

INTRODUCTION

This volume comprises a speech which lasted from the 15th to the 20th October, 1927, delivered by Gazi Mustafa Kemal Paşa, President of the Turkish Republic, at Ankara before the deputies and representatives of the "Republican Party," of which he was the founder and head.

Unconventional as the length and character of this speech is, the subject of it, which is a comprehensive account of one of the most remarkable events in the many centuries of Turkish history, is equally unique. It reveals the activity of the speaker from the time when he first felt himself called upon to take the leadership of his nation into his own hands and guide it from shame and threatened ruin to freedom and power.

Now that danger from abroad has been averted and since the foundations have been prepared in the country on which a revived State is arising, Mustafa Kemal Paşa is moved to show his people how this new Turkey has been built up, on what foundations she is standing and what are the paths she must tread in future.

The speech was delivered before Turks by a Turk, by a man who from the commencement of his military career was intimately associated with the political events occurring in his country; before men who, like himself, have lived to witness or to share in the two eventful decades of the modern history of his native land. This fact alone will explain that the speaker presumed many a circumstance to be perfectly well known to his hearers with which the reader is not familiar.

The present Turkish State under its new Constitution is an extremely democratic republic, which emphatically declines to be influenced by religious considerations. As an easily to be understood, and we may even say inevitable counter-blast to the close connection existing for many centuries between the most absolute monarchy and a religion permeating every sphere of private and public life, the freedom of the citizen and the complete separation of State from Religion have become the battle-cry of the present day. The most liberally conceived Western ideas are accepted with the most jubilant enthusiasm. Western development, civilisation, progress are the aims and substance of the efforts that were made. But the main object of all the anxiety and all the bitter struggle is the nation itself, the people of Turkey.