

# THE CATOCTIN CLARION.

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THURMONT, FREDERICK COUNTY, MD., THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1915.

NO. 31.

## FREDERICK RAILROAD

Thurmont Division

Schedule in Effect September 19, 1915.

All trains Daily unless specified

Leave Frederick	Arrive Thurmont
7:00 a. m.	7:57 a. m.
9:00 a. m.	10:27 a. m.
11:40 a. m.	12:27 p. m.
2:10 p. m.	2:57 p. m.
4:45 p. m.	5:27 p. m.
6:10 p. m.	6:57 p. m.
8:30 p. m.	9:17 p. m.
10:10 p. m.	10:56 p. m.

Leave Thurmont	Arrive Frederick
6:12 a. m.	6:58 a. m.
8:14 a. m.	9:09 a. m.
10:45 a. m.	11:31 a. m.
12:33 p. m.	1:19 p. m.
3:14 p. m.	4:00 p. m.
4:52 p. m.	5:38 p. m.
6:20 p. m.	7:06 p. m.
8:40 p. m.	9:26 p. m.
10:25 p. m.	11:05 p. m.

Note—All trains arriving and leaving Thurmont scheduled from Western Maryland station.

Note—All trains arriving and leaving Frederick scheduled from Square.

## Western Maryland R. R.

Schedule in Effect September 19, 1915

GOING WEST.

Leave Baltimore	Leave Thurmont	Arrive Hagerstown	Arrive Cumberland	Arrive Washington	Arrive Chicago
6:00	6:07	7:29	7:25	8:00	8:10
10:40	10:47	12:09	12:05	1:00	1:10
12:40	12:47	2:09	2:05	3:00	3:10
4:04	4:11	5:33	5:29	6:30	6:40
7:10	7:17	8:39	8:35	9:30	9:40

GOING EAST.

Leave Chicago	Leave Washington	Leave Cumberland	Leave Hagerstown	Leave Thurmont	Arrive Baltimore
6:55	7:02	8:24	8:20	9:15	9:25
10:35	10:42	12:04	12:00	12:55	1:05
12:35	12:42	2:04	2:00	2:55	3:05
4:00	4:07	5:29	5:25	6:20	6:30
7:05	7:12	8:34	8:30	9:25	9:35

\*Daily. †Daily except Sunday. ‡Sunday Only.

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## Secrets of the Courts of Europe

An Old Ambassador's Revelations of the Inner History of Famous Episodes Heretofore Cloaked in Mystery

Chronicles by ALLEN UPWARD

### A SERAGLIO SECRET

We came out into the open air and seated ourselves in front of a small table with a marble surface, which a waiter diligently wiped with his napkin, before proceeding to bring us our refreshments. The night was mild, and the numerous lights of the boulevard were muffled by a faint mist, which softened the voices of the passers-by. The ambassador leaned forward with one arm resting on the table, and his hat set back from his forehead.

"It was on a night like this," he began, "only more close and sultry, that I had what is perhaps the most bizarre experience of my life. It was when I was attached, in the capacity of secretary, to our embassy in Constantinople.

"It was at a time when the affairs of Turkey were about to attract the attention of the civilized world. Russia was already preparing to draw the sword, and it was believed in some quarters that England would not consent to remain a passive spectator of the struggle. The entire weight of France was being thrown into the scale to avert this contingency, and I have reason to believe that it was the services which I was able to render to the republic during this crisis which led to my being entrusted with my first embassy.

"Our desire, of course, was to keep Russia strong, to act as a restraint on Russia; and in this task I found myself pitted against your celebrated minister, Lord Beaconsfield. He was a great man, let me tell you, who succeeded in obtaining for himself a European vogue second only to that of Bismarck. But of my labors in this direction I must not speak.

"To return to the night which I have already referred to: I had sauntered out from the embassy quite late, and after walking through the streets of Pera for an hour, I was seized by an impulse to cross over the Golden Horn and explore old Stamboul. It was perhaps a rash proceeding at such a time, but I had accustomed myself to these nocturnal rambles, in which, for greater safety, I wore a Mohammedan costume.

"Doubtless, you have read those delightful 'Arabian Nights,' and can figure to yourself the enchantment of wandering through an Eastern city in the silent hours, when the moonlight falls softly on the tapering minarets, and on the high walls of mysterious gardens in which veiled beauties recline beside marble fountains, and listen to the songs of divine birds.

"I made my way, as I have told you, into the Turkish quarter. Avoiding the region of the bazaars, which at this hour were closed, I turned my steps into that in which the pashas have their superb residences, a region intersected at long intervals by narrow and solitary lanes, running between blank walls, with here and there a little postern gate artfully introduced beneath the ivy. I was sauntering slowly down one of these lanes when I perceived in front of me, at a point where the shadow of a tall ilex fell across the white surface of the road, a group of those dogs which infest Constantinople. They were quarreling over some object which lay on the roadway in the center of the black patch of shadow. Save for the presence of the dogs the whole neighborhood appeared to be absolutely deserted.

"I advanced toward the spot, endeavoring to make out the nature of the object which had attracted these carnivorous brutes. As I got nearer I perceived it to be a slipper of the pattern usually worn in Turkey. My curiosity was now strongly roused. I stepped into the midst of the growling urs, and drove them off with a few blows of a stick which I carried. Then I stooped down to pick up this mysterious object.

"No sooner had my hand touched it than I started back with a veritable thrill of horror. The slipper contained a human foot!

"My first impulse on making this terrible discovery was to turn and fly from the place. But a dreadful fascination, which I could not overcome, rooted me to the spot, and even compelled me to make a closer examination. I stooped down, peering in the dim light, and asking myself with a beating heart how this severed foot had come to be exposed there on that lonely path, as if it were the damning evidence of some strange crime.

"As I gazed at it thus, I became aware that the foot had for some time ceased to bleed. It had been cut off at the ankle, and the dry blood was beginning to congeal over the severed veins and arteries. I looked on the ground beside it for stains of blood, but not one was visible. I extended my circle, and scrutinized all round it with care, but the result was the same.

"Of one fact I was now positively assured. This foot which I beheld on the ground had not been cut off from the human being to whom it belonged at this place, nor perhaps anywhere in the neighborhood. It had been brought here, doubtless, under the influence of some strong fear, by one who felt it

"Constantinople was settling down again after its excitement, and I was beginning to believe that nothing more would happen, when the news of the catastrophe arrived. About midday a steam launch left the Dolmabahche palace, and came down the Bosphorus, stopping at the residences of the ambassadors, and bearing Suleiman Bey, the secretary of the grand vizier, who communicated to each of the foreign representatives in turn the tragic tidings that Abdul-Aziz had refused to survive his deposition, and had died by his own hand.

"I was with my chief when Suleiman Bey reached the French embassy, and as the ambassador had no secrets from me, I remained while he delivered his message. He appeared much agitated, a thing which is most unusual in an orient.

"The ambassador and I were, of course, overwhelmed by the announcement which he made to us. While the Bey was speaking my chief glanced at me, and I read in his eyes the suspicion which had already formed itself in my own mind. This sudden death of an inconvenient and dangerous prisoner was an event which it was easy to understand in an Eastern court.

"Evidently the grand vizier had anticipated the feeling with which this intelligence would be received. The secretary went on to say:

"My master has thought it his duty to communicate the fullest particulars of this affair to the representatives of the powers at once. The body of the late sultan is still lying in the room in which it was discovered by his attendants. He appears to have taken his life by means of a pair of Persian scissors, with which he is believed to have cut open a vein in the left arm, and then died.

"The ambassador rose to his feet with a severe frown.

"This is a remarkable story which the grand vizier has sent you to tell me," he said with a distrust which was not intended to be concealed. "I trust,



He Turned Pale and His Eyes Literally Protruded From Their Sockets.

for the new sultan's own sake, there will be a proper investigation, which will confirm the views the powers are asked to take of this affair."

"The bey showed no resentment at these remarks.

"It is the vizier's earnest desire that the powers should satisfy themselves as to what has taken place," he replied. "He has desired me to invite you to send a representative at once to the palace, who will be admitted to a sight of the dead body, and given every facility for satisfying himself as to the facts."

"This sounded sufficiently correct. My chief turned to me with a look of inquiry, and I at once volunteered to accompany Suleiman Bey to the Dolmabahche palace and make the inquiries which the grand vizier invited."

"Accordingly, after going to my own room for a moment, with a purpose which you will readily understand, I left with the bey and quickly arrived at the scene of the imperial tragedy.

"The streets, it is needless to say were lined with people, all of them wearing exultant and fierce looks, which were not rendered more amiable by the sight of a Giaour being admitted through the palace gates. How ever, a very strong force of troops had been brought together by the vizier with a promptness which in itself was capable of an evil interpretation, and there was no open disorder.

"In the palace I found members of the staff of all the principal foreign embassies, prominent among them being, of course, the representatives of Russia and England. As soon as we were all gathered, we were taken into the presence of Mehemed Rushdi, who received us with a great display of sincerity, and who appeared, moreover, to be really affected by this sad event.

"After making a little statement to us, which was practically a repetition of what he had said already through his messenger, he handed us over to Said Pasha, the imperial chamberlain, who conducted us to the apartment in which, so he assured us, the sultan's body had been discovered.

"It was a small and meanly furnished chamber, immediately adjoining the women's apartments, and looking out on a deserted courtyard. On a divan against the wall lay the body covered as far up as the chest with a cloth or pall of black silk embroidered with gold. The left arm was bare, and hung down by the side, showing a deep wound above the elbow, evidently made by some pointed instrument. The scissors with which, according to Said Pasha, the unfortunate monarch had taken his life lay, still caked with blood, upon a small table by the head of the corpse.

"His majesty," explained the pasha, "sent across to his mother early this morning—as soon as he had risen, in fact—for these scissors, on the pretext that he wished to trim his beard. No sooner had he received them than he appears to have retired into this room, where he was not likely to be disturbed by his attendants for some time. It was two hours before his strange absence excited attention. A search was instituted, and he was discovered lying in the posture which you see, with an immense pool of blood upon the floor, in which these scissors were lying."

"While the pasha was giving us this explanation I had withdrawn a little apart from the others, and was closely examining this corpse, which represented the monarch of a vast empire. As my eyes traveled slowly over the object on the divan, they were suddenly arrested by an extraordinary feature.

"I have said that the lower part of the body was covered by an embroidered cloth. You will easily picture to yourself the folds which this drapery would naturally have assumed in resting on the body's upturned feet. What I now perceived was the dreadful and startling fact that the cloth in this place rested upon only one point, instead of two.

"I waited to make sure that no one was observing me. Then I stepped swiftly to the side of the divan, and

would have become public property. As it is, provided that you take me fully into your confidence, I may be able to propose a bargain to you. I will engage to keep the affair a secret from every living soul, merely asking in return that you will use your influence on behalf of French interests in the questions which are now under discussion between the powers."

"He heard me out with great attention, looking at me all the while as if to ascertain how much I really knew or suspected. When I had finished he observed:

"But suppose I tell you I am in reality as ignorant as yourself of the cause of this strange mutilation?"

"I returned a sarcastic smile.

"I should answer that I myself am not altogether ignorant on the point, as you will perhaps believe when I show you this object, which I discovered under circumstances you will hardly ask me to explain."

"And I produced the slipper, which I had brought with me from the embassy.

"When I found this slipper," I added, "it contained a human foot."

"And this foot," I continued, with a stern glance, "was rendered remarkable by a certain deformity—"

"Ah!"

"He sprang to his feet and clutched at his beard, while he paced the room with irregular strides. I watched him keenly. Presently he turned to me with a searching gaze.

"Feringhee, can I trust you?" he demanded firmly. "If I tell you everything, what security do you offer me for my life?"

"The honor of a Frenchman!" I replied with a superb gesture.

"It is enough!"

"And with those words he sank down upon a couch, exhausted by his agitation. Finally he recovered himself sufficiently to relate the circumstances.

"Mehemed Rushdi gave me the story, as nearly as I can recollect it, in these words:

"You cannot be ignorant of the intense feeling which prevailed against Abdul-Aziz in this capital, a feeling which is sufficiently shown in the demeanor of the mob since his death has been announced. But like most foreigners, you have perhaps attributed this feeling to political motives. The truth of the matter is, however, different.

"During the last years of his reign, the sultan was guilty of outraging his subjects in the Mussulman's most sacred feelings. He had acquired the custom of going out from his palace at night, dressed in some mean disguise and wandering through the streets in search of adventures. In so far as he may have proposed to himself the model of the caliph of Bagdad, but unlike Harun the Just, his adventures were all of a certain kind.

"Although this was known to me, and I had frequently tendered to him my respectful warnings on the subject, I had, nevertheless, done my best to repress the seditions which his conduct continually provoked. My colleagues in the ministry will bear witness that I have on all occasions stood between Abdul-Aziz and the consequences of his folly. Had I listened to the solicitations which were addressed to me, he would have been dethroned long ago. But I was loyal to my master, and up to last night I had believed that he was not ungrateful.

"A month or two ago I made an addition to my harem in the person of a Georgian lady, of distinguished birth and brilliant accomplishments, and who was, besides, strikingly beautiful. Knowing the disposition of the sultan, I had imported her with the greatest precautions, through a merchant who is devoted to me. She was brought up the Golden Horn in a covered galley, and carried to my residence in a closely curtained litter. I carefully refrained from boasting of my acquisition to my friends, and warned Dekapoulos (the merchant) to be equally silent.

"Having handed over my treasure to the care of my head eunuch, who possessed my entire confidence, I imagined myself secure. For some weeks, indeed, all went well. The Georgian was submissive and affectionate, and my wives were not unduly jealous of my new purchase.

"But at the end of this time I began to perceive a change in Zara's manner. She became exacting and haughty, and had frequent fits of temper, in one of which she even threatened to leave me. These words caused me the most profound alarm. I suspected that she had been approached from outside, and racked my brain to discover the manner in which I had been betrayed.

"You know how things are when one is no longer able to depend on one's eunuchs. They are all in a league together, and it requires torture to arrive at the truth. I am naturally humane, and rather than resort to those cruel measures which are usual in such cases, I resolved to employ strategy. I affected to have become tired of the Georgian's society, and even dropped a hint that I thought of bestowing her on a friend. At the same time I loaded the chief eunuch with favors, and pretended to let him into my inmost thoughts.

"Meanwhile I was engaged in secretly collecting through various sources a body of fresh slaves, who could have no communication with the old ones, and on whom, therefore, I felt I might rely. As soon as I had obtained the number I thought sufficient, I armed them, and introduced them secretly into the garden at night. There I posted them behind some shrubs, with instructions to watch for the entrance of any stranger, and if any such

appeared, to instantly seize him and detain him till I arrived.

"These arrangements completed, I gave out to my regular household that I was going to sup with a friend and should not return for some hours. I took my departure, spent an hour away, and then returned by way of the garden.

"As I approached the postern I heard loud cries, and a group of men came rushing away down the road. I noticed that they were supporting one in the center, who was closely wrapped up, and who appeared to be unable to walk by himself. I also observed that the gate from which they were hastening was standing an inch or two ajar. The next moment it was flung wide open, and my men streamed out in pursuit of the fugitives.

"A secret intuition warned me to restrain them, and to let that veiled figure go in safety. Filled with vague forebodings, I led the way inside, and as soon as the door was closed and locked, I made them tell me what had taken place.

"It appears that immediately after my own departure the head eunuch, on whom I had so blindly relied, had gone out by the postern gate alone. At the end of an hour he returned, letting himself in with the key which he had been entrusted. Behind him entered a muffled-up stranger, who paused to give some directions to a body of men outside.

"Hardly was he well within the door when the slaves whom I had posted, carried away by their zeal, rushed forward to take him. He turned to flee, and would have escaped entirely had not some one in the confusion pushed the door to in time to catch him by the left foot.

"His friends outside began frantically attacking the door to release him, and then it was that one of the slaves, fearing that the intruder would get clear away, gave a sudden blow with his sword and cut clean through the ankle with one stroke. Thereupon the wounded man had been dragged off in the manner I had witnessed.

"In proof of their story the men held up the still bleeding foot. Impelled by the dread which had taken possession of me, I drew off the slipper. You, who have seen that horrid sight, know what it was that made me shudder as I looked!

"Years ago I had heard of a dark tradition in the palace that the foot of the sultan was not like a natural foot, that there was some revolting blemish hereditary in the house of Osman, which had to be concealed from all eyes. The moment I had looked upon this foot I realized my dreadful situation. That Abdul-Aziz had been mutilated by my household was little; but I had stumbled upon the knowledge of one of those palace secrets which even the mothers of sultans hardly dare to whisper to each other; at the bare hint of which eunuchs stop their ears and turn pale; to be suspected of knowing which means death.

"There was only one alternative. It was the sultan's life or mine. I departed instantly to the palace, and sought a secret audience of the mother of Prince Murad.

"We arranged the matter swiftly. Every moment was heavy with peril. Fortunately, everything was ripe for this revolution, which I had too long delayed, and you are no doubt already acquainted with the steps by which it was carried out. As soon as Prince Murad had been proclaimed, and the oaths of allegiance had been taken, I summoned the officer of the guard and a dozen picked soldiers, and under their escort, accompanied by the sultan, I forced a way through the terrified eunuchs into the presence of Abdul-Aziz. He had just set his seal to a paper as we entered. I snatched it up, and read. It was my death-warrant!

"The vizier trembled as he came to this point. It was an experience to unnerve even a brave man.

"Then I informed Abdul-Aziz that he had ceased to reign. He received the news in perfect stupor. I pointed to the soldiers and invited him to escape the degradation of death at their hands. He understood the situation, and covered down on his couch, shrinking from us in a peculiar and dreadful way. Then the sultana spoke to him.

"She had long intrigued for his downfall, and knew that her son would not be safe while Abdul-Aziz lived. She urged him to preserve his honor.

"Still he hesitated, and finally muttered something about not having a weapon. Instantly the sultana snatched a sharp pair of scissors from her waist, and thrust them into his unwilling hands. Still he hung back. It was becoming shocking.

"Finally I was compelled to order one of the soldiers to advance with his sword drawn. Then at last, with a sob, the sultan thrust the steel points into his arm at the place you saw, and the soldier was allowed to finish the work."

"This was the vizier's account. In a country like Turkey such things are done every day. Nevertheless the affair impressed me unpleasantly. I parted with Mehemed Rushdi with perfect courtesy, but I did not take his hand.

"However, as I have said, I was able, in consequence of the secret which I possessed to exert a powerful influence over the course of events, and on the occasion of my meeting Lord Beaconsfield at the conclusion of the Berlin treaty, he even went so far as to say to me:

"If it had not been for you, baron, the Russians would not have had Estimul!"

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