

*(b) The Russian Volunteer Army and Georgia.*

Disputes as to the boundary between the territory occupied on the one side by the Volunteer Army and on the other by Georgia and Azerbaijan were the cause of many of our difficulties.

The trouble on the Black Sea coast arose over the question of the ownership of the Black Sea Province. After many collisions in the Sochi neighbourhood, to which the Georgians had withdrawn, it became necessary to despatch British troops to intervene between the opponents and to picquet the line of the river Zbiz.

This did not, however, prevent hostilities, and finally a British detachment was stationed at Gagri in order to keep the peace. All attempts to arrange a more permanent settlement of this unsatisfactory situation, remained unsuccessful, and on 9th September, 1919, the British garrison at Gagri was withdrawn to Batoum, leaving the rival parties to settle their differences as best they could.

*(c) Armenian-Tartar Hostilities in the Nakhichevan Area.*

Early in January, 1919, hostilities broke out between Armenians and Tartars on the railway south of Erivan, and it became necessary to send a British officer, Captain F. E. Laughton, M.C., 2nd Bn., Cameron Highlanders, with a company of British infantry, to control the situation. The result of his action was the establishment of peace from Erivan to Djulfa, and the opening of telegraphic and rail communication between the Caucasus and Persia.

Nakhichevan district remained under the administration of this officer as British Military Governor until early in May, 1919, by which time Armenian administration had been gradually installed.

By 5th June all British troops had been withdrawn from the area and Armenia had completed her occupation of the district.

*(d) Armenian-Tartar Hostilities in Nakhichevan in July and August, 1919.*

After Armenian control had been substituted for British in the Nakhichevan district as stated above, the situation remained comparatively quiet until early in July, 1919. Then, however, hostilities broke out between the Armenians and Tartars near Erivan town. Armenian troops attempted to make a settlement, but were treacherously fired on, and in consequence of this incident a series of Tartar risings began throughout the south-east of Erivan province. By the end of July the Tartars were in possession of the railway from Djulfa to Shakh Takhti, and the Armenian garrison of Nakhichevan had been forced to retire into the hills, while the British Military Representative and the American Relief Mission withdrew to Tabriz.

At the end of July, Armenia declared a general mobilisation, but her troops were hampered by a shortage of rifle and machine-gun ammunition, and the Tartars extended their possession of the railway as far as Kamarlu (15 miles south of Erivan). The Tartar forces were led by a Turk named Khalil Bey, and Turkish soldiers were present among them. It became clear later that the Government of Azerbaijan were also participating on the side of the Tartars. Towards the end of

August they admitted this, and stated that they had telegraphed to Khalil Bey to stop hostilities. On August 20th the British Military Representative at Erivan, Lieut.-Colonel J. C. Plowden, M.C., Shropshire Light Infantry, succeeded in reaching Nakhichevan, and tried to arrange a settlement, but without result. Later he was withdrawn to Tiflis on account of the general evacuation of the Caucasus, and the Armenian-Tartar disturbances have continued practically ever since, with the result that the Armenian Aras Valley has been lost to the Armenians, and an unbroken belt under Mahomedan power now stretches from Asia Minor into Azerbaijan.

*(e) Georgian-Tartar Hostilities in Akhaltsikh and Akhalkalaki.*

Towards the end of January, 1919, a British officer, Lieut.-Colonel A. McD. Ritchie, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, was appointed Military Representative at Akhalkalaki, and proceeded there with a small escort. On reaching the Akhaltsikh district on his way to Akhalkalaki he found that hostilities were already in progress owing to the activities of a certain Atabek, who had succeeded in exciting a Tartar rising which, in the space of a few days, swept the Georgian garrison of 3,000 infantry with cavalry and mountain artillery out of Apastumen and Akhaltsikh in headlong flight towards Borjom. The British Military Representative remained at Akhaltsikh till he had restored order, and then proceeded to Akhalkalaki, leaving a detachment at the former place. At Akhalkalaki Lieut.-Colonel Ritchie was completely successful in reinstating the Georgian administration without meeting with any resistance from the Tartars.

*(f) Azerbaijan-Armenian Hostilities at Shusha.*

The hotly disputed region of Karabagh was a constant source of friction between the republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan throughout the period of the British occupation of the Caucasus, and it became necessary in December, 1918, to instal a British Military Mission under Lieut.-Colonel W. D. Gibbon, D.S.O., M.C., Worcestershire Regiment, with a small escort at Shusha.

By the continual effort of this British mission peace in Karabagh was successfully maintained, except for one short outbreak between 4th and 6th June, when a massacre of Christians was carried out by Kurds. This was stopped by the arrival of a British battalion and by the action of the British officers in the district.

All British troops had left Shusha area by the end of June, 1919, but a British representative remained until late in August.

*(12) The Establishment of Lines of Demarcation and Neutral Zones.*

The actual result of the presence of the British force in Trans-Caucasia was the establishment of the following lines of demarcation and neutral zones:—

(a) Differences between Armenia and Georgia were settled by British control in the neutral zone of Borchalinsk.

(b) Georgia and the Volunteer Army were restrained from hostilities on the line of the river Mekhadir.

(c) The conflicting claims of Georgia on the one hand and of Armenia and the local Tartars