

western border, and then you must travel four hundred and thirty miles before you come to its eastern border. It is a fine mountainous country, with several large rivers. Near the centre of this region is the famous Mount Ararat, where the ark rested, and many suppose that the garden of Eden was somewhere within the boundaries of Armenia. On this account the region has been called the cradle of our race.

The Armenians themselves claim that they were descended from a great grand-son of Noah named Haig, and hence they call themselves Haiks. The race is evidently a very ancient one, and was known long before Christ. Some of the Armenians say that the Gospel was brought to their ancestors by the Apostle Thaddeus only a few years after Christ died. But whether this is true or not, it is true that Christianity became the religion of the state in the beginning of the fourth century. This was accomplished through the influence of Gregory, called the "Illuminator," who was a remarkable man, and is still held in highest esteem by Armenians, as a saint and a teacher. The Bible was translated into the Armenian language as early as A.D. 411, and the people still possess copies of it in their churches, holding it in great reverence. But since that early day the language has passed through such changes that the old Armenian is not understood by the people, and the Bible, though they have it in their hands, is practically in an unknown tongue. Oftentimes the priests themselves do not understand the words they use; they only repeat the sounds which they have heard. The Armenians were conquered by the Mohammedans in the year 837 A.D., and ever since have suffered, oftentimes in terrible ways, from the oppression of their masters. The whole race is now estimated at about four million souls, but they are widely scattered; probably not over a quarter part of the four millions live within the bounds of Armenia. The rest of them are to be found in Russia, Persia, and India, as well as in Constantinople and other parts of Europe.

Though the Armenians claim the name of Christian, they know little or nothing of the gospel as Jesus taught it. In some respects they are like the Roman Catholics, and one section of them acknowledges the authority of the Roman Church. But the orthodox Armenians are followers of Gregory, and so are often termed Gregorians, and the head of the Church, called