

The Republic of ARMENIA



VOLUME II

From Versailles to London, 1919-1920

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RICHARD G. HOVANNISIAN

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS
BERKELEY · LOS ANGELES · LONDON

The fall of Molla-Kamar and Kulp rendered the Armenian military position in the Kars oblast all the more tenuous. On August 17 Omar Agha led a thousand tribesmen against Colonel Shaghrutian's garrison at Kaghisman. Shaghrutian urged the partisans to withdraw so as to avoid bloodshed, but the Muslims demanded that the Armenians clear out instead. An Armenian counterattack at dawn on the eighteenth drove the Kurds

from the outskirts of the town, but it was not until the arrival of a relief column from Kars two days later that they retreated to the hills.⁶⁴

During the latter half of August Muslim irregulars maneuvered to isolate all outlying areas from Kars. The Armenian 4th and 5th Infantry Regiments were drawn into constant combat around Bashkeuy and Karakurt. Near Novo-Selim and Begli-Ahmed, the tribesmen, reinforced by a detachment of Turkish soldiers, tried to cut the railway and the main road between Sarikamish and Kars.