

45 Jan.

157

TURKEY

1911

Jerusalem.  
May 22, 1911

No. INDEXED

Received by post. June 1

(Subject.)

Consul Satow,  
No. 33.

Departure of Azmi Bey to Constantinople  
on leave of absence. Reports - and  
remarks on his administrative ability, etc.

Last Paper.

(Print.)

(Minutes.)

(How disposed of.)

M<sup>r</sup> Itymauice  
Black Book

(Action completed.)

(Index.)

Next Paper.

44 Jan

British Consulate,

Jerusalem,

May 22, 1911.

154

No. 33. Sir,

I have the honour to report that yesterday Azmi Bey, Governor of Palestine, left for Constantinople on one month's leave of absence.

He was naturally very careful to explain that he would return at the expiration of his leave, but the general opinion is that he will not do so. It would probably be better that some other post be found for him, as the gross and open insult to which he was subjected at the time of what is now known as the "Mosque incident" cannot but have weakened his influence here.

During his term of office he has not shewn himself strong enough to take a firm and independent attitude, but has fallen under the influence of various officials whose advice he appears to have on all occasions adopted. His chief counsellors have been Sami Bey, Commandant of the Gendarmerie, who was recently transferred to Beirut and the Director of Public Instruction. It is perhaps hardly necessary to add that these persons were leading lights in the local Committee of Union

and  
His Excellency,  
The Right Honourable,  
Sir Gerard Lowther, K.C.M.G., C.B.,  
etc., etc.,  
British Ambassador,  
Constantinople.

and Progress.

He was generally credited with being anti-European and fanatical. The policy of the Ottoman Government being opposed to foreign influence, it was not unnatural that every attempt to weaken this influence in Jerusalem, where it has been exceptionally strong, should be made. Azmi Bey has doubtless been a not unwilling instrument of this policy. He has, in contrast to his predecessors, consistently avoided any private intercourse with the Consular Corps and with foreigners. This may, however, be due partly to his ignorance of French and partly to a somewhat solitary disposition.

I have it on good authority that shortly after his arrival he assembled the local notables to whom he made a speech on rather chauvinistic lines in which, among other things, he thanked Heaven that he had never learnt any European language. As he had not learnt Arabic either and as the local Moslems have no ill-will against foreigners to whom they can dispose of their property on very advantageous terms, this speech did not produce the desired effect upon his hearers.

Personally I have found him moderately reasonable and well-disposed, but dilatory in his methods and unready to accept responsibility where an instant decision was required.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

With the greatest respect,

Your Excellency's

most obedient,

humble Servant.

*H. Satow*