

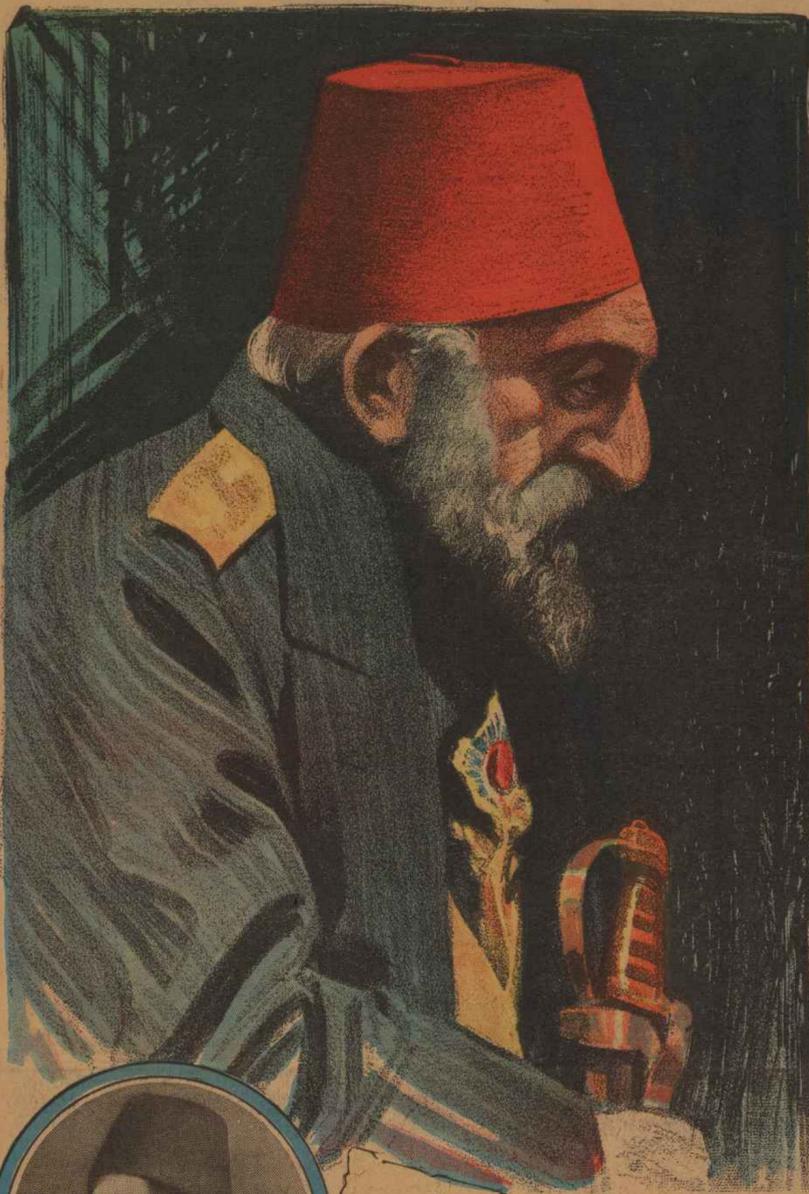
The BURYING ALIVE of ABDUL HAMID

Turkey's Former Sultan Is Rigorously Confined in the Villa Allatini, Salonica—The Mystery That Enshrouded Him in Yildiz Kiosk Still Surrounds Him—Abandoned by Many of His Wives and Household, He Feels Death by Poison and His Mind Has Failed



Abdul Hamid II. From a Photograph Taken in 1872. When the Sultan was 39 years Old. (From Le Monde Illustré.)

Abdul Hamid II. From a Portrait Taken in 1887. When the Sultan was 45 Years Old. (From L'Illustration.)



Drawn from a Portrait in the Illustrated London News.



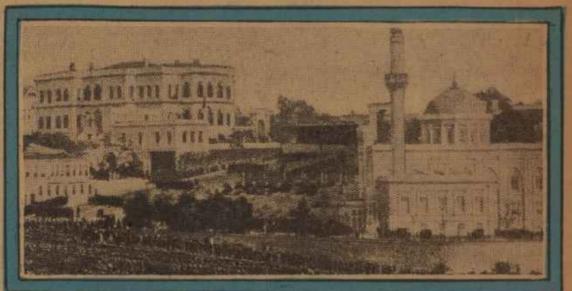
Abdul Hamid II. From a Portrait Taken in 1904.

Until some time ago, Abdul Hamid received £1,000 a month, but £200 has been given to one of his wives, so that his monthly allowance is reduced by that amount. But with that sum he has quite enough to go on with. Abdul Hamid eats well, is an early riser, smokes cigarettes almost continually, and is a particularly good judge of tobacco. From time to time he may be seen sitting at one of the windows of the Allatini Villa, but the moment he thinks himself observed he disappears from sight.

Of late the former ruler makes no reply. About a year ago he used to ask that his household be increased. In other words, he wanted more wives. If you ask Razi Bey how the former Sultan is he will invariably reply: "Quite happy. He does not worry about anything, and indeed he has increased in weight of late." But behind those words of the guardian of the imperial prisoner there is a cryptic



Salonica, from the Water Front.



Yildiz Kiosk and the Mosque of Hamid, Where the Sultan Formerly Lived. Photo by Underwood & Underwood, N. Y.

tions his wives have been Circassian beauties. As a race the Circassian women are rare types of refined and artistic loveliness. Strike in the Harem. A little more than a year ago, owing to the dullness of life within the walls at the Allatini residence, there was a strike or upheaval in the harem. Up to that time Abdul Hamid had had for his amusement a jester and a musician. The discontented appealed to the authorities to be released, and, as the former Sultan made no objection, the jester and the musician, a son and ten of the wives were entrained one night for Constantinople. It was given out that they had gone to the capital to attend a wedding. Anyhow, they never returned, and ever since Abdul Hamid has deplored the meagreness of his harem.

Since that night upon which the bulk of the former Sultan's people abandoned him the neighbors have observed that all life seems to have left the Allatini villa. It is inferred that that was the final coup which settled upon the former monarch and left him in a state from which he has never recovered. The shutters remain closed and the house looks deserted. As in the times of yore at Yildiz, Abdul Hamid still retains a great fearfulness for his personal safety. His cuisine is simple—that is to say, it is essentially Turkish, consisting largely of mutton, chicken, rice, vegetables and fruits. Each dish is, as was the case in Yildiz, brought up from the kitchen bound round with tape and sealed with red wax. That sealing is a primary precaution, so that the food cannot be tampered with on the way from the kitchen. But that is not enough for this strange man, whose suspiciousness takes the form of mania, and that mania resolves itself into the fixed

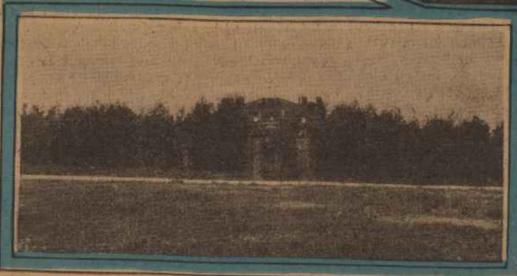
While the former monarch is thus minutely careful concerning his own safety, the Young Turks are just as precisely solicitous that he should not possibly escape, and there is no manner of doubt, in spite of constant official assurances that Abdul Hamid is quite happy, that his captivity has been carried out with a rigor which is scarcely justifiable. The Young Turks, who are intensely shy about any reference to Abdul Hamid, assert that their captive has all liberty within the big outer walls of the property. That, from what I hear on what I am bound to consider as good authority, is untrue. What is told me is this:—That the imperial prisoner occupies the first floor, and that he is confined to that. He is neither allowed to descend to the ground floor nor ascend to the second story. Above all, that he is not allowed to go out into the garden, and that he has never been out since his arrival here. This last is an incontrovertible fact. The Young Turks, when I tackled them with this unrighteousness, assured me that he does not care to come out for exercise and that he seldom went out at Yildiz.

The precautions taken to prevent any one reaching the prisoner are extreme. I asked to have an interview with him and was met with sarcastic laughter and a very emphatic negative. "Impossible!" said a Young Turk leader. "Abdul Hamid is dead to the world and no one will ever see him alive again!" It has been told me, and it is quite within the possibilities of the situation and is backed by the above words quoted, that should any revolution break out and the Young Turk party find itself in peril one of the first orders given would be the extermination of the prisoner of the Allatini villa. Lunching at a villa within a stone's throw of the Allatini house I was rather surprised to find an ordinary net wire fence all around the garden where a wall would have naturally suggested itself as more ornamental and useful. "Oh, yes," said the owner, "No walls here. We are not allowed to build them." And it was quite true. No one having a villa within rifle range of the Allatini villa is allowed to have a wall. For behind such walls friends of the former Sultan might take shelter when attempting a rescue of Abdul Hamid. Thus even Rami Bey, the Young Turk member of Parliament, who has a villa between the Allatini villa and the sea, may not build the wall he desired and began around his garden. Ships also might contain rescuing parties, so all vessels are strictly forbidden anchoring anywhere in the bay near the Allatini villa.

idea that he will, one day or another, meet death by poison. Accordingly, when the dishes are opened the cook and one other member of the household is compelled to taste thereof first. Not until this has been accomplished will Abdul Hamid eat of anything. Even the doctor is not free from suspicion, and with him it assumes a serio-comic phase. Thus, when he has ordered Abdul Hamid a certain régime of pills, the illustrious patient invariably insists upon the doctor himself partaking of the medicine, and that there may be no trickery about it he himself picks out the pill, and that is the one which the doctor must swallow and no other. It reminds one of an event some seven or eight years ago, when Dr. Bergmann told the reigning Sultan that his daughter would have to be operated upon for appendicitis. Abdul Hamid insisted thereupon that a similar operation should first be performed upon



The Allatini Villa—The Prison of Abdul Hamid.



The Allatini Villa as It Appeared Before the Wall Was Built.



Some of Abdul Hamid II's Younger Sons. FROM THE GAZETTE.

ABDUL HAMID is alive! The former Sultan is in Salonica and has not been secretly conveyed to Constantinople.

Those are the replies to two recently circulated reports which have told of the former Sultan's demise and of his having been spirited away during the night to the capital. The latter report was merely founded upon the passage of a train full of munitions, concerning which quite special precautions were taken.

If you want to set yourself a difficult task it is in coming to Salonica and trying here to find out some details concerning the physical condition and mode of life of the deposed Sultan, who for so many years was the political chess player who kept the diplomatists of Europe busy, and who was so skilled in the game that he usually saw twenty moves ahead, while the ambassadors at Constantinople saw but two or three.

Abdul Hamid here in his confinement as the prisoner of his people is enveloped in much the same mystery as he was in Yildiz Kiosk at Constantinople, and rumors and reports unlimited circulate concerning him—most of them inventions, a very few approaching the truth.

The former Sultan, as most people know, lives in the villa Allatini, where he has now resided some two and a half years. His dwelling and prison consist of a large square built red tiled house, in modern French style, which springs out as a note of color from a grove of very dark green pine trees which surround it on all sides. They are up to the second story now, and in a few years at their present rate of growth the trees will entirely hide the building.

The Sultan's Prison.

The Allatini house was built by an Italian flour merchant who had settled here, and when he died it was sold to a company, which in turn disposed of it to the State for the purpose of using it as a place of confinement for Abdul Hamid upon his deposition in 1909, after the second revolution.

Abdul Hamid upon his downfall tried in every way possible to be allowed to inhabit a palace on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus, the one, a beautiful building, which had been built to shelter a well known Empress upon her visit to the Turkish capital.

But the Young Turks were obdurate. Fearful of a reactionary movement in favor of the Padishah, who was intensely beloved of the old Turks, and not at all sure of their own positions, they insisted that Abdul Hamid leave the capital.

So, silently and secretly, in the middle of the night, with a minimum of baggage, accompanied by seventeen wives, who made themselves conspicuous by their lamentations, he was with scant ceremony despatched to Salonica. That city was selected because of its being the seat of the Young Turk party, and its members wished to have their arch enemy

under their own eyes, guarded by themselves, and above all away from the capital, where they thought he might possibly have escaped.

To-day I walked around the villa on three sides. The main road runs along one side, the northern. There is nothing but a bare wall to be seen, at the centre of which is a walled up gateway of large size. Lynx eyed sentries watch the passers. Any one lingering is promptly requested to move on. On the three other sides no one is allowed to go anywhere near the walls, and sentries about fifty yards apart jealously mount guard, and any one approaching is likely to be shot at without parley. An enterprising innocent Englishman recently tried to take a photograph. The whizz of a bullet set him running. So there are not many photographs of the Allatini house—none of the interior, at all events, since the Sultan has been there.

Sentinels Will Fire.

To get a view of the two sides, east and south, a big detour had to be made through fields filled with a rank growth of a prickly dead weed. The sentinels all round the walls meanwhile were keeping a vigilant eye upon the movements of my party.

The wall used to be one metre high; it is now thrice that height. Inside and out it is heavily picketed. A military guardhouse of considerable dimensions is on the north side across the road. At the south soldiers used to camp out. Now the tents have been replaced with neat white guardhouses with red tiled roofs. But no one is allowed to approach. Any one so doing takes his life in his hands. The orders to the soldiers on duty regarding the approach of strangers are of the most stringent nature, and they are "Fire at once!"

There is a road running down the west side of the Allatini property. That is ab-

solutely forbidden to all except those known to be directly connected with the household, and they consist almost solely of a contractor, a doctor and a barber, all three of whom are warned that any indiscretion will be severely punished.

Razi Bey, a colonel and warm supporter of the Young Turk party, is personally charged with the responsibility of the keeping of the erstwhile Sultan. He is a man of severe aspect and few words. His duty is to see Abdul Hamid once a day, and he goes through the formality of asking if there is anything the prisoner wants.

meaning. It is true that the former Sultan is not unhappy, but if he be happy it is in the negative form of a man who has ceased to know what is going on. The truth is, that for a year past softening of the brain has set in, and the great intelligence which used to match itself against all the combinations of the diplomatists of Europe, and so often beat them, is to-day no more, and Abdul Hamid is a mental nullity. He does nothing. He used to while away his time in carpentering, at

which he proved himself quite skilful. But that he has long given up. He does not read. Newspapers have been offered him. He does not look at them. He knows nothing of what goes on in the outer world. He talks to a brother-in-law who lives with him, but he does not remember the most important events of his reign. His mental state is, I am assured, owing to the abuses of the harem. He has one wife, a Circassian, aged twenty-eight, with whom he is enamored. With few excep-