

each other, "What is to be the position of the Sheriat under the new Constitution?" No public agitation of this question was possible during the first few months, when all classes vied with one another in declarations of loyalty to the new order. But a private form of agitation, which rapidly spread, soon revealed itself to close observers. It even found encouragement from men who once would have stamped out such a movement. The reactionary party, who represented the old régime, were quick to take advantage of the critical spirit fostered by the agitation in regard to the Sheriat. It was not long before that arch-intriguer, Abd ul Hamid, became aware of the strong undercurrent of ecclesiastical dissatisfaction with the non-Islamic tendencies of the new régime. He soon began to plot for the overthrow of the constitutional party by means of an alliance with the religious agitators. In some respects he thus reversed the policy of his early reign. The very leaders whose power he had broken, and the sacred ambitions which he had once tyrannically suppressed, he now identified himself with most zealously, since he saw in them the only power which could wreck the Constitution. The counter revolution which occurred in 1909 took for its watchword "Honour to the Sheriat." So deep a hold had this issue taken on the ignorant masses, by this time, that the constitutional party would have been hopelessly outnumbered and defeated, had their enemies at this juncture only found able leaders to organize the forces of reaction. But the men of aggressive force and intelligent enthusiasm, the only men capable of constructive patriotic effort, were all with the party of progress. The hands on the clock of Turkish history were not to be set back. Constantinople was reoccupied by a series of brilliant manoeuvres, and the hold of the Young Turk Party on the government of the nation was rendered far stronger than before.