

of Ararat. The tomb consists of an octagonal platform with a crypt beneath, in the midst of which a massive pillar supports the platform roof of tiles. Two sloping passages give admittance to the crypt, which has whitewashed walls. According to the popular belief, a man will have a fortunate journey or be successful in an enterprise if a stone adheres when he presses it with his thumb against the plaster. Of course I tried my test stone, but I gave a good push in. Round about the strange tomb, where a fireplace in the crypt seems to indicate that Armenian pilgrims take their meals in the holy apartment, stand several old Armenian graves. The ground around the place where the pious believe that the cheery old man slumbers is silent, bare, and dreary, but grand mountains rise in the distance, and far off towers the majestic Ararat.

Nakichevan is a quite unimportant town of 12,000 inhabitants, one-third Armenians and two-thirds Tatars. The country produces cotton, raw silk, wheat, rice, and grapes, and the trade, as well as the land, is in the hands of Armenians. These play in general the same part in Caucasia as the Jews in South Russia. They are detested because they monopolize profits and, as sharp and cunning usurers, keep the rest of the population in material thralldom. The fertile lands have passed into their hands, and while they themselves have only to shuffle their cards well, other people work like slaves to increase their gains. But they are shrewd and gifted like the Jews, and are persecuted as they are. They have despoiled their original fatherland, and in the struggle for existence have done their best, under exceedingly unfavourable circumstances, to keep their heads above water.

On the morning of November 30 I breakfasted very quietly with my quondam countryman, the good colonel, who undertook to make all necessary arrangements for the drive to the Russian town of Julfa. Two huge *kalyaskas*, properly calêches, drove up to the gate, and in one was packed and secured all my heavy luggage, while the smaller was stowed in my carriage. Heavy, clumsy contrivances were these vehicles, ragged, bent, and strained after many a dusty journey on unmade roads; and on their wheels and