

# ARMENIAN LEGENDS.

ARMENIAN LEGENDS AND POEMS. Illustrated and  
compiled by Zabelle O. Bayajian. (Dent,  
Fls. net.)

So little is known in Western Europe about  
the literature and art of Armenia that we owe  
a debt of gratitude to Miss Bayajian, not only  
for making this anthology of her native poetry  
and fanciful prose accessible to the British  
reader, but for having, in the matter of illustra-  
tion, adhered to the ancient tradition of her  
stricken and persecuted country. She has  
frankly adopted the style of Armenian  
medieval missals and illuminations which pre-  
sent not so much a compromise between, as a  
combination of, Persian and Western art. The  
Persian influence is particularly noticeable in  
the rich ornamental border designs.

Centuries of suffering under the heel of the  
cruel persecutor have not been able to crush the  
national spirit and the religious faith of the  
Armenian race, but they have left a veil of  
sadness over Armenian poetry and folk-lore—  
sadness that at times rises to bitter resentment.  
The opening poem, "Reproaches," was written  
by "Erik" in the first half of the fourteenth  
century, but nothing has changed since then;  
every line of it might voice the sentiments of  
the Armenian of to-day:—

Lo, how the world afflicteth us  
With wrongs and torments TADOCIOUS;  
And Thou dost pardon every one,  
But turnest from our woes alone.

How long must we in patience wait  
Unmovingly our fate?  
Sweep away