

The Tragedy of Turkey.

Ghazi Mukhtar Pasha—The Bearer of Turkey's Burdens.

UPON the shoulders of the most venerable, as well as the most brilliant of her elder statesmen, "Mukhtar the Victorious," Turkey saddled the burden of the Balkans. In his capacity of adviser to the Sultan, Ghazi Mukhtar Pasha awaited in Constantinople the four conquering armies of the Balkan allies, there to foil the purposes of the allied kings who would drive the Moslem from Europe. The long life of Mukhtar has been spent in baffling the designs of great powers upon the Sultans in Turkey. When he swayed the councils of the Osmanli in their capital, observes the Paris "Temps," European diplomacy was helpless against his imperial masters. Mukhtar has had the misfortune to incur the suspicion of Turkey's rulers, however. He has been exiled for years at a time. During these periods of banishment, his native land has lost territory, lost prestige, lost glory. But when the empire was on the brink of ruin, he was given a decisive voice in affairs. The supreme necessity in the late conflict, from the Moslem point of view, was the retention of a foothold in Europe. This could be effected if the great powers of the north worked against the little powers of the south. This was the key to Mukhtar's problem.

In the Ghazi Mukhtar of recent distracted times the Paris paper beholds the grandest of Turkey's many grand old men. Turkey's grand young men, it observes, failed miserably. The misfortunes of the Sultan were the work of the Young Turks. In a few brief years they lost possessions in Africa, ravaged whole districts in Europe and sowed revolt in every part of Asia. The mischief had been undone in part by the Old Turks, and Ghazi Mukhtar is the greatest of these. He is a soldier, a diplomatist, a statesman. He is honest, clean, temperate. He has health and strength and ideals. The catalogue of his personal qualities could be prolonged to his credit, observes the Vienna "Neue Freie Presse," for his personality is a blend of the best that is in the European with all that is characteristic of the Moslem.

From a modest home on the Adriatic bank of the Bosphorus, where he dwells in dignified ease upon an ample patrimony, Mukhtar was summoned to the post of Grand Vizier a little while ago by a messenger who found him in bed. The one wife of the aged hero of the Turco-Russian war implored him upon her knees to return to his slumbers. His two granddaughters, we read, wept and tore their hair. The grandsons were away at the front, as was the only son, Mohammed Pasha, a gallant soldier in high command near Adrianople who lost all his battles. For nearly an hour, it seems, the aged Turk, whose hair but vigorous, listened impressively to the pleas of his household. At last he ordered the reading aloud of a favourite chapter of the Koran. Then, commending his soul to Allah, he made arrangements for the conduct of his household in the event of his death. So absolute is the domestic rule of the Old Turk that no one ventured to offer a further word of remonstrance.

So contagious is the optimism at the foundation of Mukhtar's character, observes the Paris "Matin," that his advent in the palace of the Sultan restored confidence at once. There had been preparations for flight into Asia. The imperial harem had been equipped with clothing for the sudden journey. Ghazi Mukhtar kept everyone in the capital. He took his morning coffee at his desk. He smoked his marghine in the public street after a frugal luncheon. He prayed at sundown with the pious. He had his favourite Hadiz read to him by a secretary when he dined. He received the members of the diplomatic corps smilingly. He took lessons in the use of a typewriter equipped with Turkish characters.

In a western country the gallant old Mukhtar would be deemed, according to the London "Standard," a scholar in

politics. He began life as a teacher with literary ambitions fully sixty years since. In early manhood he found himself tutoring one of the imperial family—no less interesting a person, indeed, than the youth who subsequently became Abdul Hamid, now a deposed Sultan and a prisoner in his former capital. Mukhtar belonged to a distinguished family of teachers, writers and ecclesiastics, learned in the lore of the commentators. He had written gracefully in the divan style of the Persians. He had edited an edition of the "Arabian Nights" and translated Firdausi. His mind was imbued with the spirituality of the traditional faith as distinguished from the heretical teachings of the Persians. He made Abdul Hamid pious, but he did not make him good. That is, our contemporary opines, the tragedy of Turkey.



GHAZI MUKHTAR PASHA.

Like all well-born Turks, Mukhtar had received a military education. This circumstance afforded the palace clique at Yildiz an excuse to be rid of him when, years ago, the war with Russia threatened the Osmanli power in Europe with extinction. Mukhtar, then a quiet, courteous, smiling young man of thirty, was dispatched to the front. He was not robust. He had never fought. Transferred from the palace luxury of the capital to the vicinity of the fortress of Erzeroum, he lived as roughly as a peasant. He had the piety, the passion, the personality of one of the Saracen heroes celebrated by Tasso. He fought as fiercely, animated by devotion to the faith. It may be true that in his blood runs, as some dailies in Europe declare, the blood of those Arabs who faced the Crusaders of old. In no long time, the camp of the Moslems rang with tales of his exploits. The soldiers plucked hairs from his head and beard to preserve as mementoes and relics. His supreme triumph came with the long siege of the great Turkish fortress. He rose steadily to command there. The prodigies of valour credited to him won for Mukhtar his cherished title of Ghazi or "the victorious." The close of the war found him the most renowned of living Moslems.

Back in Constantinople, Abdul Hamid followed the rise of his tutor to glory with an agonised jealousy. The courtiers at Yildiz assured the Sultan that Mukhtar aspired to supremacy in the State. He was the idol of the troops, the supreme soldier in the Ottoman army, the most illustrious of living Turks. His return to the capital in triumph was followed by an order that he remain secluded in his home indefinitely. During this period the disgraced hero of Turkey's war with Russia had a clandestine meeting with the Sultan now on the throne. The hapless brother of Abdul Hamid was a prisoner of state in one of the royal palaces on the Bosphorus. The merest allusion to him at Yildiz Kiosk was a species of treason.

The Hamidian subtlety of the despot in Constantinople contrived an exquisite punishment for the object of his suspicion, Mukhtar was sent with every circumstance of pomp to represent the sovereignty of the Osmanli in Egypt. The Khedive, it may be mentioned, is nominally vassal of the Sultan's. Abbas the Second sends his yearly tribute to Yildiz still. The theoretical overlord of the Court in Cairo is commander of the faithful in Constantinople. To incarnate this shadow of enserainty, Mukhtar Ghazi Pasha was dispatched to the banks of the Nile, to dwell in lonely grandeur

The Origin of Gloves.

An article by M. Darcey has recently appeared in the "Revue Egyptienne," in which he traces the origin of gloves to the time of Amon of the twenty-first dynasty. Mittens are among the dress accessories found with the mummies of priestesses dating from that period. They were made of the same material as that of the upper garment. It is probable, however, that actual gloves were also worn to correspond with the foot covering of thin pink or red kid, which was more than a mere stocking, for it was so made as to separate the big toe from the others. This ensured the safety of the white leather sandal, which was fastened by two straps, one of which passed between the first and second toe, the other going over the instep.

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