

OBITUARY

Ali Riza Bey

Four years after his retirement Ali Riza Bey, the first lecturer in Turkish at the School of Oriental and African Studies, died in London on 5th December, 1945. He came in 1917 to join the School from Cambridge, where he was holding a similar post in Pembroke College under the late Professor E. G. Browne. During his long service of twenty-four years at the School hundreds of students, many of them from the three Services—Army, Navy, and Air Force—benefited by his teaching. Besides being a master of the Turkish language he was an accomplished calligraphist in all styles of Arabic handwriting and gave special lectures for all students learning languages in which the Arabic script is used. As a teacher he was conscientious and painstaking, and his lectures were conducted in a pleasant atmosphere and interspersed with humorous remarks and copious drawings. His unpretentious attitude and friendly conduct endeared him to all his students.

He was born in Smyrna in 1876 and educated at the Agricultural College in Constantinople. On completion of his studies he was appointed superintendent to the private estates of Prince Yusuf Izzeddin, the ill-fated heir to the Ottoman throne, and was decorated by an Order which conferred on him the title of Bey. The political unrest prevailing at the time in Turkey compelled him in 1911 to come to England, where he remained till his death.

By nature and education and by early experience in life he was not content with a quiet academic career, and he found various other avenues for his overflowing vitality. In 1938 the Turkish Government appointed him supervisor to the Turkish students in England, and at the outbreak of war, when the B.B.C. enlarged its foreign broadcasts, he took charge of the Turkish section. Finally, after his retirement from the School, he was called to act as Secretary to the Turkish Halkevi in London, where he worked with great enthusiasm until his failing health after an operation compelled him to relinquish that post early in 1944.

In Turkey he had been for a time joint-editor of the Turkish illustrated paper *Shahbal*, and from England he contributed articles to the Turkish press. He had prepared a Turkish Grammar for his lectures, which, however, was never published. The artist in him predominated over the scholar.

With his death the School loses yet another of its original members, whose kindly disposition and devotion to duty will long be remembered by all those who knew him and worked with him.

It may be a symbolic act of Fate that while England guards his remains in the Moslem Cemetery at Brookwood, his own country keeps in the British Cemetery at Constantinople those of the late Sir E. Denison Ross, the first Director of the School, under whose loving care he worked so long.

S. T.