

II

Strict Limitation of the Area submitted to the Arbitration of President Wilson.

The decision of the Supreme Council at San Remo in regard to the boundaries of Armenia, as finally adopted in the Treaty of Sèvres, was based, in its main outlines, upon the report of the Expert Commission of London, dated February 24th. The treaty proposes that the boundaries upon the north and northeast, between Russian Armenia and the districts inhabited by the Georgians and the Azerbaijan Tartars, shall be determined by a direct agreement of the states concerned. It provides further that in case these states *have not determined their common frontiers by the time President Wilson's decision of the Turkish-Armenian frontiers shall have been rendered, the Principal Allied Powers shall determine these northern boundaries. The eastern boundary of Armenia, between the Armenian state and Persia, is fixed by Article 27 II (4) of the Treaty of Sèvres. It is to be the line of the old Turco-Persian frontier. The boundary arbitration referred to President Wilson contemplates, therefore, the decision only of the southern and western frontiers of

* The government of the United States has never recognized the de facto governments either of Georgia or of Azerbaijan.

the new Armenian State. All the Powers signatory to the treaty have, by the fact of signature by their Plenipotentiaries, expressed their intention of accepting the terms of the President's arbitral decision.

The disposition of the Allied Powers, as it crystallized after the American withdrawal from Paris in December, was to grant to the new Armenian State an unimpeded sea terminal only on the Lazistan Coast. This intention, however, was modified before the request for the American mandate and the boundary decision of President Wilson was submitted to the State Department (Telegram of Ambassador Johnson to Secretary of State Colby dated April 27th). According to this modification, which was embodied in the Turkish Treaty, the possibility of including in the Armenian State any part of, or all of, the Vilayet of Trebizond, lies in the power of President Wilson as the arbitrating agent. According to the terms of the treaty, however, the boundaries are to be fixed "in the Vilayets of Erzerum, Trebizond, Van and Bitlis" (Article 89).

President Wilson is empowered:

1. To transfer "the whole or any part of the territory of the said vilayets to Armenia,"
2. to provide for the demilitarization of any portion of Turkish territory adjacent to the frontiers established, and

3. to formulate arrangements for access of Armenia to the sea

This delimitation of the area within which President Wilson's competence to arbitrate is confined, is emphasized in the wording of the invitation sent to him upon April 27th in the note of Ambassador Johnson to Secretary of State Colby, which reads as follows:

"To invite the President ----- to arbitrate the frontiers of Armenia as described in the draft article."*

An earlier portion of the invitation sent to President Wilson also emphasizes this limitation; It remained to decide what parts of the provinces of Van, Bitlis, Erzerum and Trebizond, which the Turks still hold, might be added without danger or impropriety to Russian Armenia." The attitude of the Government of the United States regarding Trebizond, as expressed in the communication of the Secretary of State to Mr. Jusserand upon March 24th, had undoubtedly been effective in bringing about the inclusion of the western sandjakes of the Vilayet of Trebizond within the sphere of the general area which might be considered by President Wilson in making his boundary decision. The total area is, nevertheless, strictly confined to the four Vilayets of Erzerum, Trebizond, Van and Bitlis.

* Namely, Article 89 of the draft of the treaty published upon May 11, 1920. This Article is unchanged in the final draft of the treaty signed upon August 10th at Sèvres.