

Caspian Government, and most of the treasure had been expended. After prolonged negotiations, and on the advice of a representative committee of bankers, a reorganised Baku State bank was formed by the amalgamation of the Russian and Azerbaijan State banks. It was under British control, and, being properly managed, proved a decided success. On the evacuation, all the depositors were given an opportunity of withdrawing their deposits.

One of the earliest actions of the Army on entering Baku was to reinstate in their houses all Russian and Armenian refugees who had been dispossessed, first by the Bolsheviks and then by the Turks.

Law and order was thus re-established in Baku without in any way compromising the political situation, thanks to the energy and ability displayed by Major-General Sir W. M. Thomson, K.C.M.G., C.B., M.C., ably assisted by Lieut.-Colonel D. I. Shuttleworth, C.B.E., D.S.O.

(b) *The province of Kars.*

On 7th January, 1919, Captain C. E. Temperley, O.B.E., M.C., Rifle Brigade, was appointed to Kars as Military Governor, and on 21st January a British Mission, accompanied by some British troops, was despatched to assist in guarding the material handed over by the retreating Turks and to supervise the removal of the grain which they had collected.

Later the Military Governor was withdrawn, and the administration of the province was entirely conducted by a local body called the Kars Shura.

This body, however, finally became insubordinate, and as they were undoubtedly working to restore Turkish authority, I ordered that the members should be arrested and deported to Malta. A combined arrest was most successfully carried out on 12th April, when the Shura was in session, and resulted in a complete restoration of the situation. The repatriation of the Armenians could now be proceeded with.

On the removal of the Kars Shura, most of the province was taken over by Armenia, the northern part of the district of Ardahan (known as the Potskov area) was assigned to Georgia, and the south-western area was administered by the Military Governor of Batoum.

(c) *Province and Town of Batoum.*

On the arrival of Major-General Sir G. T. Forestier-Walker, K.C.B., at Batoum, late in December, 1918, Brigadier-General W. J. N. Cooke-Collis, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., had been appointed British Military Governor in place of the Turkish administration.

A new administration was formed from among the local civilians who carried out their duties for some time in a fairly satisfactory manner. Early in April, this civilian staff supported a general strike in opposition to the Military Governor, and it became necessary to replace it by a staff of British regimental officers, assisted by a certain number of local subordinates.

Some idea of what this assumption of the administration entailed can be gathered from the fact that these British officers were called upon to fill the following varied and highly technical administrative posts — treasury, labour control, customs and excise, taxes,

refugee department, posts and telegraphs, police, fire brigade and courts of justice. These posts they have filled for the period of over 18 months with the greatest success. They also administered such institutions as the civil hospitals, the botanical gardens and the Chakvat tea estate and bamboo factory.

A frontier guard and provincial police some 800 strong was maintained to protect the frontier and the coast, prevent contraband trade, guard the railway and pipe-line and generally police the province, which for this purpose was divided into eight districts, with posts in all important villages and along the main roads. Recruitment was from both Georgians and Russians, and the force has proved itself trustworthy and loyal.

The post and telegraph department met with considerable difficulties, owing to the unpromising attitude of the Georgian officials and lack of up-to-date instruments.

The courts of justice comprised a magisterial court, which dealt with offences under the British proclamations, a civil court, and a district court for the trial of serious civil and criminal cases.

Owing to the fact that Georgia would not allow the importation of any supplies into Batoum province, all flour had to be brought in bulk by the local administration from the various ports on the Black Sea, and resold to the population.

The administration of the province was largely complicated by the very difficult monetary situation. The complications due to the depreciation of the rouble can be estimated from the fact that the pound sterling, which at the time of the armistice could be purchased for 80 roubles, had increased in value by the time of the evacuation to 2,500 or 3,500 "Nikolaieff roubles," while the quotation for "Don roubles" at that time was 14,500 to the pound sterling, and even higher.

In spite of the great increase of population caused by the influx of refugees from the Caucasus and south Russia, and the turbulent nature of the populace, the town of Batoum, when eventually evacuated, was a model of cleanliness, law and order, and the province, which is inhabited principally by Adjarians, was in a flourishing condition.

(15) *The Evacuation of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia.*

The evacuation of all British troops in the Caucasus having been decided, the train movements from Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia to the Port of Batoum commenced on 15th August, 1919, and proceeded methodically.

By 9th September, the last British troops had left Tiflis, and the evacuation of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia was complete.

As the question of the future status and government of Batoum province was still under discussion, I received instructions that Batoum would remain under British control, and that I should retain a sufficient garrison there to protect the province and maintain authority. I therefore decided to retain three battalions of the 80th Infantry Brigade, and that its commander, Brigadier-General Cooke-Collis, should continue his duties as Military Governor of Batoum province.