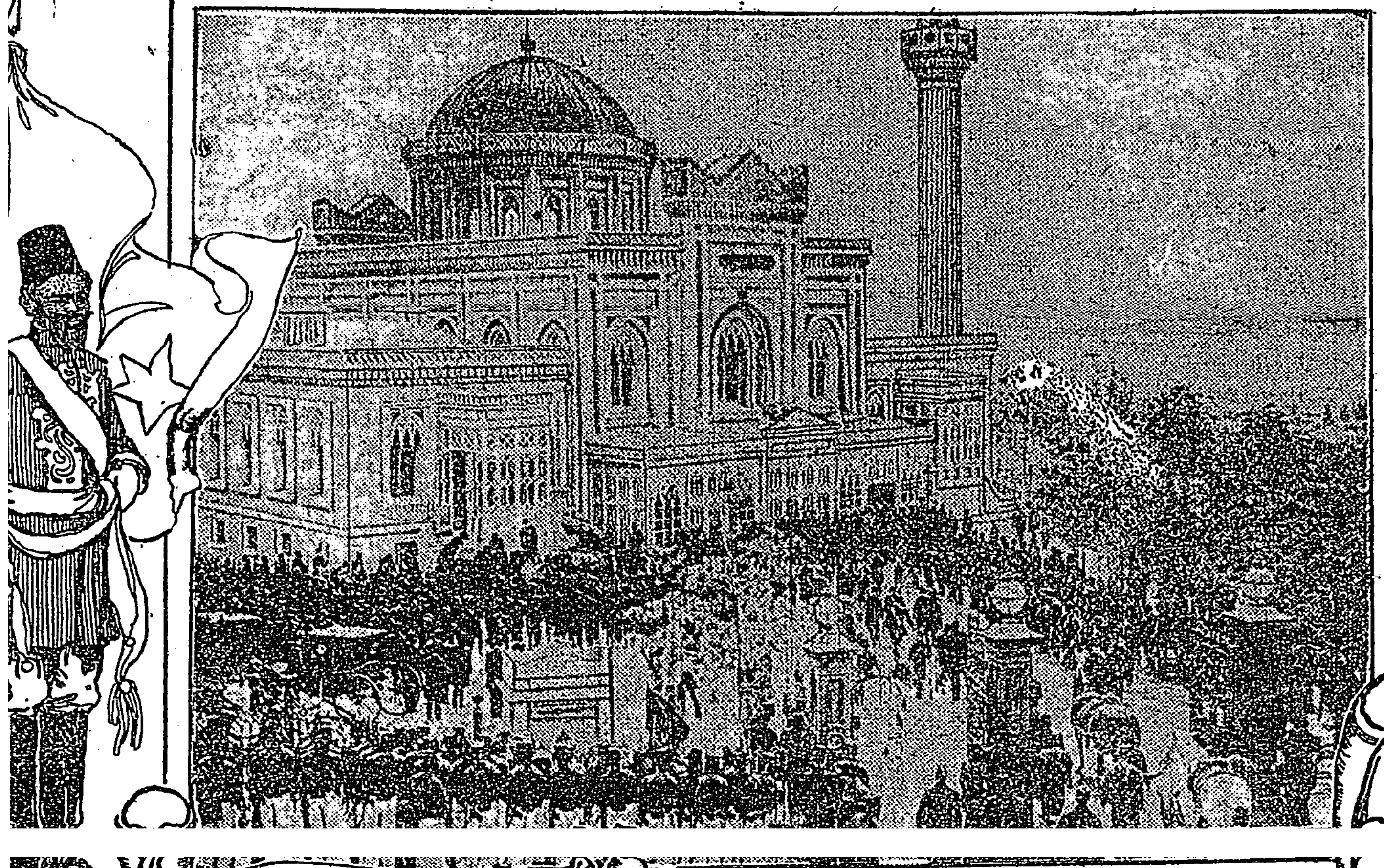


THE DOWNFALL OF FEHIM PASHA



The Sultan of Turkey
The Only Authority
Portrait of Abdul Hamid
Known to Exist



Yildiz Kiosk, Official
Seat of the Turkish
Government



Baron Marschall
Von Bieberstein
The German Kaiser's
Ambassador at the
Sublime Porte to
Whom Fehim Pasha
Owes His Fall

An Unparalleled Career of Tyranny Checked at Last—Sultan's Hated Favorite Brought to Book by the Kaiser's Minister—Strange Chapter in the History of Modern Government.

TRUSTED favorite of the Sultan, head of Abdul Hamid's personal spy system, and the eyes and ears by means of which he kept track of the plots and intrigues of which Yildiz Kiosk is the hotbed; master of the imperial favor and dispenser of the imperial bounty, the power behind the throne in a palace where occult influences have ever been paramount, Fehim Pasha has been struck down by the "mailed fist" of Germany, and is now languishing in exile in Asia Minor. It is impossible to say how far Fehim Pasha's influence reached, and what effect he may have exercised upon the Sultan in his dealings with foreign powers during the past ten or twelve years, but it is a fact that his downfall has been ardently desired by many of the Ambassadors and Ministers who have had experience of the devious ways of diplomacy as practiced by the Sublime Porte. None of the efforts made to bring about that devoutly wished consummation, however, met with any success until Fehim Pasha fell foul of the Kaiser's representative in Constantinople, Baron Marschall von Bieberstein. Then his fate really hung in the balance for the first time during all the years through which he has governed the palace of the Sultan, and through the palace the whole Turkish Empire.

Fehim Pasha's name during a decade has struck terror into the hearts of the inhabitants of Constantinople. Secure in his hold over his imperial master, and, with Izzet Pasha, at the head of the most imperial clique of palace officials known in the recent annals of Yildiz Kiosk, Fehim Pasha stopped at nothing. Utterly unscrupulous and seeking only his own advancement and his own pleasures, the lives of men and the honor of women have been equally at his mercy. His first exploit showed what manner of man he was. One day he walked out of his house with a revolver in his hand and shot down indiscriminately some fourteen persons whom ill-luck led to cross his path. Some of those he wounded died, but Fehim was not the sort of man that the guardians of law and order in Stamboul cared to tackle. He stood too high in the good graces of Abdul Hamid for any ordinary Magistrate or police officer to lay hands on him. From all accounts, this murderous exploit of his was not an outcome of the wild instinct to kill of the Malay running amuck, but simply a method of demonstrating that he stood above the ordinary law, and that what pleased his humor of the moment was his rule of life.

Unlicensed Tyranny.
Power in the hands of such a man necessarily meant indulgence in the worst appetites of his nature. For years Fehim Pasha has been the almost uncontrolled master of the liberty and property of every man and of the honor of every woman among the Turkish inhabitants of Constantinople. Only a few months ago he wreaked vengeance on an old and distinguished General, a hero of the Russian and Greek wars, who had had the misfortune to offend him. His victim was driving along an unfrequented road, when Fehim Pasha and a gang of his myrmidons stopped his carriage, dragged him out, and beat him till he was nearly dead. Then they left him to help himself as best he could. A report was made to the Sultan, and as the General in question was one of Abdul Hamid's aides de camp and his past services had not been forgotten, some inquiry was made into the affair,

and for a moment it looked as if Fehim had gone too far. Abdul Hamid, however, came to the conclusion that his favorite's uses were greater than his abuses, and the matter dropped.

As has been mentioned, Fehim Pasha has been the eyes and ears of the imperial tenant of Yildiz Kiosk. By his birth he had a hold upon the Sultan. He was a son of a foster brother of Abdul Hamid, and being as a boy a favorite of the latter's father, he was brought up mainly in the palace. Thus from his earliest years he breathed in and became impregnated with, as it were, the atmosphere of the most vicious and most mysterious Court of Europe. When of age he entered the army, and very speedily was made an aide de camp of the Sultan and promoted to the rank of General of Division. One of his most conspicuously successful intrigues in these early days of his career as a palace potentate brought about the fall of Marshal Fuad Pasha, a distinguished soldier who played one of the chief roles in the one-sided conflict which Greece went into so light-heartedly and came out of so ingloriously. Fehim's reports upon Fuad Pasha pandered to his imperial master's jealousy and distrust, and the Marshal's ruin followed.

In this work Fehim Pasha had struck a vein of gold. The role of spy and informer appealed to his tastes, and the power it gave him was as the apple of his eye. He adopted it as his profession. He became the chief of the elaborate system of espionage which Abdul Hamid, like many another despot, relied upon to maintain his personal rule. The Sultan appeared to repose implicit trust in his minion. He paid Fehim Pasha £750 Turkish a month as secret service money, and permitted him to enroll a body of 140 men who were under the personal orders of the favorite and with whom the ordinary police dared not interfere.

Past Master of Graft.
Eventually Fehim Pasha was intrusted with the delicate mission of keeping a close watch upon the heir apparent, Reshad Effendi. Abdul Hamid's personal knowledge of the methods by which succession to the throne of the Caliph is often insured, and his persistent dread of meeting the fate of so many of his predecessors, made the duties which now devolved upon Fehim Pasha profitable opportunities. He had Abdul Hamid's ear, and he held his master's life in his hands, and his imperial master knew it.

Under the circumstances Fehim Pasha could do no wrong. Nor did he hesitate to commit any. He devised methods of "graft" and "get-rich quick" schemes which were brutal but effective. His personally employed and personally controlled agents became so many tools for his personal aggrandizement. Everything was grist that came to his mill. He levied toll upon existing institutions and created new ones to bring in more money to his exchequer. On the advice of a renegade, whom he made an excellency for his pains, Fehim Pasha established all manner of dissolute resorts, from which his myrmidons collected tribute. No woman upon whom he set covetous eyes was safe from him. When he did not think it prudent, even for him, to seize upon the prey he had marked out for his own, a favorite dodge of his was to arrest the male relatives of the woman who had attracted him, and release them only when the bargain he wanted had been agreed upon.

His methods are said to have borne a close resemblance to those by means of which the Tweed ring in New York, the Patterson gang in Philadelphia,



Fehim Pasha
For Years the Smiter Power Behind the Turkish Throne

and the Schmitz organization in San Francisco filled their pockets at the expense of the people whose interests they were supposed to serve. "For East is East, and West is West," wrote Kipling; but there are evidently points of resemblance, after all.

The name of Fehim became a bogey in Pera and Stamboul. He was a man of great personal courage, and much as he knew himself to be hated, he laughed defiance at his enemies. He had created a reign of terror, and rejoiced in it. He flaunted his misdeeds in the eyes of his victims, actual and possible; and his extravagant display and sneering disregard of the possibilities of reprisals were as characteristic of the man as the gaudy yellow satin lined carriage in which he drove up and down the badly paved and narrow Grande Rue of Pera.

Germany at Last Aroused.
It was a singularly audacious act on the part of Fehim Pasha that induced German interference in his schemes. A German firm had bought a cargo of sleepers at a port in the Black Sea and had shipped them to Constantinople. The vessel had been chartered by the German company, but was flying the Turkish flag, and it was this which probably led Fehim Pasha to make the blunder which has led to his complete undoing. He seized the ship on its arrival at Constantinople, and set about selling the cargo. Baron Marschall von Bieberstein was apprised of the affair, and addressed to the Porte a note in which he demanded the surrender of the vessel and her cargo and the punishment of "the brigand" who had committed this "act of piracy." At the same time he sent the second dragoman of the embassy—an official whose person is sacred in Turkey—and a kavass to retake possession of the ship in the name of the chartering firm, backed by the German Government; but Fehim's acolytes were on hand, and kavass and dragoman had to retire empty-handed.

Thereupon Baron Marschall von Bieberstein, who was specially selected by William II. for the post at Constantinople, acted in a fashion that awoke the slumbering Porte to a realization that this was no ordinary affair, to be settled by a policy of masterly inactivity. The German Ambassador sent a message to the Sublime Porte, couched in no hesitating terms, to the effect that if the ship were not surrendered within two hours—"Leut. Kaiserinlok" with

twenty men from the Lorelei, the German dispatch boat stationed in the Bosphorus, would take possession of it in the name of the German Emperor.

This threat clinched the matter. The ship and cargo were released. More than that, Fehim Pasha had started an avalanche. Baron Marschall von Bieberstein called for the exemplary punishment of the offender who had dared to lay hands on German property. He sent a strongly worded note to the Sublime Porte, and followed it up by an audience of an hour's duration with the Sultan, in which he impressed upon the latter the necessity of complying with the demand that Fehim Pasha be punished.

A Fight for Supremacy.

Pera has no newspapers worth speaking of, but the tongues of rumor clack busily there, and in a very short time it was known throughout the city that Fehim Pasha and Baron Marschall von Bieberstein were engaged in a conflict that for one or the other meant disgrace.

On the one hand, the Sultan's favorite stood to keep or lose the supremacy he had enjoyed so long; on the other, the German Ambassador was fighting to see whether the influence which his Imperial master had been slowly and laboriously building up in Constantinople was a real asset or an empty myth. Failure would have indicated that exchanges of imperial presents and complimentary messages were vain tokens of a good feeling which would bear no strain. Success meant the establishment of German prestige on a secure basis.

For nearly three weeks the issue apparently remained hanging in the balance. Fehim Pasha was seen driving out daily in his yellow satin-lined carriage, and he was as overbearing and insolent as ever. At the weekly Selamluk there was no sign on the part of the courtiers to indicate that his place in the imperial favor was even shaken. To use a common but expressive phrase, many people were of opinion that the German Ambassador had "bit off more than he could chew."

Enemies with Good Memories.

Then, just at the beginning of February last, it was announced that the Sultan had appointed a commission to examine the complaints lodged against Fehim Pasha by the German Ambassador, and at the same time to investigate other charges. This let loose the floodgates. For twelve years Fehim Pasha had gone on his course unrecking. His enemies had waited patiently. The men he had blackmalled, the husbands, fathers and brothers of the women he had ruined, the people he had terrorized into silent brooding over their wrongs, the regular police, who had all along been jealous of the interference—all the thousand and one people whom he had given cause to hate



Fuad Pasha
A Distinguished Victim of Fehim Pasha



Reshad Pasha

to arrest any of them attempting to commit a crime, and the other giving orders that none of them were to be admitted into the regular police service or allowed to usurp the functions of the police.

This marked the beginning of the end. On Feb. 15 last Sir Nicholas O'Connor, the British Ambassador to the Sublime Porte, had brought his influence to bear in line with Baron Marschall von Bieberstein. Some time before the British Embassy had laid a protest against Fehim Pasha, who had tried to blackmail a merchant engaged in the British trade. Up to that date the former fa-

vorite still retained his rank as aide de camp of the Sultan, although three weeks had passed since Baron Marschall von Bieberstein had denounced him as a "brigand" and "notorious criminal." On the following day, Feb. 16, Fehim Pasha left Constantinople on board the steamer Banghazi bound for a place of exile in Asia Minor, while his army of agents was disbanded and many of them deported to the provinces.

Whether Fehim Pasha's exile will be permanent, or whether he will be recalled to favor when the storm has blown over, is a matter upon which the gossips of Constantinople hold diverse opinions; but in any case his disgrace is regarded as marking the end of what has been one of the worst periods of abuse of imperial favor known in the Turkish history of recent times.

him were now ready to give voice to their enmity. Fear of Fehim had given place to the desire to hammer a nail into his coffin. The owner of the forest from which had been cut the sleepers the seizure of which after they had been sold to a German firm precipitated the crisis, had come to the German Embassy in fear and trembling in the days when Fehim Pasha's fate was still in the balance and had stated that some time before he had been seized by the Pasha until he consented to pay Fehim 20 per cent. on all his sales of wood. He did not dare make any complaint himself, and he would only state his case against Fehim now on condition that he was safeguarded in the Embassy. When the Imperial Commission was appointed it was seen that the danger was over, particularly as at the same time Fehim Pasha was notified that he was a prisoner in his own house, which was guarded by police—the regular police, not his own agents. From this time on things went hard with the former favorite.

To a man the members of the commission who were sitting upon his case detested him as much as they feared him. They had ample grounds on which to find against him. A long list of crimes, ranging from murder and rape to the extortion of petty sums, was charged against him, and every day, as the investigation continued, the list was added to. In almost every instance the victims were Ottoman subjects. Many of the charges had been public property for years, and almost every offense in the calendar was on the list. Nothing had come amiss to Fehim Pasha in his career of rapine and robbery—he had blackmalled, he had extorted, he had embezzled. Rich and poor alike had suffered at his hands. He had ordered a number of gramophones from a Hungarian dealer in the Grande Rue, and had neglected to pay for them. By way of compensation he had permitted the dealer to speak of him as "my friend, Fehim." There was a sardonic humor about the man that was very ingratiating.

The Beginning of the End.
Some days passed, with the commission still sitting, and then a further indication of how the wind was blowing was given by the issuing of two irades, one of which charged the police to keep a strict watch on Fehim's agents, and