

Its Centuries-Long Sleep



The former prisoners of the harem now walk the streets whenever they please with their faces unveiled, and dressed in the latest Paris fashions.

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found in modern Turkey—wears her skirts just as short, her silk hose just as sheer, her French heels just as high, and smokes her cigarette just as nonchalantly as her sisters of the western world. As for bobs, they are popular with the younger women of Turkey and some of the older ones.

Young women are admitted to the universities and medical schools, but only a few seem to prefer professional careers just yet. The majority of women are pressed into work by economic necessity and prefer some "job" which does not require such long training. Many are taking government clerkships or becoming salesgirls or stenographers or going into factory work.

Bank clerkships seem particularly suited to women in this new era in Turkey. Strangely in contrast to the rights of women in America, until a short time ago, Turkish women have always been allowed absolute control of their property. Men could not attach it, even though in every other respect women were virtually slaves. The ability in financial matters that has been developed through long generations of property management is standing the new Turkish woman in good stead in earning her living.

Until two years ago it was rank defiance of all the conventions for a Turkish woman to be seen walking on the street with any man except her husband or a near relative. She was prohibited by law from entering a restaurant or other public eating place. Her religion prohibited her from going to the same part of the mosque that the men do. In fact, the Prophet Mohammed unkindly neglected to make it clear whether a woman had hopes of immortality. He let it depend entirely on the wishes of her husband whether she should enter Paradise.

A novel method of encouraging young women to go out more is being tried in Eskishehr, a town in the interior of Turkey. Here the young men members of a recreational club are offering to pay a very alluring salary to girls who can dance or play some musical instrument and who will attend their social meetings. The advertisements this club is sending out ask for girls who have no physical defects and who are good conversationalists or at least can talk without stuttering.

And so the unveiled women of Turkey have the opportunity now to become professional entertainers, just like the girls of France, England or America. Such a thing would have been beyond the pale of decency two or three years ago.

The movies are very popular in Constantinople, Smyrna and all the larger towns. The country villages are still too poverty stricken to encourage them. And it is thoroughly correct now for a young girl to be escorted to the evening movies by her boy friend. She may go with him to the cabarets, too, with perfect propriety.

The chief reason why Turkish women are going into business and professional life more and more is because they are forced to by economic necessity. Wealth in Turkey has always been unequally distributed. The majority of the population are in very straitened circumstances.

Under the Sultan, there were elaborate pension systems and homes of refuge for widows and orphans.

**Astonishing Transformation of the
Once Backward Land of Harems,
Veils and Fezzes Into an Up-
to-Date, Progressive Nation
Where the Men Wield Fountain
Pens Instead of Scimitars and
Young Women Go to Business
and Dance the
Charleston
Dressed
Quite Like
Our Own
Flappers**



A woman street cleaner in Constantinople helping to carry out Kemal Pasha's idea that in order to be thoroughly up-to-date Turkey must keep itself cleaner than it ever has been.

The pensions have been partly continued, but the decrease in the buying value of money has made them almost negligible. The widows have to be self-supporting and they are waking up to the fact that there are plenty of places for them in the business world. If they have not enough education for a business position, they go into the factories where pottery, tapestries, rugs and laces are still made by the same methods that they were 500 years ago.

Many young couples in the cities start out in marriage just as many do in the United States. The wife keeps her job, for her young husband could not possibly support her on his earnings.

Along with the change in the status of women in Turkey is coming a big reform in the marriage laws and customs. More equitable divorce laws have already been put in operation.

According to the old Turkish custom, as set down by the prophet ten or eleven centuries ago and still holding when Kemal Pasha came into power, all marriages were arranged entirely by the parents of the couple. The prospective husband did not see or speak to his bride until after the wedding rites. Girls were married when they were scarcely more than children.

The first reform has been to make it at least possible for the engaged couple to be introduced and to become acquainted before they are married. Either the young man is invited to the home of his fiancée or she is invited to his. Just as soon as possible, as much freedom in marriage will be given to the younger generation as they could hope for in any other country of the world. The young bank clerk who falls in love with the girl at the desk next to his may soon marry her unhampered by family intrigue.

Divorce in Turkey has always been very one-sidedly in favor of the men. All the lordly husband had to do when he grew tired of his wifely chattel was to tell her she was divorced and to get out and go home. But when she wanted to divorce him, she had a much harder time, for there were not many causes that would be legal grounds.

The only protection the Turkish woman had in marriage lay in her charms and her property rights. The Turkish dower is a sort of marriage insurance. When the husband divorced his wife he had to give up her



This photograph, showing a woman unveiled and dressed quite like her sisters of the western world having her smart shoes polished in a Constantinople street, is striking evidence of the new freedom which Turkish women are enjoying.

sale of alcoholics. Bars are not popular and the person who buys even one drink of raki, the national concoction of 65 per cent distilled essence of grape, is requested to sit down and sip it leisurely. Drunken men are immediately arrested.

Sports are becoming popular in the schools of Turkey. A few years ago few people took any interest at all in football or other team games. And when interest did start, traditions of the country made such recreation rather difficult. The students of Robert College, in Constantinople, when they first tried to play football, had to appear on the gridiron in civilian clothes. There they would quickly change into more suitable garb, start the game and continue playing until spied by the police and made to quit.

Radios are being introduced throughout Turkey, but they haven't much vogue yet. Work and not amusement is the important thing in the Turkey of today.

The Turkish educational system is being revolutionized. Until the last revolution in Turkey not 30 per cent of children of school age were sent to school. These, for the most part, learned Arabic so they could read the Koran and then dropped out. Science was not taught in many of the schools. The boys and girls were taught together in the primary grades, but from then on until university and professional school were entirely segregated. The sanitary arrangements in all the schools were atrocious.

Now a very modern school system is being established, with kindergarten, primary, secondary and college courses that include every branch of modern learning. Even art is taught, though in the Islam creed any picture or sculpture representing the form or face of man is strictly prohibited. Domestic science—dress-making, household budgeting, cooking, etiquette, including the use of the fork which is not found in most Turkish homes—is stressed. Supervised playgrounds are being introduced.

Modern Turkey is finding some way to rid itself of all its old decadent traits and to substitute ultramodern ideas for those of the Middle Ages. Her respect for the Mohammedan religion is still great, but when it conflicts with modernization, religion suffers. All the old prohibitions of the Koran are being dropped. "Whenever the cause for a prohibition is removed, so is the prohibition" is the code of the newly awakened country.

Turkey is a very cosmopolitan country. Five or six entirely different races live there, and under the old regime they were separated rather than united by the government. Kemal Pasha is now doing his utmost to weld these divergent races together and to standardize one language, the Turkish. His most important step in this direction has been the revision of the Koran and its translation into Turkish from the original Arabic which is being done now. This is an even more significant reform in Turkey than the translation of the Bible from Latin into English was in the West.

Turkish traditional etiquette required that every visitor to a private home or place of business be offered a cup of coffee. All Turks are hospitable to the last degree. But with the increase of business the coffee drinking soon grew to such proportions that it was an actual handicap to office efficiency. As soon as this came to the attention of the new President he issued a new order: "No coffee during office hours." Government offices and legislative departments were the first to feel the effect of this order, for they had grown used to their eggshell cups of thick coffee syrup a half dozen or so times a day as they pondered over weighty matters of state. But they soon came to see the really wide benefits of so seemingly trivial an edict.

The old brutal prison system of Turkey is also undergoing reform. Never before in the history of the country have there been so many women under arrest and of course modern provision must be made for them. This has come about coincident with granting so many liberties to women, although it is not the new woman but her decadent sister who is bucking the law and having to be punished. The arrest of all women who criticize the new dress and religious reforms, thereby weakening confidence in the Kemalist government, has been ordered, and a special squad of police set to watch over the women in hotels and cafes to see that they don't find fault with the new modernization processes. A large number of arrests has been made already.

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The less romantic but far more comfortable and efficient uniform now worn by soldiers in the Turkish army.

dower, and it was easier to keep her around, especially as he could always take a few more wives to solace him, than it was to give up that dower. As a result of this, however, the well-known Turkish custom of tying the wife up in a sack and dropping her into the Bosphorus grew up, and that barbaric practice is only recently being blotted out.

The Turks are patterning their amusements as well as their clothes after those of the western world. Afternoon tea dances are becoming popular with the upper classes, and even the Charleston is being introduced at these gatherings. The modern ballroom dances and the acrobatic, jazzy dances of the Paris and New York stage are more appreciated in Turkey these days than the languorous dance steps with which the beauties of the old regime charmed the Sultan and his court.

The new buildings in Constantinople, in the business and residence sections, have to be of brick or stone. The older sections are of wooden construction, and fire and decay have almost destroyed them. The fire department of old Turkey was a very picturesque but futile thing. The watchman whose duty was primarily to protect anybody on the street from being slugged and robbed, occasionally would detect the smell of smoke and turn in a fire alarm.

Then came the fire company, a remnant of medievalism in truth. Clad in "shorts" and thin shirts like old Greek athletes they would dash down the street, bearing aloft a tray on which reposed a very short and ineffectual looking hose. If it were night they also carried torches. And then having reached the fire, it would probably be discovered that the only water in the district came from cisterns and so the fire company and its little length of hose could be of no use whatever.

Now there is a scream of a siren and a sudden dash of red and noise, and a modern engine company with chemicals, ladders and other up-to-date equipment is on its way to fight the flames. There is a much better water system, too.

Turkey's new prohibition laws are an innovation. Liquors of all sorts may be sold in the big cabarets and the cafes and restaurants on the main streets. But no small, secluded place on a side street may engage in the