PHOENIX ASCENDANT

The Rise of
MODERN TURKEY
BY THE SAME AUTHOR

PORTRAIT OF A TURKISH FAMILY
COOKING WITH ЙОГУРТ
THE YOUNG TRAVELLER IN TURKEY
TURKISH COOKING
PHOENIX ASCENDANT

The Rise of
MODERN TURKEY

by
IRFAN ORGA

ILLUSTRATED

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THIS BOOK IS FOR THE MEMORY OF MY FATHER,
HÜSNÜ
WHO DIED AT GALLIPOLI, AND FOR MY MOTHER,
ŞEVKİYE
WHO LIVED LONG ENOUGH TO SEE THE EMERGENCE
OF THE TURKISH REPUBLIC

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NOTES ON TURKISH PRONUNCIATION

Most of the consonants are pronounced as they are in English. The exceptions to this are:
c—pronounced as in “jump”—Turkish example, Cemal (Jemal)
ç—as in “chair”—Turkish example, Çan Kaya (Chan Kaya)
g—as in “gulf”
ğ—always silent in Turkish and serves merely to lengthen the preceding vowel—Turkish example, “ağa” (aah)
j—pronounced as the French j
s—as in English
ş—as in “shame”—Turkish example, Paşa (Pasha)

Vowels:
a—fairly broad sound as in the English “barb”
â—very broad
e—roughly pronounced as “eh”
i—very like the English “is”
ı—very similar to “squirrel”
ö—as the German pronunciation
ü—as the German pronunciation

My acknowledgements and thanks are due to the Press Attaché at the Turkish Embassy in London, and the Director of Press, Broadcasting and Tourism in Ankara for having supplied photographs and information.

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PREFACE

THERE must be at least a score of books available to the interested English reader on the subject of Turkey. However, this has not deterred me from adding one more for, with the exception of Halide Edib’s *Turkish Ordeal*, published many years ago by John Murray, I believe there are no other books on this subject written by Turks, in English. This does not imply that the Turk has a special knowledge of his country and its personages denied to foreigners; in fact, the contrary often applies. But it does imply that the range of the foreign writer is limited for, however he looks at them, events will tend to be coloured by his own ideology. In consequence, he tends generally to view the Turks with contempt or admiration, inclining in either state of mind to overemphasis. This leads one section of English readers to look upon the Turks as semi-barbarians, and the other to regard them as a progressive modern nation, with all the amenities of civilized life. The truth, I am inclined to think, lies midway between the two extremes—barbarity is dying out, and the modern, progressive nation is confined to the cities and a few large towns.

However ardently the Turks pursue a policy of westernization they are still close to the East, but for how long this will remain true is an open question. They have had to date little more than a quarter century’s rapid westernization against over ten centuries of barbaric culture. It doesn’t need me to point out that a quarter of a century is a mere drop in the ocean of time. Political intrigue is much less than in the past, but it is still there, and there it will remain for some time to come. Rome was not built in a day, and a completely democratic Turkey will not be built in a day either. Old customs die hard, and in Anatolia today the peasant woman still hides her face from the stranger; the new bride is still subjected to having the evidence of the consummation of her marriage displayed to the interested relatives on either side, and the village overlord still controls the lives, souls and properties of his “subjects”, as if there were no progressive Ankara government to lay down laws.
Islam is still strong, but Islam is a militant faith which destroys or absorbs the unbeliever. The fact that its militancy has been tempered with the years in no way alters the basic truth that the followers of Islam find it difficult to achieve full union with those of other faiths. Here, again, this fact was demonstrated in the Istanbul Riots of 1956. Islam is one of the vital factors in Turkish history. The other factor is nationalism, in no whit diminished by the emergence of a secular Republic and contact with the West. Islam and nationalism remain the dominant features of Turkish life, and it is difficult to see how they can be reconciled effectively with the wider international aims of the Ankara government. In this age no country can remain isolationist.

Turkey accepts foreign aid—but not from Russia whose intentions she knows of old. It was to the United States of America the Turkish leaders turned for help, but concessions had to be made and some loss of national integrity was bound to follow. The people, while benefiting from the results, resent foreign aid, but it is a paradox of humanity that the giver’s hand is sometimes bitten. Anger against America was particularly high during the last Cyprus crisis. I was in Turkey at that time and none of the people I spoke to could see why the Americans should listen to the Greek side of the question, or try to exert pressure on Ankara. They regarded as specious the argument that the Americans were as anxious to secure good relations with the Greeks as well as the Turks—apart from the political need to encourage the Greek vote in the United States. I found that the Turks still spoke and thought as nationalists, not as internationalists.

The strength and the weakness of the Ottoman Empire was Islam—strength, because although foreigners attained high positions of authority, or Turkish dignitaries married foreigners, Islam was nevertheless the faith they all professed. There was never any question of the foreign partner in a mixed marriage not embracing Islam. The children of these marriages were brought up as Muslims, and in this way racial differences were integrated even though the reason for the integration, Islam, was also the very factor that held back the peasants in a morass of superstition. Many of the people I spoke to believed that Islam has lost its grip on the new generation. They blame
this on American influences, and on the influx of foreign films which is bringing about a revolution in the habits and morals of young people. However, this is a bogey which I do not believe exists. Strict adherence to Islam may have been pruned, but it is only in the cities. The bulk of the nation is still untouched by Western thought, and owing to the restrictions placed on foreign travel, due to the shortage of foreign currency, the majority of young people have no means of knowing anything other than what their parents teach them—and the influence of lurid covered American magazines is much less sinister than the diehards would have one believe. However, the fact that the Turks imitate the West at all implies admiration. The further fact that they are so inordinately flattered when some Western nation praises their efforts, suggests their wish to be admired. Perhaps time will integrate them fully in union with the West, but if so, what of Nationalism and Islam?

Because the bibliography at the end of this book lists only Turkish books as the sources of my references, this must in no way be taken as implying my independence of English authors. They have all had their say, however, and, impressed as I was by the erudition of Professor Geoffrey Lewis, Turkey (Ernest Benn, 1955), and the wisdom of the authors of Modern Turkey (Routledge, 1940), I had to approach this study out of my own observations and memories, and the opinions of other Turks who have written so profusely in their own language. This may not have been the best approach, but it seemed to me the most honest. Besides, I grew up in the middle of the Turkish Revolution. I knew Kemal Atatürk, and as a young officer heard him talking with my seniors in Officers’ Clubs all over the country. Unrestricted by the presence of foreigners he talked freely, and without rhetoric. He moulded us into his own shape, but I always like to believe that he left some of us with enough impartiality to mirror his days as truthfully as we know how.
Part I

THE OLD PHOENIX

Chapter I

The land of Turkey has been inhabited by Hittites, Phrygians, Parthians, Gaulish tribes, Romans and Byzantines, as well as the scores of tribes who migrated from the east. Its geographical position, and the economy of its neighbours, has guaranteed a turbulent history. There is no such thing as a pure race and present-day Turks are as much a racial medley as the earliest inhabitants. Despite the idea, originated by Kemal Atatürk, that all Turks are descended from the Selçuk Turks, the Turks, in fact, have developed from a variety of stocks. In Anatolia there are undoubtedly descendants of the Selçuks, but the blood has been diluted, and around the Aegean coast the predominant blood factor is still Levantine.

The earliest home of the Turks was somewhere between the Tien Shan hills and the Aral Sea and Chinese historians knew them as a branch of the race of the Hiung-no. In the latter half of the sixth century the northern Turks sent an Embassy to the Emperor of Constantinople and a few years later, in 576, an Embassy was sent to the southern Turks. They left their homeland during the sixth century, travelling westwards in search of loot and pasturage for their flocks. They had had a colourful history, lived in tribes and were fierce warriors, the terror of their less warlike neighbours. They worshipped nature, but during their wanderings lost touch with such simplicity and, presumably as an economic measure, embraced the faiths of many races. They undoubtedly came under the influence of Christianity, but its peaceable nature made no lasting appeal to them. It is not until the tenth century that we hear of them as Muslims—in such numbers, in fact, as to leave little doubt that once again economic factors were at work, even though Islam is essentially the faith for the warrior. This glorious idea of a militant faith must have appealed
enormously to the Turks—especially coupled with the fact that whoever accepted Islam had full citizenship in the flourishing Arab civilization of that time. The wanderers were able to call a halt to their migrations and for a time settled down to imbibe the culture and enjoy the rights of Islamic citizens. They defended their new faith with a fierceness unknown amongst the more lethargic citizens of the vast Arab State. They were a troublesome irruption; they sought a land for themselves—a fertile land where the spectre of drought would haunt them no more.

Selçuk, the leader of one of the most powerful tribes, rose to prominence, founding the Selçuk Dynasty and in 1055 his descendants captured Baghdad. The Turks had become a force to be reckoned with; they had been influenced by the culture and artistic triumphs of other civilizations and now set about creating their own memorials. They were still wanderers at heart, but the centuries had given them stabilization within their own units and a recognizable form of government. South-west Asia became the cradle for their vast empire, but they still sought the lands to the west. Within a score of years they had defeated the army of Byzantium in the initial phase of their conquest of Anatolia. By 1071 they were in Malazgirt and shortly afterwards they had taken Ankara. The descendants of Selçuk had reached Anatolia, even though the future of the country was not in their hands. Hordes of religious fanatics, irregular warriors whose only livelihood was to make war on non-Muslims, carried the Selçuks to victory. Perhaps the lure of plunder, rather than religious enthusiasm, led these hordes to carry on the fight, to expand the frontiers of the Selçuks ever westwards, and force the creed of Islam on the vanquished. Due to the zeal of the irregulars, the new Empire flourished, and within a short period the cities they had conquered began to assume, architecturally, the characteristics of Selçuk art. In 1097 the city of Konya was chosen as the Selçuk capital under Kılıç Arslan, and rose to the peak of her splendour with the Sultan Alaaddin Keykubad, who ruled from 1220 to 1237. Konya is an excellent example of Selçuk splendour, a tribute to the warlike tribes who had migrated from northern China six hundred years earlier. During the eleventh and twelfth centuries there was leisure and the encouragement of art. Learning was in favour and medresse,
grouped around a mosque, were built. The Sultans lived magnificently, wintering in the more temperate climate of Antalya, where much of their architecture is still to be seen today. They were tolerant rulers in an intolerant age. Their buildings have stood the test of time and are spread across Anatolia: rectangular in shape, with pointed roofs, the mosques resemble the churches of the early Christians, only their minarets proving them Islamic. The Selçuks borrowed ideas freely from the Byzantines and the finest artists and calligraphers of the day were brought in to record the glories of their short-lived Empire. More raiders from the east poured into Anatolia and set up states within states, autonomous, however, to the Selçuks. The descendants of the irregulars still sought to extend Islam and many of the newly arrived tribes grew strong and dangerous. The Selçuk barons quarrelled amongst themselves, and the Empire was already tottering due to the inroads of the Mongols. A powerful tribe from the east led by their chieftain, Ertuğrul, rejected Selçuk authority and declared their independence. Osman, the son of Ertuğrul, founded the dynasty which was to rule Turkey for six centuries. Legends surround his name: his dream of Constantinople won by ringing swords, and the rich lands to be had for himself and his descendants. What is more to the point, perhaps, was the tempting nearness of Byzantium. The Selçuk Empire was attacked, and they, who had been the first of the tribes to achieve success, fell back before the new dynasty. Osman’s son, Orhan, captured Bursa and made it the first capital of the Ottomans, and Osman himself was the first Sultan to be buried in the city. Orhan is said to have founded the corps of Janissaries—the fighting body of Christian child captives trained by the sternest methods to be fiercer champions of Islam than the Muslims themselves.

He was an excellent leader, exercising wisdom, tolerance and restraint over the districts he conquered. Due to his foresight and the daring of his soldiers, he strengthened the Turkish conquests in Anatolia, and consolidated the power of the young Ottoman state. It was his devotion to duty that won for him the respect of the people he conquered, and slowly, step by step, he assimilated them. He forbade looting and pillage. He allowed the non-Muslims to live in peace under the banner
Chapter II

The modern Turkish State springs directly and inevitably from the roots laid down in 1453. The conquest of Constantinople, with the enormous advantages that this entailed, was, undoubtedly, the major factor shaping national temperament and outlook. The descendants of the nomad chieftain, Ertuğrul, esconced in Constantinople, had more influence there than from any previous conquest—or, indeed, from any subsequent expansion.

The death of the Sultan Murat in 1451 was also the death of the remaining greatness of the Caesars of the Eastern Roman Empire. His successor, Mehmet II—a young man of twenty-one—commenced his career by smothering his infant brother in the bath. Turning his conqueror’s eye on Constantinople he negotiated truces with his northern enemies and isolated the city. He already held the passage of the Dardanelles and now he prepared to secure that of the Bosphor.

In 1393, Sultan Beyazit had built on the Asiatic shore the first distinct threat to Constantinople—the castle of Anadolu Hisari, which still overhangs the water’s edge. On the 26th March, 1452, his descendant, Mehmet II, laid the first stone of a castle on the opposite shore, at the point where the passage is narrowest. This was the famous castle of Rumeli Hisari, completed by Herculean efforts in five months. Envoys sent by the protesting Emperor of Constantinople were butchered without mercy and a Venetian galley was sunk just to prove the range of the new cannon. By the spring of 1453 the Ottoman army stretched from the Golden Horn to the Sea of Marmora—a formidable sight of over 300 vessels covering the placid waters. The defenceless Emperor appealed to Europe for help but the Byzantine Empire was disunited, divided sorely on the question of the Union of the Eastern and Western Churches, detested alike by the people and the ecclesiastical authorities who, with memories of the disastrous Latin Kingdom set up in the beginning of the thirteenth century, had no wish to see Papal authority in the city. On 6th April, 1453, the Sultan
Mehmet spread his prayer rug outside the city walls and turning towards Mecca prayed for the success of his campaign. The Ulema, the religious teachers, had all prophesied his success.

The city resisted his attacks, but even with the Turks hammering at the very walls, remained disunited. Mehmet sent a message demanding the surrender of the city and promising the Emperor sovereignty over the Peloponnese; Constantine however, rejected such terms even though his position was hopeless. Outside the city walls over 30,000 Christians had joined forces with the Turks and inside the city an enraged populace declared they would “rather the turban in Constantinople than the hat of a Roman Cardinal”. The Genoese, probably through treaty with Mehmet, remained obstinately aloof from the fate of the beleagured city. Mehmet, conceiving a daring plan, transported the whole of his fleet overland from the Bosphor into the Golden Horn. Attacked abortively by the Venetians they succeeded in this feat and the Emperor was forced to mediate between quarrelling Venetians and Genoese, the one blaming the other for the failure of the Venetian attack on the Turkish fleet.

On 23rd May, 1453, Mehmet sent an envoy to the Emperor and for the last time offered him surrender terms; sovereignty in the Peloponnese, freedom for those in the city who wished to depart and security for those and their possessions who remained. Once again Constantine refused and six days later fell in the final battle, the Turkish hordes pounding over his defenceless body. The long fight was over and Constantinople belonged to the Turks. The soldiers of the Conqueror stripped the city and beheaded the populace—even those who had barricaded themselves inside the Church of Santa Sophia were not safe. Christendom in that hour was at a disadvantage before Islam.

It is recorded that Mehmet entered the city about noon, riding on a fine white horse. At the great door of the Church of Santa Sophia he dismounted and taking up a handful of earth touched it to his lips and forehead, in remembrance that all earthly conquests end thus. Entering the church he was halted by its magnificence and in a burst of fury knocked senseless one of his soldiers hacking at the tessellated pavements. His first act, we are told, was to prostrate himself before the
altar in thanksgiving for his victory whilst an Ulema, mounting the pulpit, read from the Koran. Islam destroyed the Christian yet Mehmet—perhaps awed by the prize fallen into his hands—promised the priests his protection and to the people, who had not been massacred by his soldiers, he promised peace. He had taken the glory of Byzantium but Byzantium set her own seal upon him, upon his State and the people who would come after him. The rule of imperial Rome was to shape the character of his Empire until the end of its days and pave the way, nearly five centuries later, for the Revolution that would shake off the mantle of Byzantium for ever.

Equipped for fighting, not for governing, the Ottomans inherited the whole Byzantine structure of government and with it the practice of autonomies within the State itself, later known as the millet system. The splendour of the city dazzled him and possession of such a gem would raise immeasurably the status of the Turks in the eyes of the world. The peculiarity distinguishing Byzantium from all other States was the millet system which was, simply, the existence in the city of a number of foreign colonies enjoying a large measure of autonomy. At the time of the conquest, settlements from Genoa, Venice, Amalfi, Pisa, Ancona and Narbonne had their own warehouses, landing stages, court-houses, churches, schools, bath-houses, bakeries and commercial life in the capital and were all under the direct authority of officials sent by their mother cities. Byzantium had looked upon such settlements with favour, securing through them the support of the maritime nations of the West. Such a system, however, had its dangers, and at one time the Genoese became so powerful and warlike as to constitute a direct threat to their hosts.

Mehmet the Conqueror disarmed the settlements but otherwise allowed them to go about their business unmolested. His tolerance, however, sprang from the contempt the warrior feels for the tradesman. Accordingly, he widened the powers of the settlements—deeming it unworthy that his officials should spend time on the unimportant disputes of foreigners. As long as the taxes were paid and the officials were responsible for the good behaviour of their subjects, Mehmet—and after him all his descendants—cared nothing more. Too, as most of the commerce and medicine were in the hands of the millet,
the Ottomans preferred not to make life unendurable. Also, in the early days of the Ottoman Empire, religious persecution was exceedingly rare owing to the stability and strength of Islam, and any such persecution generally sprang from the nationalistic tendencies on the part of the minorities. The millet system, logically enough, widened to include the Turks themselves. This was the millet of Islam and included Arabs, Kurds, Albanians, Bulgars, Tartars, Circassians, Lazzes and all other Muslims living in Ottoman territory. For the Turk, however, this led to a loss of national character so that he tended more and more to identify himself with Islamic culture and developed none of his own for several centuries. This was especially the case in respect of the educated Turk who, influenced to a remarkable degree by Byzantine customs, tended to overload his speech with Persian and Arabic words and became separated from the Anatolian peasant who still retained his native speech and customs. The gap widened still further and as time went on the language of the Ottoman Court became so ornate and flowery, so stylized, that it lost all semblance to the original speech of the Turks. The word “Turk” to an Ottoman was an insult—foreigners might call his country “Turkey” but he was a member of the Ottoman Realm; the “Turk” was the peasant of Anatolia.

A further artificial addition to Turkish life was the continuance of the pomp and splendour of the Byzantine Court. This sophistication was demoralizing to the warriors who had come out of the East to the splendid city in the West. They had been simple and direct, harsh and uncompromising. They had spent most of their lives on horseback and their women were independent and unveiled.

The first Ottoman Sultans had, of course, already learned a good deal of polish from the Selçuks who had also taught them the divinity surrounding kings. They had, in fact, stopped being nomad chieftains and become emperors. The further West they moved and the more contact they made with higher and more complicated civilizations than their own, the greater the change became. This process, this metamorphosis, achieved its climax with the entry into Constantinople. The harem and the eunuchs were new to them but were nothing more than a continuance of the Byzantine Gynaecceum—as was the
adulation and softening of Court life. The Master of the Girls, the Chief Nightingale Keeper, the Keeper of the Parrots, all had their counterpart in the life of the Byzantine Emperors. Architecturally the city of Constantinople took on the face of Asia but the impress of Byzantium was on its rulers.
Chapter III

Turkish power depended on the continuance of the Janissaries, the system started by Orhan, whereby the Christians had to give up a tribute of their children to the State. These children were brought up in the faith of Islam, well educated according to the precepts of the day and disciplined sternly. Later on, as they advanced in years and knowledge, they were divided into two classes: those who showed no especial aptitude were put to work in the government offices whilst the others were trained in military subjects. The Corps of Janissaries became the finest soldiers in Europe and spread the terror of their name throughout the world. They became the sole strength of the basis of Ottoman power although before three centuries had passed they were the rulers of the Sultan, no longer his subjects.

The Janissaries were of all nationalities and, dragged away at an early age from kith and kin, knew no other home save the narrow courtyard of the Seraglio. They existed for the glory and furtherance of Islam, were fed and looked after by the Sultan and had no other hope of earthly reward. They never tried to escape their life and revert to Christianity and the camaraderie of their fellows, the power of their early training and their religious fanaticism kept them amongst the Sultan's loyalist subjects.

Mehmet the Conqueror died the greatest of the Ottoman rulers and the power he had founded rested securely on the Janissaries. It was he who established that the children of the Christians should become the highest dignitaries in the land. He encouraged art and learning and endowed schools, and his organization of the religious and judicial classes, the Ulema, were more permanent than all his victories.

His son, Beyazit II, expanded the Turkish Fleet but was so little the warrior that the Janissaries insisted on his relinquishing the throne in favour of his son, Selim. Beyazit was the first of the philosopher Sultans and even though the years brought their victories, nevertheless the Sultans tended to decay with
the life of the Court and were more and more inclined to rely on their officers of state, their Grand Viziers, and their formidable troops to expand the Empire.

The Sultan Selim I was a brutal tyrant. He added more territories to the already heterogeneous Empire, massacred whoever stood in his way and, in imitation of his forebears, added a mosque to Constantinople. In spite of his tyrannical disposition he was a friend of the learned and had himself something of a reputation as a poet. He died at Adrianople on 22nd September, 1520, and Suleyman—perhaps the most illustrious name in Ottoman history—succeeded him.

Suleyman was religious and learned and declared from the outset that he would govern his Empire with justice, mercy and according to the laws of Islam. From the first year of his reign he was victorious in the field, for Belgrade surrendered and the island of Rhodes was conquered. Threatened insubordination amongst the Janissaries, however, awoke the savage in him and several officers paid with their lives for their temerity in questioning his authority. He saw that wars, victories and an army on the march were necessary to restore order amongst his idle, disgruntled troops. In 1526 he marched against Hungary, defeating the Christian army and returning to Constantinople with over 100,000 slaves, besides much loot and treasure. He made the sovereigns of Europe accept him as their equal, for every ruler was anxious to negotiate with him. Their envoys were sent to form alliances and submitted to his indignities solely to win the favour of he whom Europe was calling Grand Turk. François I of France prostrated himself before him, bringing about the first of the Capitulations and calling down the Pope's wrath on himself. The whole of the Christian world was scandalized by François's action, but seeing the autonomy granted to the French in Constantinople, the trading concessions secured by them and the respect accorded to them by the Turks, they sought similar treatment for themselves. Austria and England, swallowing their distaste, joined France.

Secure on his magnificent throne, Suleyman forgot that the whole of his vast Empire was built on shifting sands and that, in essence, it was first and foremost an Islamic military institution. The declared aim, in consequence, was the conquest of all territories where non-Muslims lived and ruled.
The Turks had never had a country of their own—not even in the far off days when the first raiders had come from beyond the Aral Sea. They were conquerors wherever they went, living on borrowed time and land. They invaded and pillaged. They might give concessions to minorities, show religious tolerance and encourage art but they were strangers. They were limited in vision by their aggressive intentions. Politics and economic considerations were outside their line of vision and the peoples they conquered so fiercely were ignored, overtaxed and at the mercy of the local tyrants who governed them in the name of an Ottoman Sultan. No land was theirs by right of heritage and to the educated Turk, Constantinople was the whole extent of his personal world. The Ottoman Sultans differed from their European neighbours in that they were merely the overlords of differing races, and the continued system of the millet kept the country from becoming a united whole.

It was in the magnificent Suleyman's time, however, that the first cracks appeared in the Ottoman structure and less than thirty years after his death in battle his armies were checked before the gates of Vienna, in 1593, setting a limit at last to their encroachment on the European scene. Their successes had been spectacular but by the sixteenth century they were in love with luxury and soft living—the illustrious Mehmet the Conqueror was an Eastern savage to his effete descendants. Suleyman ruled over an Empire in its heyday. Through him Eastern art and Turkish poetry became known to Europe and it became the fashion there to ape Asia. Suleyman's was the great age of Turkish architecture, of learning and victories and wealth, for trade poured into the city of Constantine. He was a great legislator and his work completed that laid down by Mehmet the Conqueror. He limited the privileges of the religious teachers and of the Grand Vizier. He put into effect financial reforms, essential to the security of his conquered territories. He reformed the Penal Code and, indeed, showed by his every action that his was a life regulated by discipline, a sense of justice and religious fervour. With his death the Ottoman Empire lost the cornerstone of its glory. His son, Selim II (offspring of his marriage with the slave, Roxelana), was a gross sensualist and,
constantly betrayed by his passion for wine, cared nothing for the fate of the Empire, which he mistakenly assumed was invulnerable. He was no warrior and started off his reign badly with a mutiny of the Janissaries because he was withholding the money always paid to them on the accession of a new sovereign. On 7th October, 1571, came the first powerful blow against the Empire with the destruction, at Lepanto, of the entire Turkish Fleet by Don John of Austria. The drunken Selim awoke sufficiently to order the massacre of all the Christians in Constantinople—the order, fortunately, however, countermanded by his Grand Vizier. His son, Murat III, was also addicted to drink but was infinitely more dangerous since he was mentally unstable, and hoarded every scrap of gold he could lay hands on—even going as far as stripping ornaments. Following in his father's footsteps he devoted himself to a life of pleasure but due to the wisdom of his Grand Vizier—the same who in the previous reign had arrested the massacre of the Christians of the city—there was order and firmness in the government. After the Grand Vizier's death, however, Murat appointed whom he wished to the office, extorted gold from the unfortunate recipients and had them beheaded when he grew tired of them. Under such rulers the Janissaries had become decadent, licentious and corrupt and the Ottoman Empire was no longer in a position to despise the West, being now largely at its mercy. Successes during this time were few and the setbacks many. Military supremacy was lost and outside the besotted Ottoman Court disease, hunger and fear for their lives was the lot of the wretched people. The Sultan Murat IV (1623 to 1640), was the last of the line to lead his men in battle, and in his time Baghdad fell to the Empire. The power had gone, however, and the mighty Empire had grown decrepit. The worst danger came from the Janissaries and the Sultan Mahmut II prepared their extermination. He enlisted the help of all the powerful Ulema—who were, in any case, friendlily disposed towards him since his defence of orthodox Sunni Islam in suppressing the heresy of the Wahhabis. On 17th June, 1826, the proud Corps of Janissaries played their last role in the life of the Empire. On the orders of the Sultan their barracks were fired and their ending given public expression by the Sheikh ul Islam himself.
New reforms were undertaken, a new army was raised over the bones of the terrible Janissaries and European clothes replaced the flowing styles of the Orient. Prussia sent instructors—founding a friendship which has lasted until the present day. Russia continued to advance in the Balkans. In 1830, helped by France and Britain, Greece was liberated and the nationalist aspirations of other European countries within the Empire grew more acute. The mighty empire had shrunk.

The Sultan Mahmut's efforts to ape the West met with opposition and in 1834 when he had coins struck bearing his likeness he earned for himself the name of "Kavur Paşa". He died in 1839, having failed to make his country a recognized European power. He is memorable, however, because the changes he began were carried to completion, nearly 100 years later, by the Ankara Government. Little as they constituted a step forward in his own lifetime, the reforms nevertheless were inspired by the West and he was the first of the Sultans to do away with Byzantine traditions.

The long decline continued. The Ottoman Empire sped downhill and the Sultan Abdul Mecid inherited a diminished realm, but the end, although in sight, was not quite yet; more than the subject races had to revolt—the Turkish people themselves had to make their presence felt. Throughout the centuries of Ottoman rule little or no attention had been paid to the people. They had been largely unaware of the corruption of their Court and their religion taught them fatalism. They knew nothing of the fear their Empire had once inspired any more than the ridicule it now attracted. Abdul Mecid, emulating his father's example, carried Mehmet II's policy one step further and issued the decree known as the Tanzimat, or Reorganization.

This was of enormous importance and had the ideas embodied in the Tanzimat ever come to birth, this would have affected the whole of the future history of Turkey. Kemal Atatürk's reactionary laws would have been more difficult to achieve—had, in fact, Kemal Atatürk ever been allowed to command the power he did. The Tanzimat, little as it would have improved the common lot in its original form, would have had the result of keeping the people loyal to their Sultan.
Developed logically with time it would have had wide repercussions on their lives. Kemal Atatürk would have arisen simply because his military distinctions singled him out as a worthy successor of the old warrior Sultans, but it is doubtful if he could ever have banished the Sultanate and the Caliphate. The Ottomans might have survived as rulers of a westernized State even though their other territories were vanished. The Tanzimat was important to Abdul Mecit—who did not, however, look far enough—for it was conceived to end the unfair levying of taxes, to make more representative the method of conscription into the army and to limit the period of service. Secondary education was to be instituted, a Ministry of Public Instruction formed and a Ministry of Justice, and all subjects, Muslim and non-Muslim alike, were to be subject to the same set of laws. Public trials were to be held and the evidence of witnesses, irrespective of creed or race, to be heard impartially. Prison administration was to be reformed, the police reorganized and torture abolished. No subject could be forced to change his religion, neither was religion to be a bar against public employment. The financial and monetary system was to be brought up to date, banks established, an annual budget published and public works undertaken in the provinces. It was an idealistic policy and ahead of the times. The Ulema, although verbally agreeing, baulked all efforts at such reform. Furthermore, the cumbersome government machinery was not in any position to make any new regulations effective. Decadence and corruption had been the rule for too long, and Abdul Mecit for all his liberal views was far too weak willed to push forward his reforms relentlessly. The ideals of the Tanzimat remained on paper, impressive and unimplemented, but had they been put into effect they would have converted Turkey into a modern State 100 years before her time.

In 1861 Abdul Aziz ascended the throne and his wild extravagances brought the already tottering Empire to the edge of ruin. During his time the forerunners of the Young Turks came into existence—the Society of New Ottomans. This society was composed of poets and intellectuals but was too small and weak to have any effect. Abdul Aziz was deposed in 1876 and committed suicide soon afterwards by opening the veins in his wrist with a pair of scissors. His nephew, Murat V,
became the new ruler but after three months was replaced by his brother Abdul Hamid II.

Abdul Hamid’s reign was one of fear and suspicion. A parliament of two houses was opened, the Russians gained a victory and the teaching of literature and history was forbidden in the schools. Suspicious of the revolutionary trends, Abdul Hamid had emphasis placed on religious lessons, hoping to protect his skin through Islam. He resurrected the long forgotten title of Kalif and was ostentatiously pious. He surrounded himself with henchmen, interfered with his Ministers’ work by countermanding their orders, was recklessly extravagant and had allowed the Ottoman Public Debt to reach 100 million gold pounds by the middle of the year 1881.

His Empire was in its death throes, on the verge of the crisis that would alter the status for ever, for the year 1881 is the most important year in modern Turkish history.
Part II

KEMAL ATATÜRK

Chapter I

SALONIKA, the year 1881.

In the Turkish quarter the houses were tall and narrow, upper storeys projecting over the street in the slatternly, intimate manner of Oriental architecture, windows tightly grilled with kafes (wooden lattice work). Plane-trees threw long shadows in summer, the cobblestones—broken here and there—made footsteps ring; cool looking and smooth they glistened in the sun but in winter, when the gaunt branches of the plane-trees supplicated the sky, they flooded in the rains, the broken ones making small seas of mud for the mangy dogs to roll in. Winter or summer was much the same to the residents. This quietly rotting backwater of the Ottoman Empire seemed neglected by God and man alike. The children who lingered at corners made grave play with contrivances roughly hewn by fathers who had never seen the originals excepting in pictures. The children dashed their pieces of wood into the puddles amongst the cobblestones and with decorous squeals of delight imagined the Fleet of their Sultan. There was always a mosque within sight—rotund, curvaceous—with a tapering minaret or two and an elegantly wrought fountain in a courtyard to quench the thirst of travellers. There was always an Imam too, to slip-slop down the street in muffled footwear, to symbolize dignity with his flowing beard, purity with his liquid voice intoning from the Koran and something less fastidious when his greasy fingers strayed across a childish face. Wild pear-trees flourished in ragged gardens, bunches of dried herbs depended from the ceilings of dim kitchens. The local pump, rusted, was the meeting place for the tightly veiled women, drab in their shapeless clothes, who gathered there each dusk to fill their earthenware jars and exchange the gossip of the day. In the cafés the old men twirled their amber beads
and spoke of the difficulty of living. There were no magnates. Most of them were very poor and only one or two in every district knew local eminence.

In Ahmet Subași district it was Ali Riza, the Customs official. In his spare time he was also a not unsuccessful timber merchant and having some pretensions to literacy pronounced on matters of immediate importance. It was he who wrote petitions to the Vilayet when an admission to hospital was required, a peasant had had a poor year in crops and could not pay his taxes or a cow had been most fearfully struck by lightning. Everyone was poor but Ali Riza’s house was his own and his salary, when the Treasury wasn’t empty, regular. He had a wife, Zubeyde, a woman of strong passions, just thirty years old in the year 1881—the year our story opens. She had just given birth to a son whom they called Mustafa. History does not record the month of the event so we cannot know if the dust of high summer seeped in through the kafes or winter’s boistrous wind rattled their flimsy structure. We can know with some certainty, however, that it would have been entirely a woman’s affair, the women of the district taking charge. Zubeyde would have been advised and soothed, slapped and pushed and exhorted; a brew of herbs might have been given, without doubt passages from the Koran chanted mournfully. The women, handmaids to mysterious nature, assisted only too willingly in a ritual they had all obeyed themselves. Genius does not choose its birthplace and Mustafa, the son of Zubeyde, was no more to the good neighbours who were present at his birth than a crumpled red infant to be washed and set in a home-made rocker cradle which had a blue bead set in the head and the word “mahsallah”, in Arabic script, to keep away the evil eye. Probably only Zubeyde saw his wonder, and she ruled him for years. She was impetuous and temperamental, legacies she handed on to him. Ali Riza was gentle and philosophic and these qualities, too, his son inherited, plus something that was his own entirely—a twisted, perverted driving ruthlessness that saw everything opposed to his own theories as treachery.

He was sent to the Modern School of Şemsi Efendi but with the untimely death of Ali Riza, who had wished him to be a merchant and grow up rich and successful, was taken off to
Lazasan where Zubeyde’s brother had a farm. With his sister, Makbule, he helped on the farm and grew tall and wild and ignorant. Zubeyde found him too much for her. Without Ali Riza to hold him in check he grew impatient of feminine restrictions. He was self-opinionated and scornful and full of wilful ideas that shocked his elders. At the age of eleven, they sent him to a school in Salonika but he ran away. Zubeyde flew into a storm of temper, he was cool and detached by contrast. She had yearned after the priesthood for him which sent her brother, Hasan, into gales of laughter. Mustafa showed no signs of wanting to be anything but a nuisance.

About this time a neighbour’s son, Ahmet, was sent to the Military School and began swaggering about in his smart new uniform; he told Mustafa he was going to be an officer. Mustafa, who was always jealous of others and did not care to be overlooked, said he would go to the Military School too. Zubeyde opposed him. His Uncle Hasan, still at Lazasan, encouraged him. Hasan, a taciturn man who lived by the earth, had no time for Zubeyde’s pseudo religiosity. In his view the Military School would solve a deal of problems—feeding for one, and clothes. . . . Although money was more plentiful (Zubeyde’s mother had recently died, leaving her a further house which she had let), Hasan pointed out that it would soon be gone if she kept Mustafa on her hands much longer. The Military School, subsidized by the Sultan, was free. Zubeyde still objected. She disliked the idea of a military career. Officers never had any money—if he became an officer that was, he might well fail his examinations and end up as a common soldier. . . . Snobbish and intractable she now swung round to Ali Riza’s original idea: let him become a merchant, there was always money in trade. . . .

The argument swung back and forth but Mustafa went behind their back, enlisted the aid of an old friend of Ali Riza’s, a retired officer, and talked him into sponsoring him with the military authorities. Whilst Zubeyde grew more and more in love with the idea of her son as a rich merchant and Hasan spat and declared it was throwing good money after bad, Mustafa sat for his entrance examination to the Military School. Passing with a high level of marks he informed his family of what was accomplished.
At Military School he was successful, happy and thoroughly unpopular. He read a great deal, was always well ahead of his companions whom he declared contemptuously were only fit to be soldiers and was liked by the officers. In appearance he was very elegant, the effect of handsomeness marred only by the cold blue eyes and his rapacious mouth. He was very fastidious about clothes and liked his trousers well creased. His voice was precise, he liked confounding his companions by his use of long words, he studied the classics and wrote a beautiful Arabic script—dashing off the complicated symbols as if the whole thing savoured too much of child’s play. He was a bore. It was one of his officers who tacked on to him the name of “Kemal” (meaning perfection) and from then on he was known as “Mustafa Kemal”.

He became aware of women quickly but had little chance to pursue amorous acquaintances, not only because the discipline of school was too severe but because he never had any money. Decent women were well protected and the prostitutes would not look at the cadets, conspicuous with their gaucherie, empty pockets and look of perpetual youth.

Mustafa Kemal was frequently lonely. Born a little out of his time he was often misunderstood, but he liked military life—enjoying the harsh personal discipline of cold showers, prayers at the crack of dawn, study in unheated classrooms. He went through a curiously idealistic period during which everything was stripped to essentials. It was at this time that Zubeyde married again, to Ragib Bey an official in the tobacco industry. Disapproving on passionate and aesthetic grounds, Mustafa Kemal refused to have anything to do with the new ménage and it was some years before he and Zubeyde became reconciled.

At the age of seventeen he passed out from the cadet school and went to the senior military school at Monastir—a tall, bony young man with the beginnings of sedition already shaping his speech. He began to improve his French and became friendly with a young man named Ali Fethi who already spoke French with distinction. With the aid of a Dominican monk as tutor they read the works of Voltaire and Rousseau. These were writers frowned upon by the Government; to have been caught reading such works could have meant imprisonment and, in the case of Mustafa Kemal,
discharge from the Military School and the end of his grandiose dreams. However, the fire of Rousseau, the dry cynicism of Voltaire appealed to the rebel in him, evoking sympathetic channels of thought, expressing with exquisite clarity the ideas that had bothered him for a long time. This was a period, too, when he wrote poetry—in French of course, as beffitted a potential young revolutionary; when he and Ali Fethi brought the name of the Sultan boldly into the open, disposing of him as the Shadow of God; when the light of intellect broke upon his mind and he lost some of his insufferable priggishness.

He passed his final examinations brilliantly, thus giving the lie to Zubeyde who was still prophesying his failure. Commissioned as a sub-lieutenant he was especially selected for the Staff College, Harbiye, in Constantinople, and already the first part of his dream was realized. For he knew that all future successes must depend on himself only and that the whole of Turkey was his to command.

But Harbiye was a different story from Monastir. In Harbiye all the young men were hand picked, were from the best families in the land and had a facility, an ease in accumulating knowledge that left him envious and slightly deflated. The whole place was a hotbed of sedition as well: every officer seemed to be a revolutionary; every free period was a revelation in destroying the old and shaping the new. Mustafa Kemal, moving cautiously, not quite acceptable to the ringleaders, found ample evidence that here the Sultan had been done to death a thousand times. The aims of the revolutionaries were clear—they wanted an end to despotism, the introduction of more liberal ideas and interfering foreigners kept within manageable bounds. The senior officers closed their eyes and ears to much of what went on; in truth they were in sympathy with the young officers.

The most earnest of the rebels subscribed to the secret society known as Vatan (Fatherland). They held meetings and published a newsheet. They were hostile to the ineffective government of Abdul Hamid and wrote violent articles against his administration. The members of Vatan were intent and earnest. They pledged themselves with great solemnity to break the power of the Sultan and to replace him with a representative people's government where the interchange of
new and liberal ideas would give new blood to the country. Mustafa Kemal became an enthusiastic member. He addressed meetings—grandiloquently, oratorically, fever paling his face. He threw himself heart and soul into the spirit of reform and wrote blazingly brilliant articles for the scurrilous little newsheet. Vatan, however, was forced to break up, for the spies of the Sultan had been alerted. Some of the members were caught but Mustafa Kemal dropped out in time, his passion cooled by the thought of discharge from the Army which was already his only love.

In January, 1904, he passed out as a Staff Captain but the memory of Vatan clung about him. It was known he had been a member and Abdul Hamid wanted him somewhere accessible, where he could have an eye kept on him. So before Mustafa Kemal could be given a post as a staff officer he found himself, along with a few others, arrested and thrown into prison. He was kept for two months and was questioned continuously by officials at the Yildiz Palace, but he was cool and polite, disclaimed knowledge of subversive activities and said he only wished to serve his country to its best interests. He was discharged in March, 1904, and sent to a cavalry regiment in Damascus, free again at last but not repentant. It took him three months to reach Damascus; the journey was often wearying, always troublesome. Lack of transport kept him too long in one place, boats were uncertain. Reaching Damascus at last he found the whole garrison ripe for revolt; he set to work straight away and organized a new branch of Vatan. The organization grew rapidly; here there was even more discontent than he had found amongst the young intellectuals at Harbiye; in a very short time there were branches of Vatan in every garrison in Syria. Mustafa Kemal became a person of importance; lustre bedewed his name and every officer in Syria looked to him for guidance but, having done what he wanted, he became bored and dissatisfied. Damascus was a place of no importance, and the centre of revolution was in Salonika. He took leave of absence and with the help of the now vast organization of Vatan left Syria. The Commanding Officer and the Chief of the Military Police at the port of Jaffa were members of Vatan and they opened the way for him to Egypt. From there he travelled to
Athens, always in civilian clothing, and made his way north to Salonika. He found the same thing everywhere—discontent and dissatisfaction and a determination to break the rule of the Sultan, all the beginnings of revolution. He remained hidden in Zubeyde's house but learned that all the most important young officers were gathering in Salonika; as he had always known here was the centre of the coming revolution. He managed to get in touch with a few of his friends and asked them to do all in their power to have him transferred to Salonika but during this time he was seen by the Sultan's spies. Surrounded by danger—and this time, if he were caught, there would be no getting out of prison as easily as the last time—he fled back to Syria. There he was protected by the Commanding Officer and the Chief of the Military Police who, delaying their replies to Constantinople as long as they dared, said that Mustafa Kemal had never been absent from his post at all; he could not have been seen in Salonika since he had never left Damascus.

On 7th July, 1907, he was promoted to the rank of first captain. At that time Macedonia was one of the danger spots of the whole of the Ottoman Empire. Not only was it the centre of the coming revolt but discontent amongst the people led to disturbances. There was local fighting between the Turks, Greeks, Serbs and Bulgars and Wallachian guerrillas. Mustafa Kemal, hearing the news, fretted in Damascus where there was nothing to do but subdue the native Druses. He was restless and bored and pulled every string he knew to get a transfer to Salonika and at last, on 16th September, 1907, he was appointed to the staff of the 3rd Army Headquarters in Salonika.

Jubilant, impatient of delays on the journey, he set off for the danger zone, this time with official permission. One of the first things he did upon arrival in Salonika was to organize a branch of Vatan but to his dismay he found that already there was another party in existence, the Union and Progress Party. There were probably several others, for in those troubled days people were organizing secret societies everywhere. But the Union and Progress Party was a most formidable rival. Its leaders were all well-known officers—Enver (Enver Paşa), Cemal (Cemal Paşa), his old friend of youth Ali Fethi, Hafiz
Hakki (Paşa), Talat (Paşa), Niyazi, Cavid—the latter the speaker of the Party and a brilliant man. These were the main members of the Central Committee and Mustafa Kemal realized at once that this party was infinitely stronger than anything Vatan could hope to produce. Furthermore, their aims were—with very little difference—the same as Vatan's. He made efforts to become a member but Enver and his friends resisted him. He was not trusted, but after repeated rebuffs they accepted him. There was a joint meeting of the Union and Progress Party and Vatan members and it was decided that Vatan should cease to be a separate organization.

Mustafa Kemal, disliking many of the members of the Union and Progress Party, nevertheless saw that this was the only way he could achieve his aims. He was elected a member of the Central Committee and later on was sent to Siros and Üsküb, in Albania, as their representative. During the time he was in Salonika he was critical of the other members of the Central Committee. He considered their organization inefficient; he accused them of too much talk and too little action, and became very unpopular. Enver, debonair, a little effete, gay and dashing, was his chief rival. Enver had all the natural graces, but Mustafa Kemal was outspoken and often tactless and found it insufferable that Enver, with his charming drawl, should be the one to stand up and make peace for him.

Suddenly the revolution they were all working for broke out. Colonel Sadik, head of the Union and Progress Party's Central Committee in Monastir, ordered one of his captains, Niyazi, stationed at Resne, to collect a small force of men, march into the mountains of southern Macedonia and defy the Government. Enver, defying the Government in eastern Macedonia with but a handful of men, at once proclaimed the revolution. To mark this, a young Gendarme lieutenant in Salonika was ordered to read the people the new Constitution, which had long been prepared. Accordingly, in the midst of turmoil, of rumour and counter rumour, he read it from the steps of the Government Kiosk on 10th July, 1908. There was little left of law and order. Local fighting broke out again; all were united, not only in hatred of the Sultan but of each other. The Government sent troops against the rebels but the troops joined the rebels and the rest of the army refused to fight.
In fury, Abdul Hamid was forced to conclude a truce with them. A constitutional government was declared, espionage abolished and on 19th July, 1908, Enver marched into the storm-swept centre as hero. From the balcony of the Olympus Palace Otel, in the main square in Salonika, cheering crowds milling in the street below him, Enver confirmed the Constitution.

Behind him, amongst a group of other officers, stood Mustafa Kemal. This was Enver’s hour; some day, perhaps, his own would come.
Chapter II

MEMBERS of the Union and Progress Party now constituted the Government in Constantinople. Enver was posted to Berlin as Military Attaché but Mustafa Kemal continued at Army Headquarters. The false lull did not last for long however. Austria annexed Bosnia and Hertzegovenia; Greece took Crete; Bulgaria, with Russia behind her, declared her independance; revolution broke out in Albania and Arabia. The supporters of Abdul Hamid bribed the soldiery in the Constantinople barracks. They sent out the hocas who told the people that the new Government (the Union and Progress Party) were irreligious and intended to destroy Islam and the Sultanate. Roused, the soldiers in Constantinople reacted immediately. They killed, or locked up, their officers, shouted religious slogans and marched out of their barracks in Taksim. In the streets they caused chaos, looting took place, guns were loosed on all and sundry. They plundered the shops. Military Schools were raided and other barracks and whenever they caught an officer they killed him. Education was their fear. The supporters of the Sultan had said that education would lead them to hell. Newspaper offices were raided, the presses smashed and the editors killed. Even Parliament was not immune, for Nazim Paşa, the Minister of Justice, was killed. The soldiers, drunk with their own power, forced the Prime Minister to resign on 31st March, 1909. The Government, unable to restore law and order, called on Mahmut Şevket Paşa for help. Mahmut Şevket Paşa was the Commanding Officer of the 3rd Macedonian Army—at that time the strongest branch of the Turkish Army—and Mustafa Kemal was on his staff. Mahmut Şevket Paşa ordered him to prepare a march on the capital.

Enver returned from Berlin and took over a detachment of cavalry and on 19th April, 1909, Mustafa Kemal left Salonika with Mahmut Şevket Paşa’s forces. On the 24th of the same month they entered Constantinople from several points and soon smashed the counter-revolution. Within three days they
had deposed Abdul Hamid and sent him under escort to Alatini Palace in Salonika under the command of Staff Major Ali Fethi, Mustafa Kemal’s life-long friend. The new Government sat back in temporary peace and Mustafa Kemal returned to Salonika, for it was Enver who had, once again, caught the public attention and become a popular hero. He was good-looking, romantic, cut a dashing figure as a cavalry officer and had he not raised the standard of revolt in Macedonia...? Upon his return from Berlin he completed that work by gaily leading the advance section of the Macedonian Army into the capital to quell the rioters. Everywhere he went he was cheered; receptions were given in his honour; he became a minor deity.

In that same summer the Union and Progress Party held its annual meeting in Salonika and from all parts of the Ottoman Empire the delegates came in. This meeting of the summer of 1909 stands out in importance because three unexpected people made their mark that year. The first was the delegate from Constantinople, Kara Kemal; the second was Ziya Gökalp, poet and intellectual, and the third was the delegate from Tripoli—Staff Major Mustafa Kemal.

Mustafa Kemal was remembered for the audacity of his suggestions, his sharp critical denials of Government policy and his almost prophetic speeches. The most important, most memorable speech he made related to the Army and politics. He said officers should occupy themselves with running the Army, leaving politics alone; he said the two could never mix and all past events proved this to be so. Part of his speech reads: “as long as officers remain in the Party we shall neither build a strong Party nor a strong Army. In the 3rd Army most of the officers are also members of the Party and the 3rd Army cannot be called first class. Furthermore, the Party receiving its strength from the Army will never appeal to the nation. Let us resolve here and now that all officers wishing to remain in the Party must resign from the Army. We must also adopt a law forbidding all future officers having political affiliations...” Officers in high positions and ex-Central Committee members, who had resigned during this meeting and were awaiting re-election, opposed these suggestions but a majority of the members gave their approval. There were
arguments, but Mustafa Kemal, always happy defending an ideal, thrived on their opposition and refused to retract a word he said. He spoke with such passionate conviction that most of the Congress were carried away by him and it was decided to find out the reaction of the 2nd Army in Adrianople to such a law. The 2nd Army agreed with Mustafa Kemal and his resolution was adopted with a large majority. Afterwards, those officers who preferred politics left the Army but there were a few, in leading positions in the Party, who still took the best of both worlds. Mustafa Kemal found it easy to decide. He remained in the Army and left the Party; he was a soldier by instinct and politics were only his second love. He had a deep almost feminine core of sadness within him and his pride had always kept him solitary. He seldom bestowed confidences and asked for none; he never established the habit of intimacy and his gaiety was only superficial. But soldiering was his life; the downtrodden could always bring out the best in him and his deep sympathy with, and humility towards, the simple peasant soldier sprang from his consciousness of what a country owed its soldiers.

Once on an army exercise led by the German Colonel, von Andertin, he said something about this. Von Andertin, who was one of the many Germans brought to train the Turkish Army long before the revolution, having ridden the men hard all day from Salonika to Vardar, where an artillery regiment entertained them for the night, drank a toast: "I raise my glass," he said, "to the Ottoman Army who put an end to the Albanian revolt."

The entire company rose to their feet and drank the toast. At the end Mustafa Kemal alone stood up and for the benefit of Colonel von Andertin a young adjutant, Tevfik, translated what he said.

"My friends," said Mustafa Kemal and senior officers folded their hands, the tips of their fingers expressing disapproval. Mustafa Kemal, his glass in his hand, his eyes flickering ironically over the officers, continued: "My friends, to be victorious in the internal affairs of a country is due less to an army than to the successful offices of a government. As a Turkish officer I cannot lift my glass to drink to so little an event as the subjection of Albania. Were I to do so I should
feel nothing but sadness; I should feel sad that the Turkish Army, not the Ottoman Army—there is no such thing—should be toasted for an event within its own borders, but listen to me, my friends”—a long pause whilst he surveyed the outraged group of senior officers—“the day will come”—a violent gesture of the hand to emphasize his point—“when the Turkish Army, not the Ottomans, will save the independence of the Turkish nation. Then we shall be proud and happy to drink the health of our Army. . . .”

He spoke for two hours and for two hours nobody had the strength to interrupt him. Von Andertin, we are told, marked his future success from that night.

His triumph caused him to expand, to warm towards his companions yet never wholly to lose his arrogance. Attention went to his head like wine. He argued and held forth and his occasional silences, whilst someone else spoke, were full of his disdain. The Turkish nation, his silences seemed to say, would never be saved with talk; men of action were needed—a man of action. . . .

To date his triumphs had been few. He had had to struggle alone and despite his brilliance as an officer he had received little encouragement. He had the makings of greatness—all the brutality and ego; the ability to make a decision and abide by it and the perilous magnetism of a man marked by fate.

Soon afterwards, on 6th September, 1909, he was appointed to the 3rd Army’s Officers’ Refresher Course as their Commanding Officer. He worked hard and gained the respect, even admiration, of those under his command. He organized rides and lectures; he instilled a discipline severer than Harbiye’s and wrote two important books on military training. One was The Fighting of a Group, the other The Fighting of a Company. He was energetic and resourceful and gave all his intelligence to the efficient training of the Army.

In 1910 he was attached to the Staff of Ali Riza Paşa on a mission to France and attended the annual manœuvres in Picardy.

In 1911 Albania revolted again and Mustafa Kemal went off to fight. Upon his return from Albania, Mahmut Şevket Paşa, now Minister of War, brought him to the War Office in Constantinople. Here he was the right man in the right place
but he was unhappy nevertheless. He was awkward and provincial and although a dandy had none of the bright mannerisms of his city companions. Enver, especially, was cock of the walk, in great demand at functions and the personal friend of the German Ambassador, Wangenheim, who dripped honey in his ear. Wangenheim saw him as Turkey’s leading man; a useful ally to help achieve the German dream of Empire. Mustafa Kemal, dour and with none of the social graces, was an abrupt, impatient soldier. Behind his back the others mocked him; to his face they were wickedly deferential, encouraged by the gay Enver who was everybody’s ideal. Quietly, and almost without passion, he accepted Enver as his enemy.

In 1911, at the fall of the year in September, Italy attacked Tripoli and in October Mustafa Kemal left for North Africa, following the land route through Syria and Egypt since the Italians controlled the sea and the Dardanelles.

He left with the poet, Ömer Naci, and a few other officers. For three days they stayed in the Sam but the captain of the boat, fearing the Dardanelles, put them ashore. Mustafa Kemal, who was the leader of the expedition, had planned to go to Marseilles (where they hoped to meet Fethi who was Military Attaché in France), cross to Tunisia and contact the Turkish headquarters from there. The Minister of War objected to this however but Mustafa Kemal, undaunted, and the poet, Ömer Naci, managed to get aboard a Russian ship which was going to Egypt, so it was not until 2nd October, 1911, that they finally left Constantinople.

At Urla, Mustafa Kemal sent a letter to his friend Salih, giving him the news that he and Ömer Naci were on their way to North Africa. The letter shows the domestic side of Mustafa Kemal, for he was greatly concerned that his mother should not know he was off to the front again. He made provision for the disposition of his money; all of it to go to his mother, after his debts were paid—even “the 40 liras given to Abdulkerim Paşa”. The letter ended with the soldierly hope “if God permits we shall meet again on the battlefield—if not, in some other world. . . .”

He was an adventurer but he and his friends were welcomed with open arms at the Turkish Headquarters in Tripoli, where
there was a shortage of officers. On 22nd December he routed
the Italians, destroying vast numbers of them and pushing
them back to the very shore. In the thick of the fighting, tired,
dirty, bearded, he heard he had been given the command of
the Derna area. He was called to Turkish Headquarters at
Ain al Mansour, fifteen miles inland from the port of Derna,
and here, once more, he met Enver who was at the time in
command of the entire Turkish Army.

Looking back, one cannot help but feel a stirring of the blood
at the meeting of these two old enemies. Alone, Mustafa Kemal
was an excellent officer and leader; no battle he directed was
ever entirely lost; but in the presence of Enver he was only a
local commander. It was Enver who gave the orders, it was
Mustafa Kemal who carried them out.

On 24th October, 1912, the Balkan War started.

Montenegro declared war and all the Christian States com-
bined to fight the Ottoman Empire.

The Turkish Government made a hasty peace with Italy.
Turkish troops were ordered to Egypt and all available officers
told to make their way home as quickly as possible. Mustafa
Kemal, with nothing more to command, travelled through
France and Romania and saw Constantinople again at the end of
November, 1912, when the leaves of the plane-trees quivered
gold in the wind and the mosques cast their sad nostalgic
shadows in the Golden Horn. He found a shattered Turkey;
a confused, hysterical collection of jackals who thought of
themselves first and the nation last. His mind strived to right
the sorry situation; his heart bled for the Turkish soldier
who, weary, must fight again and die a thousand deaths before
the country he might never see again, was freed. The Ottoman
Empire swayed but no new leader had yet emerged. Mustafa
Kemal lived but Atatürk had not yet been born.

The Turkish Armies were smashed and lay in ruins every-
where; the Serbs had advanced, unchecked, from the north;
the Greeks had attacked from the south and taken Salonika
with 25,000 prisoners. The Bulgarians made Constantinople
their goal and stormed the fortified lines, hammering in-
cessantly, only fifteen miles from the city at Çatalca. The
Turks had been swept almost out of Europe.
But there was light in the darkness, for Rauf, a naval commander, had taken out the old cruiser *Hamidiye* and slipped through the blockade at the mouth of the Dardanelles. Chased by the enemy ships he sped up and down the Aegean Sea, appearing here to bombard a port, or there to sink a transport. Rauf became a national hero.

Constantinople was crowded with the wounded and the dying; the dead still lay on the battlefields, rotting in the winter air. The hospitals, mosques, barracks and many of the big houses took in the wounded and nursed them. The country around was a rabble of refugee camps and thousands were dying of cholera, dysentery, typhus and hunger.

Mustafa Kemal, full of the desolation of an ambitious man who sees no future, searched the refugee camps for news of Zubeyde, for surely, with Salonika in Greek hands, she and all her household would have fled before the entry of the invaders. He searched exhaustively, strung to a delicate and almost ironically observed agitation, his blue eyes cold with the hatred for suffering and poverty. He found mothers without their children and children without their mothers, hungry, pitiful, the ebb and flow of their little lives at a standstill; hopeless aliens flooding the country they owed allegiance to by virtue of language and religion; homeless outcasts sheltering on the windswept plains of Anatolia until death or release came to them. The refugee camps were as full of disease as the stricken Turkish Army. Zubeyde, older, less sure of herself, was discovered at last, her daughter Makbule trembling beside her. Ragib Bey was dead, the pink house and all the other pink houses she had owned in more prosperous days, were things of the past. Here, on alien soil, Zubeyde had come to spend the rest of her days. Mustafa Kemal found a house for her and gave her money, comforting her with his laconic affection. He found too, Fikriye, the cousin Zubeyde had snatched out of Salonika before it was too late. He scarcely remembered her; she had been such a small child when last he saw her. But now she was an adolescent, small, fair and so gay and pretty that even the dust and squalor of a refugee camp could not dim her especial zest for life. Makbule and she called each other “sister”; turning their soft tender eyes on Mustafa Kemal they included him in their intimacy and called him “brother”,
laying down the burden of their young lives on his shoulders. He was not a family man but to comfort his own heart he had to fulfil his family obligations and Zubeyde’s plight touched the soft inner core of him. Poor Zubeyde, the spirit temporarily crushed in her, felt an outcast in the country whose language she spoke.

Mustafa Kemal was appointed to a division in Gallipoli as Chief of Staff. This was a key position, for if the Bulgars broke through here they would have control of the Dardanelles. General Sava Savoff led their attack; for six months the Turks stood firm but Adrianople was captured and Enver forced by his Government to sign a peace treaty. However, the Balkan allies started quarrelling amongst themselves, attacking each other indiscriminately and the Turks, on Enver’s orders, reopened the battle against the Bulgars. Mustafa Kemal, in Bulağır, reorganized his battered troops. Advancing rapidly, virtually unchecked, the Turks took back Adrianople and cleared the country of the Bulgars. Enver, victorious, marched into the city to receive the acclaim of the people and Mustafa Kemal was promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel.

Mahmut Şevket Paşa, the War Minister, was murdered and rumour held Enver responsible. Enver at any rate became the War Minister and, as such, forced the Government to do his will. He was magnetic and forceful, overriding all objections to his policy. He married the Princess Naciye and went to live in a small palace overlooking the Bosphor. The generals—Cemal and Talat—held ministerial posts. Cavid became Treasury Minister and Ali Fethi was sent to Sofia as Ambassador. Mustafa Kemal, also posted to Sofia, became his Military Attaché.

Enver had great plans. His ambition was to bring all the Muslims together under the Sultan Halife and revive the Ottoman Empire. To attempt this, however, he had first to reorganize the Army and this task he gave to a Prussian general—Liman von Sanders.

Mustafa Kemal, hearing the news in Sofia, was astonished, later bitterly angry. Furious with his own impotence he lost heart in his job; he had never set great store by being a Military Attaché. However, he became friendly with high ranking
Bulgarian officers, including General Savoff who had driven back his troops at Bulağır. The ladies of Sofia unfortunately found him provincial, over conscious of himself in a salon and awkward at paying compliments. He was sulky and amorous by turn—altogether too big and vital for a society drawing-room. He was like a sharp gust of unkind wind in their faces. Fethi, on the other hand, was immensely popular. He was gentle and attentive and spoke romantic, chivalrous French. The ladies fluttered round him, and Mustafa Kemal, who knew no language of love, sought release in the brothels of the city.

Nevertheless, Sofia is memorable, for it was the languorous sophistication of the women (whom he often coveted but seldom won) that not only brought out a sort of elephantine gaiety in himself but sowed the seed in his mind for future Turkish womanhood—free, unveiled, westernized, able to communicate with men. It was Sofia too that taught him something of its own lightness of heart and something of life’s nostalgia. In a letter to his friend Salih he wrote:

La vie est breve
Un peu de reve
Un peu d’amour
Et puis bon jour

La vie est vaine
Un peu de haine
Un peu d’espoir
Et puis bon soir

which just about summed up his own philosophy of life, then and ever afterwards. Sofia too ruined his health. Contracting a sexual disease he set the fuse for his own death. Looking back, it is astonishing how important Sofia was to him. In its salons and brothels, its cafés and quiet squares lay the whole future—not only of Mustafa Kemal—but of Turkey too. Turkish democracy was conceived there; in a smart restaurant on a summer afternoon the Turkish peasant was liberated because an unknown Bulgarian peasant was abused by a waiter.
The incident impressed Mustafa Kemal enough to cause him afterwards to record it. He was in one of the smart cafés during a thé dansant when a peasant entered and, seating himself at a table, called for the attention of a waiter by banging with a spoon on a plate. The waiters, huddled at the service doors in a haughty little group, ignored him and the peasant banged the table even louder. A waiter finally detached himself from the agonized group and told the peasant to leave the restaurant and seek some place more in keeping with his dress and his manners. The peasant, ignoring him, ordered tea and cakes. The manager was called “an important looking man”, writes Mustafa Kemal, “with a thick white skin and flabby neck.” The manager, too, suggested the peasant should seek elsewhere for his refreshment and this made the peasant angry. “Who are you trying to throw out?” he shouted and the dancers paused in their whirling but, seeing it was only a peasant speaking, shrugged elegant shoulders and resumed the dance. “I have money to pay,” said the peasant and just then a gendarme walked in with the waiter who had been sent to fetch him. Mustafa Kemal, watching the scene, said the peasant “hardened”. Determined to remain where he was he scattered money on the table. “Take what you want,” he said contemptuously, “I have more than enough to pay for my tea.” The gendarme looked at the manager, raising his eyebrows and, spreading his hands, regretted he could do nothing; the peasant was causing no disturbance; was not a thief; there was no reason why he should not be served. Swinging his hips which, Mustafa Kemal noted, were “rounded like a woman’s” he went away. The peasant said to the manager: “Have you no shame? You and the people of Sofia, the whole of Bulgaria, live by my rifle and by my plough, yet you would refuse me the right to eat in your company. . . .”

Recounting the story many years later, Mustafa Kemal added: “We shall bring the Turkish peasant to this level: the peasant shall be the master of Turkey.”

Watching the scene in the restaurant in Sofia he was not conscious of the weight of the years ahead of him. The future was uncertain, the road long and arduous but the seed of Atatürk was sown that day in the flesh and bone of Mustafa Kemal.
Chapter III

The Government in Constantinople were on the verge of bankruptcy. They requested loans from Britain and France but without success and they turned to Germany. Germany, planning the building of a railway from Berlin to Baghdad, gave the help needed. The Kaiser wrote: “On this occasion we must help Turkey financially, without conditions, with the aid of Austria, so that she will not come permanently under Anglo-French domination.” In August, 1914, the great nations of the world were at war and Turkey went in on the side of Germany. She could hardly do anything else; assisted by them financially, German officers already training the Turkish Army, she was involved by more than honour. The greed and rivalries of the great nations, the personal ambitions of the leaders of the Union and Progress Party, had rocked her like a straw in the wind.

Bulgaria remained neutral and Mustafa Kemal was saddened by the turn of events. Haven’t the Turks had enough? he asked. Must they be bathed in blood once more...? All over Turkey families were still mourning their dead from the Balkan War, the sons and brothers and husbands who had given their lives to a sterile cause—must they sacrifice still more men? Arguing with Ali Fethi, he paced the rooms of the Embassy and awaited his recall to active service.

But he waited a long time and at last was forced to take the initiative himself. He wrote to the War Office, asking for a command. Enver himself replied: “There is always a position for you in the Army,” he wrote, “but for the moment we accept your present post in Sofia as being of more importance. It is because of this we are keeping you there.”

Stung, Mustafa Kemal returned dramatically: “There can be no more honourable duty than to serve physically for the defence of the country. Whilst my friends are at the front, under fire, I cannot remain in Sofia doing the job of Military Attaché...”

Enver ignored this and Mustafa Kemal prepared himself to
leave for Constantinople. Leaving his personal belongings with Ali Fethi, he intended forcing Enver to utilize his abilities in some other sphere than Sofia. Hoping against hope that a summons to return to the capital would come, he packed a case and left his house. But just occasionally life keeps its dramatic surprises: a telegram was handed to him at the very moment of departure which read:

"You are appointed to the Command of the 19th Division. Leave immediately for Constantinople."

But when he arrived there he found that the 19th Division did not exist, excepting on paper, and that he himself had to organize it.

On 2nd February, 1915, he went to Tekirdağ with this in view, and with the old energy and enthusiasm organized the 19th Division. A few weeks of hard training had them ready to fight and on 23rd March, 1915, he moved the Division to Maydos. Here he was under the command of General Liman von Sanders. On 25th April, 1915, on a Sunday, the British landed at Ariburnu. Mustafa Kemal and the 19th Division were still in Maydos, but as soon as he heard of the landing he sent a cavalry unit to Kocacımen and himself followed with the 57th Infantry Regiment and a mountain battery. Climbing to the top of the hill he saw nothing, so advanced to the slope of Çonkabayırı. Moving up the slope he came on a Turkish company coming over the hill.

“What are you doing here?” he asked.

“The enemy,” a few of them replied, pointing to where the Australians were advancing, “they are over there and we have no ammunition left. . . .”

“Fix bayonets and face the enemy,” Mustafa Kemal ordered. “Never run away from the enemy,” and, turning to an officer beside him, told him to bring up more soldiers.

The Australians were puzzled, for the company halted by Mustafa Kemal had, until a few moments ago, been retreating as fast as they could. Now, halted, they appeared to be about to offer resistance again. Their hesitation helped the Turks for soon Mustafa Kemal had the mountain battery and the 57th Regiment at hand. He ordered the 57th to attack. By this
Ottoman art. Sultan Ahmet Mosque
Mustafa Kemal during the First World War
time the rest of the 19th Division had arrived and he sent them all into action without waiting for von Sanders' orders. He was certain he was facing the main attack and so threw in every available man. Had his judgment been in error the results would have been disastrous. But in every campaign Mustafa Kemal had the devil's luck.

He gave no chance to the Australians to establish themselves on the hillside. He attacked again and again, viciously and determinedly. He was up and down the lines constantly, inspiring his men, radiating energy and confidence. The battle raged for the whole of the day. The Turks were exhausted, ready to break but the Australians were exhausted too. Eventually both sides dug themselves in.

This section of the line was the key to the Dardanelles; if this section fell the way would be open for the British fleet to pass through, right to Constantinople. Turkey and Germany would be cut off from each other, the road opened to Russia for food and arms from the Allies.

Weeks slipped by and both sides suffered under the burning sun. The British fleet bombarded constantly, sometimes so heavily that the Australians—believing that after such bombardment there could be no life left in the hills—came from their trenches, launching an attack. But the Turks overran the hill like ants and pushed them back to their lines. It was always the Australians who opened fire, for the Turkish ammunition was strictly rationed, saved for the ground forces, and in any case the British had bombarded every Turkish gun site they discovered.

The barren rocks burned in the brazen heat of summer; the stench of death hung in the air, disease broke out. The soldiers were tired and near breaking point.

Mustafa Kemal worked hard. Always tired, always dirty, he planned and organized and made suggestions to his superior officer, but his ideas were ignored, his requests refused. He became restless, despairing of ever throwing the Allied forces from the peninsula. Towards the end of July, Enver—War Minister and Acting Commander-in-Chief of the Army—came to Gallipoli to inspect the forces. Mustafa Kemal outlined to him his aims and his proposed plan of attack but Enver refused to agree to any of them and returned to Constantinople, still very much the swaggering cock of the walk.
Mustafa Kemal, up in arms, resigned from the Command. Liman von Sanders attempted to dissuade him but Mustafa Kemal was angry and obstinate. He believed his plans to be the right ones and, rather than risk the disaster he knew was awaiting the Turkish forces on the peninsula if his proposals were not carried out, he preferred to take the command elsewhere.

Kazim, von Sander’s Chief of Staff, telephoned him. “What is it you want?” he asked impatiently. “I have told you many times,” said Mustafa Kemal, “but every suggestion I have made, every proposal I have put forward, has been ignored. Now the situation is beyond repair. There is only one thing you can do.” “And what is that?” Kazim asked. “Place all the troops you have under my command.” “But will they not be too many for you?” Kazim asked. “Too few,” retorted Mustafa Kemal, ringing off.

At the beginning of August, fresh British units, ammunition and equipment were landed behind the Australian lines, facing the Turks on Kocacîmen. During the night of 6th August, 16,000 newly landed troops moved forward from behind the Australians, climbing the vital hill to Kocacîmen. In the faint dawn glow only a small unit of Turkish soldiers faced them but the advancing British, already tired from the stiff resistance put up by the Turkish pickets, footsore from the boulder strewn way, lay down and remained where they were for the rest of that day. History does not record why; had they persisted in advancing they would have swept the Turks off Kocacîmen. Mustafa Kemal drew reinforcements from his division at Çonkbayiri and meanwhile, five miles north at Suvla Bay, during the darkness of the same night, 25,000 British troops were landed—almost without opposition—for only 1,500 Turkish Gendarmes faced them. At dawn on 8th August, the British attacked. One column assaulted Kocacîmen, another Çonkbayiri. The fighting was bitter. The British took part of Çonkbayiri and the Turks, counter attacking, were driven back. Yet Mustafa Kemal, weary himself, held his weary men in position.

The same evening, Liman von Sanders sent for him and
informed him of his intention to place all the troops on the Anafartalar front under his command. Mustafa Kemal agreed, making his plans even while he was talking. Von Sanders was depressed; Suvla Bay was undefended and open to the enemy to walk through, thereby cutting the Peninsula in two but Mustafa Kemal, brassy with confidence, was certain that luck still favoured him. During the same night reinforcements arrived. They had been on the march for two days and nights. Mustafa Kemal, a blazing inferno of energy, organized the attack. The British were preparing to launch an offensive too. Both sides jockeyed for position, neither advancing an inch. They fought bitterly but the British were unable to advance, the Turks not forced to retreat. Suvla Bay was saved.

On Çonkbayiri and the Kocaçimen the battle still raged. Up and down, down and up the two armies swayed in most mortal combat but neither side gaining the advantage for long. The British fleet bombarded the hills, the Turks were worn out, scarcely able to go on and amidst the massacre the British bombarded their own men with a shocking loss of life. For the Turks, the position was desperate. They were tired and underfed and had not the resources or equipment of the British.

Mustafa Kemal, arriving from Anafartalar, to survey the land, saw that unless the British were dislodged from Çonkbayiri at once the battle was lost. More reinforcements were brought in—three battalions and the 8th Division—and Mustafa Kemal spent the night amongst his soldiers. He smoked and talked and told them to take courage; his own blazing courage shone through him like a flame. A bullet smashed his watch instead of his heart and he joked as if the experience had been nothing, as if he had not missed death by less than inches.

The attack, desperate because it had to be successful, opened without the usual, softening-up process of gunfire. Mustafa Kemal could not afford defeat. Had he ordered one gun to be fired he would have had the whole British fleet turned on him, as well as the answering guns of the British and Australians. Any chances of success would have been doomed from the start, for his men could never have left the trenches. The success of the attack depended on surprise, so on the morning of the 10th August, 1915, he ordered his men

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in a bayonet charge. Shouting, yelling “Allah!”, “Allah!” the Turks swept down on the enemy trenches like a river that had burst its banks. The British broke and fled, and down over the edge of Çonkbayiri, facing the sea, poured the Turks like an unstemmable tide. The British fleet bombarded them, the dead on both sides fell in their thousands but still the Turks swept on, wave after terrible wave of them, their voices chanting “All-ah!”, “All-ah!” above the bass murderous voices of the guns.

It was a scene of carnage, a welter of blood and dust and horror amidst the barren, sun-baked rocks of Gallipoli.
Chapter IV

The winter of 1915-16, Mustafa Kemal spent in Constantinople with his family, in a house in Akaretler Caddesi, Beşiktaş. However the lamentations of his mother, always longing for Salonika, the restlessness of Makbule, preyed on his nerves, but perhaps Fikriye’s presence held him in unconscious bondage, for he spent most of his evenings at home. She was dashing and pretty, a contemporary informs us, and would serve his coffee with downcast eyes but the lilt of the devil in her hips.

He took a hand in the affairs of the country again. He had a reputation this time, as the hero of the Dardanelles, and he was tired of seeing the high-ranking German officers in control of the country. He preached his hatred of the Germans far and wide. “Turkey is for the Turks,” he used to say. “It is an insult to the people to keep the Germans here.” And next to the Germans he hated Enver. Public opinion supported his views. People were sick and tired of this never-ending war; of hunger and death and of whole families left without the means of supporting themselves. Germans and Turks quarrelled frequently. Enver himself had become unpopular and was in constant danger of assassination. The city was full of suspicion and intrigue, of plots and counter plots and Mustafa Kemal, making no secret of his views, whipped those around him into a frenzy of hatred for Enver and the German warlords. Jealous as a woman, he despised all intrigues that were not of his making and refused to join with any clique.

Enver, anxious to be rid of him, posted him to the Caucasus front, in command of the 16th Army Corps. It was on the 12th March, 1916, that Mustafa Kemal reached his new unit to find the troops in such critical condition that it would have broken the spirit of a commander less resilient than himself. The ragged, disease ridden troops were apathetic and in pitiful condition. They had not yet recovered from the terrible disaster of the previous year when Enver and Hakki Paşa had massed a large army in Erzurum and attempted a winter attack
on the Russians. High up on the Russian passes, swept by blizzards and icy, snow-laden winds, the flower of the Turkish Army withered and died. In one place 66,000 Turks had frozen to death; nearly 30,000 had frozen to death in their barracks, huddled together like animals seeking warmth, and Erzurum, Van, Bitlis, Muş, were taken by the Russians, almost unopposed.

Mustafa Kemal found the ragged remnants of the troops hungry and diseased, short of ammunition and guns. Morale was bad, the officers thieving and vicious. Mustafa Kemal blamed Enver whose scheme, glorious in dream, had failed so lamentably; who had miscalculated supplies, distances and the time of the year to launch an offensive. He saw he had no time to lose, for the Russians were preparing an attack that, with victory, would sweep them in to the very heart of Turkey. He reorganized the corps from top to bottom and once more inspired weary men with his own tireless energy.

He asked for medical supplies, ammunition and men but Constantinople was deaf to his entreaties; besides, they already had too many difficulties nearer home to worry about the far-off Russian front. Realizing that no help could be expected, Mustafa Kemal relied on himself and his second in command—Kazim Kara Bekir. With almost superhuman effort he pulled the rotting army to some sort of shape. Contractors offered him bribes; his reply was to hang them from the nearest tree. With bad officers he dealt mercilessly. The welfare of the men, the tired, hopeless soldiers, was always his first thought. They were, for the most part, sick human animals; obedient, illiterate, downtrodden, and he scourged the officers who took advantage of their position. All through his Army career he was greatly loved by the soldiers who would have followed him to hell.

He put an end to laziness, he reformed troops, harangued the doctors and harboured the dwindling medical supplies. Life rippled through the sick men. They began to dream of home again and victory, and the invigorating warmth of Mustafa Kemal’s justice did more than the doctors’ pills. He had brought an army together again out of disease and waste, yet he knew it was not enough. The Russian Army was formidable and well equipped beside his few thousand, but luck—
that element that never quite deserted him—stood at his elbow again.

On 12th July, 1916, the Russians attacked, with an army three times the size of the Turks on that front. Mustafa Kemal pulled back his left flank and the Russians advanced a little but, recouping, Mustafa Kemal threw in the whole of his forces on a 30 kilometre front and drove back the Russians, recapturing Bitlis and Muş. The tide of events had turned in Mustafa Kemal’s favour. There was one other big attack at the end of August, but the Russians failed, for revolution was creeping in and the whisper of it affected the Russian Armies. Discipline weakened, their spirit died—for whom were they fighting after all? What was happening at home? Apathy and defeatism broke them up; their new offensive was postponed and the Grand Duke Nicholas returned to Moscow where events were moving fast towards his own destruction. Throughout that summer the Russians and the Turks skirmished, crept round each other and jostled for supremacy but the handful of Turks pushed the dispirited Russians back and back. Van fell and the Turks prepared to take Batum. The Russians, uninspired, crumbled like the ashes in a burnt-out fire.

At the beginning of 1917 Mustafa Kemal became a General and took over the acting command of the 2nd Army in Diyarbekir where a certain Colonel İsmet was his Chief of Staff.

Colonel İsmet was a small, dark man with mild eyes, and an undecided manner. He was capable and excellent under orders, and Mustafa Kemal was glad to meet him again. İsmet was a man to temper Mustafa Kemal’s fire; a good disciplinarian, a man of inchoate fads and fancies, but an officer who would obey orders without question. Mustafa Kemal, setting to work immediately, was critical of the condition of the 2nd Army. Looking for perfection, he seldom found anything but disorganization. Intractable and ill-humoured he set about preparing a report for the War Office in Constantinople. His ideas of Colonel İsmet may be summed up in the following conversation he had with the Commander of the 2nd Corps, Cafer Tayyar Paşa, who visited him in Diyarbekir. Mustafa Kemal, criticizing his predecessor, Ahmet Izzet Paşa, from whom he had taken over
the command of the 2nd Army, said he had been indecisive.
Cafier Tayyar Paşa, agreeing, added:
"It is true he is a man who can never make up his
mind, but don't forget that İsmet's influence must be counted,
too."

Mustafa Kemal said crossly:
"Certainly not! What nonsense! İsmet couldn't influence a
donkey! You dictate to İsmet and he carries out your orders!
He has no initiative at all, absolutely none! If Ahmet Izzet
Paşa ever discussed problems with him, then it isn't any wonder
the 2nd Army's in the state it is, for İsmet would sit there and
agree with everything that was said. I doubt if he has a thought
in his head which wasn't inspired by someone else. To give
you an instance—when I came here I discussed the situation
with him and went through the records. I told him to give me
a report for the War Office. Well, he went, he wrote and he
brought—and I tore up the whole thing. Everything in the
report expressed Ahmet Izzet's opinions, not mine. So I
started to dictate the report myself. 'Clause 1,' I said, and gave
the information; 'Clause 2,' I said—and suddenly İsmet stood
up and said he now knew how I wished the report to be written.
There is his capability—an exceedingly good servant. He has
no other character at all."

However, Colonel İsmet was not left in Diyarbekir very
long for, shortly after Mustafa's Kemal's appointment, he was
sent to Syria.

The Turkish Army were facing great difficulties in Medina
and Enver decided to nominate a new commander in place of
Fahrettin Paşa. As the forces in Medina were attached to the
4th Army, commanded by Cemal Paşa, Enver asked his
opinion and his suggestions for the nomination of a new
commander. The change was no reflection on Fahrettin Paşa,
for he was an excellent General and leader. He fought in the
lines alongside his men, impervious to danger, slept on the bare
ground with them and physically carried back wounded
soldiers behind the lines. His leadership was an inspiration but
he could not hold out much longer and Enver wanted him in
some other command less full of frustration.

Cemal Paşa suggested Colonel İsmet but Enver demurred,
saying he was too young and had insufficient experience.
Touching his clipped moustache slyly he himself suggested Mustafa Kemal, which greatly astonished Cemal Paşa. Forced to agree, Cemal Paşa added, however, that it seemed to him Mustafa Kemal was too important for such a position; it would never have occurred to him to nominate such a senior officer for an evacuation. For that was what the command at Medina amounted to since Enver had decided to throw all the troops from there into the defence of Palestine. Mustafa Kemal, ordered to proceed to Medina, got as far as Şam, the Army Headquarters where he met Cemal Paşa and his chief of staff and learned that he had been given the command of an army ordered to evacuate. He decided straight away to refuse the position.

Whilst Cemal Paşa was talking to him, the electrical system, due to some fault, was put out of action and the entire city of Şam plunged in darkness. This affected Cemal Paşa like a visitation of the wrath of heaven, for no sooner had he announced the decision to leave Medina, the burial place of Mahommet, than the lights went out! Feeling through the dark like a blind man, he reached the cupboard where was kept a supply of candles and, lighting one with shaking fingers, he was seen to have turned the colour of clay. His voice sounded thin and horrified. Mustafa Kemal, sitting opposite him, his own face hollowed and tired in the light of the candle, clearly saw no omen, either for good or for bad, in the sudden failure of the electricity. He demurred, however, on the wisdom of sending him to Medina. He said into the half-hearted discussion, “But why should I go there? To evacuate only? Let who ever defended the city until now arrange the evacuation. I shall not go.”

Cemal Paşa telegraphed this decision to Enver who came post haste to Şam, inspected the troops, annoyed Mustafa Kemal with his insolence, discussed the evacuation haughtily and then returned to the capital. From there he despatched the following telegrams, to Cemal Paşa.

2nd March, 1917.

“According to his Excellency’s suggestions I order the evacuation of Medina, the evacuated troops to be used in Palestine.”
2nd March, 1917.

"Fahrettin Paşa, the Commander of the Turkish Army in Medina, will remain in his command.

"Mustafa Kemal Paşa has been appointed Commander of the 2nd Army."

However, when the Sultan heard of the proposed evacuation he was profoundly shocked and wept. He threatened the Government with his resignation, saying he could not carry the burden of so great a sin on his shoulders. Talat Paşa was also shocked and told Enver that at all costs Medina must not be evacuated. Enver was in a fix. He, with Cemal Paşa, had taken the decision to evacuate only with the greatest reluctance, conscious as they were of the strategic position of the whole front. In the meantime, however, from Medina came the news that Fahrettin Paşa refused to evacuate and begged to be left there, even with one regiment, so that he could at least defend the grave of Mahommet!

Between all these suggestions and counter suggestions, the superstitions and the arguments of the Commanders, Medina was lost, despite the brave, inadequate stand of Fahrettin Paşa, who fought to the bitter end and was afterwards taken prisoner. Had Mustafa Kemal gone to Medina there might not have been today's Turkish Republic, for the evacuation, no less than the defence, of Medina was pregnant with danger. The evacuation line was 300 miles, every side of which was in the hands of the British and under constant fire.

Revolution broke out in Russia on 9th March, 1917, and the Russian Armies broke up. All Turkish troops from that area, with the exception of those left to consolidate the positions gained and to subdue the local Armenians, were sent south, to Syria, where the British were gaining more and more ground.

During this time a plot against Enver was discovered and Mustafa Kemal Paşa's name was linked with it.

It was discovered that Major Yakup Cemal, who had killed Nazim Paşa, the War Minister during the Young Turks revolt, had organized the plot. His dream had been to assassinate Enver and make Mustafa Kemal Paşa the War Minister. Enver discovered the plot and hanged Major Yakup Cemal;
Mustafa Kemal would have been hung, too, but for the fact that there was definite evidence he had had nothing to do with the plot. Later, when he was asked about it, he said bluntly: "Certainly I would have accepted the post of War Minister but first I would have shot Yakup Cemal."

During April, 1917, Baghdad was lost. Requested by Enver, the German High Command appointed General von Falkenhayn to the command of the Yildirim (Thunderbolt) Army in Syria, with Headquarters in Aleppo. Mustafa Kemal was also appointed to Aleppo, to the command of the 7th Army. Von Falkenhayn's appointment infuriated Mustafa Kemal; he hated working with the Germans. Their temperament and psychology were not his; he found their arrogant Prussianism both derogatory and insulting. He hated von Falkenhayn personally from the first moment of meeting and refused every friendly overture. The German General, unable to break down the reserve of this protesting insubordinate Turk, tried to buy him off by sending him a box of gold coins. Mustafa Kemal, perhaps even enjoying himself, said: "Surely this is a mistake? Isn't it intended for the paymaster?"

But von Falkenhayn's adjutant insisted it was a present for him personally, whereupon Mustafa Kemal sat down and solemnly counted each gold piece then issued a formal receipt for it. Later on, when he had had enough of the joke, he returned the box with his own adjutant; insisted on the Germans counting the money in their turn and demanded his receipt back.

He disapproved of von Falkenhayn and criticized all his plans with a thoroughness that would have defeated anyone less optimistic than von Falkenhayn.

At a staff meeting in Aleppo, at which were present Enver and Cemal Paşa, Mustafa Kemal, von Falkenhayn and several high-ranking German staff officers, Mustafa Kemal attacked von Falkenhayn's plans viciously and with a blunt, dry humour that the Germans resented. Mustafa Kemal made it abundantly clear that von Falkenhayn's plans were unrealistic, especially his plans for raiding the Suez Canal and an attack on Baghdad. Cemal Paşa, who hated the Germans with nearly equal intensity, sided with Mustafa Kemal—to the annoyance of Enver, who had begun to feel there was no
agreement anywhere. The rift between the Germans and Mustafa Kemal grew wider and wider; Mustafa Kemal was openly hostile and disobeyed orders he thought untenable.

Finally, on 7th September, 1917, he sat down and wrote a report to Enver. The report was long, carefully considered but written, clearly, in the white heat of passionate conviction.

Latter-day Turkish historians have called this report the writing on the wall for the Ottoman Empire.

It is a very long report written in scholarly language, and in it Mustafa Kemal explains the country's and the Army's situation, as he saw them; their relationship with the people and the value of the Army as a fighting instrument. In one place he says: "The people are tired of war. Those left at home are women or children, the disabled and the deserters. All of them are working hard to produce the handful of crops that will keep them alive but the Government's officials are taking even these from them in order to feed the great hungry machine that is the Turkish Army. The people are being left face to face with death. Because life is teaching them that there is no security where there are Government officials or an Army division, they are drawing in on themselves, becoming unwilling to co-operate. We can safely say, therefore, that there is no relationship between the people and the Government."

In another place he says:

"The country's financial position is disastrous; officials and officers are affected by this. They cannot obtain even the essentials of life; payments are irregular so bribery, profiteering and dishonesty are rife. One result of this is that officials behave as they like and not according to Government orders. They fill their pockets unlawfully whenever they can. It is clear that the Government has failed in its duty to keep law and order; everything is chaotic. Life is ruined or at a standstill in the four corners of the country. Trade has suffered, economy has gone wild. Everything is on the Bourse Noire—which is strangling the very life-blood of the country. Even the most reliable and honest officials are driven into dishonesty in such circumstances. Consequently, while the war continues, the most dangerous thing facing us is that the Sultanate—which is growing rotten in every corner of the country—will collapse from inside before we know where we are..."
And again: "... there is no sign that the end of the war is in sight. It is not a question any longer that Germany will force the enemy to negotiate a peace by continuing the war. In fact, the enemy’s tactic today is ‘come and defeat us’. Time is showing us that our enemies will not break up and quarrel amongst themselves. Their people are better off than our people; their armies are always fresh and well equipped and have good food. It is certain, to me, that they will continue the war as long as we are able to go on. The keys to the end of the war, therefore, are not in our hands... Our Army is terribly weak. The number of units today are one-fifth less than they were at the beginning of the war. The country’s sources of supply are no longer capable of filling the gap. Even my own 7th Army, which has every resource the country has to offer in food and equipment, is not strong enough. As an example, the new units sent to me are composed of seventeen- to twenty-year-old children and fifty- to fifty-five-year-old humble men with no spirit. They are all unhealthy, underfed, miserable looking specimens—better off in a hospital than on the battlefield. Already, more than half of them have been separated as unfit and these are an extra burden on our shoulders. This example from the famous 7th Army shows, unmistakably, that whatever we do we cannot organize even a small unit. The condition of the officers, and their needs, moral and physical, are beyond words."

He goes on to explain the situation on the Turkish western, northern and south-western fronts, putting forward his own views on the military situation.

"Our future aim," he says, "must be to defend, not to attack. We must defend and defend Turkey. Not one single soldier must be sacrificed for the Empire but saved for Turkey."

He mentions the appointment of General von Falkenhayn as Supreme Commander of the Syrian front, saying that Muslim countries should have a Muslim Commander, but if von Falkenhayn was essential to the defence of the countries concerned, then he must be made to serve under a Muslim. He agrees that this would be hard for the Germans to accept.

"But," he adds bitterly, "we and the Germans are in the mud together now; we must try and get out of the mud together, but I object strongly to putting all our resources into
their hands so that they can make a German colony out of us. I believe, therefore, that it is essential for your Excellency to be as jealous and as free as the Bulgarians. . . ." (This is a reference to Bulgaria’s neutrality.) "... I assure you that the day the Germans understand this, our jealousy for our independence, their attitude will change. If we continue to cooperate this will not make them any the more merciful to us in the end; on the contrary, it will be an added encouragement to put their future colonization plans into action. Already, von Falkenhayn is sending German officers to the Arab tribes and making propaganda to win them over to Germany’s side. He told me personally that the Arabs are the Ottomans’ enemies and that they can be won easily for Germany, for the future Germany. His dream is to put all the Arab countries under German rule but he does not himself now believe that an attack on Suez and Baghdad, his first dream, is the right thing to do. He is playing now with the idea of attacking along the Syrian front; that is his second dream and Arabia is his ideal. . . . If all the forces under his command manage to defend and keep Palestine secure he will win his biggest victory against the world and against Turkey. Should such a thing happen, we shall see our beloved country nothing more than a German outcrop . . . and for this purpose von Falkenhayn will sacrifice the last Turkish soldier and expend the last Ottoman gold. . . ."

Enver replied as follows on 2nd October, 1917:

"I am certain that Marshal von Falkenhayn will make the best decisions for the success of the coming Syrian attack. I, therefore, beg your Excellency to join with me in this belief."

Mustafa Kemal, defeated, resigned the command of the 7th Army. Enver tried to dissuade him and von Falkenhayn wished to have him punished for insubordination. Enver posted him back to Diyarbekir but Mustafa Kemal refused to go; von Falkenhayn tried to insist on having his pound of flesh. He was not used to having a junior officer insubordinate, critical and definitely hostile. From Constantinople, Enver continued to press for his return to Diyarbekir but Mustafa Kemal, obstinate as a goat, refused, so Enver did the only thing possible in the circumstances: he gave Mustafa Kemal indefinite sick leave. Enver was in a difficult position. His orders had been disobeyed but Mustafa Kemal was no junior
officer; he was a General with a gallant reputation. Enver and the Germans were already unpopular enough and to have punished Mustafa Kemal for not wishing to serve under a German officer would have caused a public outcry. Overnight Mustafa Kemal would have become a martyr to the cause of Turkish freedom, a national hero. Yet Mustafa Kemal on sick leave, and back in Constantinople with his family, was an even greater nuisance to Enver. Many officers who felt as he did, and who considered Enver was throwing the country away, attached themselves to him and for a supposedly sick man Mustafa Kemal was remarkably vociferous. He denounced the Government and insulted German officers whenever he had the chance. He was determined and dangerous and Enver’s greatest threat.

He strode through the streets of the capital like a king, his spirit unbroken, his heart indomitable. From the cafés came sometimes the strains of old Turkish songs. The music suited his mood—that sad, grave music, full of the odd, nostalgic sound of nomads nowhere completely at home, especially perhaps in this creaking old capital where hunger and wealth walked hand in hand. Turkish music seems to call back to the past with regret, to a time when the Selcuks were the conquerors, not the Ottomans; and even further back than that, sometimes it seems, to a time when wild Turanian ancestors roamed the windswept steppes. Meanwhile the war continued.
Chapter V

EARLY in 1918 it was arranged that the Crown Prince Vahdettin should pay a visit to Germany, in the place of the Sultan, Reşad, who was old and feeble.

Mustafa Kemal, idling in Constantinople, was attached to the Mission as Military Adviser—a job he had at first refused, until curiosity, and a sardonic inquisitiveness maybe, of how the German Army machine worked on home soil, got the better of him. Enver, glad to be getting rid of his rival, in gratitude decorated him with the Mecidiye Medal, 1st class; the highest decoration in the land.

Mustafa Kemal met Vahdettin for the first time at his palace overlooking the Bosphor. He spent forty minutes with him and came away with the conviction that the Crown Prince was a moron.

He remarked to his adjutant: "Here is a Prince who does not know how to pronounce correctly the word 'Memleket' (fatherland) but who, instead, says 'Melmeket'. Is it ignorance, I wonder, or affectation...?" He was already sorry he had accepted the appointment. He was even sorrier when it came to the moment of departure, when Palace officials either ignored him or pushed him out of their way like so much excess baggage. Angry, his conceit pricked, he smouldered with resentment.

On the journey, however, Vahdettin sent for him and they conversed together for a long time.

Vahdettin said, in reference to the defence of Gallipoli:
"Fatih Sultan Mehmet, my ancestor, was the first conqueror of Constantinople; your Excellency is the second. I am one of your fervent admirers."

Mustafa Kemal was charmed by this and at once revised his previous poor opinion of the Crown Prince for, indeed, he himself had no illusions at all about his importance and without modesty was quite willing to talk of his exploits.

He and Vahdettin hated Enver and Talat; it was the only bond they had in common although the knowledge barely
Sivas Congress—Mustafa Kemal with Rauf Bey
(Above)
Atatürk attending army manœuvres

(Left)
Atatürk teaching the Latin script
flickered between them, for Vahdettin had spent too long in the Palace to give his trust to anyone. It was obvious that for all the informality of their talks and the seeming friendliness, Vahdettin was summing up his Military Adviser. It might be he was even a little frightened by his exuberance. 

In Germany, received by the Kaiser, who was effusive with the Crown Prince, Mustafa Kemal was greeted warmly, and the Kaiser said, as if recollecting something:

“16th Army Corps... Anafartalar!”

Mustafa Kemal strangely embarrassed—for sensibility was not one of his strong points—did not reply and the Kaiser, piercing him with a look, said:

“Are you not the Mustafa Kemal who commanded the Army in Anafartalar and the 16th Army Corps?”

Repying in French, Mustafa Kemal agreed that he was, omitting in his excitement to call him “Sire”, instead addressing him as “Excellency”. He was very critical of the German Army, but in private, and to Vahdettin only, so when the Kaiser paid a return visit to Vahdettin and the Crown Prince expressed doubts of the future, the Kaiser jumped to his feet and said angrily:

“My dear Prince! I believe someone is confusing you! If I, the Emperor of Germany, assure you of the success of the future, how can you doubt?”

Vahdettin, nervously polite, looked down at his fingers and the Kaiser, refusing to sit down, again emphasized his confidence in the outcome of the war, but was plainly very angry. Soon afterwards he took his leave, shaking hands with Vahdettin and Naci Paşa, who was standing beside the Crown Prince. He stared at Mustafa Kemal, obviously deeming him the snake in the grass, his eyes flickering arrogantly up and down his uniform and the Meçidiye Medal pinned to his breast, then turned away. Walking on a few steps he halted suddenly and returned to Mustafa Kemal:

“I must ask your pardon,” he said coldly. “I regret I forgot to shake your hand.”

Mustafa Kemal was more than ever aware that the Germans had not expected Turkish opposition; neither had they anticipated that Enver would have chosen above all others Mustafa Kemal as Vahdettin’s Military Adviser. The Turkish
delegation were received at Marshal von Hindenburg’s Headquarters and von Hindenburg gave them an optimistic review of the situation, including that of the Syrian front; Mustafa Kemal, injecting more doubt into the wavering Vahdettin, insisted that von Hindenburg’s details were incorrect and that the Germans were bluffing.

They later visited Ludendorf who gave a more detailed account of the situation and emphasized the preparations being made for the big spring offensive. Mustafa Kemal cut into the conversation rudely.

“And what line do you expect to reach if the offensive is successful?” he asked.

The Field-Marshal, piqued by such a question from a young officer and despising the whole Turkish mission anyway, screwed in his monocle furiously and replied in very general terms.

“We aim, usually, at a point that is decisive to us; any further action depends entirely upon circumstances. . . .”

Mustafa Kemal bowed his thanks and turning to Vahdettin remarked: “Even the Chief of the German General Staff does not know his objective. He trusts to luck apparently.”

He hated the Germans and continued to drip his particular brand of poison into Vahdettin’s unwilling ear. The Germans reciprocated his dislike, looking upon all Turks as barbarians. This, in turn, drove Mustafa Kemal to further passionate outbursts of rage which utterly annihilated the cringing Vahdettin.

“Have they forgotten Suleyman the Magnificent who defeated their undefeatable Karl V?” he would roar but Vahdettin, ignorant of the past as befitted a Crown Prince, refused to reply. There must have been many a time when he regretted having the despotic Mustafa Kemal as his Military Adviser. Could the Germans be wrong, could they—uneasy thought—be duping him . . .? Vahdettin, who wished only to save his own skin, vacillated between admiring and loathing Mustafa Kemal who would not leave him in peace.

“The Germans are in a bad way,” declared Mustafa Kemal, “from my own personal observations I tell you that . . .”

But Vahdettin, unwilling to assert himself, decided to let the future look after itself.
Returned to Constantinople Mustafa Kemal went down with illness. His kidneys were affected, causing excruciating pain. A life of hardship at the front, his own insane carelessness for his health, now pinned him to his bed. He was sent to Carlsbad for a cure and hovered between periods of wracking pain and great depression of spirit. He seemed to have lost interest in everything, including the salvation of Turkey.

On the evening of Wednesday, 3rd July, 1918, Sultan Reşad died and Vahdettin was proclaimed Sultan. Mustafa Kemal summoned enough energy to send him a congratulatory telegram and at the end of July returned to Constantinople. Mindful of the ideas he had distilled into Vahdettin, as Crown Prince, he called upon the new Sultan, anxious to take up again the role of confidant and adviser; to ask to be made Chief of Staff. But Vahdettin, weary of strife, preferred to take the line of least resistance and, although cordial, made it quite clear to Mustafa Kemal that he had full confidence in the policy of Enver and his German advisers. Mustafa Kemal, boiling with unsuppressed rage, realized that Vahdettin had let him down. The truth was, of course, that Vahdettin, unskilled in trickery, was frightened to death of Enver and the very strong Union and Progress Party. Mustafa Kemal might be the man of the future (although Vahdettin obviously did not believe this and thought of him only as a fiery, exhausting hothead), but he had no body of public opinion behind him. Vahdettin, whom Palace life had made a coward, preferred to run with the hounds.

Mustafa Kemal, on the other hand, had no doubts at all that Enver had slapped him down. When Vahdettin put forward his muddled ideas, Enver would have been astute enough to sense at once the originator of those ideas; he would have looked behind Vahdettin’s uncertain mind and seen the sardonic face of Mustafa Kemal.

On 7th August, 1918, Enver saw to it that his enemy was got out of the way once more. He appointed him to the command of the 7th Army in Palestine, for the second time.

At the end of 1917, when Jerusalem fell to the British, and von Falkenhayn was recalled to Germany, Liman von Sanders, now a Marshal, was appointed to the Supreme
Command of the 4th, 7th and 8th Turkish Armies, known as the "Thunderbolt" Group.

Mustafa Kemal reported to him at the end of August, 1918, and von Sanders made no secret of his great delight at seeing him again.

The troops were in bad condition, worse even than Mustafa Kemal had mentioned in his report the previous year. The British were fresh, alert and well equipped and were preparing a big attack. Their number was far greater than the Turks; their supply route was uncontended, for Egypt was behind them, and their Air Force supported them. Mustafa Kemal, knowing the Turks' inequality, was downcast. On 19th September, 1918, the British attacked, concentrating on the Turkish 8th Army. The defeat of the Turks was bitter and decisive; they scattered in disorder. Advancing, the British cut off the 7th Army who retreated on a line to the north. For the 7th Army there was only one flank open—the River Jordan, but bridgeless. Mustafa Kemal fought grimly. The tattered remnants of the Turkish Armies were held together by his strength and brutality. He was merciless on himself and every fleeing, demented Turkish soldier. He crossed the Jordan with what was left of his men, retreating westwards, then turning north under the increasingly heavy aerial bombardment. The Turkish dead were piled thick as flies. Mustafa Kemal tired, his old illness nagging at him, took responsibility and ordered a general retreat, a fighting retreat, to the mountains north of Aleppo. Here, he reformed his troops, drove them pitilessly and prepared a new defence line, ten miles north of Aleppo. On 25th October, 1918, the Turks and the Arabs fought, the Arabs led by T. E. Lawrence, the Englishman. The battle was fierce and somehow, to Turkish minds, all the more terrible because Muslim was fighting Muslim. On the night of the 25th, Mustafa Kemal evacuated the city and on 26th October, 1918, the enemy units arrived at the new defence line. Here they met with strong opposition. It was the first battle of the Turkish Independent War for, until now, the Turks had fought to defend the Empire; now they were fighting to defend Turkey.

Liman von Sanders and the other German officers had already left for Germany and Mustafa Kemal stood quite alone, fighting for the life-blood of his country. To the Turkish
soldier he was a hero, the man who had saved Gallipoli; who was now saving Turkey. On 31st October, 1918, he was appointed Supreme Commander of the Turkish Army; an empty title, for on the same day Turkey signed an armistice with the British at Mudros, in the island of Lemnos, on board H.M.S. Agamemnon. All Ottoman possessions in Syria, Africa, Arabia and Iraq were to be put under the Allied Military Command; the Straits were to be opened, the Black Sea and the Dardanelles occupied by the Allies. The Allies were also to be given the rights to occupy any strategic point should there be a threat to allied security. Admiral Calthorpe, the British delegate, gave the Ottoman representatives a secret undertaking that he would recommend to the British Government that no Greek troops should be sent to Constantinople or Smyrna. The Allies, however, chose to ignore Admiral Calthorpe’s recommendation.

Vahdettin (now Mehmet VI), pursued a pathetically lively policy of agreement. He didn’t care how much the Allies cut up the old Ottoman Empire providing he could rule over the rest.

On 13th November, 1918, a fleet of sixty allied vessels, including the Greek Kilkish arrived in Constantinople. Admiral Calthorpe soothed the nervous Government by explaining that no occupation was intended and that the reason for the fleet weighing anchor was to fight the Bolsheviks in Russia. The next day, however, British troops disembarked and proceeded to requisition property in the capital.

On 1st November, 1918, the old Government had fallen and Enver, Talat and Cemal fled the country in a German torpedo-boat.

İzzet Paşa became the Grand Vizier and a new Cabinet was formed. It was İzzet Paşa who sent the terms of the Treaty of Mudros to Mustafa Kemal. Mustafa Kemal, without wasting time, despatched the following telegram:

“The Treaty of Mudros is not meant to secure the safety of the Ottoman Empire. The Clauses in the Treaty are not explained clearly; they are vague and have very wide meanings. It is necessary to clarify them explicitly or today they (the Allies) will demand the Taurus line, tomorrow the city of Konya…”
İzzet Paşa replied testily, also by telegram; Mustafa Kemal despatched another. He argued every word in every sentence of the Treaty. İzzet Paşa, goaded, slapped back at him with still more telegrams.

The British, according to the terms of the Treaty, were to occupy Alexandretta, but Mustafa Kemal furiously ordered the troops to resist and told Constantinople that he would not hesitate to attack. Back came the order to dissolve the Army at once. Instead he gathered every soldier he could find, for he was determined to fight for the survival of a nation, not an Empire.

İzzet Paşa again ordered him to submit to the terms of the Treaty and hand over Alexandretta but Mustafa Kemal ignored the command. İzzet Paşa stopped ordering and, instead, begged him to think of the future, to consider the good of the country. Mustafa Kemal replied by telegram:

“If we are weak now we shall be annihilated.”

Seeing that telegrams were getting him nowhere he asked to be relieved of the Supreme Command. İzzet Paşa, harassed on all sides, almost hysterical, sent another telegram begging him to see reason and to collaborate with the Allies. Mustafa Kemal replied as follows:

“To collaborate means to make them Masters of the country; to collaborate means to see a Turkish Government chosen by them”

and returned to Constantinople.

İzzet Paşa resigned and Tevfik Paşa, an Anglophile, was made Grand Vizier in his place.

In the capital, Mustafa Kemal saw nothing but chaos, apathy and disintegration. Turkish women were not safe from attack; Turkish children already carried knives. The city was full of the foreigner—the English, Italians, French, Singalese and Indian. The hotels were filled with their officers. Outrages were committed in the dark; a soldier or two killed. The people, beaten and hungry, still showed their hatred for the occupation.
Mustafa Kemal saw that Parliament contained some strong personalities even though the Cabinet was decrepit. Should the Sultan dissolve Parliament, which was what the Allies wanted, it would be difficult for the people to elect new deputies. Apart from everything else, many parts of the country were already controlled by the Allies and no man of fire stood a chance of becoming a deputy. As to the rest of Turkey, where would they find forceful leaders? Mustafa Kemal saw that, no matter how heavy the terms of the Armistice, a strong Parliament would be in a better position to argue. He joined up with many of the politicians and tried to argue them into his way of thinking. The greatest disaster, he believed, would be for Parliament to fall. In the interval, between the election of new deputies and their inauguration, several months must elapse and during that time the Allies would be able to force the Government, headed by Tevfik, to do whatever they wished.

Convinced that he was right (and this accounted for much of his unpopularity, for it is unbearable to one's friends and enemies alike, to be always right), he harangued Parliament and took a hand in nearly every little resistance movement blowing up. He wrote vituperative articles for the daily papers. As far back as 18th November, 1918, he had been scourging the country with a whip. At that time he wrote in an article for *Vakit* (*Time*): "I believe that the disastrous situation we are in today is a dangerous threat to our Constitution."

He continues, somewhat dramatically: "It is the national duty of every Ottoman, who is a good Constitutionalist, to beware of the situation . . .” adding, "I should like to remind gossipers that the deputies of the present Parliament were elected under many influences . . . no one will deny that in every country, during an election, this or that factor might influence the outcome of the election . . . let us remember that the symbol of the Constitution of the Ottoman nation today is its Parliament. The constituencies of the present deputies are in a state of emergency and are unsuitable for new elections. Consequently, to take only this one matter into our consideration, will show us very clearly the madness of dissolving our present Parliament. It is essential for the present Government (who will decide on the peace terms), to have the support
of the deputies. . . .” On 21st December, 1918, Tevfik Paşa went to the Palace to see the Sultan. They talked for a long time, searching the Constitutional laws until they found a clause suitable for their purpose. Together they prepared an Imperial Resolution and next day Tevfik Paşa sought out Arif Bey, the Minister of the Interior, and handed him the royal decree. It was three o’clock in the afternoon and the deputies were celebrating Mevlud (Mahommet’s birthday) and wishing long life to the Sultan.

Arif Bey waited until they had finished and then went forward to the Speaker’s place.

He said strongly: “I am instructed by the Grand Vizier, Tevfik Paşa, to read to you His Majesty’s Imperial Resolution.”

He cleared his throat, wiped his lips with his handkerchief and read the Imperial Resolution.

“By the right of the 7th clause of the Constitutional law, which gives authority to Majesty, I am—for political reasons—dissolving Parliament from today.”

The Sultan brought Damad Ferid, his brother in law, and a man who thought like himself, as Grand Vizier.

His next move was to rid the capital of Mustafa Kemal, who was doing nothing but making trouble, as soon as a post could be found for him.

On 8th February, 1919, French troops disembarked in the capital and Franchet d’Espinay, their commander, entered the city on a white horse (a gift of the local Greeks), in open mockery of Mehmet II who, in 1453, had entered Constantinople thus. This action drove the knife a bit nearer the heart and was a stupid, damaging piece of carelessness on the part of the Allies. Mustafa Kemal was there too; he saw the triumphal entry on the snow-white horse and the Bosphor packed with Allied warships. If the embryo of Atatürk stirred angrily before, it might now be said to have fairly lashed in frenzy. He was conscious of only one desire: to rid Turkish soil of the foreigner.

With Parliament dissolved and Damad Ferid the Grand Vizier, the Allies did as they wished, and even commenced the occupation of the country as a whole. Mustafa Kemal idled, unable to leave the capital since he was too well watched,
unable to put his dream of positive resistance into action. He stayed with his mother and sister and the cousin, Fikriye, who during the war had married a wealthy Egyptian, been divorced and was now back in Turkey again. Fikriye was prettier than ever, very gay and full of confidence. It did not take much to make Mustafa Kemal succumb.

His mother and sister, however, did not care for the situation. Zubeyde, simply because she was his mother, and in her opinion, therefore, no young woman was good enough for him; Makbule, perhaps because she was a little jealous of the careless, pretty cousin. Never before had they seen Mustafa Kemal so besotted. The possibility of his marriage with the scandalously divorced Fikriye alarmed them. There might be any number of Merry Widows in Turkey but one rarely heard of them marrying until middle age, or loss of looks overtook them, and Fikriye was not even a widow. Merry she might be, but she was not the wife for Mustafa Kemal, the hero of the Dardanelles, the truculent warrior of the Aleppo front. Zubeyde and Makbule, one may be sure, took care to keep Fikriye in her place. Her gaiety, her freedom, her pretty tricks of fashion, her blonde hair and pale skin, were the ideals Mustafa Kemal sought for all Turkish womanhood. Fikriye reminded him of the past; of Sofia where the ladies of quality went unveiled and wore seductive clothes.

He grew tired of the arguments at home and took a house in Şişli, on the Pera side of the capital. Here he was free of family scenes and here the frivolous Fikriye could visit, discreetly veiled, to stay as long as she liked. Here too came his friends—the politicians and the generals—amongst them Rauf Bey, hero of the "Hamidiye" affair; Fethi, who had been Ambassador to his Military Attaché in Sofia; Kara Vasif, the politician; Staff Colonel Arif, his most intimate friend. Here in this small house in Şişli, plots were hatched, discussed, abandoned. They were exciting times, remembered long after friendship was dead.

One raw winter morning, with sunlight glancing off the Allied ships in the Bosphor, Kazim Kara Bekir (who had been his second in command with the 16th Army Corps in the east of Turkey) called on him unexpectedly, on his way to Erzurum where he was taking over command of the 15th
Corps. The two generals faced each other and Kazim Kara Bekir said:

"I wanted you to know that I agree with your plans. My army in Erzurum will be the foundation for our national resistance."

There were reports of resistance everywhere; in Constantinople there were supposed to be at least a dozen such movements. Arms and ammunition were being stolen from army depots and despatched to the interior where resistance groups were being formed.

Mustafa Kemal was in touch with these movements. He dreamed of getting into Anatolia, to organize under his own command the local nationalist groups, but he was too prominent and too dangerous an adversary for the Allies to let him leave the city.
Chapter VI

Ironically, it was the Sultan who gave him his dream; the Sultan and Damad Ferid. Wishing him out of the capital, where he was too active and too dangerous, they overlooked the importance of Anatolia. Consequently, in April, 1919, the Minister of War informed him that the Allies were complaining of attacks on their soldiery and ammunition in the area of Samsun, and had threatened that if the Ottoman Government could not maintain order in the area, they themselves would. Hardly able to conceal his astonishment, Mustafa Kemal listened to the Minister of War eulogizing him; it was well known that Mustafa Kemal had considerable influence with the Turkish soldiers; he was accepted as an opponent of Enver and the Union and Progress Party, etc. . . . He was, therefore, to be made Inspector General of the Turkish Army in east and north-east Anatolia.

Accepting, Mustafa Kemal must have felt that Fate was smiling on him almost too blandly.

The Allies, however, put forward vigorous objections. Mustafa Kemal was far too dangerous a man to be trusted; remembering his attitude at Alexandretta they were dubious of the leopard having changed his spots. To trust him to enforce delivery of arms raised the question of how he would use them; that he would disband local meetings of the Union and Progress Party they had no doubt, but would he institute other meetings to some other Party? The Allies preferred to have him deported to somewhere where he would be less troublesome. The Sultan on the other hand, had his own troubles. Mustafa Kemal, away from the capital, would suit him very well. For Mustafa Kemal life grew suddenly sweet. He knew that as the Sultan’s representative he would have almost unlimited power in Anatolia. He disciplined himself to listen to Damad Ferid, to agree to every suggestion he made, winningly and with guile, to get him to redraft his instructions, giving wider powers to an Inspector General. Damad Ferid and Mustafa Kemal played cat and mouse with each other, each dripping honey
and each confident of his own greater power over the other.

He set sail for Samsun on a fine May evening, when the last of the sun glinted off the grey hulls of the Allied fleet in the Bosphor and the gulls wheeled, crying, around their masts. The hills of Anatolia looked fair and green; they were the dream he was flying to whilst behind him the mosques of the city threw their shadows down to the water, down across the ships of the Allied fleet and scavengers searched for treasure along the muddy banks of the Golden Horn. Northward, meeting the cold winds of Russia, sailed the little steamer carrying Mustafa Kemal and Colonel Arif, and the new commander of the 3rd Army Corps in Samsun, Colonel Rafet.

Rauf Bey (famous commander of the Hamidiye) came to see them off, and to give them the fateful news that the Allied Conference in Paris had sent Greek troops to Smyrna.

Leaving the Bosphor, northward into the Black Sea, the little steamer sailed through the night. Mustafa Kemal, restless, paced up and down the deck, bitterness striking him more than the cold wind. With Greeks in Smyrna, under Allied blessing, it was obvious they sought the end of Turkey. The time for waiting, for patience and soft words was over; only resistance could now perhaps work the miracle.

They arrived at Samsun on 19th May, 1919, that day famous in Turkish history when Mustafa Kemal stretched his arms to the wide sky over Anatolia and burst into one of the saddest yet most stirring of Turkish marches.

Dağ başını duman almış
Gümüş dere durmaz akar
Güneş ufuktan şimdi doğar....
Yürüyelim arkadaşlar!
Sesimizi yer gök su dinlesin
Sert adımlarla her yer inlesin!
Bu gök deniz nerede var,
Nerede bu dağılar, taşlar,
Bu ağaçlar, öten kuşlar....
Sert adımlarla her yer inlesin!

The misted peak, the flowing stream,
The horizon where the sun awakes....
Let us walk, friends!  
Let the earth, sky and silver water  
Hear our voices.  
Let our tramping feet make the whole world tremble!  
Ah, where is there this sky and sea,  
These mountains and these sun-washed stones;  
Such trees as these, such singing birds. . .  
Ah, let the whole world tremble!

Samsun was held by British troops and an Intelligence Officer pried into everything Mustafa Kemal did. The local Greeks and Armenians, currying favour with the Allies, reported his every movement.

Exasperated, he moved to Amasya, a town further inland. Here he was free of the British but to organize a resistance against them was difficult. The Turkish Army had no power of attack; only in the east, at Erzurum, under Kazim Kara Bekir, did it exist. Working secretly Mustafa Kemal realized he must have the backing of the inactive Turkish Army behind him. Ali Fuat Paşa and Rauf Bey came from Ankara, Rafet from Samsun. Rafet was a cavalry officer, happy go lucky, good natured, courageous. His nature was in direct contrast to Mustafa Kemal’s and although he was in full agreement with resistance he recognized the coldness, the dogmatism and ruthlessness of Mustafa Kemal. He would support him in the resistance movement—but only because there wasn’t anyone else with the same abilities. The four men met secretly and on 19th June, 1919, prepared a resolution. “The Central Government,” it said, “is under foreign control. The Turkish nation is determined to put an end to this foreign domination and this determination is proved by the ever growing number of organizations springing up all over the country. The activities of these organizations must be centralized. A representative Congress must be called at Sivas. Representatives sent from Constantinople, and of whose integrity the Nationalists are doubtful, must be excluded.”

Colonel Rafet, ever on the alert, said to Mustafa Kemal:  
“Are we to start a new Government or organize the defence of the country?”

Ali Fuat Paşa replied quickly:
“When we discussed this we had no thought of a new Government but if defence is possible only under such a condition, why should we not do so?”

“But,” said Rafet, “that could be done only after open discussion and, more importantly, only if it is a case of absolute necessity. I raised the question purely because I sensed the intention in the resolution.”

“Stop theorizing,” said Ali Fuat Paşa. “Let us all sign this protocol.”

He himself, should the necessity arise, was to take over the civil administration in the west; Kazim Kara Bekir in the east and Mustafa Kemal at the pivot, central Anatolia. Mustafa Kemal was well enough pleased with this modest beginning although realizing that Colonel Rafet would be the most difficult member to handle. His shrewdness, the suggestion of critical superiority in his statements, aroused defiance in Mustafa Kemal. Criticism was anathema to him; having reached a decision he did not care for it to be picked to pieces by some lesser mind. Egocentric just to the point of mania, he never believed himself to be in the wrong. The fact that he made so few mistakes did not endear him to the intellectuals who, although acknowledging his qualities as a great leader, nevertheless believed him to be mentally inferior to themselves.

The resolution was sent out and the Governor of Sivas promised support. Kazim Kara Bekir, a fortress in the east, with a large Army, the full-blooded determination of the people of Erzurum and the Kurds behind him, invited the revolutionaries to a conference in Erzurum. Ali Fuat Paşa returned to Ankara but Mustafa Kemal, Rauf Bey and Colonel Arif set out for Erzurum. Mustafa Kemal was elected President of the Congress and the decisions reached there were later reaffirmed at the Sivas Congress.

During the Erzurum Conference, Constantinople (who had long ago regretted the decision to send Mustafa Kemal into Anatolia), ordered Kazim Kara Bekir to arrest him, Rauf as well, to close the Congress and take over the Inspector-Generalship himself. Kazim Kara Bekir refused on all counts; from now on he took orders from Mustafa Kemal only. Mustafa Kemal, stripped of his rank, dismissed from his command by the Sultan, promptly played tit for tat and sent in his resigna-
tion. Borrowing a suit from the Governor of Erzurum and a kalpak from somebody else, he discarded his uniform, and sent a telegram to the Sultan.

"I shall stay in Anatolia," he said, "until the nation has won its independence."

In the meantime Kazim Kara Bekir offered him his army and his loyalty; Ali Fuat Paşa telegraphed his support from Ankara and Rauf Bey pledged himself once more to the cause of freedom.

Only his former Chief of Staff, a Colonel Kazim, threw in his hand, saying that as Mustafa Kemal no longer had a command there was nothing more for him to do and he would go over to Kazim Kara Bekir's command. Upset by this Mustafa Kemal turned to Rauf Bey and lifted his eyebrows expressively. "How can I catch the big fish," he said, "when the little fish are ready to eat me now that I no longer have the Sultan's authority?" Having chosen a sub-committee at the Erzurum Conference the policy was now to proceed along the following lines:

The preparation of a national pact; the organization of the Anatolian defence of national rights; the election of a representative body (Heyet-i-temsiliye) which would, if the necessity arose, take the place of a temporary government in Anatolia to carry on national defence. The Conference declared emphatically, however, that if the elected body formed a temporary government it should follow the established laws of the Central Government and, after realizing the aims of the National Pact, cease to be a government.

The Erzurum Conference made a profound impression on the Sultan's Government in Constantinople and the immediate result was that the question of calling a new election was discussed seriously.

It was on 23rd July, 1919, that the Erzurum Conference had taken place and all during the month of August feverish preparations were going ahead for the Sivas Congress. The necessity of another conference in some more central place, where representatives from western and middle Anatolia, even Constantinople, could attend, had been decided at Erzurum. Sivas chose Rauf Bey to represent them; Erzurum, Mustafa Kemal.
The Allies, in the meantime, were by no means quiescent. French officers called on the Governor of Sivas, informing him that the Allies would occupy the city in five days if the conference took place. The British brought four battalions from Batum to Samsun and started to disembark. But still the delegates were arriving in Sivas, secretly, under cover of night and by devious means. Mustafa Kemal escaped arrest by a matter of hours, made a tortuous journey through the mountains and eventually arrived in Sivas. The decisions of the Erzurum Conference were reaffirmed but the new delegates had no clear aims and could define no policy. Mustafa Kemal, working for freedom, anxious to be rid of the profitless Arab provinces, refusing to accept an American Mandate, swept away their doubts and indecisions. In the middle of the session an order from the Central Government to Ali Galib the Governor of Elazığ was intercepted. This order instructed Ali Galib to incite the Kurdish tribesmen, raid Sivas and arrest the delegates at the Congress.

Fate could not have played the game better for Mustafa Kemal. All dissent and argument were forgotten; the delegates, finding the possibility of Kurdish tribesmen arresting them the very last straw, roused themselves angrily. A detachment of infantry was despatched from Sivas. Colonel Ilyas, commander of the infantry regiment in Malatya (a province to the south of Elazığ), was ordered by telegraph to attack and Ali Galib and his tribesmen were routed.

The action of the Central Government had achieved a formidable result: it had drawn all the delegates together. Spurred on by their own anger and Mustafa Kemal's oratory, they broke with the Central Government. Mustafa Kemal, riding his old hobby horse, was in his element. He ordered the military authorities to take over the telegraphs and so cut Constantinople off from the rest of the country and to replace civilian officials with men they could trust. He sent an ultimatum to the capital demanding the dismissal of Damad Ferid and new elections forthwith. To this there was no reply although the break had frightened the Central Government badly.

On 2nd October, 1919, the Central Government fell; Damad Ferid resigned and a new Cabinet was formed by Ali Riza
Paşa who was secretly in sympathy with the Nationalist movement. He sent Salih Paşa, Minister of Marines, to Amasya to confer with Mustafa Kemal. They agreed on five main points: the territorial integrity of the country was to be maintained; the Government must recognize the Nationalist movement; no special concessions were to be made to minorities; the Turkish delegates at the Peace Conference must be approved by the National Committee and the seat of Government was to be in Anatolia.

Back in Constantinople the Cabinet proceeded with arrangements for the elections but ignored the Amasya decisions.

The election gave the Nationalists a large majority and now that, officially, they were no longer rebels but respectable, solid deputies, the Nationalists paused to reconsider the situation. Mustafa Kemal was elected for Erzurum and leader of the deputies.

Some were adamant that to go to Constantinople was putting their necks in a noose; some were in favour of going. Kazim Kara Bekir, summoned with Ali Fuat Paşa by Mustafa Kemal, put the situation neatly when he declared that, having won a small victory, they must tread cautiously. A government in Anatolia would never gain the support of the nation—unless it could be proved beyond all doubt it was necessary. The nation would have to be inflamed before it would recognize the right to have a government in Anatolia; something drastic would first have to happen in Constantinople. It was agreed that for the time being Mustafa Kemal should remain in Anatolia. Rauf, who agreed with Mustafa Kemal, was, however, impressed by Kazim Kara Bekir's logic. He said to Kazim Kara Bekir:

"But supposing, even though our delegates in Constantinople work as we want them to work, the Allies don't arrest them or interfere with them?"

"But they will," Kazim Kara Bekir insisted. "How can they not? If our delegates refuse their unacceptable peace conditions what alternative have they? They will be forced to close the Parliament; an enemy cannot behave differently. There is no future for a Constantinople Government."

"Then," said Rauf Bey, "if I went to Constantinople, instead of remaining here, if I force the Allies to raid Parliament,
perhaps even to deport me, could that be the reason for an Anatolian Government?"

"Of course," said Kazim Kara Bekir. "The closing of our Parliament, deportation of our important men, interference with our rights, would be the match we could use to inflame the nation. With the cessation of Parliament in the capital there could be only one place for it—Anatolia."

"Then I will go to Constantinople," said Rauf. "We shall succeed in that way."

Kazim Kara Bekir embraced him with some emotion.

"You have courage, my friend," he said. "Go, then, to Constantinople and do as we have planned. We shall succeed in our aims, we shall have the whole nation behind us."
Chapter VII

MUSTAFA KEMAL cautiously moved his Headquarters to Ankara, a sun-baked dusty plain, capital of a province, but in an advantageous position and with excellent natural defences. He made the Agricultural School his Headquarters, a big grey building set on a hill above the ruins of a model farm. He used a large room on the first floor, practically bare of furniture, as his office. There was a table, a few chairs, maps on the walls and a rusty old stove to keep out the cold of winter. Wrapped in a hunter’s jacket, his kalpak planted firmly on his head, he planned his next move. In Constantinople the Sultan co-operated with the Allies. The Dardanelles was under French, Italian and British occupation; the Greeks had occupied Smyrna with the assistance of the British and, encouraged, were advancing into Anatolia; on the Mediterranean coast Antalya was held by the Italians; in Mersin, Adana and Antep, the French were in possession, arming the local Armenians. The French General Guro had issued millions of leaflets declaring that by agreement with the Sultan the whole of south-east Anatolia had been placed under French protection and called on the people to take refuge under the French flag. In the east of Anatolia the Armenians were preparing to emerge victorious; only Kazim Kara Bekir’s regular Army could hold them in check. Revolt and disorder were everywhere; trouble broke out in Konya; in many other parts of the country the people massacred each other in the name of the Sultan. Civil war was closing in around the little oasis of freedom in the Agricultural School like a tightly drawn net. The Sultan’s followers, known as the Caliph’s Army, were everywhere inflaming the people against the Nationalists. All the main roads were controlled by the British—even the main railway at Eskişehir, the link between Ankara and Constantinople. Surrounded by three or four loyal supporters, Mustafa Kemal tried to stem the rising panic. The country was in its last death agonies but, perhaps, after all a miracle would occur to save it. Driven on by dogged
hope, scarcely ever resting, organizing a telegraph office in the building, Mustafa Kemal followed his destiny, hardly aware that destiny was leading him, but burning with the desire to save Turkey.

If a biographer is permitted to intrude his opinion it should be remembered, when today’s Turkish intelligentsia tell us Mustafa Kemal was a barbarian and the Ottoman Empire never really half as bad as he said it was, that but for his emergence there would be no Turkey such as we know today. Even today, despite all the schools and the teaching and the participation in western life, to the extent of beauty queens and glamorous film stars, the bulk of Turkish people are illiterate. When Mustafa Kemal pulled them out of chaos, 80 per cent. were illiterate. They had no means to instrument government. Without his burning personality, his love for the country he had not been born in, they would have become the slaves of the West. Alone in Ankara, in the big cold building where the shadows of the dying day crept into corners and mist rose from the bare Anatolian plain below him, Mustafa Kemal struggled and planned for the freedom of Turkey. News was telegraphed in from everywhere—of pressure here and resistance there; of shortages of ammunition and food; of local skirmishes; of blood and death and the underground rumble of civil war.

“Resist,” he preached. “Resist first and last and all the time! Let resistance be your watchword!”

With almost inexhaustible patience he waited until his luck was right. Daily he expected news of the closing of the new Parliament in Constantinople. There was a price on his head. He was an outcast—a general with no army; the leader of a government—powerless, moneyless, impotent, but still he waited, for he believed his moment would come.

In the capital the new deputies were loyal to the Sivas Congress. They were truculent and demanding, stating the aims of the Congress again and again. The Allies, with the consent of the Sultan, demanded the resignation of the War Minister, and this high-handedness made the deputies buzz like a nest of angry hornets. They published the National Pact which had been prepared at the Erzurum Conference. This pact stated the principles on which the deputies would agree
to peace. All over the country events were moving fast, driving the people on to an inexorable climax. In the south-east, the local Turks had attacked and driven back the French; garrisons in Urfa were besieged. Due to the demobilization of the British Army, troops withdrew out of Anatolia. Their orders were disobeyed, arms were stolen in fantastic quantities and in the capital the newly elected deputies did nothing about it.

As Kazim Kara Bekir had predicted, the Allies were forced to act for themselves. On 16th March, 1920, they raided the Parliament, arrested many of the deputies—including Rauf—and deported them to Malta. Parliament was closed, dissolved. It was the match set to inflame the nation. Now, all the leading people in the capital, the writers and poets, the intellectuals, fled to Anatolia to join forces with Mustafa Kemal. The Sultan, unable to control the irresistible tides, sent out an army of hocas and Imams, preaching that the sacred duty of every Turk was to kill the rebels, Mustafa Kemal especially. The people, already chaotic, responded on the instant and civil war broke out, bitter and bloody.

Mustafa Kemal received the news on a cold, raw day when clouds scudded across the sky in the van of a blustering wind.

He was in great danger. The Sultan’s spies were everywhere. Even in the village of Ankara, looming above the barren plain, lurked death and the seeds of his own disintegration unless his luck held.

In Constantinople the Allies had taken control. Every official building and Government department was taken over. British battleships almost touched Galata Bridge, where part of the stunned population had gathered. The streets were held by British soldiers. Atrocities took place, the fortunes of civil war. Houses were barred and bolted, the drunken soldiery paraded the streets in groups; shots were fired in the dark; a knife stuck in an unsuspecting back. The atrocities of the occupying forces bred worse atrocities amongst the population. There was a sadness and desolation hanging in the spring air. Earth swung out in space towards the face of the sun, but ground into the dust of her own face the people of Constantinople were ominously quiet.

The atrocities continued. Five Turkish soldiers were shot whilst asleep in their barracks; a guard was stabbed in the
back; the dismembered body of a British soldier floated in the Golden Horn. Well-known people were arrested, amongst them politicians and intellectuals; armed British soldiers were everywhere; captive Turks marched between their jailers; tanks lumbered impressively in the streets; machine-guns ornamented street corners, the tops of buildings and the minarets of the mosques. The people were still stunned: they saw it was necessary to think clearly before acting; to think clearly, decide quickly and act carefully.

Notices were displayed all over the city; in the mosques, the cafés, the boats plying the Bosphor and the police stations, informing the city that whoever gave shelter to a Nationalist would incur the death penalty. There was, in fact, the smell of death everywhere and the threats and the discipline only made the people more restless. Determination began to harden them; very soon they were united in the desire to wrest their city from the foreigners' hands. They began, one by one, to turn their backs on the Sultan and to face Ankara where, they were beginning to believe, their salvation lay. For them, in their hour of humiliation, the sun had already set over the Palace. The name of Mustafa Kemal began to be whispered from lip to lip—a penniless general, a man from outside who loved their country so much he was ready to die for it. He became a hero long before he knew it; even the intrepid sacrifice of Rauf (who, with quiet dignity, had refused to try to escape into Anatolia when Parliament was closed), was soon forgotten in the mounting excitement.

Somewhere just beyond the green hills of Anatolia, lay the people's hope and resurrection. The burning-eyed young men, the writers and artists, the intelligentsia, ex-soldiers, unemployed generals, group after group of them started to climb the long hills of Anatolia, towards Ankara, leaving the main roads and the railways to the British. The ammunition dumps were raided, with a reckless disregard for life, and guns, shells and rifles sent into Anatolia.

Kuleli, the Military College, and Harbiye, the Military Academy, were occupied—the one by Americans (who crowded Armenian children into it and flew the Stars and Stripes from the flag mast), and the other by the British. The Turkish cadets, ousted, were forced to live under canvas in the
fields around Kağithane at the end of the Golden Horn, but within a few weeks the tents were empty and the gipsies moved amongst them, for the cadets, too, had escaped to Ankara.

All over Turkey the Sultan’s Army of religious leaders incited the people. Looting, murder and rape broke out in a fresh wave of violence.

Ammunition poured into Anatolia. In Constantinople the friends of the ones who had fled, with a passionate belief in their own rightness, sacrificed their lives and their money to supply the rebels. The British garrison at Eskişehir was isolated. There was nothing between them and the determined Turks but a British unit at İzmit and Mustafa Kemal, putting his plans into action, sent Ali Fuat Paşa to clear them out. Ali Fuat gathered an irregular force, talked with the British Commander who was not impressed by threats but was forced in the end to evacuate. Leaving Eskişehir the British destroyed all the bridges along the route to Constantinople.

Allied officers, on Mustafa Kemal’s orders, were everywhere arrested in the Interior and held as hostages against the Turkish Deputies interned in Malta. İzmit was evacuated and left to the Turks. The Allies, depleted, owing to demobilization, were forced out by the irregulars. Besides, for them, war was over. They were sick of war and at home they had their own troubles. France had to contend with Syria; Italy paralysed by revolution; Britain busy putting down a rebellion in Ireland. But it was evident to Mustafa Kemal that some sort of Government had to be set up, so without losing time he decided to open a Parliament in Ankara. He sent a circular throughout Anatolia instructing the people to send him two chosen representatives from each Vilayet.

Halide Edib, writer, and her husband, Dr. Adnan, had by this time joined him in Ankara. They had once believed that the unity of Turkey lay in acceptance of the American Mandate; so sure were they that Halide Edib, on 10th August, 1919, had written to Mustafa Kemal a long letter on the subject. Mustafa Kemal had rejected the suggestion immediately and during the short-lived raided Parliament, Halide Edib and her husband joined Rauf in the struggle for independence. They had now thrown in their lot with Mustafa Kemal.
There was no longer need for Mustafa Kemal to work and live alone, save for the three or four original personnel. Now the old schoolhouse knew the footsteps of many. Plans were made, there was much discussion and plenty of action. They were far away from the bitter conflicts of the city, the desolation and restlessness of the people, yet they too were sitting on a volcano, for at any moment the Sultan’s Army might incite the people of Ankara to rise up against them.

In the early days of April, 1920, the trouble which had been brewing in Konya, became acute. But gradually all classes were coming over to Mustafa Kemal.

It was about this time that the Sultan sent out a new emissary against the Nationalists. His name was Anzavur, an illiterate Circassian, to whom the Sultan gave the honoured title of Paşa. Anzavur set out from Bandırma with an armed force and so wild and savage was he that he literally swept all before him. But Nationalist forces, led by another Circassian, Ethem, and by Ali Fuat Paşa, stood out against him at Bandırma, Bursa and İzmit. Ethem was strong, too, and courageous. He had earned glory for himself leading an irregular force against the Greeks in İzmir. His force was one of the strongest in the country and included a large number of ex-regular officers and men. He defeated Anzavur, and so saved the situation for Mustafa Kemal. Already small, local forces inspired by the hocas had come to within fifteen miles of the Nationalist Headquarters. During those anxious days horses were saddled day and night, ready to transport Headquarters staff to Sivas should the necessity arise. Many of the officials had left already. Mustafa Kemal looked worn and his old illness troubled him. He worked hard during the day and often far into the night—ruthless as ever, inexorable but with fugitive pity etching permanent lines in his face. The daily reports were reports of failure. Everywhere town after town was now joining forces with the Sultan; successfully inspired by the hocas to religious frenzy they feared the Nationalists as much as they did the Allies. Chaos was not confined to everyday living—it was, starkly, in the minds of the people. Yet despite the setbacks Mustafa Kemal still had faith. Everywhere was bitterness but no apathy. The nation was fighting for liberty and rights of which they were scarcely aware; killing lawlessly but not
always for the lust of killing, only with the half absorbed knowledge that freedom demanded high ransom. Mustafa Kemal fighting for the same things knew that in the end he and the people would meet and merge in their common interests.

Ethem, the new conqueror, brought in his savage army, offering dramatically his heart and his life to Mustafa Kemal. His men were shaggy giants, wild and bearded; merry giants who twirled their moustaches and swore vengeance on the enemy. They were awe inspiring but picturesque and Ethem was the most picturesque of all. Swaggering, full of confidence, white teeth flashing, tall and handsome, Ethem was accorded great honour. Mustafa Kemal even lent him his battered old car—the only one in Ankara—and from its interior Ethem smiled like royalty.

And still the ones who managed to escape the vigilance of the Allies in Constantinople were pouring in. The intellectuals still fled to Ankara and hope—for to ignore the Nationalists meant the acceptance of nonentity. There was no alternative for them; it was the Nationalists or racial extinction. Many of them openly despised Mustafa Kemal as an uncouth army officer who had spent most of his life caught up in the machinery of war instead of reading Bergson or Strindberg. They were precious and conceited but, wishing to survive, they had no alternative but to support him. Mustafa Kemal received them with no particular pleasure. They had never known discipline and orders were something to be discussed; to be broadened or lessened according to their several viewpoints but never to be acted upon without question. The officers found them bores but Mustafa Kemal, his sense of humour getting the better of him, himself a brilliant talker, took pleasure in subduing them and in forcing the two parties—officers and intellectuals—to mingle.

In the midst of them all arrived Colonel İsmet and Arif (the President of the closed Parliament in Constantinople), with many members of the Party. Mustafa Kemal was delighted by their arrival and knew it would be excellent propaganda for the people of Anatolia to learn that the President of the Central Government had come to join the Nationalists. Accordingly, he greatly exaggerated the occasion and arranged a great welcome for them in Ankara. Officers, officials (great and
small) were gathered in a hurry. There were flourishes of iron-wheeled carts (conveying the precious), braying donkeys, horses, stepping delicately, carrying spruced up officers and Mustafa Kemal’s noisy old car. The crowds gathered, excitement mounted and dust was kicked up by the restive horses. It was a great day and a local triumph for the Nationalists. A telegram was despatched to Kazim Kara Bekir, informing him of the new arrivals and he wired back, expressing his pleasure.

Now the Agricultural School was filled with people. There were generals and colonels, ex-M.P.’s and intellectuals rubbing shoulders and petty quarrels flaring out here and there. Yet there was a certain unity too, brought about by Mustafa Kemal himself who never minced matters and who kept them all in their places. Even Arif, the ex-President, at one time a professor of law in Constantinople University, was dealt with abruptly. Colonel İsmet took charge of the Union Club and welcomed new arrivals. Fevzi Paşa, a general, became Minister of Defence and organized the fighting units.

There was some sort of social life. In the evenings after dinner there were animated discussions for the future. They seldom spoke of the past. It was a way of life over and done with; it was like looking into a misty glass. Mustafa Kemal generally dominated every topic, his wit, his malicious irony, never very far from the surface. The danger of their living brought its own vicarious excitement; there were differences of opinion but never deep enough to cause any to forget they were fighting for their lives.

News filtered through to the villages slowly. In Ankara the townspeople heard of the closing of Parliament swiftly, but there were hundreds of other villages who all this time had been fighting for the Sultan and as the news spread so did their reaction to it. They blazed a successful trail for the Nationalists; angry enthusiasm swept them along in Mustafa Kemal’s path and a wave of disappointed fury set in against the Sultan who had made fools of them.

Soon the chosen deputies for the National Assembly started coming in, living roughly in the dormitories of the Agricultural School.
On 23rd April, 1920, the National Assembly met for the first time. They were a strangely assorted crew from which to expect the rebirth of a nation. The deputies wore locally made suits of many colours; the hocas’s foreheads were bound with white turbans. The red fezes of the professors, the shining shoes and Europeanized clothes were strange contrast to the dusty national costume of the bearded Kurds. But at this moment all snobbery was in abeyance and they were one in the tremendous ovation accorded to Mustafa Kemal. Standing before them, his face as if carved in ivory, he made one of the most moving speeches of his life. A proclamation was issued, stating that the Sultan had become a prisoner in the hands of the Allies. It was a memorable day, for all their traditions seemed confused and so far away in the past they might never be retrieved again. They were the new Government in a place of exile that had never known government before; the burdens of a nation, all the machinery of law and order, had fallen on their shoulders.

Looking to Mustafa Kemal for support, anxious in these uncertain moments, they elected him President of the Assembly. As President he was arrogant to the foreigner; he had been elected to speak for the people and replied tartly to the President of France, who had sent him a message:

“The Grand National Assembly, sitting in Ankara, will preside over the destiny of Turkey as long as the capital is in the possession of the foreigner. The Grand National Assembly has appointed an Executive Council which has taken over the Government of the Country . . . therefore Constantinople, the Sultan and the Government being in the possession of the foreigner, all orders from there are automatically rendered null and void. The nation’s rights have been violated. The Turkish nation, although calm, is determined to maintain its rights as an independent state. It desires to conclude a fair and honourable peace but it will do so only through its own accredited representatives.”

Yet it was not altogether arrogance but the pride of the Turk who still feels he is someone to be reckoned with. Mustafa Kemal was intelligent and a natural leader, but he was not without heart. He was susceptible to flattery and knew well in his own life the frailties and weaknesses of the human heart. He was pitiless with the mass when a big issue was at stake,
but pity for the individual often moved him to tears. Sacrifice he professed to despise yet it was only on the surface he despised it, hiding himself always behind a façade of ruthlessness, for he himself spent the most of his life sacrificing himself for his nation. To the foreigner, with his utterly different mentality, he was a frighteningly life-size figure of loose living, lechery and heartlessness but to the intimate one or two who held his affections, he was gay and tender and almost feminine in his sharp, perceptive love of justice. He was materialistic and irreligious—not by nature, but because he saw that Turkey had for too long been fettered by religion and the exponents of religion, the hocas, who kept the people back. He was a creature of his century and so he tried to awaken the nation, to show them the mechanical, materialistic New Cosmology of the Universe. Officially he banished God and spiritual things yet himself retaining to the end a spiritual yearning that often troubled him and from which he often fled, debauching and drinking and debunking God.

I remember once meeting him in the Officers’ Club in Eskişehir, where he had paid a flying visit. He said to me, à propos of a conversation on Francis Thompson’s *The Hound of Heaven*, which he had read in the French:

“Do you believe in God, Lieutenant?”

“Yes, your Excellency,” I replied.

He stared at me for a second or two, then he smiled and replied:

“You may wrest a new nation out of the ruins of an old but there are some things you will never be able to destroy; the very stones are permeated with them. Belief in God is one of them. It outlasts everything else. But remember, Lieutenant, that in the storm of battle, God and country sometimes seem to be the same thing.”
Chapter VIII

The Anatolian summer wore away and overwork and the unbearable heat frayed Mustafa Kemal’s nerves. He became irritable and moody, easily depressed and subject to sudden outbursts of rage. Trusting no one but himself he began to interfere with unimportant details and the Grand National Assembly were not easy to manage. The deputies had all the thrust and conceit of rawness and exaggerated their own sense of importance. Mustafa Kemal had the full support, more or less, of the intellectuals and the minor officials and, to some extent, the leaders of the irregular Nationalist forces, but the majority stood aloof from him and sometimes were sharply critical of his policies. Holding positions of influence for the first time in their lives, representing the will of the people, they were very conscious of the country’s need of them and, consequently, highly suspicious of Mustafa Kemal whom they suspected of wanting personal honour. This section of the Grand National Assembly became known as the opposition (later called the 2nd Group), and they made the machinery of government difficult and prolonged and scores of useless arguments were carried on. Another group emerged, led by the hocas, calling themselves the Independents and one side continually attacked the other. Mustafa Kemal, for the time being at any rate, preferred to work through the Assembly but the constant opposition tired him. He alternately flattered and bullied them, but tired as he was he never gave way entirely. His energy was enormous, his vitality superhuman. Haranguing the Assembly for hours at a time, patient, dictatorial, persuasive by turn—he wore them down as inexorably as wind and rain wears away the face of a rock. Part of the trouble was that he needed the deputies to work through and yet he put insufficient trust in them. He repeated his maxim incessantly that “the Grand National Assembly is the incarnation of the people. All authority belongs to the people absolutely”, yet it seemed to the deputies that this was theory only, not fact. Their critical attitude increased. He became cold and haughty
by contrast. He appeared too much of an upstart—an ex-
soldier turned politician, with all the brashness and rawness of
the city he had named his capital. The fact that he got anything
at all out of the deputies was due to his personality and the
vivacity of his ideas. He loathed their criticisms and would
have liked to have insisted on absolute obedience, making his
deputies an army of "yes-men", so blazingly sure was he that
he alone could save the country. It is necessary to understand
that Mustafa Kemal’s mind always worked at greater speed
than anyone elses. During the long watches of the night,
sleepless, he would work out a problem to its logical con-
clusion. He knew, almost fanatically, when he was right and
the objections of the Assembly (which he took to be crass
stupidity and interference), seemed to him thoughtless and
irresponsible. It often took weeks for the deputies to see what
had been obvious to him after a night’s cogitation. It was this
quality that had made him such an outstandingly successful
General, but translated to civil life, it labelled him as a Dictator
—vainglorious and out to satisfy his own personal ambitions.
But Mustafa Kemal was a man who loved Turkey and wanted
to see her take her place once more as a strong nation. The
foreign label of "Dictator" always struck at his heart like an
insult. He often commented that it was a pity he had to be
named alongside Mussolini whom he despised. To the Turks
as a whole there was nothing of the "Dictator" about him.
Instead, he reminded them of the still traditional type of
Turkish father who is benevolent, wise and all seeing and
who chastises his family for their own good.

To be great is always to create legends. Men with their own
axe to grind, their own personal ambitions to satisfy, are
seldom proof against vanity, and things attributed to Mustafa
Kemal were very often the work of local officials who were
themselves little dictators and used his name to further their
interests. Furthermore, when a scandal broke out people heard
one side of the story only. The Turks are tired of hearing their
only great man called "a wolf" or "a leopard" or "a tiger".
To them he was and is still the man who put them back on the
map; the wise father who saw their destiny even beyond his
own life span; who gave them literacy, pride and a place in the
world. To talk of his debauches, to fabricate stories of wild
orgies is pointless, since even lesser men are subject to lapses, unheard of by the world at large simply because they are not in the limelight. One cannot try to discredit the greatness and humanity of Mustafa Kemal without losing a little of one’s own humanity.

He was a tower of strength in dark days; a cyclonic force that drove the new nation before it, battering it, bruising it, often torturing it, urgent and pitiless yet who, on seeing his favourite horse dying of tetanus, wept and said: “I am glad I never had a son, for if the heart can bleed like this for the agony of a horse what would it do, I wonder, for the agony of one’s own son...?”

It was during this dusty summer that he left the house where he had been living and went to live in Çan Kaya. Here it was cool and free from dust, high above the yellow Anatolian plain whose barrenness and terrible immensity fretted the heart. In Çan Kaya he had a bodyguard of Lazzes, wild-eyed, moustachioed men from the mountains of the Black Sea coast. They swaggered up and down before the house, proud as Lucifer, dressed in their national garb of slashed black coat and gleaming high boots. Their leader was the brigand Osman Bey, always known as Colonel Osman, a barbarous, black-eyed savage who would kill as soon as look. These men were fiercely loyal to Mustafa Kemal and he looked after them well enough, the mountebank in him taking pleasure from their scenic wildness. For a time he lived alone at Çan Kaya, without ceremony and without friend. But even here he was restless and impatient and still worked hard—drinking black coffee to keep him awake whilst he wrestled with problems of law or the machinery of government. He often went out for long, silent walks into the country, tamed the birds to come and eat out of his hand and had bird tables erected in the garden. He talked to soldiers and civilians, anxious to hear their ideas, wrestled with his dogs and visited Parliament daily where, disdaining the President’s box, he sat amongst the deputies, often jumping to his feet to pour abuse on the head of a speaker or taking the floor himself drive them helplessly before him in a passionate flood of denunciation. Mere rhetoric he despised, insisting that any fool could string together a lot of meaningless but high sounding words. “Action is what is needed,” he would
roar to the infuriated Assembly. "You are wasting your time sitting here on your big bottoms arguing about unessentials. Get up and go out and do something!" He went down with an attack of malaria, brought up from the infected marshes of Ankara, and for a time suffered an exhausting period of ill health.

He had not seen his family for over a year although he had kept in touch with them, but about this time his cousin, Fikriye, braved the journey from Constantinople (no light feat for a delicately nurtured girl at that time), and came to Çan Kaya.

Fikriye had been the one softening influence in his life. She was frail and fair and unstable. Her instability was the reason his mother had opposed their marriage and Zubeyde, very much the matriarch, was a power to be reckoned with. Illiterate herself she nevertheless desired her son to marry some well-born, well-educated lady. Fikriye was too ordinary—only a girl from Salonika, a refugee, an insignificant member of the family and, besides, she was prettier than her daughter, Makbule, and with true motherly rage Zubeyde delegated her to a humble position in the family. But Fikriye, destined to die young, was gay and impetuous and had adored Mustafa Kemal for years. Brave and touchingly youthful she set off for Ankara (with his knowledge but not Zubeyde’s), and at İnebolu, where she stayed the night at the house of the director of the Post Office, incautiously declared she was going to marry Mustafa Kemal. Insufficient as a dream she floated through the director’s house, charming and alarming his more restricted family, chattering of this and that, flitting to the mirror every so often to rearrange a curl or admire her sparkling eyes, confiding that Zubeyde and Makbule opposed the marriage and had been cruel to her. Pushing back a sleeve from a slender arm she displayed a purple bruise, legacy from Zubeyde. The director’s wife, plump and matronly, could only console herself that Zubeyde no doubt had her reasons, even she had caught her husband’s eyes straying too frequently to their guest. ...

Fikriye, refreshed after the night at İnebolu, was despatched on the rest of her journey, still gay, still chattering, still inattentive to anyone else’s opinion but her own. Sublimely
unaware anyone else’s opinion could matter she was the very prototype of Mustafa Kemal himself.

She left an impression behind her at İnebolu not easily eradicated. Some time later Mustafa Kemal’s brother-in-law, Makbule’s husband, on his way to Ankara and following the same route, also stopped the night at the director’s house. The family, flattered by his patronage, told him of Fikriye hanım and how she, too, had recently passed this way and had told them she was going to marry Mustafa Kemal. Looking into mirrors, hardly cold from her reflection, they praised her youth and her beauty, her gaiety was resurrected but Makbule’s husband could only be appalled by her imprudence. Breaking his journey he returned to Constantinople where he broke the news to Zubeyde, who was stoical and adamant, and to Makbule who straight away had hysterics. In the meantime Fikriye was installed at Çan Kaya where her personality at once asserted itself. The house was transformed, Mustafa Kemal was transformed. She might be as unstable as Zubeyde maintained, but for him she was just what the doctor ordered. He had a great affection for her; in his own way he loved her as he was never to love anyone else, but he loved Turkey more.

Blind allegiance to Fikriye would have brought out his humanity; she would have subjected him and made him a hostage to fortune.

Fikriye, fluttering her long eyelashes at him, eating grapes languidly, buffing her nails until they shone, staring for hours into mirrors until she almost swooned with her own beauty, gave him a new lease of life. Loving the sense of dramatic as much as he did, she posed and postured and smiled to herself when the Lazzes jumped to attention in her presence. She had a garden cut in terraces behind the house and sown with rock-plants. She planted trees and flowering bushes, built a small summer house at one end with windows on all sides, festooned it with climbing roses, and often sat there when Mustafa Kemal was working inside the house, gazing away to infinity over the rolling, dust-eaten plains of Anatolia. In the courtyard she built a marble fountain where she would sometimes stand, trailing her fingers in the bright drops, watching them glittering in the sun like diamonds, and smiling to herself as though at some private joke. Her personality invaded the house; even
Mustafa Kemal’s study knew the touch of her hands. She covered the floors with carpets from Sparta; built shelves to house his books, curtained the windows in Bursa silk, brought pottery from Kutahya and a painted china stove from Constantinople. Untutored, she yet knew the legitimate face of beauty, was tender with inanimate objects endowing them, with her endearments, with a life of their own. She planted flowers everywhere until the Çan Kaya gardens were a blaze of colour. She pirouetted and strutted, became aware of her attractions and learned to drink. She lost a good deal of her youthful charm and gaucherie, knew moments of tempestuous anger and, under his tuition, grew up. But it was an artificial, forced growing under hot-house conditions. Never having known values she now learned the wrong ones. Since her divorce, kept chaste by Zubeyde’s vigilance, she now went wild with Mustafa Kemal. He had a great attraction for women. He was a superb actor and could actually believe himself to be easy and charming and gay; only Fikriye, perhaps disillusioned, knew him as he really was. Gentle and compliant herself in public, in private he and she had tremendous, soul-shattering rows.

Superstitious, she wore a gold amulet of Arabic good luck signs; Mustafa Kemal, equally superstitious, carried them in his pocket.

During all this time, with the Grand National Assembly growing stronger, and the Allies waxing, too, in Constantinople, Russia was the only nation to help and encourage Turkey. A treaty of friendship was even signed between the two countries in Moscow while in Paris the Allied nations drew up the notorious Treaty of Sévres—at which even the Sultan’s brother-in-law protested. This was signed on 10th August, 1920, and was the death sentence of the Ottoman Empire. Had it ever been effective it would have meant the end of Turkey, for these were the terms: the Straits to be neutralized and administered by a permanent Allied Commission sitting in Constantinople. The city itself was to be held as a ransom for the good behaviour of the Turks against the minorities (the Greeks, Armenians and so on). Should the rights of the minorities be interfered with the city was to be taken away from the Turks altogether. The eastern provinces of Anatolia were to
be divided between the Kurds and the Armenians. Greece was to be given Smyrna and the district around, which included Thrace. France and Italy were to divide up south-eastern, south-western and central Anatolia. It was an absurd, unrealistic Treaty, yet for all that it was signed and served to further inflame the Nationalists.

The Treaty of Sévres could only be a failure. Could the Allies ever have been so misled as to suppose that a ruling race like the Turks—rulers in Anatolia alone for more than 1,000 years—could have been subjected, without a whimper, to the indignity of having every moment of their lives controlled, their finances restricted and scrutinized, their taxes, police and army subjected to the foreigner?

For once the entire National Assembly approved of Mustafa Kemal’s denunciations. Momentarily their ambitions, rivalries and jealousies were forgotten and they pledged themselves solidly behind him. The rest of the country went wild. The remainder of the Sultan’s Army was smashed and opposers were killed brutally. A new section rose up and called themselves the “Kemalists”. The Greeks were threatened with death.

Mustafa Kemal himself organized a fighting Cabinet with Fevzi Paşa as his Minister of Defence and Colonel İsmet, Chief of Staff. Anatolia was solidly behind him. Under his orders, Çafqer Tayyar Paşa moved his troops forward. The troops of Ali Fuat Paşa attacked İzmit, routed the remaining troops of the Sultan and faced the British, whose fleet opened fire but could not check the Turks for very long, and the British troops at İzmit were too few to hold them. Soon they were on the mountains overlooking Constantinople. They used that part of Kuleli Military School left to them to water their horses and brought their wounded to the school’s hospital. The Allies were shaken by this state of affairs, fearing that other revolts would flare up. Venizelos, the Greek Premier, stepped into the picture at this stage. His aim in life was to establish a Greek Empire with Constantinople as its capital and he saw his chance now. For certain considerations, he placed the entire Greek Army at the disposal of the Allies. His offer was accepted by President Wilson, Lloyd George and Clemenceau.

The first Greek offensive had begun on 20th July, 1920, but
had progressed slowly. On all fronts, however, they had met with easy victory, for Mustafa Kemal, in reality, had few regular troops. The country was poor, the new Government in Ankara had no money; the troops were ill clad, undernourished and lacked equipment—and for the rest Mustafa Kemal had to rely on the irregular forces who were wild and capable only of obeying their own leaders. None of them were able to stand up to the well-equipped Greeks. A Greek force marched into Thrace and ignominiously captured Cafer Tayyar, proceeded to Adrianople and successfully cleared the European side of Constantinople of Turkish soldiers. Another force reached Balikesir; at İzmit the victory for the Turks was short lived, for the Greeks pushed them back remorselessly. Bursa fell, chaos and alarm broke out again and frightened people everywhere wondered what would happen next. The Nationalists, immured in Ankara, were practically cut off from the rest of the world. The driven back, beaten Turks were tired and discouraged; it seemed to them as if they were fighting all the world, as if they had been fighting for ever. Men deserted and went back to their villages to protect their families and to try and raise a little food on the land. In the Grand National Assembly the deputies were in uproar; they cried out for the punishment of Ali Fuat Paşa and of Mustafa Kemal who, omniscient, should have seen this trouble coming. Mustafa Kemal, well aware of the desperate situation, remained calm and steady. Facing the deputies he silenced them decisively. He called for their patience and for time for he himself to reorganize the Army.

"We are Turks," he said, "we will never be the subjects of a people who only yesterday were our slaves."

About this time a serious revolt broke out in Konya, with looting and massacre, on a scale seldom before known. There was rebellion in northern Anatolia amongst the Pontos Greeks; spasmodically troubles flared and died, first in one place and then in another. The Grand National Assembly elected Independent Tribunals to deal with law breakers, deserters from the army and traitors. Each Tribunal had three members, chosen from amongst the deputies. These Tribunals, sent out into Anatolia, had complete authority and were responsible to no one. They were free even to decide on the
death penalty, and often did so. The result of the setting up of Tribunals was almost instantaneous; deserters deserted no more; peasants no longer gave shelter to those who did, for death was the result.

Supported by the Allies, the Armenians started an offensive against Kazim Kara Bekir on 24th September, 1910. But on 28th September, Kazim Kara Bekir counter attacked, occupying Sarikamis and Kars in two days and destroying the Armenian forces.

This victory by the Eastern Army inspired confidence in the Nationalists and Mustafa Kemal himself sent a telegram of congratulation to him.

"We are fighting with our backs to the wall," he told the Assembly, "but we will fight until the end. We demand the right of every sovereign state, to be free within our own boundaries. We ask nothing more and nothing less." Kazim Kara Bekir was a soldier of the old type, trustworthy and dependable. He did not always agree with Mustafa Kemal’s policy but supported him loyally. In his off-duty moments he liked to play the violin, although he had little ear for music, and he was inordinately fond of small children. His heart bled many times during that campaign for the homeless, frightened children left destitute. I remember I was a cadet at Kuleli Military School at that time and he sent there hundreds of undersized, underfed orphans. Altogether, to military schools all over Turkey he sent 2,000 children he had adopted.

Most of them are today holding important positions in the country and not a few of them exceeded him in army rank.

He was a man who knew neither fear nor favouritism and was greatly loved by the nation.

He was, perhaps, Mustafa Kemal’s only serious rival.
Chapter IX

MUSTAFA KEMAL always knew that his regular army was too small, too weak and ineffective to be of any use as an instrument of defence. With the operation of the Independent Tribunals there were fewer desertions and on the western front Ali Fuat Paşa had organized five divisions, but these were still too few, and ill equipped, to make any serious impression on the numerically superior Greek Army who were fully mechanized, well fed and had the power of the Allies behind them. The irregular forces were also a constant source of irritation since, although they fought on the side of the Nationalists, they obeyed only their own leaders. Mustafa Kemal himself was under constant fire from the Assembly; in the west Ali Fuat Paşa was becoming increasingly popular and, convinced that leadership could not be split, convinced that he knew better than the people what was good for them, Mustafa Kemal sent Ali Fuat Paşa to Moscow as Ambassador. Colonel İsmet, a man who could be relied upon to obey orders and not ask questions, was put in command of the western front and the guerrilla leader, Ethem, told to place himself under his orders. Ethem refused, thus bringing to a head the long smouldering resentment between himself and Mustafa Kemal. Many of the irregular forces joined with the regular army, of course, but their leaders were not of the calibre of Ethem. For years Ethem had been wild and free and had lived like a king in the mountains around İzmir, ruling the villagers, and taking the young men into his irregular army. He grew rich on ransom—at one time he held the Governor of İzmir’s son hostage until a large enough sum of money was paid over to him. But he had tremendous organizing ability and was a powerful threat to Mustafa Kemal. Ethem’s forces slowed the Greek advance, they fought against rebelling irregulars, killed deserters without mercy and even fought the regular army when ticklish questions of territory or prestige arose. They had no clear aims—save to terrorize the country and rule by mob law—but they were a very important force. Furthermore,
Ethem's men were well equipped. They had artillery and machine-guns and made Kutahya their capital. They even published a daily newspaper called Yeni Dunya (New World).

Ethem respected Mustafa Kemal and for a long time worked loyally with him, recognizing him as a man of authority, a possible enemy, but with a will quite as ruthless as his own. He refused, however, to take orders from İşmet, whom he considered weak, and went straight to Ankara to seek out Mustafa Kemal, taking a strong bodyguard with him. Without ceremony he entered the house where Mustafa Kemal lay sick in bed and demanded to see him. Posting his guards in the hall and on the stairs, Ethem—a magnificent, wild figure—pushed open the door of Mustafa Kemal's bedroom, his mouth curling contemptuously at the effete luxury of a bed, for Ethem was more at home sleeping on the ground. This was a moment of life or death for both of them. It was Ethem's intention to kill Mustafa Kemal should he refuse to remove İşmet from command of the western front and it was Mustafa Kemal's intention to kill Ethem should the need arise. Slipping his gun from under his pillow, he was courteous to Ethem. They were men of equal calibre, neither afraid of the other. In the middle of their polite salutations—Mustafa Kemal expressing joy that Ethem should visit him, Ethem commiserating that the President of the Grand National Assembly was confined to his bed—İsmail Hakkı Bey, Commander of Mustafa Kemal's bodyguard, aware of Ethem's visit, surrounded the house with his own men with orders to shoot on sight.

Ethem demanded the removal of İşmet but from the windows saw İsmail Hakkı's men around the house. "Impossible," said Mustafa Kemal from the bed. He too knew İsmail Hakkı's men were near. Ethem and he stared each other out but Ethem, realizing Mustafa Kemal's death could only mean his own, capitulated. Baring his teeth in a smile he accepted his own defeat, saluted Mustafa Kemal and left the house—but not to leave Ankara. Taking a room in an hotel he plotted against Mustafa Kemal. Ethem was even more powerful than before; now, even the Grand National Assembly honoured him with a tremendous ovation when he visited Parliament. He had no clear aims for the country's future, he only wanted to be leader at any cost and steadily refused to accept İşmet's orders.
Mustafa Kemal, not wishing to lose such a valuable force, tried to reason with him but Ethem saw no reason but his own. He even boasted that he would kill Mustafa Kemal and hang his body up outside the door of the Assembly. In the end, however, the regular army defeated him and, proud to the last, vainglorious and conscious only of his own dignity, Ethem went over to the Greeks. In a night he lost his power and his popularity; even the wildest of the irregulars was shocked to see good guns and ammunition going over to the Greeks when those struggling for Turkish independence needed every gun they could get.

“A man who lives only for his own glory becomes despicable,” said Mustafa Kemal, dismissing the incident.

The Greeks, convinced that the Turks were quarrelling amongst themselves, used Ethem’s secession to advance from Bursa to Eskişehir where they intended to occupy the railway junction. İsmet and his new army moved forward and the main forces of the Turks and Greeks met at İnönü on 9th January, 1921. The victory for the Turks was stupendous; on 11th January, 1921, they had routed the Greeks, who outnumbered them thirteen to one.

In Ankara the deputies were hopeful; the joy of the people was unbounded and İsmet for his pains was made a Brigadier. The Allies were dismayed and, not intending the Turks to gain the initiative, called a hurried conference in London to which representatives of both the Ankara and Constantinople Governments were invited. Bekir Sami Bey, Mustafa Kemal’s Foreign Secretary, was sent from Ankara and the Premier of the Sultan’s Government, Tevfik Paşa, represented Constantinople. In London there was a great deal of discussion and modifications were put forward on the Treaty of Sévres but neither Turkish representative would accept them. The conference ended in failure and France, Britain and Italy declared their neutrality on the western front, leaving the Turks and the Greeks to fight it out alone.

Because the eastern borders of Turkey were not yet fixed, it was difficult to bring the Eastern Army to the west so Mustafa Kemal was faced with the big problem of how to transfer arms from Erzurum, Sivas and Diyarbekir. Indomitably he set to work, using camels and oxen, under the
worst possible weather conditions, bringing arms and ammuni-
tion over mountains and roadless tracks. From the east men
walked on foot; peasant women in many places carried the
heavy loads on their backs. Women, lacking their menfolk,
without animals or implements, tilled the land, sowed seed
and reaped the crops and more than half of their hard won
harvest went to feed the troops. The Moscow Treaty, signed
on 16th March, 1921, gave the Turks arms and financial aid
but all offers of manpower were refused, for the Turks were
still bleeding from having accepted German officers into their
army.

On 10th July, 1921, the Greek Army launched their biggest
offensive with 120,000 men and the very best equipment,
including tanks, guns and aeroplanes. They swept forward
after taking Afyon carrying all before them, concentrating on
Eskişehir. This time the Greeks meant business. İsmet, in
Supreme Command, had his Headquarters at Karacabey, a
village just outside Eskişehir: a squalid, uncomfortable place,
up to the knee in mud and primitive beyond compare. İsmet
was living and working under great pressure, but he had none
of the clear thinking or capabilities for swift decisions of
Mustafa Kemal and the strain told on him badly. He had to
make a vital decision, for the Greeks were advancing, with all
speed, on three sides on Eskişehir with the object of encircling
it (and consequently trapping the main Turkish Army). Unable
to bear the burden of this frightful responsibility, he sent a telegram to Mustafa Kemal in Ankara. Mustafa Kemal
wasted no time and left at once for the front. From then on he
was the one to give the orders. Realizing that a stand was
impossible he told İsmet to withdraw to a line beyond the
Sakarya River, thus lengthening the Greek lines of com-
unication. Mustafa Kemal knew that abandoning over 100
miles of Turkish territory to the enemy would come as a great
shock to the nation and to the Assembly but he was prepared
to deal with that whilst İsmet was preparing for retreat. As
soon as the news leaked out despondency swept through the
country again. In the Assembly the deputies blamed the
Army; the Army retaliated by blaming the deputies for their
lack of foresight. Mustafa Kemal, still in Eskişehir, sent back
a message to the Assembly:
“The situation is critical,” he wrote, “but a war cannot always be to the advantage of one side or the other. There is no need for hysteria. Keep calm and stop losing your heads. . . .”

Yet despite his own apparent calm he, too, was conscious of the loss that retreat would involve. But he did not allow sentiment or pride to complicate his decision. He looked at the situation from a purely military standpoint: stand, and see the Turkish Army wiped out of existence or retreat and plan for another day. Taut and unhappy he issued an order of the day, dated 19th July, 1921:

“Army units now disorderly retreating are to be gathered in the north and the south of Eskişehir and fall 300 kilometres to east of the Sakarya River. Evacuate Eskişehir.”

But of the 90,000 Turkish troops İsmet had had at the second attack at İnonu, only 17,000 were rounded up (the rest had fled into the mountains or back to their villages).

Hurrying back to Ankara, Mustafa Kemal faced an angry, incredulous Assembly. The opposition harried him and made indiscriminate, damaging speeches; his own supporters screamed for the blood of whoever was responsible for such a disaster. Rauf, Kara Vasif and a few others who had returned from their imprisonment in Malta, were the loudest in their demands but Mustafa Kemal, trusting only himself in emergency, shouted them all down. The Assembly, unappeased, roared back at him that the man responsible for this disastrous retreat ought to be at the head of the Army. Mustafa Kemal, smiling, agreed that he would be ready to take command whenever they wished, but on condition that all the authority of the Grand National Assembly would be transferred to him personally. This insolence caused another storm: how could they transfer supreme power, which was vested in the Grand National Assembly as a body?—at best could he be regarded as deputy Commander-in-Chief. This, Mustafa Kemal refused unconditionally. He would be Supreme Commander or nothing at all. The Assembly, growling, retired for the day but on the following morning granted him the powers he wished. From then on his orders had the force of law behind them. He had become, in fact if not in person, a military dictator.

Fevzi Paşa, when asked his opinion of the situation, allied himself with Mustafa Kemal and said:
"This retreat from Eskişehir is leading to the final defeat of the Greeks. We shall lure them east of the Sakarya and defeat them for ever in the wastes of central Anatolia."

But İhsan Bey, Minister of the Navy, speaking to Mustafa Kemal, said:

"My General, we are not living in an age of miracles. You are not God to save the situation now, with the 17,000 men who were unable to desert because their villages were too far away. If you lose this battle you lose the whole of Turkish Independence too."

"I shall defeat the enemy," replied Mustafa Kemal. "I have already studied the situation."

Before he left for the front he issued a decree, confiscating (payment to be made at some unspecified date) 40 per cent. of all clothing, food, bedding, oil and petrol and motor spares. A register was to be compiled of all mechanics, metal workers and men in other trades of military importance. The Independent Tribunals, already set up and operating all over the country, were to see that these laws were enforced.

In an order of the day he declared unequivocally:

"There is no defence line. There is only a defence area, which is the entire country. Not one inch of it is to be ceded until it is drenched in Turkish blood. Any unit, no matter what its size, may be thrown out of position but it will still stand and fight the enemy at the first point where a stand is possible. Units which see another unit forced to withdraw cannot follow. They will stay where they are and resist to the end."
Chapter X

The Greek Army was gathered in the hills and mountains about the Sakarya River.

Mustafa Kemal set his Headquarters in the village of Alagöz where he worked day and night, often in pain, rarely sleeping. During the day he was in the field but at night he pored over his maps, working out all possible positions of attack, preparing counter measures, moving little flags here and there, sometimes talking to those around him but more often than not grimly silent. Colonel Arif, always close at hand, gave details of the rough, hilly country around the battle area. Rafet Paşa was busy recruiting; he worked brilliantly, producing men, food and ammunition. But it was not enough. During the whole of the Sakarya campaign the Turks never had more than 40,000 men in fighting condition. Fevzi and İsmet asked for more men; they had a handful and they asked for thousands. Mustafa Kemal knew that the future of Turkey depended on a Greek defeat, but he hadn't enough troops. He had to count every man, unable to afford to lose one.

Colonel Arif said to him cynically: "You will always find enough men in Turkey to send to their death, with or without reason. No one ever asks questions about the waste of human life..."

His words had unknowingly the air of prophecy about them, for he, himself, one day would be sent to an ignominious death by this old comrade of youth. It was on 23rd August, 1921, that the Greeks attacked. They gained some ground, but slowly and with appalling losses, occupying places of strategic importance with difficulty, clinging to them precariously for too short a span, their own dead lying with the Turkish dead.

Throughout all that broken hilly country—in the valleys, on hilltops and mountain gorges the Turkish troops, sometimes a regiment, sometimes a handful of men with a corporal, fought their desperate individual battles. Under the burning August sun they drove off attack after attack; the final decision or defeat would rest with them even though the glory, or the
scorn, would belong to Mustafa Kemal who had had faith in them. Time and time again defeat seemed certain but at the last moment Mustafa Kemal was there to throw in another handful of men. The Turks took a terrible beating and the strain told on him badly. He never stopped for sleep, dozing very often over his maps. Meals were sketchy and eaten at his desk and his silences terrible reminders of what was at stake if the Turks lost. Standing on Alagöz Mountain, watching with Fevzi, İsmet and Rafet he turned to them and said wearily: “Until they take the Çal hilltop there is nothing serious to worry about, but if they occupy Çal they will take Haymana and then we shall be caught, like rats in a trap.”

Çal fell before the week was out, and over Turkish Headquarters there hung a weariness and a silence so grim that it seemed already as if their hour had come.

Mustafa Kemal, weary of the defeatism in everyone’s eyes, paced up and down, snapped a flag in two with hatred and tortured himself with theories. The day wore on and still he did not issue an order to retreat; night fell and in the candlelight faces looked cadaverous, hollow checked, eyes black like bruises in the pallid flesh. A few hours after midnight the telephone rang and Mustafa Kemal took the call. The receiver held tight against his ear, he was silent, listening, but suddenly his staff heard him shout: “Did you say the Greeks show signs of retreat...?”

It was the ending of a battle.

“Throw in all the reserves to the north,” he said. “We will threaten the enemy’s line of retreat along here...”

Still moving maps he replaced the telephone receiver, smiling a tight little smile at his staff.

“We are not defeated, gentlemen,” he said.

Retreating, the Greeks stumbled back along the way to Eskişehir, burning and destroying everything they left behind. Mustafa Kemal, among his sadly shattered troops, tried to bring new heart to them. He reformed and reorganized the pitiful few and ordered them to pursue the retreating enemy. The Turkish cavalry played a very big hand in carrying the war into the rear of the enemy’s lines, harrassing them, raiding them, exploding their ammunition dumps and capturing their transport. They pursued the Greeks as far as the west of
Eskişehir and Afyon railway line and, taking up a line facing them, Mustafa Kemal, ordered his men to dig in. On 15th September, 1921, he returned to Ankara.

The Greek King Constantine had declared: “I shall conquer Anatolia”, but on the same day as Mustafa Kemal returned to his capital, Constantine and his Foreign Minister quietly slipped out of Mudanya, boarding the Greek ship *Avarof* for home.

In Ankara the people gathered to meet Mustafa Kemal; the streets were crowded with cheering people, the rooftops were crowded. Flags waved and sober deputies cheered like school-boys. The people of Ankara were delirious with joy. For days they had listened to the dull, hollow reverberations of the guns only 50 kilometres away; they had packed their chattels, ready to run into the mountains in the east should the battle reach their city, but now, with the return of their saviour, they could relax again.

Mustafa Kemal and his staff arrived by train to find deputies, Ministers and generals lined up to meet him. There was a guard of honour which he had to inspect and in the streets, the wild, delirious crowds. He had returned the victor and the mob surged forward with their approbation.

“But I am afraid of the mob,” he once confessed to Rafet. “Today you are their hero but tomorrow they may tear you limb from limb...”

He was made a Marshal and given the title “Gazi”—“Destroyer of the Christians”—but despite all the clamour and the cheers he did not lose his head, knowing that the Turkish victory had been hard won. Furthermore, Sakarya had not been a decisive battle and the Turks, shockingly decimated, might be said to have barely escaped destruction.

A few weeks later a treaty was signed with France. Fighting was ended on the south-eastern front and about 30,000 Turks released to fight on the western front. The signing of the treaty was important—not only because of the cessation of hostilities—but because, by becoming a signatory, France showed her recognition of the Grand National Assembly whereas Britain still refused to recognize any government but the Sultan’s in Constantinople.
Mustafa Kemal took a long time to recover from the near-disaster of Sakarya. He was quieter, more restrained and less sardonic. A startlingly brilliant general, he still regarded the Army as his first love even though destiny had set him to rule over a nation. But he brought military tactics into his everyday affairs, insisting on being the Commanding Officer, engendering jealousy, hatred and a great deal of opposition. His greatest failing was his egocentricity; convinced as he was that only he could save the nation (despite the nation's obvious reluctance to be saved by him), he could not bear to see anyone else assuming popularity or getting too much attention. He could not govern alone but he distrusted everyone around him. The Assembly, as the voice of the nation, was often vociferous in its untimely demands; many of the deputies were right thinking, level headed men and they resented his appropriation of power. He detested criticism, feeling that those who criticized had the least ability to do so. By foul means or fair he had set his foot on the nation—plotting intrigues against the popular, persecuting the ascendant. In the meantime he was reorganizing the Army, building it up for the next great offensive of the Greeks. But the people were weary and underfed and men were hard to find. Mustafa Kemal called up all classes in the desperate effort to achieve his plans.

In the Government, too, there was unrest and disruptive forces. The Assembly, having willingly granted Mustafa Kemal unlimited powers in the hour before Sakarya, now demanded them back. They were tired of his domineering, afraid of his ambition. There were cliques amongst the officers; unrest in the Army and, in Parliament, Rauf and Fethi opposed him constantly. But Mustafa Kemal was a man of iron. He stamped on the intrigues ruthlessly, hanging twenty-five insubordinate officers on the way, and brought Parliament sharply to heel.

"Until I have done what I set out to do, pulled the Turks into a nation, I shall continue to be master. Let none of you mistake the compliancy of my actions."

But still the deputies howled for their rights, insisting that Supreme Command should now be taken from him. He told them laconically that none of them could do the job as well as he.

At Çan Kaya he had no rest either, for Zubeyde, who now
lived with him, was old and bitter and as strong willed as he was. Day and night she begged him to get rid of Fikriye who was uncivil and demanding. The parties, and the hectic life had worn her down; only the eloquent eyes remained of the old, merry Fikriye. The doctors diagnosed tuberculosis and wanted her put into a sanatorium but Fikriye insisted on staying at Çan Kaya. She had the peasant dread of hospitalization and perhaps, too, the fear that without her in the house Zubeyde would get her way and find a wife for Mustafa Kemal. The relationship was strange and unsatisfactory; love had, and did exist between them, but whereas Fikriye had surrendered all outside interests for Mustafa Kemal he was unwilling to give the whole of himself to a woman. Fikriye, compliant, could never have been the power behind the throne, for Mustafa Kemal’s own nature would have withstood her mild pressure. In love, a happy man, he would have disintegrated; his successes were all born of loneliness. He may even have been a little mad, for certainly, the line between true genius and madness is very fine and Mustafa Kemal was always a formidable mixture of effervescence and despair. Fikriye met him too late; all his love and allegiance, his tenderness and compassion, were already given to Turkey.

Zubeyde he listened to, for with motherly pride, she encouraged him to hit back at those who opposed him. She dominated him until the day she died.

He drank heavily, ignoring the advice of the doctors, letting himself go to the dogs in that strange, fatalistic way that often overtook him. On 13th October, 1921, he signed the Treaty of Kars with the Russian and Caucasian Republic and by this Treaty the eastern frontiers of Turkey were solidly fixed.
Chapter XI

MUSTAFA KEMAL worked hard. Driving the deputies, and through them the nation, he organized and reshuffled the Army; bought guns and ammunition from America; called up still more men and with Fevzi and İsmet tried to create a first-class fighting force out of war-weary, decrepit human material. With the exception of Fevzi and İsmet he had no real friends and of those two it was on İsmet he most depended. For İsmet was the perfect foil—quiet, dependable, always ready to obey orders without tiresome questioning or attempted advice. He looked up to Mustafa Kemal admiring his sane, cold judgment and, a devout man himself, although he disapproved of Mustafa Kemal’s way of life nevertheless continued to respect him. Whenever decisions of vital importance had to be made Mustafa Kemal never drank and refused to allow his companions to drink while a conference lasted. Supremely master of any situation that might arise he drank only in off-duty hours.

“But how can I hope to make a nation out of them?” he is reported as once saying to İsmet. “They are as full of jealousy and hatred as a pampered woman surveying her rival. We shall never have peace—after the war is over we shall kill each other and after that, too, we shall look for some other excitement. . . .”

But it was of his own nature he spoke not of a national characteristic. His sayings, his speeches, his private conversations partly revealed the man he was—a strange mixture of the cruel and the tender. He was an amazing personality; alone and with very little support he imposed his will on the people.

Protesting deputies were talked down; his satire at their expense was cutting and brilliant as a polished diamond. Behind his back they might plot and mutter threats but to his face they were forced to yield to his dictates. He was a man who became a legend in his own time. Cruelties he never committed, or permitted, were attributed to him; orgies, that made the Roman Saturnalia pale in comparison, were said to
be nightly affairs at Çan Kaya; lust, homosexuality, rape, murder and procuring were laid at his door. He was never credited with a kindly thought or deed; it was assumed that sultans, kings, dictators were free to give reign to all the sadism and animalism in the human race. Tiberias in all his lifetime cannot have been vilified more than Mustafa Kemal. It is a feature in most of us to look for and magnify the defects of the great. It is as if, conscious of our own restricted lives, we weld into one personality our own lasciviousness and cruelty. Mustafa Kemal, hearing of a remark made by a foreign diplomat, once said:

"In me are the sins of the nation. I am so corrupt and swollen that I am already assured of a place in history, for... anything I have done for my country is insignificant by comparison with the atrocities I have supposedly committed..."

And another time, when likened in a foreign newspaper to Mussolini:

"Is it not sad that I should stand beside that mountain of complacency; that hyena in jack boots who could destroy the innocent Abyssinian savage without a moment’s regret.... I have fought for my people, by God, but I have fought most of all for our innocent savages...."

To get at the truth of him is not easy, for we are all of us jealous by nature, suspicious of the new or reactionary, readily believing the worst; mistrusting altruism or kindliness, we are for ever seeking the vicious motive behind the deed. We ourselves make life and people complicated, for we can so seldom believe that white is really white.

Mustafa Kemal faced mistrustful deputies, some of whom clamoured for peace at any price; apathetic villagers who hid their men or gave them reluctantly. There was a mild uprising of the old Union and Progress Party who, hearing that Enver Paşa (now Emir of Bokkara) and Cemal Paşa (who had become adviser to King Amanullah of Afghanistan) wished to return to Turkey, planned to get their leaders back again at any cost. The supporters of Enver were openly hostile to Mustafa Kemal. He issued orders to the civil and military authorities in the border provinces to arrest Enver and Cemal should either attempt to cross into Turkey. This gesture, too, was an instance of his ruthlessness and his determination to hold the people to
his will. He knew of the underground movement against him, he knew its leaders and liked pin-pointing them with his irony. He never forgot them, never gave them rest. Detached and slightly amused, he liked making macabre jokes about them; with telling gestures he drew a rope about their necks, yet they were not intimidated—like so many others they underestimated his strength of purpose.

In the meantime his position of Generalissimo was periodically in danger, for every three months Parliament had to decide whether or not to renew his unlimited powers. As time went on the sessions became more heated, for each three months in power made Mustafa Kemal more surely their master, and nearly all deputies opposed bitterly the laws he had enforced during the previous term of office. On one such occasion when the deputies were wrangling, he was sitting amongst them. Already they were twenty-four hours late in deciding whether to vote him Generalissimo for the next three months or not. During this time the Army had no chief. Tiring of their wavering, of the insults of the roaring opposition and the ferocity of his own supporters, he jumped to his feet and shouted:

“Gentlemen, we are all struggling with the same purpose in mind—to free our country from the enemy. For twenty-four hours we have left the Army without a leader. While you’re all sitting here making big backsides, our country is in danger and the enemy preparing another attack. I am tired of your old maidishness and your inability to make a decision—so, I am deciding for you. I shall not leave my post! Understand me well, gentlemen! I am Generalissimo and I shall remain Generalissimo!”

Surveying them haughtily he turned on his heel and went back to his seat.

The deputies were silent with disbelief but even when they had found their voices again they were only able to mutter feebly; for the time being at any rate he had taken the wind out of their sails. And he had won another respite, for in spite of the clamour of the opposition he was voted into power for another three months.

He knew everything that went on, for even when he was not in Ankara his close attendants controlled Parliament, kept law and order amongst the deputies—literally at the point of a
gun—and reported back to Mustafa Kemal. It had become a question of ruling by force, although he had no illusions about his followers’ excessive loyalty to him. He held them simply because they saw him on the winning side; none of them would have been above putting a bullet in him had they seen possibilities by so doing. These followers, virtually led by Kiliç Ali (Sword Ali) were a kind of civil guard for ceremonial occasions. They were as ruthless as any band of outlaws, lived well under his protection and swaggered about Ankara, spying here, reporting there, calling the deputies to order with a gesture of the gun and as treacherous as a load of tigers. Rauf Bey, wavering strongly towards the opposition, was marked by them; the coolness blowing up between Kazım Kara Bekir and Mustafa Kemal was noted. Kiliç Ali, foreseeing future events with the transparent ease of one accustomed to brutal endings, suggested that İsmet Paşa should try and clear the air between Mustafa Kemal and Kazım Kara Bekir.

“You are Kazım’s oldest friend,” said Kiliç Ali, who had disturbed İsmet in the middle of a bath. “It is up to you to ease this tension between them.”

İsmet, naked as the day he was born, put his arm on Kiliç Ali’s shoulder. “As long as I hold the Army and you hold the Parliament there is nothing to be afraid of,” he said pompously. “Kazım is old and the Gazi is tired, but we shall all go on to the end together.”

At Çan Kaya home life was not sweetened by the prospect of a visit from Mustafa Kemal’s sister, Makbule, and her husband. Whenever she and Fikriye met there was a scene—usually made by Makbule and instigated by Fikriye who took pleasure in annoying her. But with Makbule to strengthen the opposition, Zubeyde was delighted. She and her daughter united to cold shoulder the elegant Fikriye. Zubeyde, when alone, had given up fighting with her although, in the presence of Mustafa Kemal, she never lost the opportunity to make hostile remarks. Fikriye’s position was remarkable. She behaved and acted like a wife; gave orders to the servants and ran Çan Kaya efficiently and gaily. She was hostess at official parties, no doubt relying on her position as cousin of Mustafa Kemal to keep the proprieties, and in public behaved to
Zubeyde with the utmost charm and tact. In private they could fight like tigers and often did but this only emphasized the closeness of their family relationship, for to a stranger Zubeyde would not have talked at all; indeed she would never have come to Çan Kaya had anyone else been her son’s mistress. That she countenanced and lived under the same roof as Fikriye proved she accepted her as one of the family. Zubeyde was an energetic seventy but had little interest in the internal affairs of Turkey, mourning always for Salonika whose freedom she longed to see. She ate alone generally, unless Mustafa Kemal was at home, but even then her power was limited, for Fikriye had a poise and charm, an expressive way of making a little moue of discontent at Mustafa Kemal, that at once excluded Zubeyde in an isolation complete. With the swish of a long, red-tipped finger Fikriye could set Mustafa Kemal laughing at nothing at all and Zubeyde would be left to glower and mutter her abuse alone.

There were often guests at Çan Kaya. Distinguished foreigners came to dinner and Fikriye, in black to emphasize her fragility, played hostess. She was scatter-brained and sweet, careless of her health and her morals, and but for Zubeyde she would have been Mustafa Kemal’s wife. Zubeyde still held the core of his heart; her dominant will still subordinated him and her coarse expressions of contempt for Fikriye still had power to move him. Yet if he did a disservice to Fikriye it was more than cancelled out by her own willingness to remain with him.

Makbule, plump and matronly, certainly dowdy beside Fikriye, resented her presence at Çan Kaya even more than Zubeyde did. Makbule, too, for all her demureness, her retiring ways, was just as much of a despot as her mother or her brother. She was a snob too and herself wished to play hostess at his luncheon or dinner parties. Too, there was probably jealousy; the jealousy that her good-looking brother should have someone younger and prettier than herself as his companion. Fikriye, inspired by the Devil himself no doubt, knew most accurately how to get her on the raw. Knowing Makbule’s strait-laced ways, she took a delight in asking other guests to dinner on the day she knew Makbule to be arriving. In a perfectly arranged dining-room, perfumed and highly
sophisticated, Fikriye would offer tiny glasses of raki to drink with the appetizers. Wide eyed with simulated astonishment she would pause in front of Makbule and in a voice loud enough to be overheard, ask why Makbule was not drinking tonight; was her weight being troublesome again...? This was to add insult to injury, for not only was Makbule sensitive of her bulk but had never in her life been known to drink anything stronger than water. In the presence of Mustafa Kemal tempers were more restrained but still the ladies were able to irritate each other by their glances. Fikriye, it is true, would have grown unbearably out of hand had it not been for Zubeyde. The years of living with Mustafa Kemal had made her imperious, haughty and intractable. The very mode of her existence at Çan Kaya had served merely to emphasize her love of pleasure, her greed for pretty things. It can be argued that Mustafa Kemal himself destroyed her but with her temperament and good looks she would never have remained constant to whatever dull husband Zubeyde might have selected for her. Had she not, indeed, proved her fickleness with the Egyptian? Fikriye was unstable and merry but the coolness of her own nature defeated her and her presence at Çan Kaya soured the last years of Zubeyde’s life; from warm-hearted benevolence the old lady became venomous and embittered. Perhaps as a result of the atmosphere at home, Mustafa Kemal was lending himself less and less to politics and more and more to drinking. The bitter side of his nature seemed emphasized and he no longer bothered to conceal his feelings in public. He was rude to the deputies, cynical with his old friends and brutal to those who attempted to advise him. He was obviously living under great strain. He was, too, very depressed with the internal situation and sometimes spoke as if he doubted Turkey would ever be free. It was his only ambition. Out of the welter of lies and rumour that surrounded his name, the freedom of Turkey was his most constant aim; if Turkey went down then he would go down with her.

But by the summer of 1922 most of the internal troubles were cleared, for by negotiation and treaty, Mustafa Kemal had secured all fronts but the western. Moving all Army units, guns and ammunition to this front, he prepared to meet the Greeks. By now the strength of both armies was very nearly
equal: the Turks having 187,000 men and 100,000 rifles and the Greeks 195,000 men and 130,000 rifles.

The main Greek forces were concentrated in the Afyon area and it was during the night of 25th–26th August that the advance units of the Turkish Army reached their barbed-wire position.
At dawn the Turks attacked, destroying the Greek positions with intense artillery bombardment. The Turkish cavalry, with flashing swords, pounded into action; following them the infantry poured from their trenches and before nightfall had cut the Greek Army in two. The fighting was bitter and obstinate, bloodier than anything in Turkish history, for this was fighting between hereditary enemies. Hatred knew no bounds. The Turkish soldier, ill-equipped as he was, became as strong as ten men; spurred on by his officer to massacre this enemy, who was yesterday’s slave, he killed for sheer pleasure—unaware that he himself was as vulnerable to death as the enemy he slaughtered. It was this unawareness that gave the Turkish soldier his superhuman strength; restraint vanished; humanity, trampled in the dust; sheer, naked animalism was in the ascendant and the Turkish soldier went berserk. The Greeks broke. They fled in all directions, bemused, leaderless, unable to cope with a situation beyond their control and, like a river in full spate, the massacring Turks came after them. The Greek units who made a stand at Dumlupinar, the key to Afyon, suffered the worst; bayonetted, harrassed by the Turkish cavalry, they lay strewn on the battlefield like flies. The battered survivors, maddened by heat and thirst, fled in the direction of İzmir and the waiting ships.

By the evening of the 30th the battle was over, the Greek Army destroyed and over 100,000 dead left behind them on alien soil.

Sitting on a cane stool, outside a flat-roofed village house, Mustafa Kemal watched the prisoners streaming past. These were the survivors of those who had made the stand at Dumlupinar. Sweat stained, blood stained, covered in dust, they filed past him dispiritedly—the hostages thrown by the Greek leaders who had broken before them. Fevzi Paşa years later, when visiting his son-in-law, General Şefik Çakmak, at the Air Force headquarters in İzmir, where I was attached, told us during luncheon of that evening. It was hot and sultry, he
said and, although the Turks were victorious, Mustafa Kemal was weary and unsmiling. He sat forward on the cane stool, his chin in his hands, watching the prisoners. The sun was going down behind the distant mountains, from close by came the sound of rifle fire, a dog barked in the village. The little group of Turkish officers were silent, depressed by the expression of Mustafa Kemal's face. White and tired, he suddenly commenced to flex and unflex his long fingers, making little snapping sounds until, Fevzi Paşa said, "We could almost stand it no longer. Our nerves were frayed... his depression affected us profoundly...." Pointing to the long line of prisoners Mustafa Kemal said, "The fortunes of war, gentlemen..." and then stood up, looking to the west where the sun had almost set, adding ironically, "Here, in these prisoners, you see the centuries... the progress made by that wonderful animal, man..." The scene was full of horror, full of the seeds of a bitterness that would never die as long as one Turk and one Greek were left alive in the world. The enmity was too deep and too ancient to be forgotten in a generation or two. Yet it was a sad retreat the Greeks made, for all that. Divisions split up, food scarce, the men leaderless and bewildered—aching to reach the sea and the waiting ships; straining every tired muscle to outstrip the following, blood maddened horde, who would obey to the letter Mustafa Kemal's historic order, "Forward, soldiers! Your goal is the Mediterranean!"

It must always be the soldier who suffers most in battle. At the mercy of his superior officers he can do nothing else but obey the adjuration to kill. He is no longer an individual with thoughts, a heart, a will; he is part of the restless, bloody machinery of carnage. The cornered Greeks fought fiercely and gallantly; the soldiers were better than the officers. They made the way hard for the following Turks, for they burned and razed as they went. They massacred the people, looted and burned whole villages. They destroyed everything Turkish in their hatred and ancient contempt. The rotting corpses of the dead stared wide eyed into the hot sky; dust and flies and the smoke from the burning villages lay like a pall over the land. Still the remnants of the Greeks stumbled towards the Mediterranean, followed by the weary, blood-stained horses of the Turkish cavalry.
By the 18th September the last Greek had either boarded a ship or flung himself to a watery death in İzmir harbour, but for the past nine days the red of the Turkish flag had fluttered from the buildings.

In İzmir, where Mustafa Kemal had entered as the victor, fires burned for days. For weeks the streets were hideous with murder and loot. The Greek population fled in terror; across the quay the guns of the enemy fleet were silent, powerless to interfere even though the waters of the harbour ran red with blood and the charred corpses of the Greeks were tossed to the wind.

Mustafa Kemal, caught in this arena of death, affected by the clatter and bustle, the conflicting temperaments at Headquarters, the sad knowledge that the fight must still go on, perhaps temporarily lost himself in İzmir. For, meeting a young woman called Latife, he married her.

She was Turkish but educated abroad so that her outlook on life was wider than any Turkish woman he had ever met before. She was the very antithesis of Fikriye. She was well built, dark and determined and, stalking into his office at Headquarters, offered him the freedom of her house to work in. We know less of Latife than of Fikriye; still less of Mustafa Kemal’s feelings for her excepting that they were of short duration. Perhaps war took its revenge on him; perhaps here at last was the daughter-in-law Zubeyde looked for. In the eyes of the world Latife certainly had far more qualifications to be the President’s lady than the dashing Fikriye. Latife was of excellent family; was wealthy in her own right; educated and obviously born in the purple. She spoke a couple of languages with ease. She was very, very modern—until one got under the skin and then she was just pure, old-fashioned womanhood.

Pitting her mind against Mustafa Kemal was dangerous; to be free and unrestrained in his presence was not at all like being free and unrestrained before the men she had met abroad. Mustafa Kemal was lonely and weary; he had worried over Fikriye’s health for months and in Turkey, in 1922, tuberculosis was nothing short of a death sentence. As long as Fikriye was with him he had never contemplated marriage with anyone else. Fikriye was as close to him as his own hand and even put
up with his occasional infidelities since they were always com-
mitted when away from her. But having sent her to a sanar-
torium in Munich where the prognosis, relayed back to
Ankara, was doubtful, he already accepted her as dead.
Latife, whose own modernity tripped her up, could never have
held him beyond a brief moment. She was not witty or charm-
ing, was not even pretty—beyond the usual appeal of youth
—but she pitted her intellect against his and, embraced,
demanded marriage. A man on the rebound, Mustafa
Kemal, was not unwilling. She would heal a breach, stuff up
the hole in his heart that had been torn out with Fikriye’s
departure and—most surely—would give pleasure to the last
days of Zubeyde. Pledging himself to an unknown future,
yet not irrevocably, he married her—secretly and unknown
to his friends. It seemed a tame ending for the lover of
Fikriye. . . .

The fight for freedom was not yet over and a Greek Army
still remained in Thrace. In a cool hurry he despatched his
men to the north, to the Dardanelles where an Allied force was
stationed. The French and the Italians withdrew discreetly,
leaving only the British to block the way to Thrace where the
newly landed Greek Army were concentrating to attack
Constantinople. Love and desire were forgotten for the time
being; Latife was left alone in the big house outside İzmir and
Fikriye already banished to the realms of the dead. Mustafa
Kemal was nervous and restless and memory is an insidious
thing; by going out of sight or touch, Fikriye had betrayed
him, for it is the senses that bound our world. Unable to
touch her, see her or talk to her, Mustafa Kemal saluted
the colour of valediction; meanwhile, in İzmir, a healthy,
plump young woman would continue to wait for him. His
Cruelty to Latife was the cruelty of indifference, nothing
more; she could have no hand in the years that were gone.
Latife was a latecomer in his life. Speeding his men to the
north he refused to listen to the advisers who wanted him to
sue for peace.

“That way I shall not get the terms I want,” he retorted.
“I shall dictate terms, not negotiate for them.”

But the position was tricky; the English, under General
Harrington, stood firm. They had orders not to let the Turks
pass and they would see to it that these orders were carried out. But the orders were weak, nevertheless, for the British were not allowed to fire a shot to stop the Turks. Mustafa Kemal decided to call their bluff. His men were told to advance to the British positions, to reverse their arms and appear as peaceable as possible; they were told to attempt to walk through and see what would happen. Nothing happened; the British were confused, unable to fire a shot—unless the Turks fired first and then anything could have happened—unable to use force. Their orders were merely to hold the Turks up, without violence, but here were the Turks walking through them, quite peaceful, their arms reversed. In despair, France sent a representative, Monsieur Franklin-Bouillon, to intervene; an armistice was signed and Mustafa Kemal secured the terms he wanted. That armistice, signed at Mudanya on 11th October, 1922, was a tour de force for Mustafa Kemal, for it was a complete surrender of the Allied powers to the Turkish Nationalists. The Greeks were to be removed from Thrace and the Allies themselves to leave Constantinople and the rest of Turkey.

Sakarya had been the turning point in this successful campaign, but it was Mustafa Kemal’s personal courage, his determination and brilliance as a leader that had caused the underfed, badly equipped Turkish Army to free their country of the foreigner.

In London, Lloyd George, accepting his defeat with the Greeks, handed in his resignation, a week after the armistice was signed and the terms declared.

Rafet Paşa was appointed to deliver Thrace in the name of the Başkumandan, Mustafa Kemal, and left Mudanya on 20th October, 1922. He arrived in Constantinople on the same day to a scene of wild welcome and cheering. Men, women and children seemed to have gone mad with joy. The streets were packed with excited people and Rafet Paşa was carried on the shoulders of a group of students. Many rams were sacrificed in thanksgiving, their horns gilded, red ribbons knotted round their throats and their frightened “ba-ing” echoing all along Rafet Paşa’s route. Everywhere the people
were demonstrating in favour of the Nationalists and shouting slogans against the Sultanate. The Sultan, that buffoon of diplomacy, had sent the Crown Prince and his Adjutant to welcome Rafet, and also the Minister of the Interior. The latter, on making himself known to Rafet, was met with coldness and the laconic observation that the Nationalist Government in Ankara recognized no Minister of the Interior acting in Constantinople.

Neither the Sultan nor his Government appeared to have any idea of the happenings of the past months. They were still co-operating with the British and seemed not to have taken in the meaning of the Mudanya Treaty. It seemed, too, that the British were trying to drive a wedge between the Sultan’s Government and the Nationalists, thus splitting the country in two, for they invited the Sultan to send a delegate to the Lausanne Conference and, ignoring the Nationalists, asked the Sultan to convey the invitation to them also.

Tevfik Paşa, the Sultan’s Prime Minister, wrote to Mustafa Kemal thus:

“... to prepare ourselves for this coming Conference (Lausanne) and in order to protect the nation, let us first discuss between ourselves the problems with which we are confronted... will you send secretly to Constantinople someone whom you can trust implicitly...”

Mustafa Kemal did not reply to this. Instead he told the Assembly of the Sultan’s Government’s inclusion at the Lausanne Conference and, acidly, read them the letter Tevfik Paşa had sent him.

All at once there was confusion in the Assembly. The atmosphere was electric. Pent up emotions broke loose, everyone stood up to speak together, tempers frayed and snapped—hanging was considered too good for Tevfik Paşa; Vahdettin was so despised for his trafficking with the foreigner that one venerable deputy almost had a heart attack with incoherency. The Assembly sat throughout the night discussing and arguing. No punishment, it seemed, was bad enough for Vahdettin and his traitorous Ministers. It was even suggested that an Independent Tribunal be sent to Constantinople to try them and hang the lot of them from the trees in the palace gardens. Kazim Kara Bekir made a notable speech, full of patriotic
sentiments. The Assembly was packed with red-faced, angry, milling deputies, all anxious to have their say. Patiently awaiting his moment, Mustafa Kemal jumped to his feet to make the alarming, radical suggestion that the Sultanate and the Caliphate should be separated, the former abolished altogether. This remarkable idea had the power of momentarily stunning every deputy present. They cooled their earlier rage, suspecting him of forcing their hands, of in fact, bullying them into an untenable position on a vital national issue, which required serious debate before being either accepted or rejected. For they knew Mustafa Kemal well. He would think things out quietly and secretly and then, out of the blue, would bombard them with suggestions they could not immediately digest. With his proposal for abolishing the Sultanate, he began to show his future intentions. More than half of the deputies were uncertain of themselves but, insistently pressing for a vote on it, Mustafa Kemal forced them to refer the question to the Judicial Committee.

This was a very learned Committee ofhocas and lawyers and they argued over the proposition for several hours, obviously totally unsympathetic to the idea. Mustafa Kemal listened intently. His was an astonishingly agile intelligence. He knew something of the religious and secular laws governing the matter, for he had studied them before suggesting the course to the deputies, and he was able to follow the Committee’s intricacies of speech. That they were being unnecessarily long winded and obtuse was obvious; they were reluctant to pronounce a unanimous opinion and used specious arguments that were almost unintelligible to the layman. But Mustafa Kemal, at the end of his patience, had no intention of losing; he had followed every word they had said, he saw they had no tenable case for withholding their agreement.

Rising to his feet in the middle of an intellectual battle between a hoca and a lawyer, he brought them to an uneasy truce. Pale, tense, he said angrily:

“Sovereignty is not given to anyone by discussion or debate. Sovereignty is taken by strength and force. The Ottoman Sultans took their power by force—for 600 years they have maintained this sovereignty but now the Turkish people take
it from them again by force. This is an accomplished fact. The question you are debating is not whether we are going to leave sovereignty to the nation but how we are to give expression to the accomplished fact. You may or may not agree, nevertheless it will happen. If those of you present try to look at the matter from its proper angle, I believe you will agree; even if you don’t the truth will still be given expression, only in that case, some of your heads may fall in the process . . . as for the academic side of the question, gentlemen, allow me to give you an exposition of it that will clear your minds of all doubt. . . ."

When he had finished one of thehocas rose to his feet and said delicately: “Your pardon, Excellency. We had been examining the question from a different point of view. Your explanation was enlightening.”

They muttered amongst themselves, out of touch with life and with politics, uncertain how to place this tempestuous man who certainly had none of their own learnedness and yet could put them in their places by his authoritative personality. The Sultanate should be separated from the Caliphate, undoubtedly; Mustafa Kemal was quite right to wish to abolish the Sultanate . . . anxious to be out of his determined presence they hurried away. It is doubtful if such dignified gentlemen had ever been spoken to in such a manner before. On the same day the Assembly sat to discuss the proposal, but it was obvious from the beginning that they were against Mustafa Kemal, and would force him to drop the proposal if they could. Cool and steady he faced them, his own personal bodyguard beside him. The deputies growled uneasily and the bodyguard made a great show of examining their guns. Mustafa Kemal, it was obvious, would stop at nothing to gain his point; murder might be committed in the Assembly that would seem like accident. It was in moments like this that he was the supreme Dictator, insisting—by force if necessary—on imposing his will. He believed passionately that he was right and that the nation could grow strong only without a Sultan.

After the Resolution was read he demanded a show of hands; several deputies protested but they were shouted down. It was breathlessly announced that the resolution was carried unanimously and uproar broke out. Nevertheless the motion was
carried and the proclamation issued that the Turkish nation considered "the form of Government in Constantinople, which is based on the sovereignty of an individual, as having passed for ever into history on 16th March, 1920..."

This was the date of the commencement of the Allied occupation in Constantinople. Vahdettin, begging the protection of the British, left in a battleship for a safer climate. Abdul Meşid, his nephew, was created Caliph but without position or temporal power.
Atatürk Boulevard, Ankara

Republican art. The Opera House, Ankara
Taksim Square, Istanbul

Galata Bridge
Chapter XIII

İSMET PAŞA became Foreign Minister and, as such, represented the Nationalists at the Lausanne Conference. Rauf Bey, who was Prime Mininster, disapproved, for he had intended to lead the delegation himself, with İsmet as one of his advisers. The Assembly backed Rauf, for Mustafa Kemal had neither asked their advice before appointing İsmet, nor made any secret of his lack of faith in them. He had himself personally briefed İsmet and instructed him point by point on the peace aims. İsmet, confident of his leader’s favour, did as he was bid and made the way hard for the Allies. He disputed every point as obstinately as Mustafa Kemal would have done, and already slightly deaf, he used his disability to suit himself until the patience of the Allies was at an end. On 4th February, 1923, the British delegate, Lord Curzon, exasperatedly broke up the Conference and İsmet returned to Ankara, having refused to give way on a point which he considered would limit Turkish sovereignty.

As soon as the Assembly heard that negotiations had been suspended they attacked Mustafa Kemal like a pack of angry wolves. They accused him of having gone behind their backs high handedly, of having been duped by the British at Mudanya and reaffirmed their doubts in İsmet’s capability to represent them. A vote of censure was taken (this was later squashed by Mustafa Kemal) and they prepared to send someone else to Lausanne to reopen the discussions. The Assembly, as was usual in those early days, was in uproar. The members were truculent and argumentative. The opposition group, headed by Rauf and Kazım Kara Bekir, was growing stronger and deputies now carried guns in their pockets. The personal guard of Mustafa Kemal, headed by the notorious Osman, was more active than ever. The Nationalists, still suffering the birth pangs of government, were vociferous in declaring their agony to the world. Mustafa Kemal, summarily questioned on the wisdom of having sent İsmet to Lausanne—the abortive result of which was attributed to him personally—declared:
“Our delegation acted in the best interests of the country. If the honourable members of this Assembly behaved with as much integrity it would be better for us all. We cannot hope to achieve success if we do not have faith in each other. . . .”

This rhetoric, however, did not silence the Assembly for long. The opposition, having gathered an impressive number of signatures, proposed a new law which would govern the election of members of the Assembly.

The rules to be complied with were, briefly, that a member must, in the first instance, live within the borders of Turkey; secondly, that he must be elected by the people of his own province; thirdly, that should his birthplace be outside the defined borders of Turkey, he must have resided in the province where he intended to be elected for at least five years.

All three conditions, of course, were directed at Mustafa Kemal primarily. Listening intently, he was noticed to smile behind his hand then, standing up, he said:

“I have listened to your proposals, gentlemen, with the greatest of interest since I believe I am the only one among you likely to be affected by your suggestions.” Bowing to them, he went on: “I should like to tell you all, personally, something of my life so that some extenuating circumstances, of which you may be unaware, may be brought to light. I cannot, of course, expect you to be knowledgeable on my life history or, even, to have taken very much notice of my activities during these last few years . . . that my birthplace lies outside our frontiers is hardly my fault. Even some signatories to this impressive new law you have in mind, would be sadly affected had the Allied nations been successful in dividing up the country—but let us not be uncharitable; the gentlemen are now safe . . . and if I have been unable to live in any one place for five years that is because of the services I have rendered the country. Had I been gifted with second sight, gentlemen, I would have done my best to comply with the clauses you propose today, but should we have been here today discussing academic niceties had I not defended Ariburnu, and Anafartalar, recaptured Van, Bitlis, Muş and forced a front at Aleppo—establishing the line which we now accept as our national frontier? Could I have remained five years in any one place and fought for the country? And
even since then I have been too busy to establish myself in a locality for five years... but I am surprised that so many people in this Assembly have such short memories and are so willing to deprive me of my rights as a citizen..."

Turning to a deputy beside him who had been a signatory, he asked:

"Are you interpreting your constituents' wishes correctly? I had thought I had the respect, even the affection, of the nation..."

His words caused new uproar, the non-signatories flying at the throats of the signatories, both sides heaping insults and abuse on the other, and Mustafa Kemal, between them, suave, sardonic, confident that in the last analysis he held them all in the palm of his hand.

In the meantime there was no sign as to when the negotiations at Lausanne would reopen. Mustafa Kemal constantly and publicly reaffirmed his peace aims—no more, no less than had been laid down in the National Pact. Turkey, he declared, was to be an independent State within her own frontiers, free of foreign interference.

From all over the world came letters, telegrams and newscuttings of praise. India, Syria and Egypt asked his help; Persia proposed an alliance. Hasan Riza Soyak, his private secretary until his death, says in Yakinlarindan Hatiralar, that a staff colonel, travelling with great secrecy brought a message from King Alexander of Yugoslavia, to whose staff he was attached. He was received in Ankara by Mustafa Kemal and proposed, on behalf of the Yugoslavs, that now that the Greeks were defeated and supine, the moment was opportune to invade Macedonia and Salonika. The staff colonel said that of course Turkish help was needed to do this and in return they would be given certain territories which would be discussed. Mustafa Kemal refused the suggestion, again emphasizing that he wanted no territory outside Turkish limits. The staff colonel was returned to Yugoslavia. But the Yugoslavs were not alone in their ideas, for many in the Assembly—even some of Mustafa Kemal's personal friends—were demonstrating in favour of a march into Macedonia to win back Salonika. By constantly referring to the subject they hoped to drive Mustafa
Kemal out on a new adventure. But he was not an adventurous man. He was a cautious, level-headed leader who never made hasty decisions who, instead, thought round a problem to its logical conclusion. He held the Assembly with an iron hand, with force, cunning and guile and once confessed to İsmet in a moment when despair blackened his mood, "How can I not force them to my will? They are all good men, anxious to save their country—there are none better than the leaders of the opposition—but they are impetuous and make decisions in the haste of anger or expediency. Such decisions can only bear rotten fruit; how can one decide without knowing every factor? A time may come when the decision may fall back on one's head like the Sword of Damocles. These men have no vision, they see only in relation to their own limited years... there is not a leader amongst them that could not be trapped a decade hence by his own tongue...."

Hasan Riza Soyak says that on another occasion, when certain members of the Assembly visited Mustafa Kemal at Çan Kaya and referred to the occupation of Macedonia, he said passionately:

"My friends, even if the people of the world do not know how we spent our last strength to attain victory, we know. Let us not forget it easily. However, there is no need for me to elaborate this point to you. Instead, I should like to remind you of something else: you all know that at the very beginning of our struggle we declared to the nation and the world that our struggle was for national unity. This declaration was in the nature of a promise; how can we place ourselves in a false position now—breaking our promise at the very first step? You must never forget, gentlemen, that our greatest strength, both for today and tomorrow, is to be the very soul of integrity; to be trustworthy, open in our dealings with all men and faithful to our promises...."

He had no dreams of Empire; he only wanted Turkey. His purpose was steady, his aims open to all to examine. When some Muslim countries asked for his help he replied: "We wish to see our brothers free but beyond our wishes we can give them no help...."

To the Assembly he said:

"I am not a believer in a league of Islamic nations nor even
in a league of Turkish peoples... each of us has the right to hold to his own ideals but our Government must be fixed, stable, sure of purpose and with but one ideal before it—to protect and safeguard the natural frontiers of our country..."

To the Russians he was contemptuously outspoken. A delegation had come from Moscow, led by the Ukranian General, Frunze, and the Azerbaijan Minister gave a dinner in their honour. The General made a long, boring speech in which he outlined the aims of the Bolsheviks, during which time Mustafa Kemal sat tapping his foot impatiently and cracking the roasted shells of pistachio nuts. The General, warmed by the wine and his theme, grew passionate in his denunciations of the great nations of the West who shamefully exploited and oppressed backward races and ended by calling on Turkey to join in the struggle for deliverance.

At the close of the speech Mustafa Kemal stood up to observe: "There are no oppressors in the world and no oppressed—there are only those who allow themselves to be oppressed. Turkey is not among these. Turkey can look after her own interests, others should do the same..."

Another time he said: "We have but one principle—to see all problems through Turkish eyes and to guard Turkish interests..."

In the meantime he continued with his own secret plans to revolutionize the country socially.

With Latife he toured the country, where cheering, surging crowds ran after his car and he made fiercely patriotic speeches, appealing to their emotions. In Adana some local ladies invited Latife to be their guest for one evening but Mustafa Kemal bade her refuse the invitation on the grounds that where he could not go neither could his wife. He was trying to break the old habit of segregation. Local dignitaries made many mistakes in their zeal to please him. In Mersin, where the Municipality gave a dinner in honour of himself and Latife, the Mayor hovered round the table, passing dishes and personally seeing that Mustafa Kemal had everything he wanted. This dog-like devotion, however, irritated Mustafa Kemal who at last cried exasperatedly: "Are you a waiter or the Mayor of this city? Take your place and sit down with the rest of us!"
Later there was a firework display in the local park and Mustafa Kemal and Latife were led ceremoniously to their chairs. These were raised a few feet above all the others so that the pair of them stood out in magnificent isolation and the chairs were elaborately carved and gilded. Eyeing them with hatred he muttered to Latife: "What a ridiculous situation!" and thrusting the newly painted chairs to one side pulled forward a couple of ordinary ones. The Mayor, shattered to his very marrow by such unorthodoxy, in his excitement sat down on one of the gilt chairs himself and for long after was referred to by his friends as the "Sultan".

Everywhere he went Mustafa Kemal made electrifying speeches, forerunners of his future plans. İsmail Habib, journalist and correspondent for the Anadolu Agency, reported these speeches to the Press. In Konya, during the last night of his tour, whilst he was correcting İsmail Habib's proofs, Mustafa Kemal, in fine fettle, said to Muhtar, one of his old friends: "Listen to this! This is how one should make a speech!" and İsmail Habib had to read it from the beginning.

Mustafa Kemal, excited, a little bit drunk, and fresh from an argument with Latife who, within a month of marriage had tried to change his habits of a lifetime, waited for Muhtar's appreciation. But he was so long in saying anything at all that at last Mustafa Kemal asked impatiently: "Do you not think it good?"

Smiling wryly Muhtar replied: "Dare anyone of us say the opposite?"

"But I am asking for your opinion," said Mustafa Kemal.

"And I have given it," said Muhtar. "It is very good"—his eyes twinkling he lifted his glass and toasted: "Long live our Baş Kumandan!"

"Why do you not say 'long live Mustafa Kemal'?"

"Oh," said Muhtar, "nobody knows what the future will bring—let the 'Baş Kumandan' stay with you a bit longer."

"And do you think I'm taking my strength from the title of Baş Kumandan? Listen, old friend, when I resigned from the Army in Erzurum the General no longer obeyed my orders"—(he meant Kazım Kara Bekir)—"so I went straight away to his office and I said, 'Paşa! Paşa! the stars on my shoulders were not giving you orders in the past. It was
Mustafa Kemal who gave them—now he is giving you orders again. Write! ...’ And you know, my friend, after I left his office I asked myself: now what could you have done supposing he had ordered the soldiers to throw you out? ...’ He smiled, adding: ‘So you see, I have answered my own question to you. My strength is Mustafa Kemal.’
Chapter XIV

MUSTAFA KEMAL believed his tour had furthered his prestige. By his own flaming speeches and Latife’s indoctrination of the women he had set his seal on the country; to have sown the seeds of social revolution was the beginning. The situation in Ankara however had worsened with his absence and petty feuds seemed in danger of gaining national importance. The Minister of the Interior, Fethi Bey—lifelong friend of Mustafa Kemal—returned from internment in Malta, accused the member for Trabzon of overspending and of crooked accounts. The member for Trabzon, Şükrü Bey, a fiery man of uncompromising directness, defended his constituency bitterly, attacking Mustafa Kemal in the process and accusing Fethi Bey himself of ignorance of the true situation of the country.

Şükrü Bey disappeared the next day and his dismembered body was found nearly a week later in a lonely copse near Çan Kaya. Suspicion for the crime centred on Osman, leader of the household Lazzes at Çan Kaya. The Assembly was back to its old form again and screamed for justice, the newspapers screamed for justice too, and the deputies went in fear of their lives. If, before, it had not been brought home to them that to criticize Mustafa Kemal was dangerous, it had now. Official enquiries proceeded but none dared to speak too openly, only in the Assembly were there still the intrepid few who called angrily for the murderer to be brought to justice. “Can we not speak freely in this Assembly?” they asked. Excitement and unrest grew; now all the deputies carried guns, tempers were strained and bitter quarrels broke out over trifles. As suspicion centred more and more on Osman even the gallant Rauf Bey began to tread warily and to pay attention to what he said in public. The burning question was, of course, had Osman really murdered Şükrü Bey and, if so, on whose orders? There were many—Rauf Bey amongst them—who held that the wild Osman, fanatically loyal to Mustafa Kemal and proud of being the leader of his guards, would have needed no orders
beyond his own fanaticism. Furthermore, Osman’s untutored mind would have seen no harm in an odd killing or two to further protect his Gazi. It was true he had never resorted to murder before, but that would have been no reason, on Osman’s reckoning, why the Gazi should not protect him—as he had in the past when his gun had been held too loosely. . . . The other schools of thought were emphatic that Mustafa Kemal had ordered the killing. They argued that Osman would never have endangered himself unless he was sure of protection. Be that as it may, proof was found that on the last night of his life, Şükrü Bey had been seen with Osman. It was decided to arrest him. The crime was, obviously, political, not personal, for Şükrü Bey had been an active, stubborn member of the Opposition, a notoriously fearless speaker and a great patriot. The burning question was could Osman be arrested without endangering the life of Mustafa Kemal, for Osman had gone into hiding from the time Şükrü Bey’s body was discovered, but it was thought he was hidden in or around Çan Kaya. He was dangerous and on the first suspicion that Mustafa Kemal would not support him, would undoubtedly kill him in revenge. The friends of Mustafa Kemal were alarmed. But it was entirely due to Rauf Bey that Mustafa Kemal escaped, for Rauf arranged for him and Latife to be taken secretly from Çan Kaya by a back door. When they arrived safely to where he was awaiting them, he embraced Mustafa Kemal with great emotion and tears standing in his eyes. Mustafa Kemal, affected himself, said: “Well done, Rauf!” which seemed tame from one usually so verbose.

A few moments later they heard the sound of guns from Çan Kaya, where Osman and his men were battling with the Army units Rauf had sent in. Osman died as wildly as he had lived, with exotic curses, his gun still firing even after his heart had stopped.

The Assembly sat back in relief and Osman’s headless body decorated the outside of the Parliament, as a deterrent to any other wild men there might be who were foolish enough to imagine they could murder deputies.

But the affair of Osman had made the opposition group stronger. Religion came to the fore again and for a while the
hocos and even many of Mustafa Kemal’s supporters joined hands with the opposition. The newspapers, taking their colour from Mustafa Kemal, derided this return to the past and the hocos angrily demanded their suppression. Dissension, long-winded speeches, the inability to reach a decision, helped to cause the overthrow of the deputies. Mustafa Kemal said wearily: “Let the people leave politics alone for the present. Let them interest themselves in agriculture and commerce. . . . I must rule a little longer, after that I may be able to let them speak freely. . . .” Parliament was dissolved, on his instructions, and the machinery of the election of new deputies set in force. In the meantime, the Cabinet of Ministers continued to hold office. İsmet was sent again to Lausanne, where a new session was to open on 23rd April, 1923. High handedly, Mustafa Kemal ignored the Cabinet and again instructed İsmet himself, then he set out to tour the country.

He well knew that he held the Government by force of personality, by intimidation and through the Army. But these things could not last; even the Army would soon forget his past victories. He needed something more permanent, so he resolved to widen the powers of the Central Committees of the Defence of National Rights, which had been created in 1919. In four years they had grown strong and now covered the country; they had been the impetus behind the Nationalist movement and the military force that had carried the Nationalists to victory. As the Commander-in-Chief, the Committees of the Defence of National Rights were under his personal orders. He decided to turn them into a political weapon and at a conference in April, 1923, under his leadership, the Committees agreed to be known in future as the Halk Partisi (the People’s Party). This cemented his position, for each Committee had full local power, but were under his orders. Even a village policeman could not be appointed unless the Committee agreed.

Touring the country triumphantly, Mustafa Kemal won acclaim wherever he went. “Together we shall make our country great,” he told the newly formed People’s Party, “You are the rulers of Turkey. . . .” The peasants were delighted to hear this. They joined their local branch of the People’s Party, declaring their loyalty to
him. The vote of the peasants was important, for it was the peasants who would give their sons to the conscription of the Army. It was the peasants who would keep the Army loyal.

Back in Ankara he was received with reserve, for now that he had shown his hand so openly he was suspect. What now could stop him? It seemed to those who opposed him that the people were in the hollow of his hand and they agreed with his policy simply because they could do nothing else; the people and the Army would follow no other leader but Mustafa Kemal.

At Lausanne İsmet was doing well, but Rauf Bey, still the Prime Minister, did not interest himself in the matter since Mustafa Kemal was sending daily instructions. This was a further clash between Rauf and Mustafa Kemal and when the Conference ended in July, 1923, with success for the Turks, Rauf refused to welcome İsmet back to the capital. He asked permission to visit his constituency and Mustafa Kemal reminded him sharply of his duty, as Prime Minister, in welcoming İsmet officially. But Rauf, also capable of ruthless determination, refused and insisted on going to his constituency.

"Very well then," said Mustafa Kemal, "but before you do so you will resign from the Premiership."

Faced with such an alternative, Rauf resigned and left Ankara immediately. He despised İsmet and was too proud to alter his convictions.

The second Grand National Assembly with the newly elected deputies opened on 11th August, 1923. Mustafa Kemal was elected as President and with his tongue well in his cheek he thanked the deputies for their continued belief in him. Fethi Bey became Prime Minister but İsmet continued as Foreign Minister. A gold medal of Independence was struck for the members of the first Assembly and Mustafa Kemal, in a fulsome speech, praised their early efforts. He had every reason to be complacent. He was back in position again; his prestige throughout the country was indisputable and, through İsmet, he had gained what he wanted at Lausanne. The People's Party was growing stronger every day and would eventually lead the country in whichever direction he wished.

The second Assembly, however, was not so much different from the first. The deputies still argued, still opposed every
movement suspected as radical and still tried to curb Mustafa Kemal’s ambitions. There were the same old arguments—Rauf, Kazim Kara Bekir and Ali Fuat solidly opposing. The deputies were torn by feuds and jealousies and tried to jockey the Cabinet out of position, many of them feeling it was time they had a hand in ministerial affairs. They became uneasy at the growing power of the People’s Party and some deputies demanded that Mustafa Kemal should resign from his position as its head. But Mustafa Kemal refused to resign and said: “Unity is essential to us. There is only one political party in the State—the People’s Party and I must remain its head—just as it is essential for me to remain head of the State. . . .”

Tempers broke and the deputies began quarrelling again. Many of them disliked Mustafa Kemal personally; many more distrusted his aims. His mildest reforms raised a chorus of angry dissent. It was obvious that the Government could not last in its present form, and, sounding out opinion cautiously, Mustafa Kemal decided to act. It was now or never. The Army and people still supported him and his worst opponents were not in Ankara.

The decision to create a Republic was not exactly news however; it had been hinted at in the newspapers for nearly three weeks beforehand. Nevertheless, the mere idea was violently opposed by the Assembly and by many people outside the Government as well.

One of his secretaries, Hasan Riza Bey, relates how one afternoon Mustafa Kemal gave him a filled notebook, telling him to use his study, to put the notes into good order and type them quickly. Hasan Riza Bey, locked in the study, read through the notes, sorted them methodically and occasionally glanced through the windows to the garden where Mustafa Kemal was entertaining several friends. Hasan Riza, witnessing under his hand the shape of the Republic, could hardly contain his excitement. Out in the sunny garden strolled Latife and Mustafa Kemal chatting with their guests; Latife stretched her hand to pull a dead leaf from a bush; the autumn sun, striking gold on Mustafa Kemal’s face, made him suddenly a stranger. The notes have passed into oblivion but for Hasan Riza those two pictures in a sunny garden are almost as clearcut as the day he first saw them. Speaking to him many years later, it
seemed as if for him time suddenly divided itself that day; his mind registered the contents of the notebook automatically, the camera of his eye subjectively, and only those two sharply clear vignettes in the garden seemed meaningful. Several times during his transcription of the notes, Mustafa Kemal came in to see how he was getting on, always impressing great secrecy on him which was unnecessary, for Hasan Riza was the most exemplary of secretaries and, still under the influence of surprise, would not have breathed a word to save his life. When the notes were finished he was instructed to deliver them personally to Sait Bey, the Minister of Justice.

"I want his reply by tomorrow," said Mustafa Kemal. "And tell him that it is my wish this should remain between the three of us only."

The Minister of Justice was in agreement and having discussed the question with a few more friends, Mustafa Kemal decided to bring matters to a head. The opportune moment seemed to be at hand, for there was continuous war between the deputies and the Ministers. Mustafa Kemal invited the Cabinet to Çan Kaya to dine and here they discussed their difficulties; the tension in Parliament and the demerits of the present system of government, which held the Ministers at the mercy of whichever deputy who cared to insult them.

"But we cannot rule like this," said Mustafa Kemal, encouraging them to talk freely. "You must not be responsible to every little provincial deputy who cares to make you his target!"

The Ministers agreed with him wholeheartedly.

"Tomorrow," said Mustafa Kemal with the air of a man just reaching a brilliant decision, "you will all resign! Let the Assembly show us what it can do without its Cabinet. . . ."

This was considered a neat solution and after the Ministers left İsmet, who had remained behind, sat up half the night helping Mustafa Kemal redraft certain clauses of the notes Hasan Riza had prepared.

The Cabinet resigned the next day and the Assembly, recovering from the shock, set to work to form a new Government. As time went on they grew more and more acrimonious and quarrelled incessantly, each jealous lest his neighbour get a better position than himself; each interested in furthering his
own affairs at the expense of the nation. There was sharp insult and sharper retort, pandemonium and confusion were rife but there was no form of government. Petty spite ruled them instead and the opposition was hopelessly divided; none but Mustafa Kemal and his immediate circle knew exactly what they wanted. Fethi, having precipitated a constitutional crisis by the resignation of his Cabinet, was silent on all questioning; he could hardly admit the truth. In the meantime, the deputies having talked themselves hoarse and reached no decision, decided to call in Mustafa Kemal to advise them. As head of the State, they argued, it was his duty to help them in their choice. This gave rise to further insulting ripostes, for the Opposition would not hear of Mustafa Kemal being brought in. They feared his interference at this stage more than ever before, uncertain that he himself had not engineered this confusion. Their objections were overruled however and a messenger sent post haste to Çan Kaya to beg Mustafa Kemal's attendance at the Assembly. Mustafa Kemal, smug as the cat who swallowed the cream, said he would rather not interfere in their affairs and left them a little longer to stew in their own juice. A second appeal for help was sent and this time, after another great show of reluctance, he consented to go to the Assembly but on the condition that his verdict would be accepted as final. This raised another loud protest from the Opposition who recognized him at his most dangerous when issuing ultimatums. The Opposition were again overruled and Mustafa Kemal told that if he would only come and advise them, whatever he decided Parliament would abide by. It must have been a good moment for him. On 29th October, 1923, mounting the rostrum he stared down at the angry, defeated deputies and for a moment or two there was a compelling silence.

"Gentlemen," he said at last. "You have sent for me in a moment of difficulty. You have asked for my advice, but with our present system of government, advice is useless, for this is no temporary difficulty you are in. You are both the executive and the legislative authority; each one of you insists on the right to vote on every Cabinet decision, consequently to delay action and throw the whole machinery of government into chaos. No Cabinet Ministers can take office under such
conditions... if you will give me one hour I will try to find a solution of the problem and present it to you...” The Assembly, still dazed by their own buffeting, were willing to listen to any proposition and the extra hour he asked for played on their nerves and reduced even the Opposition to uneasy speculation.

At the end of the hour Mustafa Kemal returned, explained once more the fundamental errors in their form of government and which, he added, he had successfully amended. In silence he handed the draft proposal of the Republic to a clerk to read and at once left the Assembly. The clerk, coughing nervously, was barely heard to declare that “the form of government of the Turkish State is a Republic...” before the anger of the deputies broke loose. Mouthing through the draft proposal—“the President of the Turkish Republic is elected by the whole Assembly from amongst its members... the President is the Head of the State; as such he may, if he consider it necessary, preside over the Assembly... the Prime Minister is chosen by the President...” the clerk finished reading. Most of his words were drowned in the storm of protest breaking over his head like an angry sea. But the Assembly had lost; they had given Mustafa Kemal the powers he wanted by their own disunity. The motion was put to the vote and although there were many abstentions, Mustafa Kemal was elected President of the Turkish Republic. He chose İsmet as his Prime Minister and Fethi Bey he made President of the Assembly. His power was supreme. He was the President of the Republic, President of the Council of Ministers, President of the People’s Party—the latter already a most powerful political body—and in addition he was Commander-in-Chief of the Army. He held the people in his hands yet in reality the people were profoundly disinterested. Only the deputies ever caused a storm. The people, simple peasants as they were, knew nothing of government and cared only for their own primitive needs. To many Mustafa Kemal was not even a name. His intrigues and crises, his dictatorships, could never affect them as long as none of them touched their everyday life. Mustafa Kemal himself was well aware of this and once, inspecting a group of soldiers he said to one of them: “Who is God and where does He live?” The soldier, raw and simple, a man of few words, in his endeavour to please got all
the teachings of his officers mixed up and said hoarsely: "God is Mustafa Kemal Paşa. He lives in Ankara."

"And where is Ankara?" Mustafa Kemal asked.

"Ankara is in İstanbul," said the soldier.

Passing on down the line Mustafa Kemal singled out another soldier.

"Who is Mustafa Kemal?" he asked.

"Our Sultan," answered the soldier.

Such was the nation he had to create anew. His hands on absolute power, he yet realized the enormous drawbacks in front of him.

"To teach them awareness," he once said in despair, "I should need the whole of my life twice over again."

Islam was destroying them, boggling them down in a morass of superstition and apathy. The peasant spreading his hands at some misfortune said, simply, "It is the will of God" and, believing in destiny, sat back and did nothing. Until Islam was outlawed, Mustafa Kemal decided, he could never make a vigorous nation, and the Caliphate must be the first to go. After that he would proceed cautiously.

The Caliph, Abdul Mecid, had for a long time been displaying himself with the great ostentation befitting a member of the royal blood. He received distinguished foreign personages and held levees. Every Friday he went to a different mosque in İstanbul, the people gathering in the streets to cheer him, his magnificent Arab horses tossing their manes and lifting their delicate feet with the precision of the thoroughbred. He flouted Mustafa Kemal's authority quietly and determinedly. He gave constant reminders to the populace of the past splendours of the Ottomans, one week wearing the headgear of Fatih Mehmet, the Conqueror, another week carrying the sword of Sultan Selim III. This behaviour was a joy to the people of İstanbul but a headache for Mustafa Kemal. The Caliph had many supporters amongst the Opposition, who encouraged him in his folly, and very soon the word was whispered about that Mustafa Kemal intended to destroy Islam. The defeated members of the first Assembly fostered this rumour assiduously and everywhere made secret propaganda in favour of the Caliph and against Mustafa Kemal. It was, of course, public knowledge that Mustafa Kemal was irreligious,
Girls' Secondary School, Ankara

Textile factory, Kayseri
Sariyar Dam in Anatolia

Copper works, Murgul
a fanatical non-believer (or so his opponents insisted), and had even desecrated the Koran by throwing a copy at the objecting Sheik Ul Islam's head, a venerable gentleman and the High Priest of Islam. This was heresy of the highest order. Mustafa Kemal was only too well aware of the danger of the Caliph's popularity spreading. In İstanbul he, and a group of Mustafa Kemal's most formidable opponents, were doing their best to form a sovereign and religious movement which, if unchecked, would defeat Mustafa Kemal. He knew the answer to the problem but not how to set about solving it. If he acted incautiously he would start another civil war; if he closed his eyes to the caperings in the old capital, he would be destroyed. Progressive ideas were all very well but the history of the Turks showed them to be so conservatively inimical to change that reactionaries had to tread with care. Mustafa Kemal could cite plenty of examples from the past—from the young Sultan Osman II, who had been stripped naked and paraded on horseback through the streets of Constantinople to the jeers and insults of the people because he had attempted judicial reforms, to the Sultan Ahmet III, who had been put to death in the Yedikule Saray for similar reasons. Mustafa Kemal knew well the passions of the mob; had he not once confessed to Rafet that he was afraid of the mob? Elusive luck smiled on him again, however, and the opportune moment came when England, unwittingly, gave him a weapon. The Aga Khan and an aged, venerable Indian Muslim, Amir Ali, wrote protesting of the indignities committed against the Caliph, their spiritual head. Writing, they said, on behalf of Indian Muslims, they demanded that the Caliphate be respected. This letter, published in the İstanbul Press (the Indians had ignored Ankara) caused uproar in the Assembly, for Mustafa Kemal, delving into the past history of the Aga Khan, discovered he was the leader of the heretical Ismaili branch of Islam, lived off the sweat of his people in style in England and on the French Riviera and associated with English politicians. The English, said Mustafa Kemal, by dint of careful propaganda had increased his prestige in the world and he was now regarded as being head of the Indian Muslims. Whilst all this was going on, the Caliph, perhaps feeling that the time had come for him to show his hand, wrote asking for an increase
in his allowance. Mustafa Kemal replied angrily, "The Caliphate is an historical relic and has no social importance. I regard it as iniquitous that you should require the people to further support an anachronism. . . ."

To the Assembly he pointed out that there was danger to their sovereignty; the Aga Khan was an agent of the English; the Caliph in İstanbul was weak and susceptible, it would be very easy for an agent to use him as an instrument to defeat the Nationalists. Working along these lines, smoothly and with the help of İşmet, Mustafa Kemal succeeded in agitating the deputies. Very soon the Aga Khan became the sinister symbol the British would use to split Turkey in two—the Caliphate on one side and the Nationalists on the other. The Assembly, always fretful and conscious of their dignity, swallowed Mustafa Kemal's hint and metaphorically stood up on their hind legs, yowling for the rights of the Nationalists. A law was passed hurriedly, bestowing the death penalty on all sympathizers with the ex-Sultanate. The affair gathered momentum. Orders were sent to İstanbul that the Caliph's ceremonious processions to the mosques were to be stopped at once, that all the pomp and finery and the high stepping Arab horses must cease. The Caliph's stipend was to be reduced and his supporters warned they might be arrested and charged with treason.

On 3rd March, 1924, Mustafa Kemal presented a Bill to Parliament, secularizing the State and abolishing the Caliphate. Talking of the Bill, he declared to the Assembly that "... the whole Ottoman Empire was built and existed on the principle of Islam. . . . Islam was Arabic in character and conception, it shaped the lives, habits, births and deaths of its adherents . . . it stifled hope and initiative . . . the Republic was threatened by it, it was time to raze to the foundations the infamous House of Osman which had spilled Turkish blood carelessly on the battlefields of the world . . . the Caliphate must be abolished before it could be turned, by the enemies of the Republic, into an instrument of destruction. . . ." A deputy suggested that the Caliphate be conferred on Mustafa Kemal, adding that already a number of Muslims in the world had authorized him to offer the Caliphate to him. Mustafa Kemal, his sense of humour getting the better of him, laughed uproariously, declining the offer.
"You know," he said, "I cannot accept an office so entirely alien to my sympathies. Furthermore, the Caliph is a political leader, and those who made this suggestion to you are subjects of kings—will their rulers consent. . . ? Have those people, in fact, the power on their own to obey my orders. Do you not think, therefore, that it would be ridiculous to assume an empty title—a title with no reality behind it. . . ?"

The Bill was passed with little opposition and without a debate. Orders were sent immediately to Istanbul for the expulsion from the country of Abdul Mecid. Within a few hours, stripped of all earthly possessions, with scarcely any money, Abdul Mecid was driven over the border without ceremony, and within a week all the members of the Imperial family, the vague princes and princesses, were sent into exile too.

Abdul Mecid, although himself unambitious, had attracted all the malcontents of the country around his own unhappy figure and engineered his own downfall in consequence. The Turkish people made no demonstration. Already they were conscious of great changes ahead, already they had lost a Sultan, and a Caliph, to gain the doubtful privilege of a secular Republic. But as long as they could till their fields in peace and eke a living from the stony hills of eastern Anatolia, they did not much care who ruled them. The Sultan or Mustafa Kemal was all one to them.
Chapter XV

He was master of the country—a lonely, difficult man without a friend. He was only really happy when engaged in some dangerous, romantic, swashbuckling drama. The people he had grown up with, the ones he had met on the way, were afraid of him. His star had blazed whilst theirs had never been kindled; he was the magnificent super-nova whose brilliance waxed and intensified; the mercurial hand that, defying all laws, held them steady beneath a core of iron. His old friends stood a little apart from him and the new had only known him in his years of triumph. Larger than life-size, infinitely complex, he towered over them, mocking their efforts, their ideas, poking fun at their diffidence and their orthodox methods, pulling to pieces their awkward, sincere ideals. He was alone on his Olympian heights—could ambition reach any further? Tasting the rarefied air of aloneness, communing with his own private gods, he came back to earth despising his enemies, bored to death by their ineptitude and long windedness, arrogant as a peacock.

"Why do they keep turning corners," he once exclaimed to İsmet, who was an adept at turning corners himself and may have mistaken this confidence as irony, "when all they need do is follow a straight line. . . ? Is it not obvious to them that if A sets B in motion, C will result? Why do they keep running down blind alleys when C is in front of them. . . ?"

"Perhaps," suggested İsmet, "it is easier to turn a corner than to go straight on."

The deputies gave him their loyalty unwillingly; they concocted little plots, which misfired, working unknowingly most of the time towards the big plot that almost exterminated them all. They were men. They were muddled, unhappy, illogical human beings pitting their strength against his impersonality. Detached and slightly ironical, Mustafa Kemal surveyed his kingdom much as God, surveying the Universe. Both the kingdom and the Universe were products of an imagination; outside the soap bubbles both had created, God and Mustafa
Kemal pulled the strings for the marionettes imprisoned within.

In İzmir, Zubeyde died; at Çan Kaya, Mustafa Kemal flicked his fingers at his enemies. Latife, returning from İzmir, cleared the house of politicians and stray women and orthodoxy enmeshed them again. He and she seldom met on the same plane. For all his coarseness of living, one part of him perpetuated idealism, wept for the dispirited and knew moments of transcending, blinding brightness of vision. Latife made no effort to follow him. She was solidly rooted on earth, her spirit seldom, if ever, knew transformation, joy or despair. She was square and determined; a feminist who wanted equal rights for women. She was coldly detached from sensual needs, liked discussing politics and the world, but was impatient of speculation. Mustafa Kemal in his cups bored and disgusted her. She was too near him to see the pathetic futility of his escapism yet not near enough to read the lonely mind of him, to suspect the unawakened heart. She destroyed nearly every trace of Fikriye. She brought order to Çan Kaya, ruling over the pretty villa in the hills and taking pride in its immaculateness. Fikriye had let dust gather in the rooms whilst she surveyed herself in a mirror, arranged a curl or simply sat and dreamed beside the fountain sparkling in the courtyard. Latife looked after the creature comforts whilst Fikriye had danced through life like a butterfly. Yet to outward appearances Mustafa Kemal’s marriage was not unsuccessful. Latife did her best. But people who had known all three of them said that Latife could only make him smile, whereas Fikriye had made him laugh—great, ringing shouts of laughter that shook his spare body like a wind and infected the people about him.

Latife had gained a position and prestige she had never known before; Fikriye, the gambler, lost even her life. For after two years in a Munich sanatorium she returned to Turkey, ill and already knowing her destiny. Mustafa Kemal’s marriage had strained her reason, almost crumpling it. She could scarcely believe the old life was over—all the gaiety and excitement, the parties and the gossip, the funny little house on a hill that she had made beautiful. She was bewildered, coming back to a country where now no one waited for her, to a house that—stripped of her fripperies—was hostile. At any
rate she carried a gun, something that scorched and burned its way through her hand-bag; she was terrified of firearms. Arriving at Çan Kaya, tired and a little bit distraught, she was refused entry by Rusuhi, Mustafa Kemal’s adjutant. He told her Mustafa Kemal would not see her; he was deaf to her stammered assurances that this was her home... here she had lived, here—perhaps she would die.

He afterwards defended himself saying her appearance had alarmed him; he had felt it impossible to leave her alone or, alternatively, allow her to go in to Mustafa Kemal. Rusuhi no doubt acted for the best, yet one has the irresistible feeling that to have killed Mustafa Kemal, as Rusuhi had suspected her intention to be, was out of character. It leaves an indelible blot on her memory, like a line out of drawing in a picture which gives a charming face a timeless quality of evil which was never there in life.

She was dramatic and over excitable but her intention, perhaps, was to be one appealing to her temperament, to torture him a bit with her reappearance maybe—the over-bright eyes, the vivacious gesture, to trade on whatever fiendish pity there was between them and then, at the height of the drama, to whip out the little gun and kill herself. Instead, she died in Çan Kaya’s gardens with a bullet through her heart. The affair was quickly hushed up; a few lines in the newspapers informing a disinterested public that Fikriye hanım, a relative of Mustafa Kemal, was dead. So the pattern of life changes; events moving up to their inevitable conclusion cut off today from tomorrow. Fikriye’s life was full of drama but she had crowded more into a few short years than most people into a lifetime.

The effect of her death on Mustafa Kemal was terrible. He changed almost overnight. He became moody and difficult, was unapproachable and lost all that ephemeral charm that stood him in good stead in his public life. His loneliness walked beside him day and night. He divorced Latife, quietly and without fuss, himself sending the notice to Parliament and the Press. His natural reserve grew in around him like a hedgehog’s spikes; he went out rarely. The confidantes of his youth, Zubeyde and Fikriye, were gone; Latife had only known him in the years of success. Makbule, hurrying to Ankara to
counteract possible scandal, was abruptly cold shouldered. He became nervous and distracted, dined alone and drank alone and when he was no longer able to move without assistance, Selim Ağa his devoted black servant, would take him to bed. Rocking uneasily in drunken sleep he would emerge the next day more unapproachable than ever, his secrets locked up behind his stiff white face. Only Selim Ağa ever saw him cry. “Self-pity,” he once said, “is despicable, but are there any of us proof against it all our life...?”

All around him storm was blowing up and he sat on the edge of the bomb and seemed uncaring. The blackness of despair passed over him and he went into public life again. He gave strange parties that were soul chilling and destructive. Prostitutes acted as hostesses, the wives of his enemies were seduced with a merciless method that would have put Mephistopheles in the shade. The rich and the safe and the highly respectable were his targets. He loved stripping their illusions from them, tearing down their modesty and showing them to themselves as seen through his sleep rimmed, Bacchanalian eyes. His friends turned away from him, repelled by this surge of brutality and lust, even Colonel Arif who had been his intimate for so many years joined forces with the opposition. No one now can ever know the truth of Mustafa Kemal. His biographers can only poke about in the dust, pin-pointing this, high-lighting that, speculating here, producing the impressions of others there. His patriotic speeches are seldom above dullness, for the patriot must always be dull to the outsider, is seldom original since nationalism is older than he. We learn little from Mustafa Kemal’s public speeches beyond the blazing ambition. His letters are few and filled with self-consciousness; stiff necked and unoriginal they now and then break into sentiment that is raw and puerile yet somehow, by accident, give us a glimpse of the vision behind his eyes. His personal remarks have been added to or subtracted, according to the personality of the teller. The books he wrote are full of the art of war, the poetry a little less than ordinary. So we fall back on the actions he did and we are at once face to face with non-reality again, for the actions of public men are so often interlaced with the necessity for esteem, so dependent on the mood of the people—or of the great man himself. Private lives gather momentum from the
number of witnesses retelling a tale. The great are not expected
to show moods like other people, even their tears must be
private affairs. Mustafa Kemal seemed to me, who grew up
with his revolution, truly great yet now, reassessing him in
maturity, I think his greatness lay in the limitations of his aims.
His ambition was for Turkey, a country within certain well-
defined borders. With the mind of an emperor he had to behave
like a statesman. He knew despair but rarely happiness. He
was as soft as wax where the poor and the humble were con-
cerned, domineering with men of his own class. He was afraid
of the intellectuals, for their power was greater than his. He
loved women and men and wine. He despised those who were
obsequious to him. His strength of purpose, his clarity of
vision, led him to the high places and the fact that he wrested a
modern state out of a decrepit Empire is, alone, sufficient to
make him remembered for ever by the people he saved. But he
was only a genius in military terms. The reforms he brought in
were borrowed. He modelled the rebirth of his country on the
West—the judicial system, the schools, the agricultural and
industrial plans. He did not encourage the arts, invent a new
musical notation or institute penal reforms. This is not to
belittle his value, but the genius and the century must fit into
each other as the pieces in a jigsaw puzzle and the zenith of
Mustafa Kemal’s brilliance was already passing by the time
he declared a Republic. He was, emphatically, a man of action
not of peace. He and the century met and flowed into each other
with the Turkish Revolution, before that they had been only
skirmishing; afterwards the century weakened the man. And
if he shrinks perceptibly beside the giants of the past—Cengiz
Khan or Hadrian—perhaps it is because he was a man not
ture to his time. The road of progress was hard for him to
tread, for by nature he was, like Cengiz Khan, destructive;
only the western civilization flaring on his extremities made
him, like Hadrian, constructive . . . but one can speculate ad
nauseam now that he is dead.
Chapter XVI

Dictatorship restricted even the Dictator. In a democratic country Monarchy smiles on the people, responds to their waving and cheering and is accessible to the sight of all. Under a dictatorship the dictator is screened by troops, escorts, closed roads and his own uneasy mind. In Ankara, attempts were made on Mustafa Kemal’s life and, although the instigators were caught and punished, fear rose from the soil like a miasma so that even the simple journey from Çan Kaya to the Parliament became a nightmare. Roads were cleared of pedestrians and other cars, armed police lined the route and an escort of motor-cycles closed in and around the solitary black car carrying Mustafa Kemal and his Adjutant. This was a period of hate and anger; a period when Mustafa Kemal seemed completely friendless, more difficult to deal with than ever and more reserved, no longer hesitant on the brink of intimacy but infinitely remote from it like a man already dead.

At the beginning of October, 1924, eleven of the deputies resigned, led by Rauf, Rafet and Dr. Adnan. Soon after, there started a wave of resignations—amongst them Colonel Arif who, unknowingly, had to follow his fate to the bitter end. Poor, gentle Arif was as helpless before the storm blowing up as a piece of chaff in the wind. He was Mustafa Kemal’s oldest friend, they had shared the bad times and the good, but resentment, like insanity, often turns on the one most loved. Arif, having meant more had to suffer more.

The Opposition was now at its most formidable, for Cafer Tayyar and Ali Fuat Paşa, resigning from the Army and the People’s Party, took their seats in the Assembly with the Opposition. Advised by Rauf and Dr. Adnan they prepared a comprehensive programme of resistance and on 17th November, 1924, became known as the “Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Firkası” (Progressive Republican Party), with Ali Fuat Paşa as their leader until the greatest plum of all—Kazim Kara Bekir—resigned from the Army to join them, when he became their
leader. This split in government was the most serious that had ever happened, for all the people who had ever helped Mustafa Kemal on his way up, were now set solidly against him. All the best brains had gone over to the Opposition leaving him alone with İsmet, his drinking companions and his posse of armed escorts. Trade was at a standstill—partly through world conditions, partly because the Greek businessmen—who had departed with the transfer of population agreed upon at the Lausanne Conference—were no longer at the hub of commerce. İsmet, with the affairs of finance in his hands, became the central target for criticism, which was not unjust since İsmet knew as little about monetary matters as he did about politics. The Press in İstanbul denounced him mercilessly, urged on by the presence in the city of Rauf and his supporters, disgruntled members of the old Union and Progress Party—amongst them Cavid—and the malcontents. Caught up in post-war lethargy and weariness, the people were hungry and dangerous, taxes were heavy and food scarce. İsmet was dismissed from the Premiership and replaced by Fethi Bey, but this move was regarded by the Opposition as a sign of fear and, encouraged, the İstanbul Press seized on the apparent weakness of the Government and wrote scalding, vituperative articles. The hocas preached sedition across the country and the stolid peasant listened uneasily. The People's Party was resentful and discipline began to get out of hand; the Lazzes—remembering Osman Ağa's betrayal—were ripe for revolt. Fethi Bey was useless as a Prime Minister and on 4th March, 1925, İsmet was brought back to power again. For all his faults, İsmet was the right Prime Minister for that troubled time. He was egotistical and conceited, but with Mustafa Kemal behind him, acted as Fethi never could have acted. İsmet was a martinet, an autocrat of the old school and held his Cabinet with severe discipline. He was ruthless with the Kurdish Revolt whereas Fethi had been wavering. Action brought Mustafa Kemal to life again. Uneasy peace had nearly defeated him—coupled as it was also with the deaths of Zubeyde and Fikriye and the divorce from Latife. Ordinary life stagnated him and the dark side of his nature got the better of him. Life bored him profoundly; he had no wife, no lover, no God and to escape from loneliness into the treacherous half-world of
drink and licentiousness was his only means of surviving. It is
terrible to contemplate the gigantic sadness of the man, the
appalling waste of his energy. His swift, mercurial mind could
not contemplate the four dull walls of peace for long and
having gained his way he had no other ambitions to bolster
him up. To live, a man must have enthusiasm, a desire for
limelight, the founding of a family or, simply his own self-
esteeem to keep him going. And after these have been accom-
plished he must still seek for the mystery of creation if he is
to retain his hold on life. Even to the end of his days he must
keep some mental stimulus, evolve some philosophy, some
metaphysical belief—no matter how shapeless and absurd—
else he sinks into insignificance which immediately deprives
him of the will to live. Mustafa Kemal, unutterably bored,
hovered on the brink of living death. Outside stimulus was
needed to awaken him and when the Kurds broke loose from
their mountain fastnesses, sweeping down almost to Diyarbekir,
he awoke into life again. There must be some clue here to the
nature of the man which psychologists could unravel. How
can one be so dependent on outside stimuli? Even the moron
is content to live within his own dream world which, again,
raises the question: what is the moron? Is he the genius gone
over the edge, his brain turned into stone by the blinding
knowledge released at his birth? And, again, what is the man
who has no dream world? One is tempted to reply he is an
automaton—except that automatons have never been clothed
in living flesh. Here too we are faced with the question of what
the living flesh encloses: a collection of cells, we know, of
molecules and atoms built up in such a way as to give expression
to thought, to give movement and speech to—in short—give
life. But surely it is more than that—there is the spirit to con-
tend with . . . the whole problem of Mustafa Kemal is too
abstruse for me, yet I am reluctant to look behind that monu-
mental façade and discover emptiness.

What factor makes a people rebel? Is it a culmination of
centuries or is it something subtler—the knowledge perhaps that
a leader has emerged from their ranks? Perhaps luck, that word
with no meaning, helped Mustafa Kemal. He was not a rebel
himself; beyond his exploits in battle he displayed no particular
heroism in his lifetime. Even as a young revolutionary he
was only real when he was fighting; his courage was of the more obvious type. But perhaps his caution gave him stability so that greater men were eliminated by the course of events whilst his prudence kept him safe. In those early days he alone had coherency; his aims were finite and definite; he fought with extra strength because he knew what he was fighting for. But if that is so then we find in him a blind instrument of his country's destiny—the man who happened to have been born at the right time, the subtle reason that caused revolt and the overthrow of an Empire. He gained momentum by his passionate belief in Turkish freedom, and when the fighting was over and he became the head of the State, the whirling force left him and he sank into profound lethargy. We see him emerging from the cocoon again with the Kurdish Revolt—the dashing General, the great leader out to save his country. What lust for blood and death was strong enough to wake him from torpor? Throughout most of his life we see him on the battlefield—clear headed, brilliant, making split second decisions. But perhaps the man of strong passions needs strong meat to keep him alive; at any rate, a diet of peace weakened Mustafa Kemal for drink, women and parties, where he sung half the night, increased the disease of his kidneys and several times laid him prone in his bed for days. Despite such fits of maniacal depression however he never quite lost sight of his aims. It is true he made the mistake of despising his opponents and of underestimating the placid nation, but he had his position to enlarge his ruthlessness, to tie the people helplessly. Here again is paradox, however, for in the moment of danger from the Kurds his was the only voice heard rallying the people to defend their territory. His opponents, divided, were unable to react as quickly as he did. The Assembly, hostilely half loyal to him, were too jealous of each other to allow one voice to be heard above another. The people, inflamed by the hocas, angry that their religion had been interfered with, nevertheless deserted the hocas at the first hint of danger. In short, when liberty was threatened, the nation again turned as one man to Mustafa Kemal, the Godless one, whose misdemeanours only yesterday had disgusted them. He was superb in emergency; one must sometimes be a little jealous for his name. The Kurds, nomadic and fanatically religious,
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swept yelling across the eastern provinces led by Sheik Said—hereditary chief of the Nakşibendi Dervishes. They were financed by the British and Islam was their war cry. For the Holy Prophet they would destroy the unbelieving Turk and establish their capital in Diyarbekir. But they were doomed from the start, for the Turkish peasantry supported the Army and would have no mountain tribes as masters. The Revolt was broken in a few months; finally smashed from the moment in March that İsmet returned to the Premiership. Sheik Said and forty-six of his followers were captured and hung outside the Mardin Gate in Diyarbekir. The Independent Tribunals set out to try the leaders and evidence was brought to light showing that the Progressive Republican Party had had a hand in the Kurdish rising and that many of its members had been in touch with the insurgents. A good deal of this evidence was plainly fabricated but even the thin residual that was real was enough to implicate the Republican Party as traitorous.

Mustafa Kemal was embittered. He is reported as having said, ominously, to İsmet that "... when personal ambition becomes such a disease that it threatens to infect and destroy an entire country it is better cut out altogether. ..." The Progressive Republicans had failed to dislodge him from the fountainhead this time but he knew there would be other attempts.

The revolt of the Kurds had been partly nationalistic and partly religious, but the eastern Turks, fanatically religious themselves, had resisted them simply because, although brother Muslims, the Kurds and Turks were separated by the former's nomadism and racialism, and from the difference in language. Yet Mustafa Kemal could not afford to neglect the situation and he realized that until the power of religion over the minds of the people was broken, the Progressive Republican Party would find other means of using the people against him. He spoke in the Assembly, indicting the leaders of the Progressives and making it clear that he would be avenged on their treachery. He was the old, crusading Mustafa Kemal, with fire in his veins—the Mustafa Kemal of the Revolution and Fikriye; the Mustafa Kemal who had brought Zubeyde to his house, who drank but rarely and whose brain flickered and
glowed with the bright dreams of an independent Turkey. He was inspired and young again, hypnotized by his own passion and significance. He sent out the Independent Tribunals and in his name much blood was spilled, many an innocent man sent to the gallows.

Secret police were everywhere; a man might be arrested as a traitor if he only made a joke. The people trembled in fear whilst in every village, town and city the Tribunals hunted down their quarry and gave the nation a blood bath. In the meantime, at Çan Kaya, Mustafa Kemal—as if unaware of the destructive forces he had let loose—planned reforms. Religion had weakened the nation for centuries and although the abolishing of the Caliphate had aroused no outcry, this was probably because the Caliph was an exalted personage, a being as remote as God from the hardworking peasant. Abolishing him did not touch the hard core of their religion. Mustafa Kemal, whom many regarded as Satan, could afford no bombast and no seeming interference with religious liberties. True, he had spoken against the Tekkeler (the lodges of the Dervishes) after the Kurdish revolt, but here again, this did not touch or involve the peasant. Religion had existed on three planes for centuries. The orthodox, paid hierarchy of the Sultan which had already vanished, the Bektashi and Mevlevi unorthodoxy which ceased, or at least was strictly limited, with the partial closing of the Tekkeler, and the Alevi practised by the nomadic tribes, which was mystical and tinged with the fearful ritual of bygone generations. Yet fundamentally it was all Islam, with the same codes of law and taboos, the wearing of either the turban or the fez, the prescribed ablutions and call to prayer and the strict observance of Thursday and Friday as the week-end. Mustafa Kemal intended to break all these. The country must be modelled on the West with the same clothes, and, important for the commercial life of the nation, the same week-end as the rest of the civilized world.

The fez was important, for not only did it allow the wearer literally to touch the ground with his forehead during his obeisance but it also distinguished him from the Christian. During the War of Independence the officers had worn the kalpak—a tall hat made of lambskin—but with the abolition of the Caliphate peaked caps had been issued. They were not
the peaked caps of today, having the merest suggestion of a peak, but even so they had been dangerously reactionary. Many young officers, myself included, felt branded and conspicuous and when within sight of our homes or neighbours would turn the cap back to front rather than face the stares and the muttered insults.

Mustafa Kemal always believed in taking the people into his confidence. He once said that his strength came from the nation and that if the people did not believe in a particular reform then there would be no point in going on with it. “Never go against the people,” he advised İsmet, “the people are right until you can make them believe otherwise—furthermore, they are in the majority. . . .” On 23rd August, 1925, he visited Kastamonu, a town noted for its rigorous, unbending conservatism. It was a brilliantly sunny day, very hot and Mustafa Kemal and the men accompanying him wore light suits and panama hats. Alighting from his car he swept off the hat in salutation and there was an excited buzz of interest in the onlookers. He had deliberately created a piece of history in being the first Turk ever to wear a hat—symbol of Christianity and racial hatred. For a few seconds the people hesitated, speechless before such a spectacle—for to the ignorant the mere wearing of a hat makes one a Christian without any further ceremony, an outlaw from Islam—but his smile held, the offending hat remained in his hand and the people surged forward to cheer him. Standing bareheaded under the brilliant sun he struck an attitude of independence; he was the very symbol of freedom from the limiting influence of Islam. He talked and was modest and charming by turn, the great actor playing his part. He waved to the people, not like the Gazi, but like a friend, one of themselves. They cheered themselves hoarse as his car and escort roared away to the Mayoral Hall. That night there was a fireworks display with Mustafa Kemal in munificent mood—“let the people be happy . . .”—and blazing torches carried to the house where he was staying. Appearing on the balcony to greet their ovation he was seen to be hatless; as always he preferred to walk before he would run.

The next day he addressed an open-air meeting, wearing the panama hat. He told his huge audience that the days of living and behaving like their Turanian ancestors were over.
"We must dress like a civilized people," he said, attacking their pride. "We must show that we are a great nation and not allow the ignorant of other nations to laugh at our old-fashioned dress. We must move with the times, be progressive . . . we have already started to do so, but our clothes are hampering us—to outwit all the other nations in this game of progress we must run faster than they do, but how can we if we wear baggy trousers which flap round our ankles and get in our way? We must don the garb of civilization—suits, shirts, ties and hats! This is a hat!"—showing them the panama on his head—"it is light and cool and affords protection against the heat of the sun."

It needed courage to speak so freely to a fanatical people, in favour of the hat. If he could win the people of Kastamonu he could win all Turkey.

"Now some of us," he said, "object to the wearing of a hat but we are stupid to do so. Why should a hat be so obnoxious, but the fez—a Greek symbol—be permissible? And the robes you wear—a legacy from the Ottomans who destroyed our young men on the battlefields of the world—do you not know that even the Ottomans copied them from the Byzantine priests? In the old days only the hocas wore the white turban to show that they were scholars, but after centuries anyone and everyone, who wanted to make easy money cheating the poor, wore them. . . ."

He talked for a while about religious sects, the tekke and local saints, assailing immutable things, outraging the sensibilities of the old, but holding his audience like a spell-binder.

"Is it not disgraceful," he asked, "for civilized people to seek help from the dead?"

Touching cautiously on the subject of women he said: "During my tour I have seen many of our sisters—not only in the villages but also in the towns and cities—cover up their face and their eyes. Surely this causes them acute discomfort in hot weather—why are we men so selfish as to let them do this? Let them show their faces to the world . . . a nation cannot progress without its women. We cannot ask the men to run forward to civilization yet leave our women chained in the dust. Both must go forward together. I have seen how some women turn their faces whenever a man passes by or sit
huddled on the ground—do the wives and daughters of civilized countries behave like this—twisting themselves into contortionist attitudes, huddled in the dust in their baggy clothes like barbarians? Gentlemen, the position is very serious! We are becoming a laughing stock in the world, we must stop this curious habit of our women immediately!"

The fire of his words, the contempt in his voice flicking them on the raw made the people of Kastamonu give him a tremendous ovation; something out of all proportion to what his advisers had anticipated.

“But there's nothing extraordinary about it,” said Mustafa Kemal. “I merely let them see I was taking them into my confidence.”

He returned to Kastamonu at the end of September of the same year to inject a little more of the reactionary fluid into their veins. This time he was even more outspoken. Discussing the Dervishes he said, “... the right Way in life is through progress and civilization. I must take it that the aim of the Orders is the well-being of the worldly and spiritual life of their adherents, yet I cannot accept the existence—in a civilized Turkish life—of people so primitive as to deliberately seek spiritual guidance from any local sheik when they stand squarely today in the blinding light of science and learning. Gentlemen, you must grasp well and truly that this land of ours, this progressive Turkish Republic, can never be a home for sheiks and dervishes ... to be a man it is enough to believe in civilization. The heads of the various Orders will, I am sure, understand the simple truth of what I have said and will, accordingly, close down the Tekkeler at once. They will surely acknowledge that their followers have at last entered the radiance of the right guidance.”

Despite the spontaneous reaction of applause in Kastamonu, however, the nation were polite but apathetic. His speeches never affected the wearing of the fez—he had to pass a law for that later. Neither did they greatly affect the status of the women. Educated women had discarded the veil and the çarsaf years beforehand—I remember my mother ceased wearing a veil during the first world war—but in some of the towns and amongst the ignorant in the cities, the veil gave way little by little to the headscarf. It was a beginning at least. He was a
great talker and, when in a good mood, had a winning way, but in the homes of the people the old women averted their eyes and ears from such a brazen suggestion as the uncovering of their faces and the few young hotheads who, defying parental authority, discarded the fez, soon put it on again unable to bear the insults of their neighbours. It was uphill work making a civilized nation out of nothing.

Nevertheless the national response was disappointing. In Ankara the civil servants and the Assembly wore the hat, but Ankara was only the showplace of the Republic, the capital, far removed in thought from the country as a whole. On 20th November, 1925, the Assembly made the abolition of the fez a law. The tekkeler were closed down, turbeler (local saints) outlawed and education completely secularized. The Persian and Arabic languages were deleted from the curriculum of military establishments and French and English took their place. Mosques, with no hocos, were either closed or stood empty in the villages where there was nobody to lead the prayers. The people were apathetic, but defied the wearing of hats, their pious superstitions lending them the strength of subterfuge. Old men tied handkerchiefs over their heads and then, forced by the police to don the Christian hat, set it upright on the handkerchief, thus salving their consciences, for at least the hat itself did not make contact with their flesh. But the police, alert to such tricks, tore off the handkerchiefs and clamped the hat squarely and securely on the naked head and the peasants, horror struck, waited for God to strike them dead. The abolition of the fez struck at the very heart of belief. Everywhere there was revolt of some sort and in Rize and Erzurum hundreds of people were arrested after clashes with the police. The Independent Tribunals set out to try and punish and hang. The Gregorian Calendar was introduced and caused fresh chaos; Thursday and Friday became ordinary days and Saturday and Sunday the days of rest. Citizens were confused, incredulous and completely at a loss.

Islamic law was the next to fall. It went overnight, replaced by the Swiss Civil Code which was adopted in its entirety. The Italian Penal Code was accepted with but slight alterations and the German Commercial Code adopted to suit Turkish
conditions. The minorities—the Armenians, Jews and Greeks—renounced their former laws which had been based entirely on religious principles. It was either that or flight, for Mustafa Kemal was determined to make every citizen of Turkey subject to the same set of laws.

The Opposition, breathing fire, sat back and waited their opportunity.
Chapter XVII

DURING this time a deputy of the first Assembly who had been unsuccessful in the second election, and was now an active member of the Progressive Republicans, arrived in Ankara with the express intention of assassinating Mustafa Kemal. His name was Ziya Hurşid and his brother, Faik, an elected deputy, was on the Opposition side of the Assembly. Ziya Hurşid stayed in Ankara as a guest at the Opposition Club and Rauf, hearing of his intention, tried to put a stop to it. Rauf's own intentions are hard to define, but at any rate, if he wished for Mustafa Kemal's death, at least he wished for less publicity. Increasingly nervous, he begged Faik to get rid of Ziya Hurşid from the capital.

"If it happens in this way," said Rauf, "we are all finished" —a remarkable statement judged by any standards. Ziya Hurşid was brash, precipitate and obviously cared little whom he implicated. His brother, infected by Rauf's nervousity, tried reasoning with him, but Ziya Hurşid disclaimed all knowledge of a plot, or so we are told. Faik going to Colonel Arif's house to discuss the matter with him, found Arif and Şükru Bey, a friend of Ziya Hurşid's, deep in a conversation which was cut short on his entrance. Faik had heard that Arif's house had been selected for the outrage, for it was most advantageously placed between the Assembly and Çan Kaya and Mustafa Kemal's car always passed this way.

"What are you talking about?" Faik demanded nervously. "Are you mad? Don't you know this is disaster...?"

But Arif and Şükru denied all knowledge of Ziya Hurşid's intentions, so Faik sought out Rauf again. Rauf suggested they should go to the Opposition Club and discuss the matter with Kazim Kara Bekir. At no time was it suggested that the proper authorities be informed. But Kazim Kara Bekir, with Ali Fuat and Rafet, shrugged the matter away and Sabit Bey, the man who had first warned Rauf of Ziya Hurşid's intention, said calmly:
“Why are you so excited? Apparently it was only a rumour. Have there not been rumours before?”

And Ali Fuat added: “There is no truth in it, Rauf. . . .”

There the matter was dropped and Ziya Hurşid and Şükrü faded quietly away. The Republican Progressive Party disbanded and some of the leaders—maybe realizing Ziya Hurşid had not yet finished—left the country. Rauf was amongst them.

The rest of the winter passed without incident and in May, 1926, Mustafa Kemal left Çan Kaya to carry out a long tour of the country. He visited towns, cities, villages in the south, turned westward, rested for a while at Mudanya, visited Bursa and planned to arrive in İzmir on 16th June. On 14th June, Ziya Hurşid arrived in İzmir with bombs, money and a few henchmen. He took a room in a hotel which was directly on the Presidential route. He talked to various people, hid the bombs in a box under his bed and settled back to await the arrival of Mustafa Kemal in the city. One of his henchmen, however, took fright at the last minute and informed the police. A little after midnight on 15th June—with success almost in his hands—Ziya Hurşid was roused from sleep, his room searched, the bombs discovered and he himself marched off in custody. The rest of his men were rounded up and the Governor of İzmir, informed of the affair, sent off a telegram to Mustafa Kemal asking him to cancel or at least postpone his arrival. İsmet Paşa, who was still Prime Minister, left Ankara for İzmir at the same time as the Independent Tribunal, which was led by Bald Ali. Mustafa Kemal rested at Çeşme from where he followed the subsequent trials.

The Independent Tribunal went into action immediately. All the members of the old Progressive Republican Party were arrested, as well as members of the old Union and Progress Party.

Colonel Arif was one of the first to be sent to İzmir for questioning. The boats and trains disgorged the suspects, and amongst the last arrivals were Cavid, Kazim Kara Bekir, Ali Fuat, Rafet and Cafer Tayyar. The people were scandalized at the distinguished names; it seemed as if every solid, decent man in the country’s affairs was implicated. But feelings ran high on behalf of the generals, for peasant and townsman alike
had a passionate belief in their generals—especially in Kazim Kara Bekir. These men had fought in the Nationalist movement, they were popular and letters, protesting at such treatment of national heroes, poured in to Government offices. İsmet, instructed by Mustafa Kemal, approached the Tribunal to secure their immediate release, but Bald Ali, taking his duties seriously, arrested İsmet, too, which everybody but İsmet thought very funny. Mustafa Kemal was forced to intervene on behalf of his Prime Minister, but made no movement to extricate the generals.

The trial was held in two parts—the first in İzmir where Colonel Arif was hung. There was no proper procedure and no attempt at justice. The prisoners were indicted, shouted at by Bald Ali, the execution warrants signed by Mustafa Kemal and the prisoners hung immediately. Arif, who had once said to Mustafa Kemal at Sakarya: “You will always find enough men in Turkey to send to their death, with or without reason. No one ever asks questions about the waste of human life . . .” must surely have been aware of fate’s irony.

The four generals were treated roughly by Bald Ali who insulted them, jeered at their protests, made fools of them, but finally had to release them on the orders of Mustafa Kemal who saw that the situation was rapidly getting out of hand and that if the generals were hung there might be a major revolt in the Army. For hours before the trial of the generals the streets were crowded with angry, excited people. The Independent Tribunal was cursed and abused, the people had lost faith in it, for every single member of the disbanded Progressive Republicans and the old Union and Progress Party had been arrested whether guilty or not. Most of them were hung, on no evidence, or thrown into prison. But even the few who were released were finished, their political careers were at an end, their private lives had been stripped bare before the nation. Rauf and the others who had escaped in time were sentenced to fifteen years imprisonment. The arrival of the generals to the Court raised a wild cheering in the streets, hats were lifted respectfully and the many officers present saluted with the precision of a military inspection. The daring exploits of the generals were recounted and chanted defiantly before the entrance to the overcrowded Court.
Bald Ali conducting their cases, was vicious and fearsome, yet even his invective was noticeably not up to its old standard. Released eventually, the generals were finished as possible threats to Mustafa Kemal. Despite the frenzied cheering of the people, the carrying of them on shoulders through thronged streets, nevertheless they had to retire from public life.

Cavid, who was tried in Ankara, defended himself brilliantly but the verdict for him was a foregone conclusion. Crying "This is injustice!" he allowed the gipsy hangman to slip the noose over his head, tighten it and kick away the chair.

With the ending of the trials the nation settled into lethargy again. The Government newspapers had played up Mustafa Kemal as the great hero and the vanquished as destroyers of the nation, devourers of the bread going into little children's mouths. Yet the terrible injustice apparent at those trials will remain as a black mark in the history of the Turkish Republic.

With his opponents hanged or rotting in prison, Mustafa Kemal no longer had anyone to oppose him. The nation, taking their colour from the newspapers, demonstrated their joy that the İzmir plot had failed, yet the Tribunals and the hangings had taught each and every man that it was dangerous to meddle with the Gazi. They themselves had elected him to power, now they must put up with his reforms and the complete tearing away of everything they had ever known. His ideas were ruthless. He once said: "When the surgeon wields the knife he must be swift to cut away the canker. Not until the canker has been removed can the patient grow healthy."

He was progressing fast. When he had decided to do away with the Islamic laws, he had done away with them entirely without wasting time trying to amend them or adapting them to suit the Republic. His boast was to take everything from the West that was good, but in so doing he neglected to take into consideration the state of his people. Having lived in primitive, eastern squalor for centuries they had neither the inclination nor the mental effort necessary for such reforms to be effective. The semi-barbarity of the peasants believed in an eye for an eye; the justice of the Italian Penal Code was far above their heads and even considered effete. Village feuds and local vendettas continued to be settled in the way they had always
been—with the death of one or the other of the injured parties. By persuasion, Mustafa Kemal tried to make them see the error of their ways. "To have the goodwill of the people is my one desire," he said repeatedly to İşmet. "What is the use of forcing my will on them if they do not believe from their heart that my way is better for them...?"

Another time he said: "Turkey must be a civilized nation in every meaning of the term."

When a hoca was brave enough to deplore in front of him the passing of religious instruction in the schools, he replied sternly: "Religion is a personal, not a national affair. Let every man decide for himself. In the old days the children were driven to the mosques with sticks, now they are free to decide for themselves, but for the truly religious there will be no falling away. I am not against religion; I am only against religion interfering with the State and the affairs of the country. ..."

All religious training schools were now rigidly controlled and the Prime Minister had the sole right, as head of religious affairs, to appoint or dismiss hocas. The legal reforms had severed all connection between religion and daily life, but had guaranteed full freedom of worship. When in 1928 the Constitution was amended by the removal of the statement that "Islam was the State religion", the severance was complete. The Koran was translated into Turkish and all mosque services conducted in Turkish. The people, recognizing that he was not interfering with their beliefs—although hesitant to pronounce the words of the Koran in anything but the sacred Arabic—made no protest. The older generation continued much as they had always done but the new and the raw lapped up Mustafa Kemal's words as if they had been God's.

Although there was now nobody to oppose him he still attended the Assembly and made a point of attacking any deputies who did not dress as he wished them to. He insisted on formal wear in Parliament, the top hat and the morning suit and all the appurtenances of civilization. The word became an obsession with him; he spoke of its beauty and advantages much as the mystic might talk of Paradise.

A School of Law was opened in Ankara, old judges were
retired on pension and up and coming young lawyers took their places. The Swiss Civil Code had brought the women into the limelight and Mustafa Kemal encouraged, coaxed and finally forced them to discard their veils. He gave them the right to vote in municipal elections. He gave them positions in the People’s Party on the same level with the men. He persuaded them into law, medicine, industry, dentistry and social services. The women bloomed overnight and met his advances with humour and courage—and, indeed, it took courage to overcome the genuine repugnance of their elders and the venom of their neighbours. Marriage underwent change, divorce became more difficult. Under Islamic law a man was allowed four wives and divorce was by word of mouth. Women were little more than slaves. They knew nothing of education, covered their faces whenever they went into public and had no freedom of choice on marriage. Amongst the peasantry their lot had been even harder, for husbands were frequently away on military service and the women had to till the land and harvest the grain. Under Islamic law it had been a man’s world, but under the Swiss Civil Code the world was suddenly equalized. The young women set out to be civilized, to wear high heels and glamorous clothes and to flick their fingers at the men. Mustafa Kemal gave them every encouragement and still preached up and down the country in their favour. His propaganda on their behalf was intense and unhesitant, for he knew that civilization—that bright dream—was impossible unless the Turkish woman was as free and as knowledgeable as her European sister. He recalled to memory the War of Independence where women had nursed, carried ammunition and fought beside the men. He resurrected, from God knows where, the high status enjoyed by the women of ancient days before the first nomadic Turkish tribes settled in Anatolia and the matriarchal status was lost in contact with the decadent Byzantines who gave them the harem. With polygamy illegal and divorce more difficult, marriages—which had become a purely civil ceremony—dwindled for a time, for the men had now to choose with greater care.

Having started the women on their way, Mustafa Kemal now turned to the problem of language reform. This was a stiff task but he set various professors to work, added his own
Suggestions and interference and then prepared to take the people into his confidence again.

Before the Republic most of the schools were influenced by the mosques and, not infrequently, the local hoca was the only teacher. The method of teaching was Arabic in character and religious in intention. Even in the better schools teaching was stylized, cramped and scholastic, and as the Arabic characters for Turkish words are so difficult to learn, the nation was almost completely illiterate. The well-to-do Turks studied abroad, spoke excellent French and German, but ponderous Turkish considerably interlarded with Arabic and Persian words brought from the Classics. Not unnaturally, the wealthy classes spoke a different language from the poor people and thus was created a stiff, formal official Ottoman Turkish which was tediously cumbersome in the transaction of affairs of State. Mustafa Kemal wrote a beautiful Arabic script himself and had been trained all his life in Ottoman Turkish—this makes his early speeches exceedingly difficult to translate—but he set to work to learn the new Latin alphabet and forced the deputies to learn it as well. The changing of the form of the alphabet was probably one of the most dramatic reforms he had undertaken, but it had its lighter side—as when İsmet made a gloriously muddled speech in the Assembly, in his newly acquired Turkish, and neither the deputies nor himself understood a word.

Elementary education had already been made compulsory; the private schools already existing had to conform to the curriculum laid down by the State and were constantly under Government control.

Evening classes were opened so that adults could attend; it was made compulsory for deputies, professional people and all civil servants to master the new alphabet (and, one might add, almost a new language) by a certain date. Mustafa Kemal himself toured the country with a blackboard and a box of coloured chalks and gave demonstrations in the towns and the villages. Hectoring, speechifying, anxious to show his own proficiency, he stumped up and down the country like a schoolmaster. The eagerness of the illiterate to become literate was touching. In the cities porters, street sellers, artisans and shopkeepers gathered to buy the newspapers brought out for
the first time in the new Latin characters. Coffee houses became reading rooms; in the villages the children ran after the trains begging for "gazete" and fought for the torn scraps of newspapers flung out to them. The monopoly of the educated, the priests and the intellectuals was over, yet literacy in the new alphabet had the advantage, as far as Mustafa Kemal was concerned, in cutting off the Turks from the old ideas, for it was still impossible for the masses to read the vast quantity of poetry and literature already published in the Arabic script. Many years were to pass before popular, cheap editions of the Classics were to be translated into the new Turkish and by then the danger might be said to be over.

The children learned quickly and easily. With the introduction of the metric system education became simplified, and young and old did their best to stumble along that bright road that was Mustafa Kemal's dream.
Chapter XVIII

There was no turning back now; the people had taken the first step along the long white road of civilization and had to go on. In the early years they had to walk alone, isolated and objects of great curiosity, for many of their brethren they had left behind in the morass of eastern ways and their bright plumaged brothers of the West were already so far ahead of them on the road they could barely distinguish them. For the vast majority of the Turks it was like walking naked in a foreign land; values changed, old shibboleths were transmuted in the melting pot and sometimes emerged queerly recognizable, like the reverse face of a coin. It was the whole psychology of a people that was being changed. For the first time in their history young men and girls met on equal ground, danced together, studied together in the mixed schools and the Universities, sat on committees and eyed each other with a half-sheepish look of wonder that each were not the mysterious entities previously imagined.

Mustafa Kemal delighted in breaking down their awkwardness, yet his vanity was in himself not in what he had done. When one of the deputies, rushing forward excitedly to kiss his hands after a youth rally, said emotionally: "Paşam! You have made us great!" he replied: "The greatness was in yourselves. I did nothing but release it... a small thing in comparison with the generosity of your own minds in accepting my teaching. The master must always bow before the pupil for tolerating his pedantry...."

He never tired of personal contact with the people. Many a time he sat outside a mud house talking with an old peasant woman, unrecognized, refusing his usual escort, lest the ceremony frighten the old woman into silence. He talked to the children, showed them new games to play and entered the cafés to gossip with the old men, encouraging their reminiscences or their dissatisfaction with the present régime. His private life was greatly exaggerated by the foreigner, but in truth, his parties and his dubious women suited the country's
temperament. The Turk was and still is an Oriental—despite his worship of the Occidental system—and only force of circumstances has made him give up the sybaritic luxury of his forefathers. Allied with the West by Pacts, Treaties, Commerce, Cultural exchanges and the high cost of living, his natural instincts have had to undergo a metamorphosis. But put a Turk and an Englishman side by side at a party and the Turk will go for the beautiful women, the Englishman to the bar. The Turk will lead the conversation in the direction of bed but the Englishman will look for a crony to discuss the latest cricket score. The Turk is labelled by the Englishman as “phallic” whereas the Turk sums up his companion laconically as an “eşek”. Mustafa Kemal, alone in Çan Kaya, was often bored to distraction. The card parties, the raki drinking were moments of conviviality in an otherwise bleak life. He rarely slept, living on nervous energy, and liked driving off somewhere very fast, stopping anywhere, en route for nowhere, to pass the time of the day with a startled labourer or drop in on a company of soldiers, tasting their meals, finding out what they did in civil life, discussing their needs. In his time the beating of soldiers by officers was forbidden and so severely punished that even the most brutal officers hesitated on the brink of assault. One may criticize that to be friendly with the people was in his own interests—excepting that his position was already inviolate. He was the head of the State for as long as he lived. He had no illusions about himself and for all his worship of the western way of life still took pleasure in old Turkish music and confessed that his favourite dish was pilav and fasulya! His chef always kept a fresh supply available and often Mustafa Kemal, after drinking hard all night, would creep into the kitchen to help himself to a plate of rice and beans at the kitchen table. His chef, always alert to noises in his sanctum, emerging in his nightshirt, received the sheepish apologies of the Gazi who had not wished to awaken him. Whilst his companions upstairs in the salon squabbled drunkenly over their cards or snored at the table, he would finish his pilav and fasulya, take a cold shower and go off in the dawn light to his model farm which was the pride of his life. With his favourite dog slipping along beside him he would stride through the grey countryside whistling to the newly
awakened birds, chastising the dog for bounding after a rabbit, and finally, reaching the stables, whisper love nonsense to his horse, feeding him with sugar stolen from the kitchen. These are some of the paradoxes of Mustafa Kemal’s life—the cynical delight in his guests’ swift lapses into drunkenness and the man with his dog pouring out his heart on a dumb animal.

Once when Riza Pehlevi, the Shah of Persia, visited him and they were touring in an open car, watching manoeuvres, a ceremonial ram was sacrificed before the foundations of a new barracks. Mustafa Kemal, paling, turned from the soldier wielding the knife and the Shah said wonderingly: “Great Gazi! a man like you, who has been in many wars—how can you shrink at the sight of a ram being killed?”

“This is something different,” Mustafa Kemal replied. “On the battlefield I walk across the dead bodies with immunity but they have died for a reason.”

“But so has the ram,” persisted the Shah. “He has died so that the new building may be blessed!”

“No. The soldiers died defending an ideal—the ram was murdered in cold blood. There can be no comparison.”

With the young and the helpless, with the soldiers and the old men of the cafés, he was at his best. When there was work to be done he was untiring; often after a telephone call he would leave his card parties and the women and disappear for a couple of days; locked in his study, invigorated by innumerable cups of black coffee, he would finish whatever task he had set out to do and, emerging satisfied, would continue the party as if he had never been away.

He was, however, a hard taskmaster. Officials and senior officers were expected to know their jobs perfectly. He had no patience with stupidity or the man who always agreed with him. He asked searching questions and expected prompt, crystal clear replies. He saw himself as the father of the country, always prefacing remarks or advice with the words “My child”. This was irrespective of the age of his companion; even the venerable old men he called “child”. He rarely swore, never used obscene language; when he was angry his strongest epithet was “eşek!” (donkey!).

Once asked by an enterprising young American journalist what was the secret of his success he replied testily:
“There is no secret. Whenever I have a job to do I first clear the problem of difficulties and what is left is the obvious answer. Would you call that success?”

His sense of humour was sardonic. One of his favourite stories was: “During the Ottoman Empire whenever the Sultan became conceited his advisers used to say: ‘There is no need to be conceited, God is bigger than you.’ Nowadays, if I try to be conceited, İsmet will say: ‘There is no need for it. The nation is bigger than you. . . .’”

After a prolonged bout of illness his doctors advised a change of air and he bid a reluctant adieu to Çan Kaya and his model farm and went to Yalova, a thermal spa on the shores of the Marmara, where he rested until he felt well enough to make the journey to the Dolmabahçe Saray—the old waterfront Palace of the Sultan. Yalova had taken his fancy and it was he who instituted the building of fine hotels, modern asphalted roads and the restoration of the Roman baths. In Ankara, İsmet was having the time of his life and with Mustafa Kemal out of the way, impressed his own existence on the country. He set out on a great policy of industrialization at the expense of agriculture; he had either built—or was about to build—blastworks at Karabük, factories, silos to house the country’s grain, railroads from one end of Turkey to the other, hospitals and village schools. The finances were rocking and the truth was, of course, that Turkey could not afford to industrialize at such a rate. High taxation recovered part of the money needed and the creation of State monopolies on sugar, spirits, cigarettes, petrol, matches, salt and shipping, sent a large number of firms in İstanbul into bankruptcy. The cost of living had risen to fantastic heights and many people complained that they had been better off under the Sultan. Mustafa Kemal heard these rumours and angrily accused İsmet of feathering his own nest. Corruption was certainly rife, for there were too many tales of Ministers becoming rich overnight and of using restrictions to their own ends. The people were dissatisfied. There was no use having fine railroads when they hadn’t the money to buy even the simplest necessities of life.

Mustafa Kemal wished to try the experiment of an opposition which would make the Republic truly democratic—his ideal.
During that time he received a letter from his former Prime Minister, Fethi Bey, who was Ambassador to France. Fethi complained that the heavy taxation imposed by İsmet’s government was draining the country. Exports had dwindled because there was no active policy of protecting agriculture and national industries. In the Assembly, it was obvious, there was scarcely any debate and the Cabinet, unchecked, had grown fat with power and were completely out of touch with the true state of affairs in the country. Fethi suggested that the creation of a new party, an actively opposing force, was necessary.

Mustafa Kemal liked the idea and replied from Yalova, as follows, on the 11th September, 1930:

“...as long as I am President of the Republic you may be sure that any Party, whether in power or not, will receive equal treatment ... your political activities will not meet with any difficulties ... since my youth I have been in favour of free discussion of national affairs by men of goodwill who have the nation’s interests at heart. ...”

Fethi straightway declared the formation of the Liberal Republican Party and published his aims in a letter to the newspaper Yarın (Tomorrow). These were to fight for and secure the freedom of the Press, freedom of speech, reduction of taxes, the lessening of State controls and the merciless stamping out of corruption. Mustafa Kemal and Fethi met frequently, then Fethi set off to tour the country. The newspapers carried headlines of his party aims and the excited people, still dangerously close to the surface of the old days, thought that a great religious revival was about to take place. In the villages and small towns they cleaned the mosques, refurbished the “türbes”, took out the forbidden fez and gathered to discuss this great new event they had all heard about. Fethi was greeted with acclaim, Government newspaper offices were stoned, and there were clashes with the police. Shots were fired, several people killed and the police, unexpectedly called upon to defend the two sides, were helpless yet belaboured about them with great enthusiasm. The whole business was beyond theirs and the people’s grasp. How could the Government encourage the Opposition? Surely it was their duty to silence it or admit their own defeat? Angry crowds bore banners calling on a return to Islam, Fethi was hailed as their
deliverer from the evil Republic and posters bearing İsmet’s picture torn and trampled in the gutter.

In Ankara, the Assembly were stunned by the criticism of their policies by the new Party. Having done pretty well as they liked for years they roared their disapproval of the upstarts who knew nothing of government. It was almost like the old days, with abuse and insult heaped one upon the other and Mustafa Kemal, in the President’s box, thoroughly approving of their discomfort. İsmet’s policies were criticized, his building of useless railroads and municipal gardens, the drain on the Treasury and the dissatisfaction of the people. The October elections, for which Mustafa Kemal had lifted the rigid censorship on Press and free speech, were chaotic and disturbed. Looking to Fethi to save them from the tyrannies of İsmet, the people fled to his side, but the local authorities—perhaps in an attempt to save the Government from the consequences of its own folly—tricked, bullied and beat the electors into voting for İsmet’s parliament. The culmination of that disastrous period was at Menemen where a courageous young lieutenant, Mustafa Kublay, ordering a crowd to disperse from a mosque was injured by a Dervish priest and his head sawn off with a rusty hacksaw. The watching crowds were remarkable for their lack of interest in the horror of the proceeding. The Liberal Republicans survived less than three months, dissolving themselves as an experiment that had failed, for Fethi, seeing he was in danger of becoming a figurehead for the opposers of Mustafa Kemal, stepped down in time.

Afterwards, with no opposition to check İsmet, Mustafa Kemal decided to interfere himself. He took a greater hand in affairs which caused frequent quarrels between himself and İsmet. For İsmet was jealous of his power. He liked being in an unassailable position, holding the reins of office and dictating his wishes to the country. Mustafa Kemal brought Celal Bayar (today’s President) as Minister of Economic Affairs without İsmet’s knowledge or consent. Celal Bayar was a sound man of good judgment, besides being a financier. İsmet and he bickered from the first. But Celal, a strong man, went his own way, reduced taxes here, government expenditure there, made changes in the tariffs and encouraged home savings by launching
Government Bonds. İsmet growled and threatened but could do nothing since Celal had Mustafa Kemal's full support. Many of İsmet's favourites were dismissed from their posts and many of his famous industrial plans shelved. He was deader than ever, thinner lipped and more of the bully. He obstructed Celal Bayar wherever and whenever he could and delighted in poking fun at him in the Assembly. But if Mustafa Kemal was aware that his people were not yet ripe for democracy, nevertheless he injected new blood into Parliament by giving the people the right to elect deputies of their own choice from various constituencies. This leavened the select few with a sprinkling of artisans, shopkeepers and labouring men who, even if unable to keep the balance, nevertheless raised some dissenting voice in Parliament. Mustafa Kemal was in and out of the Assembly constantly, plaguing İsmet's life, touring the country again, ripening the people for fifteen years hence. Democracy was his aim. Wherever he went—to officers' clubs, factory canteens, welfare centres—he sooner or later induced the people to talk of their grievances, to come out into the open and discuss what sort of government they wanted. He made mock parliaments. He himself used to join in the discussions. But at first the people were shy of him. As the months passed, however, they began to talk more and more as they did amongst themselves and, often forgetting he was present, abuse each other much as the real deputies frequently did.

In 1934 a law was brought out forbidding the wearing of religious clothing in public; from henceforth the minorities had to dress as lay people. Proselytizing was forbidden and more than one religious foundation closed because of this. Foreign missionaries were refused entry. Titles were abolished, family surnames became compulsory and Mustafa Kemal became Kemal Atatürk (Father-Turk). Women were at last entitled to vote in the election of deputies. They were, indeed, changing times.

"But I have still much to do," said Kemal Atatürk. "My people are still like babes in arms, they must be fed and sheltered, led and guided along the road of progress until their feet are sure and they cannot stumble any more. They will rule themselves then, that has always been my desire—but until that time comes I must remain with them..."
Chapter XIX

THE two biggest problems confronting him were the education of the people and the stabilization of the country's economy, for he knew very well that the one affected the other.

The education programme was comprehensive but remained largely on paper in the early years of the Republic owing to lack of money. However, some new schools were built and existing ones improved—with the emphasis on schools for the rural communities. The shortage of rural teachers was partly overcome by means of the Institutes set up in large villages and catering for the needs of the smaller villages within a radius of 75 kilometres.

Agricultural conditions were at their lowest ebb—even in the year of the Republic, 1923, approximately 3,000,000 pounds sterling worth of Russian and American wheat was bought to meet the national requirements. Barren land, poor irrigation, apathy, poverty—all these had made Turkey dependent on outside interests for centuries, but to educate the peasant was not easy. Instructors or books were of little use. To the first he would listen unwillingly and the second he couldn't read. Shaking his head he would declare that what had been good enough for his father was good enough for him too.

With the laicization of the State, over two million acres of church lands were distributed amongst the people but the real problem, that of cultivation, remained unsolved. The small peasant farmer, scratching a living from six or ten acres was quite content to go on as he had always done—besides, he had no money to work a larger area of land and no inclination to pursue more scientific methods of farming. This was where the Village Institutes took over, for any bright child of twelve, who had finished primary school, could receive a further six years free education at one of the Institutes—providing he showed the aptitude. Local teachers were always on the look out for promising pupils to whisk out of the influence of
retrogressive parents. Objections were met with firmness, but generally the children themselves, so eager to become better farmers than their fathers, so susceptible to the promise of a free grant of land, were the persuasive factors. At the Institutes they learned the care of animals, how to fit into a community, or to lead it if the natural talent was there, and how to use building materials to better their living conditions. At the end of six years the children returned to their own villages, now young men of eighteen and fitted by their advanced knowledge for leadership. Contracted to work for the Government for twenty-five years they held classes in local cafés, in the open air in fine weather and with the aid of local funds showed the children how to build their own schools. The arrangement benefited everyone. Sickness of animals, sometimes even of persons, was taken care of and a new generation of children trained to carry on the good work. Many of these in turn graduated to the Institutes and later served other communities further afield. It was the best method of solving the problem of nation-wide education and Atatürk turned next to the graduates of Universities—which were free—and obliged them to spend the first three working years as servants of the Government, sending them all over the country as doctors, teachers and dentists. He rammed education down the throats of his people and then set out to industrialize them. He was a passionate exponent of industrialism, but never forgot that an agricultural country’s primary need is to be able to feed itself. All the money he could lay hands on went to the opening of schools for forestry, agriculture, veterinary training, hygiene and public health activities, but it was never enough. His reforms, essential as they were, barely touched the hard outer crust of the nation; to do everything he set out to do would have cost him billions. Despite the work of the Institutes and the other teaching centres, whole areas of land remained untouched and just as the lack of water drove the first Turks over the mountains and wastelands of Mongolia so in Atatürk’s life-time it drove them further and further from the place of their birth. All over Anatolia were the ruins of villages; a spring dries up, water has to be carried ever greater distances and once more a community moves on to a spot nearer the source of supply. Irrigation was a most pressing
problem for the villages scattered across the dusty Anatolian plain, so the people continued to build their temporary dwellings of mud, for what was the use of the Village Institute, set in lush farmland, teaching them how to build with bricks, since they might have to move on again in a few years?

Elsewhere the situation was less desperate. Farmers received expert advice, free seed was distributed and an assured market guaranteed. All this did not greatly raise the already low standard of living but it did help reduce the terrible struggle for survival. Yet it was not enough to teach the nation how to feed itself, general health had to be improved as well. Years of strife and lack of food had taken its toll in the form of tuberculosis, malaria and infant mortality. Health was nationalized as early as 1920 but from 1924 onwards a vast programme was mapped out. Vaccination against smallpox and other diseases was made compulsory, dispensaries were set up and at all the government centres treatment and medicine was free. Swamps were drained, mosquitoes exterminated in their breeding grounds, quinine issued and a centre for malarial diseases set up in Adana. Young women were encouraged to enter the medical and nursing professions and child welfare clinics were inaugurated. Health visitors were sent to attend to home confinements and to instruct in hygiene.

Technical schools were opened to overcome in part the serious shortage of skilled labour but the standard of living throughout the country remained primitive. It was only in the textile and industrial areas that some improvement was noticeable. There was no unemployment problem, for development was new and expansion rapid. Wages were inadequate but factory workers were given free meals whilst on duty, social insurance was created for them, new houses built and free clothing provided. On the face of it the future looked rosy but Kemal Atatürk saw the future in terms of money—and this was scarce. Nevertheless he refused to risk a foreign loan. Government backing was essential to industry but burdened as they were with the debts of the Ottoman Government they could do little. During the first ten years of the Republic industrial development was mainly confined to private enterprise. Free land was granted to encourage new projects and to erect factories, taxes were suspended on all newly installed
plant and duties abolished on imported raw materials and machinery.

The aircraft factory at Kayseri and the sugar-beet factory at Eskisehir were built by the Government, but in the main it was free enterprise that provided the revenue. The textile and cotton industry expanded and by 1934 steel, glass and paper requirements were for the first time met partly by Turkish factories. In return, however, the people suffered under the crushing burden of increased taxation; all commodities including food, furniture, sport, cinemas and theatres, tobacco and public transport were heavily taxed. Many of the people considered it all very well for Atatürk to declare: “Our aim is to raise Turkey economically as well as in all other ways, within the shortest possible time, to the level of the most advanced country in the world . . .”, but objected to his ruthless methods of so doing. The Government was swiftly becoming the owner and landlord, the increase in consumer goods was compensatory but where was the money coming from to buy them. . . ?

The primary sources of power, coal and lignite mining, were abundant but skilled men and modern equipment were in short supply. The electrification programme suffered from the same drawbacks and very few parts of Anatolia were electrified. Railroads, despite İsmet’s passion for laying down thousands of miles of track, were totally inadequate and power stations were often non-productive from lack of coal. Still the Government plodded on doggedly, the people resentfully and Atatürk strode the scene like a Colossus. Many people fell by the wayside and died but to those who survived his bitter policy he gave a new land to live in. His taxation cut at the heart of everyone but in his ruthlessness he cared only for the country as a whole. Individuals might drop out of line, go mad, die of hunger, still he set the merciless heel of the People’s Party on their necks, trampled on their feelings and forced them at last into his alien mould. His foreign policy was dictated by his environments, by the history of his country and its geographical position. The economy and political aims of his neighbours were important factors—as was his own fear of foreign domination which often added acid to his diplomatic relations.
Halk Evleri (People’s Houses) were opened up and down the country in an effort to reach into the hearts and minds of the people and to preclude the possibility of another Menemen affair. These Halk Evleri—so few at the beginning—served many purposes and although any Turk could use the facilities provided, the Chairman had to be elected from the local committee of the People’s Party. Halk Evleri made a great appeal to the nation, providing as they did for language, literature, history, art, sport, social welfare and exhibitions. Debates, lectures by famous people, sporting events, concerts and cinema shows were part of the programme. Kemal Atatürk loved to drive off in his car, stop at whichever town or village took his fancy and watch his earnest, brutal, patient people enjoying themselves in their Halk Evleri.

In March, 1935, İsmet celebrated the tenth anniversary of the Premiership and the newspapers lauded him and feted him as the “working right hand of Kemal Atatürk”. İsmet preened and was photographed looking stern, with one arm draped across his chest like Napoleon. He regarded himself as the ruler of the country and, having already had a doctor’s adverse report on Atatürk’s health, had shown less restraint in his relations with him. The deputies suffered under his smarting tongue; Cabinet Ministers had to transact all business through him, and he employed his favourites to spy for him. He was petty and spiteful, hated the foreigner and even extended his pin-pricks of sarcasm to Atatürk.

In 1937 the trouble between them came to a head when Atatürk criticized the Minister of Agriculture, declaring bluntly that he was no good at his job. This was said during a dinner in Çan Kaya at which the entire Cabinet was present. İsmet, very deaf, very cross, paled and jumped to his feet. “I daresay you wish him to leave his post?” he shouted, “like all the other Ministers before him? All my Ministers are being forced to leave their posts because you do not care for them. My opinion is never asked. I am face to face with continual surprises. My opinions count for so little that it appears necessary for every statement I make to be subjected to the fullest investigation and circulation amongst my Ministers for their opinion . . . it appears to me that the most secret matters of State are being discussed around the dinner tables,
with people who have no interest in the country's affairs. . . .”

Glaring at him Atatürk said: “You are saying, I think, that State matters are discussed with drunken heads? Well, well, İsmet—is that not so? Indeed, you amaze me—where does this courage of a lion spring from?”

The rift between them deepened, İsmet growing braver in private and scarcely bothering to restrain himself in public. But Atatürk took his revenge and on a journey by rail to İstanbul, for the opening of a Congress of History, asked to be left alone with İsmet in his compartment. According to latter day writers, İsmet was told that the time had come when a change of Premiership was necessary—both for the good of the Assembly and the nation. He was asked to nominate a successor but, the wind taken out of his sails, was unable to put forward anyone’s name. Atatürk suggested Celal Bayar but İsmet stubbornly refused to give his opinion.

They remained alone in the compartment for some hours and the waiting staff were uneasy, restless and hungry. Suddenly the door opened and Atatürk strode into the rocking corridor and calling back over his shoulder to the following İsmet: “There is no need for you to hurry yourself—I am sure you would welcome a little time alone . . .” went off to the diner, leaving İsmet to cool his heels in sorrow, anger and hunger. It was obvious to the attendant staff that whatever had been between them was over for good. This was later clarified at a small dinner at Dolmabahçe Saray—from which İsmet was for the first time excluded—but at which Celal Bayar and Fuat Köprülü were present. Drawing attention to the absence of İsmet, Atatürk said: “Did you not know İsmet revolted against me? Yes, I repeat it—he revolted! I could only imagine he was unwell so I have ordered him six weeks' sick leave. I fear he has become a hypochondriac. For twenty-five years I have struggled to make something of him and in the end he revolted—I think he has been having too many little chats with my specialists. . . . He complained of my lack of faith in him; he said I stifled the breath in him and never allowed him to put forward an opinion of his own, but I ask you to tell me, gentlemen, do you think he ever had opinions of his own . . .?”

Celal Bayar became acting Prime Minister but on 1st
November, 1937, at the opening of Parliament, he was made officially Prime Minister. İsmet had faded from the scene.

 Atatürk’s health, however, had taken a serious turn for the worse—which had already been foreseen by the specialists. İsmet, of course, had known this for several months; it was the reason why he had revolted against Atatürk’s authority.

Celal Bayar wished to bring in some foreign specialist to advise him, but Atatürk said he was too busy to be bothered—he had, so he said, the problem of Hatay on his hands. This was the former sub-province of Alexandretta, annexed to Syria at the fall of the Ottoman Empire. Over 40 per cent. of the population were Turkish and in 1937 Atatürk pressed France to relinquish this territory. France, however, after parleying, was only willing to grant autonomy to Alexandretta, where lived the bulk of the Turkish population, but Atatürk still pressed his claims for the whole region. Fighting broke out in 1938 and on 1st July of the same year it was agreed that France and Turkey should take over joint control of the area. In August, elections for a local Assembly were held, the Turks securing over half the available seats and an independent Republic of Hatay was declared. This deeply pleased Atatürk who did not live long enough to see, in the following year, the union of Hatay and Turkey.

And even at the time Hatay became a Republic it was obvious to all that he was growing physically weaker. Celal Bayar had already, in the early part of the year, brought in Professor Fizenje of France, but the distinguished Professor made it abundantly clear that unless Atatürk obeyed his orders implicitly, he could do nothing to save him. Atatürk, pathetically anxious to obey, was however unable to resist his own volatile nature and, too, perhaps, did not realize how serious was his condition. At any rate, after a few weeks of rest and total abstention from drink, he felt so much better that he insisted on making the long journey to Mersin where the Hatay problem was at an acute stage. He went against the advice of the specialists, his friends and his Prime Minister. He believed, however, that it was his duty to show himself to the nation at such a critical period and to the world as well, for the French newspapers had been hinting for some time that he was finished and had speculated on Professor Fizenje’s
attendance at the Dolmabahçe Saray. Atatürk longed to force the Hatay problem to a peaceful conclusion before he died. Living once more on nervous energy he attended Army manoeuvres; was shaken and jolted in his car over rough, formless roads and entertained guests he met on the way. Onlookers remarked on his cheerfulness, his flush of health and his increased weight; in reality he was sicker than he had ever been before and his body had already started to make water.

He returned to İstanbul exhausted, and spent a short time on the yacht Savarona. The illness took a rapid hold on him, however, and forced him back to the Dolmabahçe Saray where, apologetically, he confessed to the doctors that he was finished. Once he fainted and was in a coma lasting several hours. Celal Bayar was sent for and hurried from Ankara, but Atatürk emerged from the coma, alert and scornful of the idea that Death could creep up on him as silently as all that. He had to remain in bed however and Celal Bayar visited him weekly. Despite his helplessness Atatürk was still eager to hear what the Assembly were doing. He showed great interest in their Four Year plan, in the power station to electrify a large part of Antolia, in the merchant shipping it was proposed to buy and the proposition to change the course of the Sakarya River.

“Eh!” he said. “We’ve come a long way . . .” and for a time lay staring at the ceiling.

After a time he asked: “Where did you get the money?”

“Credit of sixteen million from England and the rest from Germany,” Celal replied.

One of Atatürk’s adopted daughters, Afet, came into the room and Celal Bayar made ready to go but Atatürk said: “Don’t go yet. Come, Afet, you listen too! This is wonderful news he is giving me—how can I be tired when Celal Bey brings me such good news?”

He lay back on his pillows, exhausted from the effort of speaking.

“Listen,” he said at last. “You have only a short while before you to accomplish these things—soon there will be war, you must mobilize all the resources of the country to help you succeed. . . .”
The fifteenth anniversary of the declaration of the Republic approached and he fretted in bed, wishing greatly to deliver his speech himself—especially his message to the Army. But it was obvious, even to him, that he could never reach Ankara alive.

"I have given my speeches for fourteen years," he complained to Celal, "now you must do it for me. Read me my speech," he said but Celal Bayar protested that it would be too much for him, it would tire him listening. However, seeing the resignation on Atatürk's face he weakened.

"That resignation," he wrote afterwards, "affected me like a clap on the head—if he had only protested a little... but I had never seen him resigned before, never had I seen him so helpless before my will... I read it to him... and at the end of the speech I took his hand in mine and I kissed it and then I had to leave him, for already he was even past exhaustion, and as I reached the door he said, 'Give my regards to our friends.' I think I wept a little hearing that small voice...."

It was the night of 29th October, 1938—the fifteenth anniversary of the Turkish Republic.

Atatürk was sleeping fitfully in his big walnut bed on the second floor of the Palace in a room overlooking the Bosphor. During the day the usual military parades had taken place in the cities and towns all over the country and in Ankara, for the first time, the President was absent. Now the night had come and outside the Palace all was brightness and roystering merrymaking. İstanbul was brilliantly illuminated; only in the Dolmabahçe Saray was there the unearthly quietness of death. The long corridors, the empty salons, the imposing deserted staircase were dimly lit and people moved softly against the deep pile of the carpets, flitting silently like ghosts come back to inhabit the places of youth.

On the second floor the vast room where Atatürk lay was lit by a small lamp so that he lay in perpetual shadow. Some of his doctors, beside the windows, looked out across the dark water to the Anatolian side where the light of the fireworks flickered against the sky. The sharp explosions they made travelled ever closer to the quiet room and the doctors eyed their patient anxiously, for it had been kept from him that this
was the anniversary of his Republic. He moved restlessly and a doctor bending over him heard him ask faintly: "What is it?" Replying vaguely the doctor attempted to soothe him but Atatürk turned his face away and said: "No—they are the fireworks, why do you say you do not know? They are the fireworks—they are celebrating and I am here. . . ."

He died on the morning of 10th November, 1938.

It was the surgeon, Kemal, who since the first cold light of dawn seeped through the windows had been aware of his rapid decline. At five minutes past nine he drew his last breath, his eyes wide open staring fixedly and fiercely at the ceiling. The surgeon, Kemal, noting down the time, moved forward and closed his eyes.

He died quieter than he had lived, plunging the nation he had saved into a mourning more real than anything ever known in their history before. His virtues and his vices were a part of him, manifestations of his blazing vitality, but they must fall into their insignificant place beside his tremendous achievements for his country. In his Apologia he set the tone of the future Turkey when he exhorted the youth to: "... maintain and defend the Turkish Republic and its independence for ever. This is the mainspring of your existence... oh, son of the future Turk... the strength you need is in the noble blood in your veins... ."

"There are two Mustafa Kemals," he once said, "one of them is he who stands before you; the Mustafa Kemal of flesh and blood who will pass away. There is another though, whom I cannot call 'me', for it is not I whom this Mustafa Kemal personifies. It is you—all you here present—who go to the furthest parts of the country to inculcate an ideal which must be defended. . . . It is a new mode of thought and I stand for these dreams of yours... my life's work is to make them come true... ."

But he was a soldier first and last, never really the politician—although there were times when he fancied he was God. Complex, passionate and dispassionate alike, he was Destiny's child. He destroyed the old Turkey, blazing a trail of fire through the nation's mind, blasting ideologies—and from the ashes of the past arose the tremulous shape of his civilized
dream: Turkey—the modern phoenix bird who consumed herself in the fire of revolution in order to live again.

The dying Ottoman Empire produced him, the man of strength and vision with the hour of the twentieth century chiming in his blood; a great Turk...
Part III

MID-CENTURY PROSPECT

Chapter I

On the day after Kemal Atatürk died—11th November, 1938—İsmet İnönü was brought out of obscurity and elected President of the Turkish Republic. This made little impact on the life of the ordinary people, for the government had pledged themselves to continue Atatürk’s policy of modernization, but Celal Bayar resigned from the office of Prime Minister, unable to work with a man whose whole outlook was so opposed to his own.

On 19th October, 1939, a treaty was signed with Great Britain and France providing for mutual help in the event of aggression in the Mediterranean by a European power. The terms of the treaty were never put into effect, however, for Turkey was profoundly influenced by German propaganda and doubted that the British and French could win the war. This doubt seemed to have become certainty in 1940 when France laid down arms and the nervous Turks retreated to the point of neutrality. In June, 1941, a Pact of Friendship was concluded with Germany, putting an end to any hope still entertained that Turkey would aid the Allies actively. On the other hand, Britain and France had failed to deliver the promised arms to Turkey and she could not for long have withstood any attack by the Germans.

The economic situation was shaky too, further debilitated by the strain of keeping up a fully mobilized army. In an attempt to offset this strain a new law was brought into being in 1942—the Varlik Vergisi. This was a disastrous law and a grim reminder that, despite the lip-service, non-Muslims had not yet been fully integrated within the citizenship of a Muslim State. The new law imposed a capital levy on all business men, commission agents, property owners and farmers in certain classes. Taxes were levied by local government officials and
there was no appeal against an assessment. The minorities, the Christians and the Jews, suffered the worst hardship—as had been anticipated. They had no means of redress (it is true that Muslims had none either, but they were assessed on a lower rate anyway, and their profits in the past had never reached the proportions of the non-Muslims; consequently there were less cases of acute hardship). Whoever was unable to pay the taxes demanded—and for the non-Muslims these were astronomical—had their property sold by public auction and if the sum thus obtained was still insufficient to meet the levy they were sent away to forced labour on government projects, road building, quarrying, etc. Thousands of people were ruined overnight and the Turkish Government shattered the confidence of European governments—it seemed that the savage discrimination against non-Muslims was still very near the surface. This state of affairs continued until 1944 when forced labour was done away with and the amounts still unpaid written off. All that the Turks gained was a little over twenty million sterling and a good deal of mistrust.

The Army, first class by 1939 standards, obsolete by 1944, continued to be fully mobilized. The Government sat astride the fence of neutrality but refused passage through the Straits to German ships. In 1945, purely as a technicality, war was declared on Germany and Japan so as to ensure Turkish entry into the United Nations.

The policy of neutrality so actively pursued was, however, a great source of satisfaction to the Turks themselves, who throughout their long history had fought for expansion and the spread of Islam.

In January, 1946, there emerged the first signs of a national movement towards greater freedom when the Democrat Party was founded. The nucleus of this movement was Celal Bayar, Atatürk’s last Prime Minister, Fuat Köprülü, scholar and descendant of the Köprülü dynasty of Grand Viziers, and Adnan Menderes—the present Prime Minister.

Menderes is a dynamic personality by any standards with the bright eyes and swift gestures of the people of the Aegean region. He was, in fact, born in Izmir, speaks good English from his early training at the American College in Izmir and graduated in Law at Ankara University. He is a ruthless leader
but very level headed and his knowledge of the political scene is acute. He speaks with a cutting tongue, a dry sense of sarcastic humour, and occasionally, the oratorial fire of Kemal Atatürk on whom he has modelled himself. Prior to his entry in politics he successfully farmed his extensive family estates in İzmir and first attracted attention to himself by his use of scientific methods. These, then, were the men who in 1946 believed that their country could best be served by an end of State monopoly and the encouragement of private enterprise. It must be recorded for İnönü, however, that he made their path easy and even welcomed the formation of a new party. During the 1946 elections unfortunately—despite the fact that the country were not yet ready to declare their support for the Democrats—the intimidation of zealous local officials ensured that the new party had no chance to determine the measure of success brought about by their campaigning. In 1950 the situation was reversed and there was a landslide in favour of the Democrats. The 1950 elections were scrupulously fair due to the secret ballot brought in by İsmet İnönü, the counting of the votes in public and fair allocation of radio time to both parties.

After nearly a quarter of a century of Republican rule the people themselves declared their independence, crowned by an outbreak of fez wearing and crowded mosques at prayer time. Still an Islamic people they declared by their actions their belief in the greater leniency of the new government. The Democrats added religious instruction to the lessons in primary schools and permitted the call to prayer to be recited in Arabic instead of Turkish. The government policy makers had come a long way since the Atatürk régime, but they had a new generation to work on too—a generation less fiercely dependent on the principles of Islam and who understood contact with the West, culturally and economically. Private investors were encouraged and government monopoly relaxed. With Menderes as Prime Minister, naturally more emphasis was placed on agriculture. Within a few years crop production had increased all over the country and many farms completely mechanized. However, the Halkevi were closed down and this was a great loss to the cultural life of the nation, especially as, so far, nothing comparable has taken their place.
At the 1954 elections there was a surprise in the shape of a new party calling itself the Workers' Party, the declared policy of which is "to deliver from the hands of the professional politicians those who . . . fear privation . . ." and of "... eliminating the working-class aristocrats who betray the interests of the workers. . . ." The membership of this party, confined mostly to Istanbul, is under 1,000, but it is doubtful if it can ever make much headway as long as the secret police are maintained and the Press effectively muzzled as far as criticism of the Government goes.

However, despite the undoubted improvements (and these must never be underestimated, for in so short a time they are quite formidable), the country still has a long way to go. In the first place the standard of living has to be improved, industry and agriculture put on a firmer foundation and education widened. Strikes remain illegal, but in a country where there is no unemployment problem this is a minor factor and the disciplined Turkish temperament, in a classless society, is in any case against the principles of arbitration on his behalf. Officials are not yet free to marry foreigners but, here again, this is purely Turkish Islamic in character and, irrespective of the leniencies of any government, will take a long time to overcome.

Religion must be allowed to find its proper level and the foreigner made conscious of the integrity of the people and the Government under all issues, so that in times of national emergency, or distasteful religious fervour, the foreigner's person and property are protected by the very nature and pride of the people themselves, and not through any horrified foreign intervention.

The fact remains that there is, however mild, however much kept under control, an antipathy against the foreigner (who is generally a Christian), that the happy-go-lucky, generous Americans for one would do well to consider. This is perhaps the most deep-rooted of all characteristics in the Turkish people and, accordingly, democracy in the widest sense and according to Western ideals, can never be attained as long as it survives.

It might be as well to reflect that it has already survived ten centuries.
Chapter II

All in all, the Turkish scene of 1958 is not discouraging. The Democrat Party is bringing about a revolution in farming methods and the peasant farmer enjoys a better standard of living than he did twenty-five years ago; this is not to say it is adequate. Cotton and cereal production has doubled over the last five years and today over a quarter of a million farmers are growing a tobacco crop of about 100,000 tons a year.

On 14th February, 1955, the foundation stone was laid for the new port of İzmir which is expected to cost fifty million Turkish lira. This is an important step forward and will more than double the present facilities.

The mining industry, formerly in the hands of foreigners, is now operated exclusively by the Government. New machinery has been installed at the Zonguldak coalmines and it is hoped that this will raise the daily production to 25,000 tons. Chrome, one of the country’s best dollar earners, is mined in the south-east of the country, notably at Fethiye and Köyceğiz, and at Kutahya in the west and here again, due to improved methods, production has doubled since 1952, now reaching nearly 700,000 tons yearly. Oil is the present hope of the strangled economy and at the moment there are twenty wells operating, at least one of them with reserves of twelve million tons. The government has called in American oil experts in the hope of finding not only further supplies, but another Texas—as so many signs indicate. A Board has been set up to manage the wells already working and in 1954 a Bill was passed governing the development of all oil wells in the country. Concessions are to be granted for forty years with the option of a twenty years extension. No well can be operated by private enterprise without the consent of the government. A royalty of 12½ per cent. is payable to the State on all privately operated concessions and prospectors are obliged to sell Turkey as much oil as she needs for her requirements. Income tax must be
paid on production, limited for a period for the recovery of the initial expenditure, but afterwards to be increased to 50 per cent. of annual income. Oil could give Turkey the wealth she needs and the Government, hard pressed as they are for money, are themselves devoting a great deal of the national expenditure to the search.

The main trouble in all industry, however, is the shortage of skilled men and although technical colleges are being opened at a great rate, it will take time to overcome the hiatus existing. Too, the whole economic situation is risky and built on shifting sands, for Menderes faces, and has faced throughout his term in office, a lethargic nation who, despite intense pressure, prefer to meet the demands of modernization at their own pace. The basis of political power has shifted drastically and the supporters of the apostles of democracy are the peasants, and Menderes, quick to cash in on this trend, has shown the peasant his own importance in the political picture. By doing so, however, he has caused a serious rift inside his own party and the intellectuals, once his most fervid supporters, were the first to level criticism of his policy. The cult of the peasant continues. In villages, isolated for years—perhaps centuries—new roads have been made, schools and public baths built, tractors loaned to farmers, along with free advice, and lorries sent to collect their produce. Half of Anatolia has been electrified, bus services inaugurated between villages and small towns, dams built and new factories opened. This enormous development has been going on steadily since 1950 and was responsible for sweeping the Democrats back to power in 1954. The programme was ambitious for a country devoting one half of its budget to the upkeep of a vast army, a competent air force and a rapidly growing navy. Time and bad weather went against Menderes. Inflation set in and the cost of living rose sharply; it is still rising. Advised to cut expenditure, Menderes was given a quick rebuff by the Americans when they refused his request for a 300 million dollar loan, although making a grant of 30 million dollars. He refused to heed all advice and his policy continues unabated, but in all fairness it must be said that he may emerge triumphant, for the factories are beginning to justify their existence and, given favourable weather, the surplus of crops this year for export should
exceed any year since the Democrats came to power. The risks are great—but so is the faith of Menderes.

Turkish foreign policy is governed by a desire for peace and uncertainty of Russian aims. The government find it expedient to regard Great Britain and America as allies and to date has already received considerable aid from America. She is a full member of N.A.T.O., has a Treaty of Alliance with Greece, a Treaty of Friendly Co-operation with Pakistan and is a member of the Baghdad Pact. Turkish relations with the Arab world are hostile—due largely to Egyptian memories of harsh Ottoman rule, and Turkey’s recognition of the State of Israel in 1948, but partly, also, to the contempt the Turk has always felt for the Arab. Syria is regarded with coolness because of Syrian claims on Hatay. Despite the aid from the West and the various treaties Turkey might still, in the event of a war that did not immediately threaten her national sovereignty, retreat behind the veil of neutrality. Her friendship with Greece is an empty word; the Turkish-Greek war has not been forgotten by either side—witness the İstanbul riots in 1956. Furthermore, the question of Cyprus does nothing to heal matters. Turks would prefer Britain to keep Cyprus but should there be any serious threat of the island becoming Greek then union with Turkey would be insisted upon. The question of Cyprus has wider implications, for the extremists in Turkey are already adopting the theme that the Western Powers, in a showdown, would decide in favour of Greece—simply, say the extremists, because they are all Christians together and dog does not eat dog. Another school of thought, by no means confined to the intelligentsia, is that Turkey as a leader in the East, where her stock is high, would be better than becoming a minority in the West. Anger at Greek broadcasts keeps the temperature over Cyprus high. The Turks themselves are not given to self-advertisement and have never learned effectively the power of propaganda and consequently they are largely unknown outside the Middle East—as is their reason for claiming Cyprus should the British leave. Further, their reputation in the past was uncertain. Since the Republic—always excepting the one fatal lapse of the Varlık Vergisi—they have proved themselves good neighbours, lovers of peace and fighters in the
old tradition—18,000 Turkish troops fought with distinction in Korea. However the Cyprus problem develops in the future, Turkey will have a prominent part to play in the final decision.

Regarding the life of the country, one of the greatest changes that has come about is in the field of scholarship, for in the last thirty years there has emerged a generation of young people trained in the ideology of the West whilst still retaining their essentially Turkish characteristics. The union of East and West has given birth to a new Turkish culture—a culture spontaneous, effortless and—viewing the Anatolian peasant-writer alone—full of surprising implications for the future. The serious literary magazines, published bi-monthly, have a wide circulation and contain some excellent literary criticisms, cameos of everyday life that are both penetrating and revealing and the best of contemporary poetry. There is, in fact, a very important group of Turkish poets remarkable for their felicity of expression and originality of mind. Music, painting and archaeology have all made an impression on the young intellectual and although there is a regional flavour about the best-selling novels, this trend can probably be linked with the settling of national ideas, acceptance of the Kemalist revolution and, as a result, a keen desire to look into the lives of their peasantry. When they look back to their long history they do so with affection and pride, and the fact that so many civilizations have left their mark on their shores, has inspired a desire to know something about these ancient races.

Kemal Atatürk left a considerable sum of private money to the Historical Society and this is now being used to excavate the ruins of the past and building, or equipping, museums to display their treasures. Were he to see his changed people today he would indeed realize that from the ashes of the past has truly arisen the bright phoenix of a new Turkish nation.
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