concluded in October, 1921, between a French agent and the Angora Turks, known as the Franklin-Bouillon Agreement, which undoubtedly led the Turks to think that the French Government was unreservedly on their side, and which greatly encouraged their pretensions. All our efforts to bring about negotiations, or mediation, or an armistice, failed. Finally, the Turkish Army, imbued with a revived national ardour, well led, and taking advantage of the increasing weakness and demoralization of the Greeks, made a sustained advance and practically drove the Hellenic forces out of Asia Minor.

This was followed by dramatic events. There was a revolution in Greece, which resulted in the enforced abdication of King Constantine. The victorious Turkish Army, elated by its successes, conscious of Allied disunion, and resolved to push forward even at the cost of a war with Great Britain, practically destroyed Smyrna, and advanced towards the straits, then held by Allied forces. The French withdrew their troops to the European shore, being resolved in no circumstances to become involved in hostilities with the Turks. Great Britain alone saved the situation and prevented the invasion of Europe by rushing a powerful force—military, naval, and air—to the Dardanelles and to Constantinople. But it was by a hair's breadth only that the renewal of war was avoided. Presently I found myself again in Paris, engaged once more in the attempt to build up Allied unity and to obtain, even at the eleventh hour, a pacific solution. The Mudania Armistice followed in October, 1922, and the stage for the peace negotiations was set.

Just, however, as the Greek defeat had cost Constantine his throne, so the victory of Angora cost the Sultan his kaliphate. He was deposed by Angora, and fled to Malta, and his successor, appointed by the Grand National Assembly, was permitted only to enjoy a purely religious authority.

On the 20th November the first Lausanne Conference began, and there I met the representatives of France, Italy, Japan, Roumania, Jugo-Slavia, and Greece. Thither came the Turks, with whom we were to negotiate the treaty, and the Bulgarians and others when their interests were involved. Thither the Americans sent observers. There, for the purpose of discussing the future status of the straits, in which they were vitally interested, Russian representatives also were admitted. There we sat for eleven weary weeks, engaged in daily, and often in nightly, negotiations. At the end of that time we were on the brink of concluding a treaty—indeed, the pen and ink were ready and the draft was lying on the table ready for signature—when at the last moment difficulties about the financial, economic, and capitulatory clauses of the draft treaty arose—features in which the French and Italian, but particularly the former, were more actively concerned than ourselves, but in respect of which I stood unflinchingly by my colleagues; and the Turks, calculating, in view of the many concessions that had been made to meet them, that they had only to hold out to obtain even more, declined to sign. I had no doubt myself that in the long-run, after some more palavering and after extracting some further concessions from the fatigue and war-weariness of the Allies, they would come to terms, and this view I expressed confidently on my return to England in February of the present year.

The discussions were resumed at Lausanne in April, and lasted for another three months, our chief representative on this occasion being Sir Horace Rumbold, the British High Commissioner at Constantinople. There were many anxious moments then as before, and the process of haggling was continued with pertinacity and at a length that recalled the palmiest days of Oriental diplomacy in the past. Finally, a treaty was signed on the 24th July last, which has since been ratified both by Turkey and Greece, and only awaits ratification at the hands of the Great Powers as soon as their Parliaments have reassembled. Since then, it having been decided by the terms of the agreement that the Allied forces, which have remained in occupation of Constantinople ever since the war, should evacuate within a period of six weeks—which period terminated two days ago—the British troops, ably commanded by Sir Charles Harington, who has shown the most conspicuous tact and self-restraint in very trying circumstances, have withdrawn. Our Turkish entanglement is now at an end, and it rests with the Turkish Government, having re-entered into possession of their capital, to demonstrate what use they can make of their recovered position.

I have seen the treaty thus concluded severely criticized, as a rule by those whose motives in making the attack are not free from suspicion. Undoubtedly, the treaty is not such a treaty as could have been concluded in 1919, had the Allied Powers at Paris devoted to the Turkish problem one-fiftieth part of the attention that they bestowed—I might almost say, squandered—upon problems and peoples of vastly inferior importance. It is not such a treaty as was concluded and signed, though not subsequently ratified, at Sèvres in August, 1920. It is not such a treaty as might have been signed at Lausanne had the Powers at all points maintained the united front which they displayed on some. But I should like to explain how and why it was that it was the best treaty that could be obtained in the circumstances.

In the first place, I would remind the Conference that when I went out to Lausanne in November last it was not generally believed that a treaty could be concluded at all. Such was the temper of the Turks, elated by their overwhelming defeat of the Greeks, profoundly suspicious of Allied and notably of British intentions, and convinced that their arms were unconquerable, that the majority of my colleagues here condoled with my mission and expected very soon to see me back again. Secondly, the principal problems, whether of the straits or the islands, or the frontiers, or the capitulations, or finance, seemed almost insoluble unless the Allies were prepared to dictate their terms at the point of the bayonet.

Such had been the case with all the previous post-war treaties. These had in each case been drawn up by the victorious Powers, sitting, so to speak, on the seat of judgment, in the absence of the culprit, and imposing what penalty or what settlement they chose. Only when the terms had been drawn up was the beaten enemy admitted to be told his sentence and to make the conventional protest of the doomed man.

Such, indeed, was the environment in which the original Treaty of Sèvres was drawn up and signed, though never ratified, by the Turkish representatives. Far otherwise was it at Lausanne.