly to the Armenians." Now it may be possible, with this indirect intimation, to give some account of the perplexing changes in Cilician "Armenia" which we have just recorded. If Tancred was their firm and trusty friend, his advent and capture of the Aspet (Alexius' general) was either purely apocryphal or carried out in alliance with the native princes. Here

*War of Seljuks and Armenia of Cilicia.*

*Amity of Armenia and Tancred of Antioch.*

*Amity of  
Armenia and  
Tancred of  
Antioch.*

*Boëmund  
becomes  
Vassal of the  
empire.*

we may well suspect another instance of the alienation of the feudal mind (very local, personal, and impulsive) at the uniform demands of imperialism. Though himself an Armenian, the Aspet may have come as a helper of the nationalists, and ended, as other Byzantine captains, as a foe more hated than the infidel. But in the welter of feudalism it is not easy to extricate the thread of private motive, much less that of political principle; and a great change comes over the East in 1108, when the "thirty years' war" is over with Boëmund, and the fiercest assailant of the empire becomes the dutiful liegeman (λιζιος) of Alexius. The terms of this curious infeudation are little short of amazing: the emperor grants what he certainly could not give, and makes over a life-interest to his vassal and feudal control over a district, including the towns of Antioch, Borzes, Shizar (Larissa on the Orontes), Artakh, Tolukh, Saint Elias, Marach, and the districts of Pagres, Palaza, and Zymè; always excepting that which belongs to the Armenian subjects of the empire. From the ancient duchy of Antioch was detached all Cilicia east of the Cydnus, and a portion of Syria round Laodicea, Gabala, Marathus, Antaradus, and Batanea. Boëmund secured an annual pension or subsidy of 200 pounds of gold and the dignified, if unmeaning, title of Σέβαστος: he died in 1111.

*(Changes  
in Roman  
administra-  
tion: the  
Duchy.)*

At this point in our story it may be well to notice briefly the changes in Roman provincial government, of which the ducal system is the final phase. At first, governors united civil and military duties; were judge of assize and lord-lieutenant and sheriff all in one. About A.D. 300, the well-known separation of department took place; and specialism reigned supreme down to the days of Heraclius. The *Thematic* scheme recognised the extinction of the civil magistrate and the ascendancy of the captain of the district corps. Localities were renamed after the regimental titles; and the problem of civil

ruler and municipal methods becomes for us insoluble. The vague designations, *Anatolics*, *Armeniacs*, *Buccellarians*, *Cibyrrhæots*, and the like, disappear in their turn ; the commanders are Domestic, and the old classical nomenclature is revived for the countries of Asia Minor. A last step is the transference of control to dukes ruling the garrison in important centres as Antioch, and acting as arbiter in the rare disputes which could not be settled by local custom and precedent. It may be doubted whether these local and urban duchies were a reminiscence of the early Latin title (so common in Ammianus) or came back into use by way of Spoleto and Benevent and the lessons taught by Southern Italy.

(Changes in Roman administration: the Duchy.)

§ 8. In 1107, we must notice a plot against Alexius, Armenian, according to some authors, Pontic in the account of others. Was Gregory, now Duke of Trebizond, the Taronite who displaced the suspected Gabras clan? Or was he the Gregory Gabras himself, affianced to the emperor's daughter Mary, who had already conspired, and been already forgiven? I am inclined to respect both the judgment of Fallmerayer and the well-known indulgence of the emperor. Seizing Trebizond as an independent domain or fortress, like the emirs around him, Danishmand or other, he was confronted by a Taronite (his own cousin, if we believe the former story). Brought captive to Byzantium, he almost eluded the imperial clemency by the violence of his language ; but mollified by captivity and time he mends his ways, is restored to favour, and once more regains his duchy by the favour of the generous emperor. Captured (if it be still the same governor and not a son) in 1142 by the Danishmand Emir of Melitenè and the Emir of Kamakh, he was able to offer the enormous ransom of 30,000 pieces of gold, a certain sign of the original wealth and power of rapid recovery which the great coast-towns of Lesser Asia always possessed.

Another Armenian conspiracy.

*Desultory  
fighting in  
East between  
Franks and  
Armenians.*

In 1109 the restless spirit of Norse individualism or crusading zeal led Baldwin and Joscelin into an attack upon Harran. Apolasar, Prince of Taron, joined them (as he had joined Cilician Basil some time before against the Seljuks): he met his death in the expedition. The Emir of Mosul made reprisals and laid siege to Edessa, retiring before the united forces of the Christian princes, but returning after their departure to inflict serious damage on the city. Next year, the Turks invade the "realm of Thoros"; but the king with his brother Leo (Ghevond) can repulse their attacks. In default they turn (1110) against the little feudal fortress of Dzophk in the Mesopotamian district, where the new prince Apirat, of the brave stock of Gregory *μάγιστρος*, is completely successful; but in the moment of victory is killed by a chance arrow from an ambuscade. Next year, Tancred and Basil vanish from the turbulent scene.—Meantime, in Lesser Asia the Seljukian kingdom of Rûm had been enjoying a certain respite from its anxieties; Kilig Arslan I.'s son was careful to maintain good terms with the reviving empire, and with a prince who knew how to turn every success and every failure to his own profit. But on his Eastern frontier (if we may use the term of his vague and shifting "sphere of influence" round Iconium) he knew no security. The "Schoolmaster" dynasty gave him no peace; and in 1112 he drowned himself in the river Chaldras near Edessa to escape his foe, the Emir Dcholi; he had reigned six years (1106-12). His son "Saisan" pursued a more vigorous policy; he ravaged the open country of the Romans from Philadelphia to the Ionian coast. That city (destined in later times to be the last solitary outpost of Roman power in Asia) contained a strong garrison under Constantine Gabras: and neighbouring Pergamus was held by the veteran Monastras. Gabras, retrieving the treason of his family, and justifying the wise confidence of the emperor, defeats Saisan and forces him to

*Difficulties  
of Rûm.*

sue for peace; it was concluded on honourable terms.

A great blow fell on the Western provinces in the next year: the central Seljukian power in Khorasan aimed a deadly stroke at the reviving prosperity of Asia. All the country from Nice to Adramyttium was ravaged; and all the coast-towns along Troas and Mysia were sacked, with Prusa, Apollonia, and Cyzicus. Eustachius Camyzes, governor of Nice, was defeated and captured; and it was the veteran Alexius in person who turned the scale. Twice he defeated the Turks, and returned home to receive the sincere congratulations of the capital. This victory ensured a welcome term of peace.

§ 9. About this time happened the great earthquake described by Matthew of Edessa, which in the distressed country added the catastrophes of Nature to the gratuitous havoc of man. Chiefly attacking the neighbourhood of Samosata, Kesoun, and Marach, it is said to have destroyed 40,000 Turks. The conservative character of the princes of the East is here well displayed, a contrast to the mere destructive raids which seem so often to exhaust the Turks' conception of "administration." The Armenian kings Thoros and Leo hasten, like modern sovereigns, to the scene, and bestir themselves to relieve the distressed and raise their shattered homes; their humane efforts are seconded by a Camsar prince in Mesopotamia, Basil the Child.—We have read of the aid and countenance given by these Armenian princes to the Crusaders: the return was not seldom a sorry one, and the extinction of these small and ancient sovereignties was hastened by the crafty greed of the Latin, no less than by the jealous centralism of Byzantium, or the wanton destructiveness of the Seljuk. Baldwin, Prince or Count of Edessa, having married his sister to Leo of Cilicia, lures Basil into confinement and seizes his estates. Alexius, unable to avenge this treacherous act,

*Alexius checks an inroad from Khorasan.*

*Armenian sovereigns and the Earthquake.*

*Baldwin of Edessa reduces the Armenian principalities.*

*Baldwin of Edessa reduces the Armenian principalities.*

welcomed the dispossessed prince with the invariable Byzantine courtesy. The only son of Thoros, Constantine, died at this juncture. Suspicion pointed an idle finger at the intrigues of his uncle Leo ; and if we were inclined to impute motive or listen to slander, we might suppose that Leo and Baldwin had conspired to divide between them the remnants of the Christian kingdoms in the Mesopotamian region. In 1117, Baldwin continued his offensive policy. Ignorant of the arts of peace or the duties of a ruler, he confused thoughtless acquisitiveness with statesmanship ; and believed that he governed when he merely laid waste and thwarted development : he attacked the town and province of Pir lying southwest of Sroudj, and was delayed a whole year before the principal fortress. He deprived another Armenian prince of his estates, a former ally of the first Baldwin, and thus ungratefully repaid his imprudent services : he took from him the town and residence of Araventan.

*State of Asia Minor, 1120, restless policy of Râm.*

Meantime the gradual desolation of the fertile and populous Lesser Asia was stealthily and steadily proceeding. Clouds of Turks, Turkmans, and Kurds poured in, bands succeeding one after the other, pillaging and wasting, and even demolishing the ancient and deserted sites to pitch their nomad tents over the ruins of Lydian, Hellenic, and Roman culture. "Saisan" again breaks faith with the empire ; and Alexius, now a martyr to the gout, rises from his sick-bed to teach him a lesson. He projected the capture of Iconium, for twenty years the headquarters of the Seljukian encampment, in answer to the insulting farces of the palace, where his malady was caricatured amid the laughter of the Sultan and courtiers. Several brave but indecisive engagements were fought near Nicomedia ; and Bardas (grandson of Burtzes, commander under Basil II.) was entrusted with a troop to reconquer his heritage, which, now occupied by Turks, had been then bestowed as a



reward of merit. It is uncertain whether he attained his end ; but it is clear that Alexius and Bardas repulsed the Turks, and welcomed to an asylum in Constantinople a multitude of expatriated Asiatics, followed by wives and children, with that protective instinct which, sometimes obscured, never failed entirely in the rulers of Rome. Alexius established for their benefit monasteries, almshouses, and hospitals ; and in 1116 opened his doors wide to admit the monks of Iberia, who came westward in crowds from the turmoil of the new invaders to the settled and orderly commonwealth,—which, having enervated its citizens by relieving them of arms and military duties, could do no less than protect them.—Saisan, a prince of inconsequent spirit and easily repenting of his boldness, soon sued for peace after a personal defeat. He showed his intense reverence for the imperial dignity and its wearer by dutiful courtesy on a Phrygian plain, where the two monarchs held an interview. But once more fraternal discord intervened, not to save Rome from a foe but to spoil a welcome treaty ; Masoud, no doubt representing the “unbending Turk party,” murdered his brother on his return. In 1118 died the Emperor Alexius I., and it is not without import that, when John his son marches to the palace to secure the succession, he should meet Abasgian envoys on the way, bringing the daughter of David III. the Restorer to marry a member of the noble house of Bryennius. With this last instance of the continuous relations of these countries to the empire, we shall end this historical sketch.

*State of Asia  
Minor, 1120,  
restless policy  
of Röm.*

*Homage to  
Alexius ; his  
death.*