

The Rebirth Of Turkey 1923.pdf/99



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British defeat at the Dardanelles was a severe blow to the legend of British invincibility, and the promise of friendship to Islam which the Kaiser had made at Damascus in 1898 now offered a possible means of escape from the vise-like grip of the Anglo-Russian Treaty of 1907. The Enver Government had shown the way out and Persia which had felt the weight of the 1907 Treaty most heavily, was not long in following. The German Legation in Teheran helped it along with much talk of Kaiser *Hajji* Wilhelm Mohammed II and that sort of thing, but when the Persian Parliament fled from Teheran in 1915 to declare war against the Allies at Kum, the Russian and British Ministers hastened to the Palace and threatened to complete their partition of the country the moment the Shah left the capital. Thereafter the Shah remained a prisoner in Teheran, while Russians, British, Persian Nationalists and Turks fought across his chaotic country.

As for Afghanistan, the war found the Court at Kabul divided into two parties, one led by the Amir's stepmother Bibi Halima which backed him in sticking loyally to the British, and the other led by his younger brother Nasrullah Khan which demanded that he seize the chance of powerful alliance in breaking out of the Anglo-Russian vise. Nasrullah's party grew rapidly, despite the fact that the Amir fought it with every resource at his command. He confronted it personally when in November, 1914, he strode onto Kabul bridge in royal state and, holding the Koran in

his hand, declaimed to his enemies: "These *feringhis* (British) are our friends. They are my friends. I the Light of Faith, I, the Torch of the Nation, have

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