

There the Turks sat at the table on a footing of equality with all the other Powers. Every article of the treaty had to be debated with and explained to them. Agreement had to be achieved, not by brandishing the big stick, but by discussion, persuasion, and compromise. The Turks knew very well that the Allies had no stomach for further fighting. The Allies were never certain how far the genuine desire of the leading Turks for peace would control the unruly Nationalist and Extremist elements, who had a quite exaggerated estimate of their strength.

What, then, did the treaty achieve? Territorially it lopped off from the Turkish State the whole of Syria, of Palestine, and of what is now called Iraq. Turkey ceased to have any hold or power over Arabia. Her possessions were confined to the Anatolian plains and highlands from which the Ottoman Turks originally came, and to the narrow European territories of her former Empire up to the confines of Bulgaria on the one hand and Greece on the other. She recovered Eastern Thrace and two or three of the islands, but beyond the River Maritza, except for the tiny enclave of Karagach, she was not permitted to go.

But I draw special attention to the arrangement about the freedom of the straits—that great international safeguard for which thousands of brave British and Dominion soldiers fought and died. When I went out to Lausanne, I doubt if any one thought that we could secure more than the freedom of commercial passage. I came away with an arrangement by which free access from the *Ægean* to the Black Sea, for foreign warships and aircraft, as well as merchant ships, subject to a reasonable limitation of numbers, was guaranteed to the States of the world. The Black Sea ceased *ipso facto* to be a Russian preserve. Demilitarized and unfortified zones were created on both sides of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus. Turkey was given an international guarantee for the safety of her capital and the territories round the straits, and was allowed to maintain a garrison at Constantinople. Who can doubt that this was a solution eminently favourable to those British Imperial interests which I was sent to Lausanne to guard?

In the course of the discussion about the straits, to which Russia had been admitted—though at that time she indignantly refused to sign the Convention—I was fiercely criticized by advanced organs at home for alienating the Power whose acquiescence in any future *règlement* of the straits was essential, and was charged with sowing the seeds of future war. My concluding remarks at Lausanne, when the Powers, with the single exception of Russia, had signified their adhesion to the Straits Convention, were as follows:—

“M. Chicherin has announced to us that Russia will have no voice and take no part in this Convention. The responsibility for that rests on the Russian Government, and even if it be their present decision I hope the time may come, perhaps not in the distant future, when, on reconsidering the matter, they may find it in their own as well as in the public interest to give the signature which they refuse to-day.”

Those words were prophetic. Five months later the Russians, quietly and without saying much about it, affixed their name to the very Straits Convention which they had repudiated and denounced, and which is now therefore a part of the accepted law of Europe. But I have never received a word of apology or vindication from the critics who were so certain six months ago of my sanguinary and sinister intentions.

In the course of the discussions at Lausanne, remembering all that my countrymen and fellow-subjects throughout the Empire had suffered at Gallipoli, I insisted upon the handing over, the proper maintenance, and the safeguarding of the sacred soil on the Gallipoli Peninsula which had been stained with their blood, and where their bodies lay. When the Turks realized that I would break up the Conference sooner than cede this point they gave way.

We laboured hard at Lausanne to secure for the minorities, particularly the Greek and Armenian minorities in the future Turkish State, a protection even in excess of that guaranteed to them by the minority clauses of the European treaties which we adopted and confirmed in ours. I cannot say that in this I was successful. The records will show the nature of the fight that I put up for these unhappy peoples. But the Turks, in their passion for a self-sufficing and self-centred national existence, were resolved upon purging their State of all alien elements—a policy which, in my view, was grossly mistaken, which has been attended by incidents of great cruelty and hardship, and which as time passes, they will often have occasion to repent. I did, however, obtain this much: that Turkey undertook to apply for membership of the League of Nations after the ratification of peace; and at the hands of that tribunal the afflicted minorities will receive such protection as it may be in the power of Europe to afford.

A troublesome question arose about the future possession of the Mosul Vilayet on the northern border of the Iraq State. To that province the Turks put forward what I conceived to be quite untenable claims, which I was called upon vigorously to contest. The dispute ended in an agreement to refer the matter to amicable discussion between Turkey and ourselves during the period of nine months after the evacuation of Turkish territory by the Allied forces. If we cannot come to an agreement, the matter will then go to the League of Nations.

The financial and economic clauses of the treaty, which concerned France much more than ourselves, ended in considerable concessions to Turkish pertinacity, as did those parts of the treaty which related to the conditions under which foreigners will in future reside and trade in Turkey. I do not pretend to be satisfied with those conditions. But in my view the chief sufferers will not be the foreign communities so much as the Turks themselves, who will soon learn from experience the extent to which even an emancipated Turkish State is dependent upon the resources and assistance of the foreigner. At Lausanne Turkey was consumed with jealousy for her own sovereignty, which