

**INSIDE CONSTANTINOPLE; A
DIPLOMATIST'S DIARY DURING
THE DARDANELLES EXPEDITION,
APRIL-SEPTEMBER, 1915**

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Inside Constantinople; A Diplomatist's Diary During the Dardanelles Expedition, April-September, 1915 by Lewis Einstein

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LEWIS EINSTEIN

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INSIDE CONSTANTINOPLE

A DIPLOMATIST'S DIARY DURING
THE DARDANELLES EXPEDITION

APRIL—SEPTEMBER, 1915

BY LEWIS EINSTEIN

FORMER MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY UNITED STATES DIPLOMATIC SERVICE;
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PREFACE

THE writer of this journal had previously resided at Constantinople from 1906 to 1909, during the later years of Abdul Hamid's reign and the period of the Turkish Revolution, first as Secretary, and later as Councillor and Chargé d'Affaires at the American Embassy. He left Constantinople in the autumn of 1909, Turcophile in his sympathies, sharing the enthusiasm of those who had witnessed the downfall of the Hamidian despotism and the birth of what they hoped would be a regenerated Turkey. He was sent there again early in 1915 by the Secretary of State as Special Agent to assist the Ambassador in the protection of the interests of the Entente — for the American Embassy was then in charge of the Allied interests, other than those of Italy, which had not yet entered the war, and Russia, both of which it subsequently assumed. He remained there until September of the same year, when he was sent to Sofia as American Diplomatic Representative in charge of British interests.

For one in official life the keeping of a diary is always a delicate matter. It was only at the inception of the Dardanelles Expedition,

with all its historic promise, that the writer decided to jot down each day's occurrences and reports. The hope that the Golden Horn would then change its masters has not materialized, and few conditions can be conceived more painful than those existing at Constantinople for the many who, like the writer, were of strong Allied sympathy. Yet the record of one who in common with others there lived through anxious days may not be without interest.

The entry of America into the war has removed the impediment to a publication which would otherwise have been impossible before many years. Under existing circumstances, however, it appears an obligation to cast what light one can on German action in Turkey and the revolting crime of the Armenian massacres. If this journal can help in any small degree to fix attention on the sufferings of the Armenian community and the reparation due, it will not have been written in vain.

In reading the pages of this diary practically no corrections have been made. It seemed better to leave this as it was written, with its absence of perspective and even its errors where these have occurred, rather than to recast it in the light of later events. The diarist is rarely able to weigh evidence, and has to include fragmentary and even piecemeal scraps. Much

that may appear irrelevant has been retained on this ground, for even in historic moments life remains a mosaic. The only omissions have been with respect to certain personalities and references likely to be detrimental to those mentioned, most of whom are still in Turkey. These, however, are rarely of a nature to interest the general reader. They concern for the most part Ottoman subjects, and especially Armenians, who were the main sufferers for the Allies' failure at the Dardanelles.

Massacre to the Western mind presupposes an antecedent condition of intense hatred. Those better acquainted with the East know that no such feelings are necessary. There was never less fanaticism than existed between Turk and Armenian in the early spring of 1915. The policy of murder then carried out was planned in the coldest blood. "We fear them," Talaat has said in private talk. "We learned our revolutionary organization from them. They know our secrets." The superior capacity of the Armenians appeared a menace to an organization which can brook no opposition. Yet the massacres might never have occurred without the fatal attack of the Allies on March 18. Until then the nervousness of the Turkish Government, as shown by the preparations made for its transfer to the interior

of Asia Minor, acted as a restraint. Only after the fleet's repulse had instilled belief in the impregnability of the Straits did the Turkish Government dare to begin its fiendish policy of extermination.

The Armenian massacres, which were officially styled deportations, were undertaken under the plea of military necessity. But the military direction was German, and the latter will find it difficult to escape the gravest blame for acquiescence in a crime which far surpasses in its horror even the crime of Belgium. Though in later years German officialdom may seek to disclaim responsibility, the broad fact remains of German military direction at Constantinople, and the intimate association between the two countries during the brief period in which took place the virtual extermination of the Armenian race in Asia Minor.

The writer's stay at Constantinople coincided with these massacres, the full horror of which took time to realize. It coincided also with the entry of Italy into the war, the crises in the Balkans, the inertia at Athens, the ferment at Bucarest, and the desertion of Sofia. And though the Bulgarian barometer fell with the Russian retreat from the Carpathians, Constantinople was still the centre which influenced the Eastern theatre of the war.

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