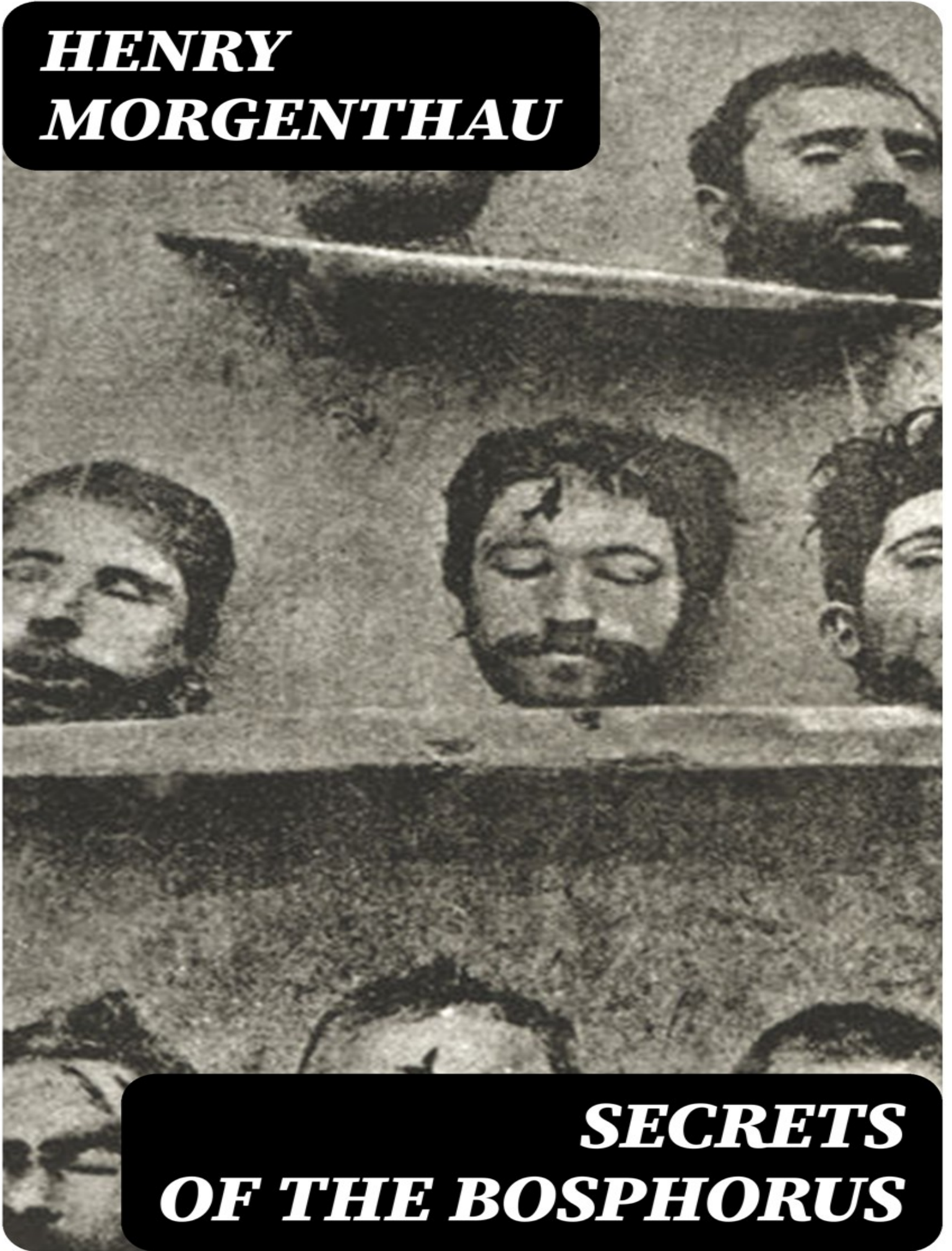


***HENRY
MORGENTHAU***



***SECRETS
OF THE BOSPHORUS***

Henry Morgenthau

Secrets of the Bosphorus

Ambassador Morgenthau's Story

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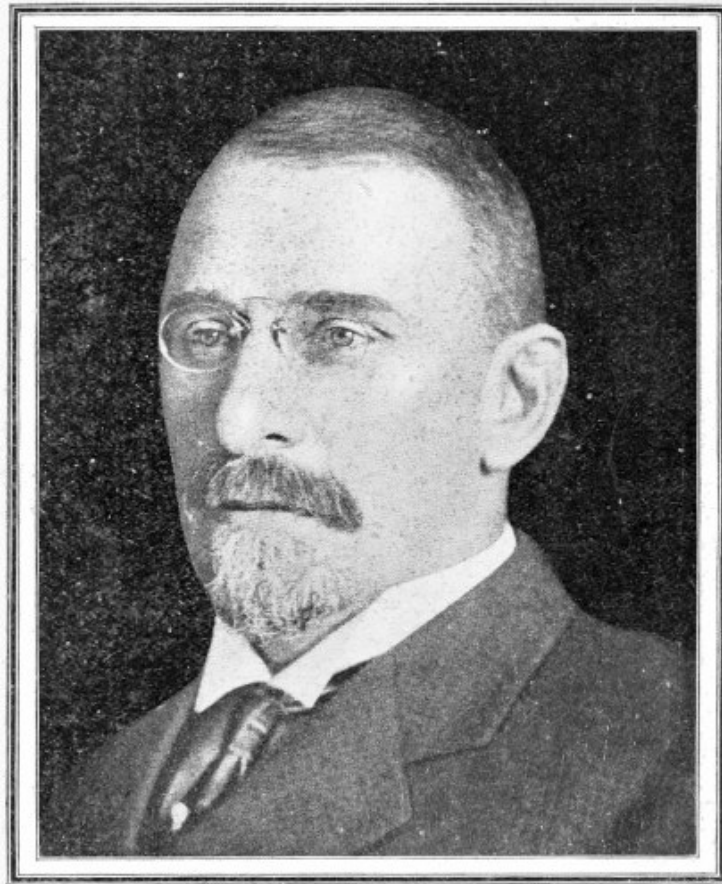
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Ambassador Henry Morgenthau.

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

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AMBASSADOR HENRY MORGENTHAU requires no introduction to the British public, but the American diplomat who may with justice be termed *The Searchlight of Truth at the Golden Horn*, and whose Reminiscences will rank now and in years to come as historical documents of the first importance, modestly obscures in his graphic and fascinating narrative one fact which requires emphasising:

That by his shrewd grasp of enemy psychology, by his unswerving impartiality, by his tact and dignity, and

unflinching courage, he frustrated again and again the evil designs and machinations of that trio of arch-schemers and villains, Wangenheim, Talaat, and Enver, against the Allies, and thus earned a debt of lasting gratitude from the British people.

Preface

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BY this time the American people have probably become convinced that the Germans deliberately planned the conquest of the world. Yet they hesitate to convict on circumstantial evidence, and for this reason all eye-witnesses to this, the greatest crime in modern history, should volunteer their testimony.

I have therefore laid aside any scruples I had as to the propriety of disclosing to my fellow-countrymen the facts which I learned while representing them in Turkey. I acquired this knowledge as the servant of the American people, and it is their property as much as it is mine.

I greatly regret that I have been obliged to omit an account of the splendid activities of the American Missionary and Educational Institutions in Turkey, but to do justice to this subject would require a book by itself. I have had to omit the story of the Jews in Turkey for the same reasons.

My thanks are due to my friend, Mr. Burton J. Hendrick, for the invaluable assistance he has rendered in the preparation of the book.

Henry Morgenthau.
October, 1918.

Chapter I

A German Superman at Constantinople

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I AM writing these reminiscences of my ambassadorship at a moment when Germany's schemes in the Turkish Empire and the Near East have achieved an apparent success. The Central Powers have disintegrated Russia, have transformed the Baltic and the Black Seas into German lakes, and have obtained a new route to the East by way of the Caucasus. Germany now dominates Serbia, Bulgaria, Rumania, and Turkey, and regards her aspirations for a new Teutonic Empire, extending from the North Sea to the Persian Gulf, as practically realised. The world now knows, though it did not clearly understand this fact in 1914, that Germany precipitated the war to destroy Serbia, seize control of the Balkan nations, transform Turkey into a vassal state, and thus obtain a huge oriental empire that would form the basis for unlimited world dominion. Do these German aggressions in the East mean that this extensive programme has succeeded?

As I look upon the new map, which shows Germany's recent military and diplomatic triumphs, my experiences in Constantinople take on a new meaning. I now see the events of these twenty-six months as part of a connected, definite story. The several individuals that moved upon the scene now appear as players in a carefully staged, superbly managed drama. I see clearly enough now that Germany

had made all her plans for world dominion and that the country to which I had been accredited as American Ambassador was the foundation of the Kaiser's whole political and military structure. Had Germany not acquired control of Constantinople in the early days of the war, it is not unlikely that hostilities would have ended a few months after the battle of the Marne. It was certainly an amazing fate that landed me in this great headquarters of intrigue at the very moment when the plans of the Kaiser, carefully pursued for a quarter of a century, were about to achieve their final success.

For the work of subjugating Turkey and transforming its army and its territory into instruments of Germany, the Emperor had sent to Constantinople an Ambassador who was ideally fitted for the task. The mere fact that Wilhelm had personally selected Baron von Wangenheim for this post shows that he had accurately gauged the human qualities needed for this great diplomatic enterprise.

The Kaiser had early selected Wangenheim as a useful instrument for his plans; he had more than once summoned him to Corfu for his vacations, and here, we may be sure, the two congenial spirits had passed many days discussing German ambitions in the East. At the time I first met him, Wangenheim was fifty-four years old; he had given a quarter of a century to the diplomatic service, he had seen service in such different places as Petrograd, Copenhagen, Madrid, Athens, and Mexico, and he had been *chargé* at Constantinople, several years later coming there as Ambassador. He understood completely all countries, including the United States; his first wife, indeed, had been

an American, and Wangenheim, when Minister to Mexico, had intimately studied our country and acquired that admiration for our energy and progress which he frequently expressed. He had a complete technical equipment for a diplomat; he spoke German, English, and French with equal facility, he knew the East thoroughly, and had the widest acquaintance with public men. Physically he was one of the most striking persons I have ever known. When I was a boy in Germany, the Fatherland was usually symbolised as a beautiful and powerful woman—a kind of dazzling Valkyrie; when I think of modern Germany, however, the massive, burly figure of Wangenheim naturally presents itself to my mind. He was six feet, two inches tall; his huge, solid frame, his Gibraltar-like shoulders, erect and impregnable, his bold, defiant head, his piercing eyes, the whole physical structure constantly pulsating with life and activity—there stands, I would say, not the Germany which I had known, but the Germany whose limitless ambitions had transformed the world into a place of horror. And Wangenheim's every act and every word typified this new and dreadful portent among the nations. Pan-Germany filled all his waking hours and directed his every action. The deification of his Emperor was the only religious instinct which impelled him. That aristocratic and autocratic organisation of German society which represents the Prussian system was, in Wangenheim's eyes, something to be venerated and worshipped; with this as the ground work, Germany was inevitably destined, he believed, to rule the world. The great land-owning junker represented the perfection of mankind; "I would despise myself," his closest associate once told me, and this

represented Wangenheim's attitude as well, "if I had been born in a city." Wangenheim divided mankind into two classes, the governing and the governed; and he ridiculed the idea that the upper could ever be recruited from the lower. I recall with what unction and enthusiasm he used to describe the Emperor's caste organisation of German estates; how he had made them non-transferable, and had even arranged it so that the possessors, or the prospective possessors, could not marry without the imperial consent. "In this way," Wangenheim would say, "we keep our governing classes pure, unmixed of blood." Like all of his social order, Wangenheim worshipped the Prussian military system; his splendid bearing showed that he had himself served in the army, and, in true German fashion, he regarded practically every situation in life from a military standpoint. I had one curious illustration of this when I asked Wangenheim one day why the Kaiser did not visit the United States. "He would like to immensely," he replied, "but it would be too dangerous. War might break out when he was coming home and the enemy would capture him." I suggested that that could hardly happen, as the American Government would escort its guest home with warships, and that no nation would care to run the risk of involving the United States as Germany's ally; but he still thought that the military danger would make any such visit impossible.

Upon him, upon more than almost any diplomatic representative of Germany, depended the success of the Kaiser's conspiracy for world domination. This German diplomat came to Constantinople with a single purpose. For twenty years the German Government had been cultivating

the Turkish Empire. All this time the Kaiser had been preparing for a world war, and in this war it was destined that Turkey should play an almost decisive part. Unless Germany should obtain the Ottoman Empire as its ally, there was little chance that she could succeed in a general European war. When France had made her alliance with Russia, this placed the man-power, 170,000,000, on her side, in the event of a war with Germany. For more than twenty years Germany had striven diplomatically to detach Russia from this French alliance, but had failed. There was only one way in which Germany could make valueless the Franco-Russian alliance; this was by obtaining Turkey as an ally. With Turkey on her side, Germany could close the Dardanelles, the only practical line of communication between Russia and her Western allies. This simple act would deprive the Czar's army of war munitions, destroy Russia economically by stopping her grain exports, her greatest source of wealth, and thus detach Russia from her partners in the world war. Thus Wangenheim's mission was to make it absolutely certain that Turkey should join Germany in the great contest that was impending.

Wangenheim believed that, should he succeed in accomplishing this task, he would reap the reward which for years had represented his final goal—the Chancellorship of the Empire. His skill at establishing personal relations with the Turks gave him a great advantage over his rivals. Wangenheim had precisely that combination of force, persuasiveness, geniality, and brutality needed in dealing with the Turkish character. I have emphasised his Prussian qualities; yet Wangenheim was a Prussian not by birth but

by development; he was a native of Thuringia, and, together with all the push, ambition, and overbearing traits of the Prussian, he had some of the softer characteristics which we associate with Southern Germany. He had one conspicuous quality, which is not Prussian at all—that is, tact; and for the most part he succeeded in keeping his less agreeable tendencies under the surface and showing only his more ingratiating side. He dominated not so much by brute strength as by a mixture of force and amiability; externally he was not a bully; his manner was more insinuating than coercive; he won by persuasiveness, not by the mailed fist, but we who knew him well understood that back of all his gentleness there lurked a terrific, remorseless ambition. Yet the impression left was not one of brutality, but of excessive animal spirits and good nature. Indeed, Wangenheim had in combination the jovial enthusiasm of a college student, the rapacity of a Prussian official, and the happy-go-lucky qualities of a man of the world. I still recall the picture of this huge figure of a man, sitting at the piano, improvising in some beautiful classic theme—and then suddenly starting to pound out uproarious German drinking songs or popular melodies. I still see him jumping on his horse on the polo grounds, spurring the splendid animal to its speediest efforts—never making sufficient speed, however, to satisfy the ambitious sportsman. Indeed, in all his activities, grave and gay, Wangenheim displayed this same restless spirit of the chase. Whether he was flirting with the Greek ladies at Pera, or spending hours over the card-table at the Cercle d’Orient, or bending the Turkish officials to his will in the interest of Germany, all life was to him a game, which was

to be played more or less recklessly, and in which the chances favoured the man who was bold and audacious and willing to pin success or failure on a single throw. And this greatest game of all—that upon which was staked, as Bernhardi has expressed it, “World empire or downfall”—Wangenheim did not play languidly, as though it had been merely a duty to which he had been assigned; to use the German phrase, he was “fire and flame” for it; he had the consciousness that he was a strong man set aside to perform a mighty task. As I write of Wangenheim I feel myself affected by the force of his personality, yet I knew all the time that, like the Government which he served so loyally, he was fundamentally ruthless, shameless, and cruel. He was content to accept all the consequences of his policy, however hideous these might be. He saw only a single goal, and, with all the realism and logic that are so characteristically German, Wangenheim would brush aside all feelings of humanity and decency that might interfere with success. He accepted in full Bismarck’s famous dictum that a German must be ready to sacrifice for Kaiser and Fatherland not only his life but his honour as well.

Just as Wangenheim personified Germany, so did his colleague, Pallavicini, personify Austria. Wangenheim’s essential quality was a brutal egotism, while Pallavicini was a quiet, kind-hearted, delightfully-mannered gentleman. Wangenheim was always looking to the future, Pallavicini to the past. Wangenheim represented that mixture of commercialism and medieval lust for conquest that constitute Prussian *weltpolitik*; Pallavicini was a diplomat left over from the days of Metternich. “Germany wants this!”

Wangenheim would insist, when an important point had to be decided. "I shall consult my Foreign Office," the cautious Pallavicini would say, on a similar occasion. The Austrian, with little upturned grey moustaches, with a rather stiff, even slightly strutting walk, looked like the old-fashioned Marquis that was once a stock figure on the stage. I might compare Wangenheim with the representative of a great business firm which was lavish in its expenditure and which obtained its trade by generous entertaining, while his Austrian colleague represented a house that prided itself on its past achievements and was entirely content with its position. The same delight that Wangenheim took in Pan-German plans, Pallavicini found in all the niceties and obscurities of diplomatic technique. The Austrian had represented his country in Turkey many years, and was the dean of the corps, a dignity of which he was extremely proud. He found his delight in upholding all the honours of his position; he was expert in arranging the order of precedence at ceremonial dinners, and there was not a single detail of etiquette that he did not have at his fingers' ends. When it came to affairs of State, however, he was merely a tool of Wangenheim. From the first, indeed, he seemed to accept his position as that of a diplomat who was more or less subject to the will of his more powerful ally. In this way Pallavicini played to his German colleague precisely the same part that his Empire was playing to that of the Kaiser. In the early months of the war the bearing of these two men completely mirrored the respective successes and failures of their countries. As the Germans boasted of victory after victory Wangenheim's already huge and erect

figure seemed to become larger and more upstanding, while Pallavicini, as the Austrians lost battle after battle to the Russians, seemed to become smaller and more shrinking.

The situation in Turkey in these critical months seemed almost to have been artificially created to give the fullest opportunities to a man of Wangenheim's genius. For ten years the Turkish Empire had been undergoing a process of dissolution, and had now reached a state of decrepitude that had left it an easy prey to German diplomacy. In order to understand the situation, we must keep in mind that there was really no orderly established Government in Turkey at that time. For the Young Turks were not a Government; they were really an irresponsible party, a kind of secret society, which, by intrigue, intimidation and assassination, had obtained most of the offices of administration. When I describe the Young Turks in these words, perhaps I may be dispelling certain illusions. Before I came to Turkey I had entertained very different ideas of this organisation. As far back as 1908 I remember reading news of Turkey that appealed strongly to my democratic sympathies. These reports informed me that a body of young revolutionists had swept from the mountains of Macedonia, had marched upon Constantinople, had deposed the bloody Sultan Abdul Hamid and had established a constitutional system. Turkey, these glowing newspaper stories told us, had become a democracy, with a parliament, a responsible ministry, universal suffrage, equality of all citizens before the law, freedom of speech and of the press, and all the other essentials of a free, liberty-loving commonwealth. That a party of Turks had for years been

struggling for such reforms I well knew, and that their ambitions had become realities seemed to indicate that, after all, there was such a thing as human progress. The long welter of massacre and disorder in the Turkish Empire had apparently ended; the great assassin, Abdul Hamid, had been removed to solitary confinement at Saloniki; and his brother, the gentle Mohammed V., had ascended the throne as the first constitutional sovereign of Turkey. Such had been the promise, but by the time I reached Constantinople, in 1913, many changes had taken place. Austria had annexed two Turkish provinces, Bosnia and Herzegovina; Italy had wrenched away Tripoli; Turkey had fought two wars with the Balkan states, and had lost all her territories in Europe, except Constantinople and a small hinterland. The aims for the regeneration of Turkey that had inspired the revolution had evidently miscarried, and I soon discovered that four years of so-called democratic rule had ended with the nation more degraded, more impoverished, and more dismembered than ever before. Indeed, long before I had arrived this attempt to establish a Turkish democracy had failed. The failure was probably the most complete and the most disheartening in the whole history of democratic institutions. I need hardly explain in detail the causes of this failure. Let us not criticise too harshly the Young Turks, for there is no question that, at the beginning, they were sincere. In a speech in Liberty Square, Saloniki, in July, 1908, Enver Pasha, who was popularly regarded as the chivalrous young leader of this insurrection against a century-old tyranny, had eloquently declared that, "To-day arbitrary government has disappeared. We are all brothers.

There are no longer in Turkey Bulgarians, Greeks, Serbians, Rumanians, Mussulmans, Jews. Under the same blue sky we are all proud to be Ottomans." That statement represented the Young Turk ideal for the new Turkish state, but it was an ideal which it was evidently beyond their ability to translate into a reality. The races which had been maltreated and massacred for centuries by the Turks' could not transform themselves overnight into brothers, and the hatreds, jealousies, and religious prejudices of the past still divided Turkey into a medley of warring clans. Above all, the destructive wars and the loss of great sections of the Turkish Empire had destroyed the prestige of the new democracy. There were plenty of other reasons for the failure; but it is hardly necessary to go into them at this time.

Thus the Young Turks had disappeared as a positive, regenerating force, but they still existed as a political machine. Their leaders, Talaat, Enver, and Djemal, had long since abandoned any expectation of reforming their State, but they had developed an insatiable lust for personal power. Instead of a nation of nearly 20,000,000 developing happily along democratic lines, enjoying the suffrage, building up their industry and agriculture, laying the basis of education, sanitation, and general progress, I saw that Turkey consisted of merely so many inarticulate, ignorant, and poverty-ridden slaves, with a small, wicked oligarchy at the top, which was prepared to use them in the way that would best promote their private interests. And these men were practically the same who, a few years before, had made Turkey an institutional State! A more bewildering fall from the highest idealism to the crassest materialism could

not be imagined. Talaat, Enver, and Djemal were the ostensible leaders, yet back of them was the Committee, consisting of about forty men. This Committee met secretly, manipulated elections, and filled the offices with their own henchmen. It had its own building in Constantinople, and a supreme chief who gave all his time to its affairs and issued orders to his subordinates. This functionary thus ruled the party and the country something like an American city boss in our most unregenerate days. The whole organisation thus furnished a splendid illustration of what we sometimes describe as "invisible government." This kind of irresponsible control has at times flourished in American cities mainly because the citizens have devoted all their time to their private affairs and thus neglected the public good. But in Turkey the masses were altogether too ignorant to understand the meaning of democracy, and the bankruptcy and general vicissitudes of the country had left the nation with practically no government and an easy prey to a determined band of adventurers. The Committee of Union and Progress, with Talaat Bey as the most powerful leader, constituted such a band. Besides the forty men in Constantinople, sub-committees were organised in all important cities of the Empire. These men met secretly, formulated their plans, distributed the patronage, and issued orders to their appointees, who filled nearly all the important offices. These men, like orthodox department heads in the worst days of American city government, "took orders" and made the appointments submitted to them. No man could hold an office, high or low, who was not a part of this Committee.

I must admit, however, that I do our corrupt American gangs a certain injustice in comparing them with the Turkish Committee of Union and Progress. Talaat, Enver, and Djemal had added to their system a detail that has not figured extensively in American politics—that of assassination and judicial murder. They had wrested power from the other factions by a deed of violence. This *coup d'état* had taken place on January 26, 1913, not quite a year before my arrival. At that time a political group, headed by the venerable Kiamil Pasha, as Grand Vizier, and Nazim Pasha, as Minister of War, controlled the Government; they represented a faction known as the “liberal party,” which was chiefly distinguished for its enmity to the Young Turks. These men had fought the disastrous Balkan war, and, in January, they had felt themselves compelled to accept the advice of the European Powers and surrender Adrianople to Bulgaria. The Young Turks had been outside the breastworks for about six months, looking for an opportunity to return to power. The proposed surrender of Adrianople apparently furnished them this opportunity. Adrianople was an important Turkish city, and naturally the Turkish people regarded the contemplated surrender as marking still another milestone to their national doom. Talaat and Enver hastily collected about two hundred followers and marched up to the Sublime Porte, where the ministry was then sitting. Nazim, hearing the uproar, stepped out into the hall. He courageously faced the crowd, a cigarette in his mouth and his hands thrust into his pockets.

“Come, boys,” he said good-humouredly, “what’s all this noise about? Don’t you know that it is interfering with our

deliberations?”

The words had hardly left his mouth, when he fell dead. A bullet had pierced a vital spot.

The mob, led by Talaat and Enver, then forced their way into the Council Chamber. They forced Kiamil, the Grand Vizier—he was more than eighty years old—to resign his post under threat of meeting Nazim’s fate.

As assassination had been the means by which these chieftains had obtained the supreme power, so assassination continued to be the instrument upon which they depended for maintaining their control. Djemal, in addition to his other duties, was Military Governor of Constantinople, and in this capacity he had control of the police; in this office he developed all the talents of a Fouché, and did his work so successfully that any man who wished to conspire against the Young Turks usually retired for that purpose to Paris or Athens. The few months that preceded my arrival had been a reign of terror. The Young Turks had destroyed Abdul Hamid’s régime only to adopt that Sultan’s favourite methods of quieting opposition. Instead of having one Abdul Hamid, Turkey now discovered that she had several. Men were arrested and deported by the score, and hangings of political offenders—opponents, that is, of the ruling gang—were common occurrences.

The weakness of the Sultan particularly facilitated the ascendancy of this Committee. We must remember that Mohammed V. was not only Sultan but Caliph—not only the temporary ruler, but also head of the Mohammedan Church. In this capacity he was an object of veneration to millions of devout Mussulmans, a fact which would have given a strong

man in his position great influence in freeing Turkey from its oppressors. I presume that even those who had the most kindly feelings toward the Sultan would not have described him as an energetic, masterful man. It is a miracle that the circumstances which fate had forced upon Mohammed had not long since completely destroyed him. His brother was Abdul Hamid—Gladstone's "great assassin"—a man who ruled by espionage and bloodshed, and who had no more consideration for his own relations than for his massacred Armenians. One of Abdul Hamid's first acts, when he ascended the throne, was to shut up his heir-apparent in a palace, surrounding him with spies, limiting him for society to his harem and a few palace functionaries, and constantly holding over his head the fear of assassination. Naturally Mohammed's education had been limited; he spoke only Turkish, and his only means of learning about the outside world was an occasional Turkish newspaper. So long as he remained quiescent, the heir-apparent was comfortable and fairly secure, but he knew that the first sign of revolt, or even a too curious interest in what was going on, would be the signal for his death. Hard as this preparation was, it had not destroyed what was at bottom a benevolent, gentle nature. The Sultan had no characteristics that suggested the "terrible Turk." He was simply a quiet, easy-going, gentlemanly old man. Everybody liked him, and I do not think that he harboured ill-feeling against a human soul. He could not rule his empire, for he had had no preparation for such a difficult task; he took a certain satisfaction in his title and in his consciousness that he was a lineal descendant of the great Osman; clearly, however, he could not oppose the

schemes of the men who were then struggling for the control of Turkey. In exchanging Abdul Hamid, as his master, for Talaat, Enver, and Djemal, the Sultan had not greatly improved his personal position. The Committee of Union and Progress ruled him precisely as they ruled all the rest of Turkey—by intimidation. They had shown their power when they dethroned Abdul Hamid and locked him up in a palace, and poor Mohammed naturally lived under the constant fear that they would treat him similarly. Indeed, they had already given him a sample of their power; and the Sultan had attempted on one occasion to assert his independence, and the conclusion of this episode left no doubt as to who was master. A group of thirteen “conspirators” and other criminals, some real ones, others merely political offenders, had been sentenced to be hanged. Among them was the imperial son-in-law. Before the execution could take place the Sultan had to sign the death-warrants. He begged that he be permitted to pardon the imperial son-in-law, though he raised no objection to viséing the passports of the other twelve. The nominal ruler of 20,000,000 people figuratively went down upon his knees before Talaat, but all his pleadings did not affect this determined man. Here, Talaat reasoned, was a chance to decide, once for all, who was master, the Sultan or themselves. A few days afterward the melancholy figure of the imperial son-in-law, dangling at the end of a rope in full view of the Turkish populace, visibly reminded the Empire that Talaat and the Committee were the masters of Turkey. After this tragical test of strength, the Sultan never attempted again to interfere in affairs of State.

He knew what had happened to Abdul Hamid, and he feared an even more terrible fate for himself.

By the time I reached Constantinople the Young Turks thus completely controlled the Sultan. He was popularly referred to as an “iradé-machine,” a phrase which means about the same thing as when we refer to a man as a “rubber stamp.” His State duties consisted merely in performing certain ceremonies, such as receiving Ambassadors, and in affixing his signature to such papers as Talaat and his associates placed before him. This was a profound change in the Turkish system, since in that country for centuries the Sultan had been an unquestioned despot, whose will had been the only law, and who had centred in his own person all the forces and sovereignty. Not only the Sultan, but the Parliament, had become the subservient creature of the Committee, which chose practically all the members, who voted only as the predominant bosses dictated. The Committee had already filled several of the most powerful Cabinet offices with its creatures, and was reaching out for these few posts that, for several reasons, still remained in other hands.

Chapter II

The “Boss System” in the Ottoman Empire and How it Proved Useful to Germany

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Talaat, the leading man in this band of usurpers, really had remarkable personal qualities. Naturally Talaat’s life and character proved interesting to me, for I had for years been familiar with the Boss system in my own country, and in Talaat I saw many resemblances to the crude yet able citizens who have so frequently in the past gained power in local and State politics. Talaat’s origin was so obscure that there were plenty of stories in circulation concerning it. One account said he was a Bulgarian gypsy, while another described him as a Pomak—a Pomak being a man of Bulgarian blood whose ancestors, centuries ago, had embraced the Mohammedan faith. According to this latter explanation, which I think was the true one, this real ruler of the Turkish Empire was not a Turk at all. I can personally testify that he cared nothing for Mohammedanism, for, like most of the leaders of his party, he scoffed at all religions. “I hate all priests, rabbis, and brodjas,” he once told me—brodja being the nearest equivalent the Mohammedans have for the ministers of religion. I can also testify to the fact that Talaat paid no attention to certain injunctions of his Church, especially that against drinking; he was the presiding genius of a club that met not far from the

American Embassy, whose tendencies were occasionally bacchanalian. In American city politics a streetcar driver or a gas-man has not uncommonly developed great abilities as a politician, and similarly Talaat had started life as a letter-carrier. From this occupation he had risen to be a telegraph-operator at Adrianople, and of these humble beginnings he was extremely proud. I visited him once or twice at his house. Although Talaat was then the most powerful man in the Turkish Empire, his home was still the modest home of a man of the people. It was cheaply furnished; the whole establishment reminded me of a moderately-priced apartment in New York. His most cherished possession was the telegraph instrument with which he had once earned his living; I have seen him take the key and call up one of his personal friends or associates. Talaat one night told me that he had that day received his salary as Minister of the Interior; after paying his debts, he said, he had just one hundred dollars left in the world. He liked to spend part of his spare time with the rough-shod crew that made up the Committee of Union and Progress; in the interims when he was out of the Cabinet he used to occupy the desk daily at party headquarters, personally managing the party machine. Despite these humble beginnings, Talaat had developed some of the qualities of a man of the world. Though his early training had not included instruction in the use of a knife and fork—such implements are wholly unknown among the poorer classes in Turkey—Talaat could attend diplomatic dinners and represent his country with a considerable amount of dignity and personal ease. I have always regarded it as indicating his innate cleverness that,

though he had had little schooling, he had picked up enough French to converse tolerably in that language. Physically he was a striking figure. His powerful frame, his huge, sweeping back and his rocky biceps emphasised that natural mental strength and forcefulness which made possible his career. In discussing matters Talaat liked to sit at his desk, with his shoulders drawn up, his head thrown back, and his wrists, twice the size of an ordinary man's, planted firmly on the table. It always seemed to me that it would take a crowbar to pry these wrists from the board, once Talaat's strength and defiant spirit had laid them there. Whenever I think of Talaat now I do not primarily recall his rollicking laugh, his uproarious enjoyment of a good story, the mighty stride with which he crossed the room, his fierceness, his determination, his remorselessness—the whole life and nature of the man take form in those gigantic wrists.

Talaat, like most strong men, had his forbidding, even his ferocious, moods. One day I found him sitting at the usual place, his massive shoulders drawn up, his eyes glowering, his wrists planted on the desk. I always anticipated trouble whenever I found him in this attitude. As I made request after request, Talaat, between his puffs at his cigarette, would answer "No!" "No!" "No!"

I slipped around to his side of the desk.

"I think those wrists are making all the trouble, your Excellency," I said. "Won't you please take them off the table?"

Talaat's ogre-like face began to crinkle, he threw up his arms, leaned back, and gave a roar of terrific laughter. He

enjoyed my method of treating him so much that he granted every request I made.

At another time I came into his room when a couple of Arab princes were present. Talaat was solemn and dignified, and refused every favour I asked. "No, I shall not do that. No, I haven't the slightest idea of doing that," he would answer. I saw that he was trying to impress his princely guests, to show them that he had become so great a man that he did not hesitate to "turn down" an Ambassador. So I came up nearer and spoke quietly.

"I see you are trying to make an impression on these princes," I said. "Now if it's necessary for you to pose, do it with the Austrian Ambassador—he's out there waiting to come in. My affairs are too important to be trifled with."

Talaat laughed. "Come back in an hour," he said. I came back; the Arab princes had left, and we had no difficulty in arranging matters to my satisfaction.

"Someone has got to govern Turkey; why not we?" Talaat once said to me. The situation had just about come to that. "I have been greatly disappointed," he would tell me, "at the failure of the Turks to appreciate democratic institutions. I hoped for it once, and I worked hard for it—but they were not prepared for it." He saw a Government which the first enterprising man who came along might seize, and he determined to be that man. Of all the Turkish politicians I met, I regarded Talaat as the only one who really had extraordinary innate ability. He had great force and dominance, the ability to think quickly and accurately, and an almost superhuman insight into men's motives. His great geniality and his lively sense of humour also made him a

splendid manager of men. He showed his shrewdness in the measures which he took, after the murder of Nazim, to gain the upper hand in this distracted Empire. He did not seize the Government all at once; he went at it gradually, feeling his way. He realised the weaknesses of his position; he had several forces to deal with: the envy of his associates on the revolutionary committee which had backed him, the army, the foreign Governments, and the several factions that made up what then passed for public opinion in Turkey. Any of these elements might destroy him, politically and physically. He understood the dangerous path he was treading, and he always anticipated a violent death. "I do not expect to die in my bed," he told me. By becoming Minister of the Interior, Talaat gained control of the police and the administration of the provinces, or vilayets. This gave him a great amount of patronage, which he used to strengthen his position with the Committee. He attempted to gain the support of all influential factions by gradually placing their representatives in the other Cabinet posts. Though he afterwards became the man who was chiefly responsible for the massacre of hundreds of thousands of Armenians, at this time Talaat maintained the pretence that the Committee stood for the unionisation of all the races in the Empire, and for this reason his first Cabinet contained an Arab-Christian, a Deunme (a Jew by race, but a Mohammedan by religion), a Circassian, an Armenian, an Egyptian. He made the latter Grand Vizier, the highest post in the Government, a position which roughly corresponds to that of Chancellor in the German Empire. The man whom he selected for this part, which in ordinary times was the most

dignified and important in the Empire, belonged to quite a different order of society from Talaat. Not uncommonly bosses in America select high-class figure-heads for mayors or even governors, men who will give respectability to their faction yet whom, at the same time, they think that they can control. It was some such motive as this which led Talaat and his associates to elevate Saïd Halim to the Grand Vizierate. Saïd Halim was an Egyptian Prince, the cousin of the Khedive of Egypt, a man of great wealth and great culture. He spoke English and French as fluently as his own tongue, and was an ornament to any society in the world. But he was a man of unlimited vanity and ambition. His great desire was to become Khedive of Egypt, and this had led him to join his political fortunes to the gang that was then ascendant in Turkey. He was the heaviest "campaign contributor," and, indeed, he had largely furnished the Young Turks in their earliest days. In exchange they had given him the highest office in the Empire, but with the tacit understanding that he should not attempt to exercise the real powers of his office, but content himself with enjoying its dignities and holding himself in readiness for the Khedivate, when all their plans had succeeded.

Germany's war preparations had for years included the study of internal conditions in other countries. An indispensable part of the Imperial programme had been to take advantage of such disorganisations as existed to push her schemes of penetration and conquest. What her emissaries have attempted in France, Italy, and even the United States, is apparent, and their success in Russia has greatly changed the course of the war. Clearly such a