



Erzerum, Chief City of Armenia.

**A**N INTERESTING subject of diplomatic gossip is how the American soldier will adapt himself to the new duties and unique surroundings of some of the distant foreign areas he will of necessity become intimate with in case the system of American mandates involved in the League of Nations becomes an accomplished fact. Armenia in general and more particularly the so-called republic of Ararat are most frequently mentioned as zones to be given over to the protecting wing of the American eagle. Everyone admits if the job is done at all by Uncle Sam it will be done in the typical whole-hearted American manner. The question therefore arises as to what the American men who will be called upon to play an active part will think of it.

It will admittedly be important to give the Americans advance information as to what they are to expect if they go as part of Uncle Sam's protecting arm to Armenia or to Ararat, says the New York Sun. Under any mandatory system exercised by the United States, American soldiers as well as American civilians will have to spend part of their lives in these countries and although the number may not be very great, it nevertheless will not be negligible.

Armenia, a mountainous country, a little larger than the state of Pennsylvania, lies just south of the Caucasian mountains between the Black and the Caspian seas. Although it is bitterly cold on the mountains and oppressively hot in the valleys in summer, it is nevertheless a fascinating dreamland, abounding in streams and lakes and rare birds and flowers. It is referred

to of marriage, of social etiquette will be absorbed by the Yanks.

For example, if an American soldier goes to call on a girl he may find her father present, and may be offered a cup of coffee, while the girl waits for the empty cup. The American soldier must drink coffee, return the cup and say:

"God reward you, beautiful child."

If the American receives a ring the next day, it means that the girl likes him and that the wedding ceremony is to be held eight days later.

The wedding, according to the custom of the people, always begins on Friday. This means that the bride and her friends go to the public bath and spend the day bathing and feasting. The invited guests, in their best clothes, go to the house on Saturday night, where they sit on the floor or in chairs, according to their station in life. A wedding repast with rare oriental dishes is had from low tables and it is by custom not a dry supper. So far apparently the bride and the bridegroom celebrate each with their own friends and in their own way. The ceremony continues on into the next day, which is featured by the bridegroom having his head shaved before the guests in a very showy manner and with great ceremony.

Later, in case the bridegroom is an American soldier, for example, the priest arrives to bless the Yank's wearing apparel before he puts it on. By ten o'clock all start out, priest, bridegroom and friends, for the home of the bride. The men carry torches and are accompanied by musicians. Arriving on the scene the American soldier would be welcomed by having rose water sprinkled over him and

little larger than the state of Pennsylvania, lies just south of the Caucasian mountains between the Black and the Caspian seas. Although it is bitterly cold on the mountains and oppressively hot in the valleys in summer, it is nevertheless a fascinating dreamland, abounding in streams and lakes and rare birds and flowers. It is referred to frequently as the "cradle of humanity," for it claims within its borders the Garden of Eden. Its history is somewhat obscure, but it is said that the Armenian nation sprang up from the great grandson of Japheth, the son of Noah.

#### "Republic" of Ararat.

Armenia is the proud possessor of Ararat—now the Republic of Ararat—which is identified with the beginnings of the history of the human race, for when the flood subsided Noah's ark is supposed to have rested upon the mountain of Ararat. The name of the village at the entrance to the glen on the northeast foot of Mount Ararat is Arghuri, meaning "he planted the vine," and American troops may be told that this was Noah's vineyard. Nearby is another spot called "Marnard," meaning "the mother lies here," and this is pointed out as the burial place of Noah's wife. The first strip of land seen from the ark is also shown to visitors at a place called "Eravan," meaning visible, and the town of Nakhwan, meaning "first habitation," is another point of interest.

If the little Republic of Ararat wins mandatory protection from the United States, American soldiers may have the opportunity of defending the mountain, which is regarded with superstitious awe. It is believed by the surrounding people still to contain the relics of Noah's ark, unchanged by time or decay. But Tartars and Turks say its summit is the abode of the devil and launch frequent campaigns against its "evil influence." American troops may well have an opportunity of engaging in almost continuous warfare in defense of this most ancient historical shrine.

#### Queer Marriage Custom.

The Armenians are intelligent and economical. The ancient customs prevail in many places, and here there will be special opportunity for the Americans to learn and appreciate the ancient ways. New ideas of courtship,

priest arrives to bless the Yank's wearing apparel before he puts it on. By ten o'clock all start out, priest, bridegroom and friends, for the home of the bride. The men carry torches and are accompanied by musicians. Arriving on the scene the American soldier would be welcomed by having rose water sprinkled over him and would otherwise be accorded a magnificent reception. He begins then to go the rounds, kissing the hands of all the guests, but beginning with the father-in-law and the mother-in-law. The bride, meanwhile, appearing very bashful, remains modestly off in a corner, covered from head to foot in scarlet silk. She must not respond when the priest first calls: "Bring forth the bride." Upon the second call she must also stand pat, but on the third call she comes forth.

The American and his bride would then go to the altar, where after a ceremony lasting about an hour, their heads come in contact. The heads are tied together with a string, and the ceremony is finished for the time being. The actual ceremonial function continues until the following Saturday, when the Yank and his bride would be called upon to go to the home of the father-in-law and mother-in-law and kiss their hands again.

If a Yank is a guest he must not forget to take off his boots before entering the parlor. He will see shoes arranged in pairs at the door, serving as a "Who's Who" for guests preceding him. In some cases slippers put over the boots for the special occasion will serve the same purpose as taking off the shoes, the idea being that the guest must not enter with the shoes carrying the dirt of the streets.

It will be essential in some respects, in case the mandatory plan goes through, for the American troops not to shave either their mustaches or their beards. To do so would signify punishment, for the people there never shave their beards excepting when forced to, just as Americans seldom shave their heads unless they are responding to prison regulations.

Some of the gestures will be perplexing to the American at first, but he would have little trouble in learning them. For example, he must not shake his head to say "No," but must throw his head backward. If he means "Come here," he must wave his hands away from him.