

CHAPTER IV

THE GREAT RENAISSANCE

(a) *The Passing of the Veil*

ONE of the things which struck me most on my return to Turkey was the new national dignity.

Both men and women now have a dignity—a *raison d'être* they never had before. You see it both inside and outside Turkey; in the homes and in the remotest village. The railway porter, the dining-car attendant, the custom-house officers, the cabmen have all now a position. As the Messageries Maritime steamer arrived in Smyrna, I watched the Turkish officials walk up the gangway. What a difference! Instead of the self-conscious, somewhat crouching Turk wondering as he ascends what kind of reception is waiting for him, the new Turk, head up, walks up the gangway and shakes hands with his colleagues as the member of a brother nation. All the time I noticed little things which proved how real the new dignity was. It is true, to a foreigner, some of the Anatolian functionaries are a little overbearing. They are, however, only exaggerating the precautions they consider necessary to defend the man and the Government that has given them their new dignity.

Once the country was free from the foreign yoke, the Sultan and Kaliph abolished, the Republic established, the Ghazi set himself the task of establishing his new democracy, of free men and women. Change succeeded change with lightning rapidity. The Ghazi was like a surgeon amputating the limbs of the gangrenous State with

resolution, knowing exactly what he was doing and confident of success.

Following the departure of the Kaliph came the abolition of the antiquated laws of the Chariat. Criticism and indignation followed this reform in the foreign Press, but the Pasha does not even trouble to listen. "Could you," asked Aga Aglou Ahmed Bey, "be governed by the laws of the New Testament?" I quoted for myself "Take no thought for the morrow," and understood, delightful as it would be to have neither banks nor dressmakers' bills, the impossibility of New Testament legislation.

After the changed laws for men followed the greatest reform of all—freedom for women. The Ghazi argued: "How was it possible to establish a democracy with the women in bondage and the whole social outlook paralysed by the etiquette of the harem. Instead of being free to help in the work of reconstruction, women were kept in idleness; the whole system was ridiculous, it just had to cease." The Pasha had made up his mind that Turks should take their place in the Councils of Europe on equal terms with representatives of other European nations, and this could never be done until women were the partners of men.

Besides, no right-thinking Turk cared for the harem. He was as ashamed of the words harem and polygamy as he was of his fez. The coarse smoking-room jokes about his home life and polygamy, as well as the conspicuous place his fez gave him in European assemblies, he deeply resented. He knew he was being classed as "a native," he asserted almost too emphatically his belief in Western home life and avoided using the word "harem," whilst the women, to escape pity, pretended they had never been in bondage.

It is true polygamy was the exception rather than the rule, but both the law of the land and religion allowed it. It was difficult for a wife to feel secure in her home, and if

she did, her place in society was not defined. She had only as much liberty as her husband was pleased to give her.

By altering the laws, putting women under the Swiss Code, abolishing polygamy, and by his own marriage, the Ghazi showed the position he intended women henceforward would hold in the State and in society, and no one has ever questioned it. Although his own married life was very quickly ended, his wife, a lady of his own choice, able and well educated, was to be half partner in his life and work.¹ By the way he treated his wife, the Pasha showed his people how he expected other men to treat their wives. For the first time in the history of Islam, a Turk took his wife everywhere with him. She rode with the Ghazi, walked with him, drove with him to all official ceremonies, went with him to the manœuvres and to the opening of Parliament. She was unveiled and rode astride. After that there was no more discussion as to what woman's position should be, the Ghazi had stated it only too clearly.

It has been argued that the war gave women their freedom. It is true that in the war of independence they had shown they were ready for freedom. On the Angora war monu-

¹ By a curious coincidence, I am reminded that it was through one woman's influence that Turkish women acquired their craze for everything French. After our visit to the Empress Eugénie at Cap Martin, Zeyneb, heroine of Pierre Loti's *Désenchantées*, was quite overcome. "Imagine," she said, "seeing in the flesh the heroine of your grandmother's stories; the Empress whose beauty fascinated the East; the Empress whose clothes the women copied; whose language they learnt; and the woman who had, though perhaps she may not know it, the greatest influence on the lives of the Turkish women." Few are aware in Europe of the revolution that this visit of the Empress Eugénie made on the lives of Turkish women.

The Empress was exquisitely beautiful, but she was a woman, and the first impression which engraved itself on the understanding of the poor Turkish captives was, that their master, Abdul Aziz, was paying homage to a woman and bowed before her in all his majesty. After the visit of the Empress, the palace ladies and wives of the high functionaries copied as nearly as they could the appearance of these lovely women. They divided their hair in the middle, spent hours making bunches of curls. High-heeled shoes replaced the coloured babouches (Turkish slippers), and even the chalvar and enturi (pantaloons and tunic) were exchanged for a dress.

ment Turkish women's war work has been immortalized by a plaque showing women carrying shells. It is a gracious attention highly appreciated by the nation. Carrying shells is never an easy task, but in those terrible surroundings of Angora, underclothed, underfed, bent under their terrible weight, it was a never-to-be-forgotten piece of heroism on the part of the women.

In 1922 several women followed their husbands to Angora, but one hardly ever saw them in public. I used to go daily to the Grand National Assembly—the only woman. I used to lunch with Ministers, députés and writers—the only woman. In schools and hospitals there were women. I still ate alone with men. Why? Even my friend who had her own Red Cross hospital had not her position secure as it is to-day.

Let us sum up, in one blow the Pasha has given woman not only complete freedom, but has assured her position socially. She can accompany her husband anywhere in Turkey as in Europe. All professions are open to her and in time she will vote and take her seat in Parliament, though I personally have met no Turkish woman who wished it; indeed, a wise decision. Not that women are not as able to vote as men and every bit as capable. But intelligent women like my friend see so much they can do outside Parliament better than men—the better housing problem, drainage, architecture, etc., that they would prefer to have the municipal vote. If women were to vote first of all now it would double the strength of the "People's Party," for naturally all the women would vote solidly for the Ghazi.

Strange it was for one like myself who saw women's freedom in England bought at the price of a titanic struggle between themselves and a Liberal Government, to see the women of Turkey given their freedom without having to ask for it, and that freedom sponsored by the ruler himself. Indeed, it is the Ghazi, the head of the women's

movement, who has defined what are "women's rights." He has made "freedom for women" one of the chief planks in his platform, and woe to the hodja or old Turk who would dare to place obstacles or even criticism along the women's path to progress. They would not try it twice, for the Ghazi takes quick decisions.

During my stay an interesting trial took place—the trial of the editor of the *Acsham*. He had published in his paper a cartoon representing woman's freedom as a balloon which, as it mounted in the air, threw its ballast "Women's virtues" overboard. Although the editor explained that the cartoon was not original; that it did not "hit" Turkish women but *all* women; there was no remedy, the editor was sent to prison. And so whatever his private opinions may be with reference to Turkish women and their freedom, he will never again express them in the Press, whose duty it is not to criticize the Government, but to work for progress and reconstruction according to the programme laid down by the leaders of the new movement. To Western ears, this muzzling of the Press does not fall in line with liberty, independence, and democracy. We must not forget, however, the age of the Republic and the new movement; a movement still in swaddling clothes cannot be left to the freedom of its own sweet will, any more than a real alive infant.

And so the women, instead of being thwarted and contradicted and put into stricter confinement at each serious attempt towards freedom, as I have seen them for twenty years, have now the blessed feeling that if only they can take some step towards progress, it will be a homage to the ruler to whom they owe so much. They feel that whatever they do to better the conditions of the people, if they found a new children's welfare centre, or a hospital, or some educational work, their Ghazi will give his patronage and if he can find time will pay them a visit. He

accepts their books, their pictures and the school children's offerings, and his congratulations mean so much to them and to their families; for families are very united in Turkey in spite of the past insecure position of the wife. I remember with what pride the very able writer Aga Aglou Ahmed Bey invited me to meet his two daughters. They are both such talented girls that an American writer published an article stating "they were Armenians, and the Bey was passing them off as his daughters and Turks," so low an estimate had American public opinion of Turkish intellect! One of the Bey's daughters is a jurist, the other, who graciously served as guide to me, taking me to the various child welfare centres, is philosophy professor at a boys' college, the post having been given to her as the most efficient person to fill it and regardless of sex, and according to the Pasha's wishes. "Away with these absurd sex barriers which have kept the country back. Work is work and must be judged as such whether it is done by a man or a woman," he preaches inside and outside season, and when he speaks he takes care to use the words "teacher, professor, author, doctor"; in my case, he called me a "gentleman," as the feminine did not express what he wanted to say. How well this man knows the *nuances* in French as well as in Turkish!

Although philosophy professor and a very interesting companion for me in my wanderings, the Hanoum is a very modest little person. It was her proud father and not she who told me of the volume on "Logic" she has published and that the Ghazi not only read it but invited her to come and discuss some of her statements with him, as he did not agree with all she said.

"You are indeed putting the doctrines of J. S. Mill into practice," I said. "We are putting into practice the doctrines of logic and truth," said the Ghazi, "nothing else matters."

The more I compare the new Turkey with its feminist triumphs with the old Turkey where women simply did not count, the stranger it appears to me. This is how a Turkish woman herself describes this unhappy period :—

“ We are idle and useless and therefore very unhappy. “ Women are solely needed everywhere ; there is work that “ we all can do, but the customs of the country will not “ allow us to do it.

“ Had we possessed the blind fatalism of our grand- “ mothers, we should probably have suffered less, but with “ culture, as so often happens, we began to doubt the “ wisdom of the faith which should have been our consola- “ tion. We analysed our life and discovered nothing but “ injustice and cruel unnecessary sorrow. Resignation and “ culture cannot go together. Resignation has been the “ ruin of Turkey. How can I impress upon you the anguish “ of our everyday life—our continual haunting dread ; no “ one can imagine the sorrow of a Turkish woman’s life “ but those who, like ourselves, have led this life. Sorrow “ indeed belongs to Turkish women, they have bought “ the ‘ exclusive rights ’ with their very souls. Could the “ history of any country be more awful than the reign in “ which we were living ? Was not the history of the reign “ of Hamid more awful than any fiction ? You will say “ I am morbid ; perhaps I am, but how can it be otherwise “ when the best years of my life have been poisoned by the “ horrors of the Hamidian regime ?

“ You ask how we spend the day ! Dreaming, principally. “ What else can we do ? The view of the Bosphorus with “ the ships coming and going is the greatest consolation to “ us captives. The ships are to us fairy godmothers who “ will take us away one day, somewhere we know not—but “ we gaze at the beautiful Bosphorus through the lattice “ windows and thank Allah for at least this pleasure in “ life. . . .

“ Unlike most Turkish women, I write . . . This correspondence is the dream side of my existence and in moments of extra discouragement and revolt, for we are always unhappy, I take refuge in this correspondence addressed to no one in particular. And yet in writing, I risk my life. What do I care? Listen to this—‘ How I hate Western education and culture for the suffering it has brought me! Why should I have been born a Turk rather than one of those free Europeans about whom I read? Why should fate have chosen certain persons rather than others for this eternal suffering? ”

“ Judge what would have happened to me had my innocent ravings fallen into the hand of the vigilant spies of Abdul Hamid, and I have to hide ‘ my dream existence ’ with as much care as if it were a plot to kill the Imperial Majesty himself . . . ”

“ Sometimes we sing, accompanying our Eastern songs on the Turkish lute. But our songs are all in the minor key, our landscapes are all blotted in sadness, and sometimes the futility and unending sorrow of our lives rise up and choke us and the tears flow, but often our life is too soul-crushing even for tears and nothing but death can change it. . . . ”

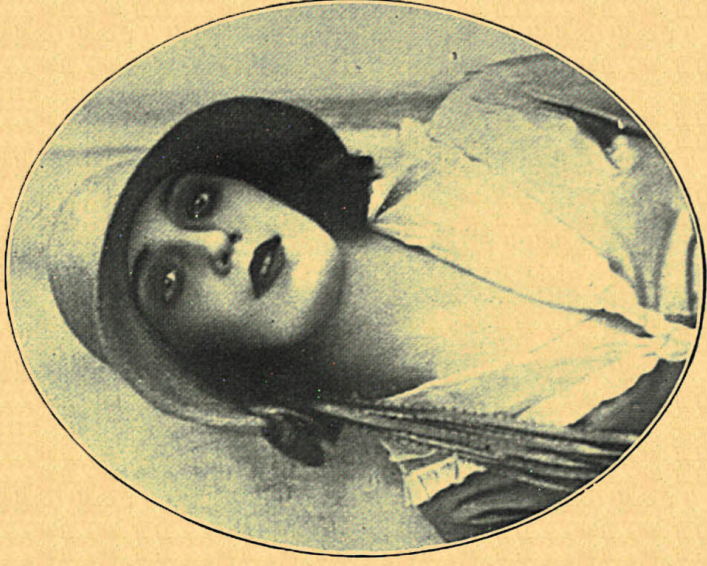
“ Like a true daughter of my race, I start the day with good resolutions; ‘ I will do something to show that I have at least counted the hours as they drag themselves past!’ Night comes, my Dadi (old nurse) comes to undress me and braid up my hair. . . . I tumble on to my wide divan and am soon fast asleep, worn out with the exertion I have not even made. ”

“ Will no one come great enough to change this futile regime? ”

Although the Turkish women’s position to an observer who has watched them so carefully for years appears



"MELEK HANOUM," HEROINE OF PIERRE LOTIS
"DISENCHANTED"



SUATE DERVISHE HANOUM, THE TURKISH WRITER,
WELL KNOWN IN GERMANY

extraordinary, they take it as a matter of course ; it is as though they had never known anything but the joys of freedom. And the more I study it, the more marvellous it seems. Is there in all history the record of a ruler who not only freed the women from the tyranny of centuries, but stood by to see that his orders were carried out ? And if during the process of awakening some of the women have been inclined to be timid, if they have felt uncomfortable unveiled in public, it is as if the Ghazi were saying : “ Don’t be afraid ; I am there to protect you. I have ordered you to have full liberty and a new dignity and I shall see you get it.”

It is astonishing that writers summing up the merits of the new Turkey have paid so much attention to the abolition of the Kaliphate and so little to woman’s freedom, which is the greatest reform of all. Free women in the home, in the schools and in the hospitals and care of women and children not only improve the character of the men, but completely change the whole national outlook. What can be the result of this useless separation of the sexes ? What is the harvest reaped from a harem existence ? Inertia—helplessness—lack of initiative—lack of staying-power—no enthusiasm—no life vigour. How can it be otherwise ? Take a population of illiterate Anatolians, give them primary education *without* women teachers and then ask yourself why the people’s education proceeds at snail pace !

What can be the outlook on life of the woman who shrouds herself from top to toe and through the scant space of one eye peers at the world ? One wonders how in the face of the high position the free women of Turkey have gained Indian rulers still speak of “ Purdah ” as the will of God, whilst the eminent physician Dr. N. N. Parakh says : “ Purdah has brought women to the level of animals.”

I feel confident that a day will come when the Ghazi’s speech, his credo with regard to women, delivered in the

most fanatical city of Turkey, accompanied only by a secretary and an aide-de-camp, when he announced what he intended to do and did it, will be the credo for the freedom of all Moslem women.

“Our women companions are intelligent thinkers like ourselves. By making them understand the seriousness of the present situation, by making them one with the national ideals, by enlightening and educating them, we shall not be guilty of a selfish act. Why should they not show their faces to the world? Why should they not see the world with their eyes? There is nothing to fear. I implore you most sincerely not to be afraid. This step is necessary, it will lead to great things. *To reach our goal we will not hesitate to sacrifice our lives.* And I beg you to remember if we want to hold fast to the new civilization, we must be ready to offer our lives as a sacrifice. It is futile to attempt to swim against the powerful tide of civilization. Civilization is without mercy to those who will not obey its dictates.”

The Ghazi's meaning is quite clear. Henceforward women are to be *companions*, they are to be educated as well as men. And it means so much that he will enforce it even though it necessitates the spilling of blood.

By directing the forces of the Turkish nation into the right channel the Ghazi has given the proper place to the greatest force of all, woman. In her old position, woman was becoming like a limb that is useless because not used, or a plant dying for want of water. The little power she had was anonymous, therefore dangerous. When things went wrong one said “*cherchez la femme*,” but she was not to be found hidden behind the veil. Now her new position is above board. In giving a new dignity to the women of Turkey, the Ghazi is without doubt raising the position of all women in the East.

(b) The Forbidden Fez—The Coming of the Hat

In the acquisition of the Turk's new dignity, the hat has certainly played an important part. "You cannot make a Turk into a Westerner by giving him a hat," say the critics, and this is true. A hat, however, is a big step in the right direction. The modern Turkish man wearing his European dress and at the same time his fez, the fez of old Byzantium, was in his clothing what he was in his Government, religion, education, mind and home life—a mixture drawn from many sources. Disciples of Rousseau, Marx and the French Revolution; students of history, geography and science; Moslems by name and dress, yet Positivists in reality; Republicans and Democrats, yet forced to pay homage to a decadent member of the crumbling House of Osman—what was there national about the Turk? His fez set him apart and branded him as a follower of a religion, whose fanatical laws had kept the people in subjection, and centuries behind the other nations, whereas he could see only too clearly that Islam, an ideal religion for the people of the desert, falls down before the requirements of twentieth-century Western democracies. The same with the mind. The big nations had each tried to put its educational hall-mark on the minds of the children. Turks thought in the language of the West and lived like Orientals. The Ghazi determined to put them once and for all on a definite national footing. They were to be Turks and at the same time Western in dress, education and mind. "The time has gone by," he said, "when a hat should be the symbol of a religion. Religion is such a personal matter that it is no one's business but your own. Instead of breaking down barriers between nations, religion creates a useless fanaticism which does not obey the dictates of democracy; why should we, then, by wearing a fez ticket ourselves as

encouraging religious fanaticism, when our one idea is to end it for ever."

This sounds very logical and simple on paper, but it was a drastic reform which terrified some of the Pasha's intimate friends. "It was a reform," said Haider Bey, "which I personally longed for, but it seemed to me it would take years to prepare the people's mind before it could be done. The Ghazi was right, I was wrong."

But, of course, before a radical change like this, there could be no pity on the part of the man at the helm, no stopping to consider the feelings of the poor peasants in the heart of Asia Minor. The man who is going to force a change so drastic must know what he intends to do, and do it at all costs.

"Supposing," I asked a Turk, "you had given permission to any Turk who saw fit to wear a hat. How many would have worn a hat?" "About seventy-five per cent," he answered. "But the reform could never have been worked in that way; there can be no half measures in Turkey."

And indeed, it was a reform that could not be questioned or discussed. Imagine what the devout Moslem must have felt, when he first heard he must wear the head-dress of the hated giaour. He had hated the giaour, because he was taught by the hodjas to do so. He had massacred giaours and had in some places refused them burial. And now he was asked to wear the head-dress of the giaour; there was to be no outward distinction between a Moslem and a giaour.

It is true, this is not the first time a head-dress has been forced on a nation. When the conquering Turks were forced to wear a fez, protests took place, during which ten men were killed and forty injured. When Peter the Great went to enforce the hat, he was accompanied by two squads of cavalry. Mustapha Kemal Pasha, however, relied on

his own powers of persuasion and his personality. Accompanied by an aide-de-camp and one secretary, wearing a panama hat, his moustache clean shaven, he chose the most fanatical city in Turkey, and to the assembled people announced that next day all Turks must wear hats and the reason why.

“ A civilized and international dress is what is necessary for our great nation,” said the Ghazi. “ We shall have it. We shall wear shoes and boots, trousers, waistcoat, shirt, collar and tie, a jacket, and to complete it all, a head-dress with a brim. The head-dress is called a hat. To those who hesitate, I say they are both ignorant and foolish. If it is right to wear a fez, which is Greek, why should it be wrong to wear a hat ? ”

“ Those people who hamper themselves with childish ideas, whose mentality belongs to the Middle Ages and who try to fight against civilization—these people must meet their fate—servitude and failure. But the people of the Turkish Republic have broken their chains ; their heroism is unprecedented in history, they are determined to live the life of a civilized nation.”

The people listened. Like lambs they exchanged their kalpaks for the head-dress of the giaour.

The Turk who translated the Ghazi's speech for me was worried lest the words of the speech should be misunderstood. He considered the whole subject had been unfairly treated by the foreign Press. He would have preferred my making no comment about the hat.

It is true, the fact that ten men lost their lives through refusing to wear a hat sends a shudder through one's whole being and is incomprehensible to the Western mind. “ You must remember,” explained the Turk, “ the hat is the symbol of the new civilization ; a sign of allegiance to the Republic. By refusing to wear it in dead opposition to the Government's order, and wearing instead a fez which is

now the symbol of reaction and allegiance to the Sultan, one is guilty of high treason, and must be punished accordingly. No half measures are possible. In the establishment of a new Government an order is an order, and must be rigorously enforced."

For the educated, travelled Turk to wear the hat he has always worn in Europe is quite natural. The hat in Pera also is far more in keeping with the surroundings than it is in Stamboul, where all sorts and conditions of head-gear meet the eye. Nevertheless, hat though it be only in name, it is the symbol of a new civilization and with its assistance the people have auto-suggestioned themselves into a new dignity. This is only too apparent.

With the coming of the hat and the admission of Turkish women into society, the Turk is a hundred times better groomed than in the days of the fez. His face is clean-shaven. His clothes are cleaner and better cut, he always remembers the "crease," and when he can, he buys English clothes. Ruschen Echref Bey, tall and handsome, looks well in his English clothes put on with care. He, however, cannot help drawing your attention to their nationality. He is like those who wear pearls for the first time, and have to tell you they are real.

It may wear off in time, but at present the hat is the uniform of a new civilization. There are certain things you cannot do in uniform. What a change it has brought in manners and customs!

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We have seen the new dignity that the hat has brought to the upper classes. Now let us hear what the peasant has to say.

It was at Konia. Always trying to find some new way to interest me in her country, my friend and hostess decided we should visit a charming old peasant, a personage

in the city known to all as "the adoptive father of the Ghazi." He has nothing whatsoever to do with the President, officially or otherwise; his title of relationship to the Pasha he chose himself. His name is Hadji Hussein Aga. He is over eighty years old, lives in the village of Cedirler, about twenty minutes from Konia, is in possession of all his faculties, and has been on a pilgrimage to Mecca. He knew nothing of life till the advent of Mustapha Kemal Pasha, except his home, the mosque, the fields where he worked and the sorrow that was the lot of the Turks in the days of Hamid; wars, taxes higher and higher, food dearer and more scarce was the life he knew—then came the day of deliverance. To show his gratitude to the Ghazi for what he had done for Turkey, the old man undertook a second pilgrimage, this time to Angora. Armed with as much honey as he could procure, someone wrote for him: "To my well-beloved son, the Ghazi, who has brought so much sweetness to our lives, I, the oldest inhabitant in the village, come to present my humble homage."

Leaving his honey at the President's house, he disappeared and sat himself down in a café to study the strange new civilization going on around him. "All of a sudden" (could one only reproduce the old man's graphic recital of his pilgrimage) came a police officer to look for him. By order of the Ghazi, he was driven in a motor-car and taken to the President's study. "Then," he said with great reverence, "I made the acquaintance of my son." Charming compliments the Ghazi paid him. He loves the peasants, knows just what to say to them, and was deeply touched by the old man's kindly attention. An officer was sent to show him round Angora. He went to the Grand National Assembly, sat himself amongst the ladies, who were delighted to meet this simple, big-souled man. Mustapha Kemal Pasha had presents prepared for him and asked

him to call and fetch them, but the old man never went. "That I should take my son presents after all he has done for us," he said, "I understand. But who am I to receive presents from the great Ghazi?"

He returned to Konia—a hero. Everybody knows him, everyone respects the old man, everybody listens to the recital of his pilgrimage to Angora,—Mecca being quite in the shade,—though they already know it by heart. The Governor has called the new village school after him.

The Governor and his wife and little son came with my friend and me to visit the old man. Although it was Ramazan and he had not eaten all day, he offered to prepare a meal for us. Crossing a clean square courtyard, we sat on cushions on the floor of his one room. The cushions were comfortable and the room spotlessly clean—if the religion of Mahomet has kept the people back centuries, it has also kept them a clean and sober nation. His wife sat on the floor beside us. Like so many of the peasants she wore her hair in hanging plaits covered by a veil. Hadji is proud to have us as guests. But he is so overcome that he forgets to remove his hat. The Governor reminds him he must do so. Before hanging up his hat, he kisses it and raises it reverently to his forehead as though it were the Koran. "Why do you do that?" I asked. "It is the order of my son, our Ghazi," he said, "the symbol of our new civilization and all he is doing for us." "What does your hat mean?" I asked. "It means: I can go out for a walk with my wife, for she is now my companion; that I must be very kind to her, never forgetting to kiss her hand when I leave home, as I have seen Nadji Pasha kiss his wife's hand."

Mustapha Kemal Pasha when he visited Konia went to see this kindly old man, sitting where I sat, and, I am told, on the same cushions.

The old man's attitude towards the hat and his devotion

to the Ghazi is typical of the devotion of the other peasants. *Vox populi, vox Ghazi*. He is so near to them, they have seen him and spoken to him, he cares for their needs.

“Have you seen the statue of my son in Konia?” Hadji asked. “Did you notice the bundles of wheat in his right hand? It means my son is a farmer like us. He has his farm and he knows what we want. The Bank of Agriculture advances us the money for our seeds and produce without interest, a blessing that only a farmer can understand.

“And did you see the sword in his left hand? That means that the Ghazi is saying ‘If there is any attempt to interfere with the freedom of my people I will take my sword in my right hand again.’” And so he talked on and on, of the new ruler and all the happiness he had brought. Certainly the idea of advancing money without interest for farm produce has made an incalculable difference to agriculture. Also if their season is bad, the farmers are not pressed to return the money; they are put on their honour to work and get as fine a result as possible, and the system works very well.

“All this new regime of my son,” said the old man, “is in such a striking contrast to what happened in the reigns of the Sultans, that I often ask my wife if I am dreaming, and if I will not wake up one day and find that Hamid still reigns.”

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I had seen the old peasant's attitude towards the hat, what did he think of the new civilization? My friend had organized the first public ball ever given in Konia, it was for the benefit of the Red Crescent. The Governor sent his car to fetch the old man. It was twelve o'clock and he had long been asleep. He could not understand whether or no he was supposed to bring his wife with him, so, erring

on the safe side, he left her at home. Had she come, however, she would have behaved with the same quiet and ease of manner as he. For an old man whose horizon had been bounded by a mosque and his own modest home, a modern Turkish ballroom was a dazzling spectacle. The brilliant lights, the hall decorated with flags and almond blossom, the unveiled women with bare necks and arms dancing with men, what could it all mean? He walked right across the ballroom in his farmer's clothes, carrying a stout stick and with his hat on. Here were people doing everything that he had learnt since his childhood meant a journey straight to hell. He just stared and stared until amongst the flags he saw the Ghazi's portrait. "There is my son," he said, "it must be all right."

He sat down to watch the dancing. What did he think? "They all seem to be behaving like good brothers and sisters," he said, "and so may God blind the eyes of those who see evil in it." They took him to the buffet. He carefully picked the ham out of his sandwich and gave it back to the waiter—for pork he would not eat—but he ate the bread and butter.

"Does my son dance?" he asked. "Yes."

"Does he dance well?" "Yes."

"Well, he ought to know what's right or wrong and I suppose in Paradise I will understand."

With these words, having thanked his hosts for their kind hospitality, the Governor had him driven home.

When we arrived home, Makboulé, late though it was, came to hear my impressions. "That fine old man was a very interesting study," I said. "His look of utter bewilderment when he came into the ballroom, and his perfect composure when he saw his Ghazi—'his son'—as he calls him, proves beyond doubt the futility of trying to oppose a personal rule at this early stage in the history of a new civilization. It is all very well for the critics of Turkey

to call the new democracy 'a democracy in chains': how can you lead men like old Hadji into the paths of democracy except by the influence of a strong personality?"

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When I visited the newly opened museum, once the meeting-place of the dancing dervishes of Konia, a dis-banded dervish served our coffee. Out of his long felt cylinder hat, he had made three hats. He was fasting. His face was drawn and pale. What a long trying fast Ramazan is when it comes in summer—sixteen hours. He stood in the same position as in the old days waiting for the empty coffee cups, but he forgot his hat was on his head, the brim at the back, ready for prayer; and there was such a far-away expression in his eyes.

The authorities apologized—but why should they? Three years ago no person outside the sacred Mevlané sect ever crossed the threshold or visited the tomb of this saint. To-day he, wearing a hat, serves a foreign woman with coffee. They show her all the holy relics, even the sacred carpet and the silver staircase. And he follows the procession carrying a chair lest the foreign woman should be tired and want to rest. He is old, he cannot understand more than what he is doing is an order of the great Ghazi. "What does it matter?" says my escort. "His son will understand and his grandchildren are at our schools,—we have to concentrate all our energies on the next generation."

The problem of the hat was indeed an interesting one. I watched the hats in old Stamboul, I watched them in Angora, Konia, Adana and Mersina—all sorts and conditions of head-gear. Provided only it was *not a fez*, any head-gear could be worn. Where had they found the things with which to cover their heads? Sheep skins, a mixture of bowler and billycock, Bill Sykes' cast-off, and caps of all sorts and sizes and colours—it looked as though someone

had distributed them as we give away cakes and buns at a charity tea, and as luck would have it, the big ones fell to the lot of those with small heads and vice versa. Some of the peasants with their caps as foundation twisted their picturesque scarves round it, whilst others, having wound their scarves round and round, crowned the edifice with a mottled cap in glaring contradiction to the scarf. It was not a happy solution to the problem, but the problem is not old and one has to remind critics "that Rome was not built in one day." One hopes that the peasant will adopt a hat which is both practical and in harmony with his surroundings. Old Hadji Hussein's hat was certainly the nicest I saw. A high-crowned, dust-coloured felt with a wide brim with a stud to fasten it up in front for prayer, it was a guarantee against sun and cold, and it was picturesque and practical into the bargain.

Whatever may be said to the contrary, the Turkish peasant is full of resources. This chrysalis stage through which he is now passing will not last long—a fine moth will soon release itself.

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"Well the Ghazi has done it," said one of his friends, "it's a wonderful reform and one for which we are all grateful. No one else could have done it."

The hat is established. Very few Turks if they had the chance would ever go back to the old head-dress. The Ghazi replaced the fez by the hat, it is true, but even he could not replace the hat by the fez.

(c) The New Charter of the Village

That afternoon the Governor motored me from Konia to the village of Ali-Bey-Heuysuk, one of the most reactionary of all the Turkish villages.

It interested me to see from another angle how much and how little the simple villager had understood of the new civilization. Was Hadji the exception, and were the others, as I was told, just sheep driven by the great Turkish shepherd?

Perihan, and the Vali's little daughter came with us. The Vali was proud to drive along the new and well-kept roads, almost the touring club roads of my country, then all of a sudden the road would come to an end. The chauffeur would jump a bank, drive along an unploughed field, spring up a hillock, zigzag along a muddy road, jump a second bank, cross the stream and another portion of ploughed field till we came to another part of the newly constructed road. At times we almost overbalanced taking our bank sideways; one felt like a puppet being driven in a circus performance. Surely our chauffeur could have had a large music-hall salary for his performance!

The most important personages of the village came to its outskirts to bid us welcome. I love the primitive life of the villagers. They may be in rags, but their manners belong to the aristocrat.

The chief buildings in the village are the mosque and the school built by the villagers themselves. In the market place, all sorts and conditions of caps were respectfully raised, for the whole village had come out to greet us. The men cheered.

After visiting the school and the mosque, we went to the Council Chamber, where we sat on cushions on the floor, whilst the Governor explained the working of

the village laws and introduced the personalities of the village.

The ledgers were brought. Very neatly the village accounts were kept, the history of the village written, and they had their own village courts with power to judge thefts up to £50. As the chief crime of the village is sheep stealing, the thief is caught and punished at once, whereas in the old days these petty thefts tacked on to a long list of town crimes only resulted in the thief having disappeared before any attempt had been made to catch him.

When I asked who kept the village in order, the villagers proudly answered: "The village is ours. We built the mosque, the school and the roads, and the village laws oblige us to keep our village clean and healthy. We are now citizens of the Republic and masters of our village, of which we are proud."

"Are you happy?" I asked the head of the village, "Life is so different for us now," he said. "We have quite a new dignity and now we count for something in the eyes of those who govern us. In the old days the Vali, armed to the teeth and with an escort, came to extort money from us. The taxes were merciless. We had a Padishah far away, and we were called out to fight and die for him whenever it pleased him, and count it a privilege. But none of us ever saw him. Now all is so different. Our ruler has been to see us, and we have shaken his hand. Our Vali is our friend. We drink a cup of coffee with him, we tell him all our fortunes and misfortunes. He has stopped brigandage and sheep stealing and we all look forward to his visits, for he is always ready to help us."

"Are these people poor?" I asked the Governor. "They have bread to eat and houses to live in, the bad days are over, prosperity is ahead. They realize the necessity for hard work," he answered.

"Did he have difficulty in collecting the taxes?"

"None whatever. The old tithes have been abolished, and quick payment of taxes is rewarded with a reduction on the total."

I spoke of this new village dignity. The Turkish villager in the past had his exquisite manners, it is true, but this new dignity comes from a feeling of being able to help oneself and counting for something in the community.

We went to see the women. The Governor did not accompany me. Perihan acted as interpreter. We sat on the floor on cushions. The absence of furniture simplifies life, and the whole contents of the home are so easily put on the donkey's back, when they travel from village to village.

The women's hair was veiled, they had been working in the fields. They were quite aware that the Ghazi had made them free. "We wear a veil because it is easier for work," said one of the workers, "but once let us get to Constantinople, and you will see the hats we will wear. We understand now we are men's equals, and it is not a sin to show our faces." . . . A step—a man's step is heard on the carpetless stairs. One of the notables of the village has come to warn me it is time to go on. Instinctively all of them pulled their veils right over their faces! . . . Poor people, they thought they were bolder than they really were—perhaps they were in need of a bolder leader.

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We drove past the construction for the new water supply to the village of Chumra. The deputy-mayor and his wife prepared a very welcome meal for us. Where had the little village collected all the good things they offered us to eat? Turkish hospitality is proverbial, but of all the cheerful givers one meets in Turkey, the villager takes first place. To him hospitality is even more than godliness, his duty to the stranger and above all a friend of his country, his

most sacred duty of all. In their path towards progress let us hope this finest of all the Turkish characteristics will never be left by the wayside. All the people insisted on offering us food. All came to see us and welcome us. I shall always remember as the outstanding quality of the villager; his big, loving heart. You are perfectly safe in his care; you would have to kill him first, if you wished to harm his friend.

“Who is responsible for these admirable village laws?” I asked the Governor.

“Ferid Bey,” he answered, “one of our ablest Ministers.”

“That you should allow so able a Minister to go to London as Ambassador proves you value British friendship,” I suggested.

“Why, of course,” he answered.

(d) The New Dignity of the Turkish Embassies Abroad

In a slow journey over Paris, Switzerland, Germany, Austria and the Balkans, calling on the Turkish representatives in each town, you feel at once that the new dignity that has come to the nation with woman's new status is very keenly felt in the diplomatic world abroad. In the old days when Turkish wives of Turkish diplomats could not follow their husbands to their posts, one kept a discreet silence about the Turks' private life. When he took unto himself a European bride, poor man, what did he not sometimes choose! "Totty Tickletoes" with social ambitions and a craving for respectability! There have been cases even at the Court of St. James, where the diplomatist has had to count as a bachelor, it being impossible to receive his European wife at Court. There used to be a very amiable military attaché in Paris who took Pierre Loti's two heroines, Zeyneb and Melek, and me with him to the St. Cyr ball. His invitation was addressed "and ladies." No one seemed surprised to see a Turk arrive with "three wives" since he was allowed four.

But beside this, many of the European wives of Turks did not care for Turkey. A Turkish Ambassadress, a Russian—charming though she was, made no secret of her dislike of her husband's country, and she did nothing to help the poor exiles in Paris, who would have been so grateful for a friendly cup of coffee now and again.

To remedy this, Mustapha Kemal Pasha has passed a law that diplomatists must marry Turks or leave the service. Although it has hit friends of mine very hard, and they have had to seek for other work, though fitted for little outside diplomacy, it is nevertheless a narrow but a wise law, and one that could well be copied by other nations. Diplomatists, like Royalties, do not belong to themselves,

but to the nation, and for this reason, they must sacrifice themselves or leave the service. It is true, when you go to a foreign country, however gracious a welcome a foreign Ambassadors in your own Embassy may give you, she is often not so stiff as an Englishwoman—she is not your compatriot. And in moments of strained diplomatic relations, and still more in war, the whole situation is impossible and exceedingly dangerous. The Turk now knows where he is ! If the lady of his heart is a foreigner, he must sacrifice his career. Strange that since the law was passed, we have not heard of one Turk sacrificing himself on the altar of love !

The Turkish Embassy in London always seemed tragic in its lack of nationality. After a Polish Ottoman Ambassador came a Greek who stayed for many years, and finally three Moslem Turks with German, Russian, and Italian wives respectively. Some of the secretaries were also European Ottomans. There was one handsome cultured youth, to whom the need of a country was a great sorrow, and he was almost jealous of our aggressive John Bullism. "An English mother, a French father, a Polish Ambassador, myself in the Ottoman service brought up in Germany with German as my mother-tongue," he asked, "what am I?" He went into the British army and made the supreme sacrifice and at last had a nationality. "I am like the Levantines," he used to say, "I have the disadvantages of all these nations, and the soul of none," and although he exaggerated his tragedy, tragedy it certainly was, and most sincerely one pitied him.

The London Embassy with its first Moslem Ambassador, Mme Ferid Bey, has indeed wakened up and asserted its nationality. Mme Ferid Bey is much younger than her husband and the youngest of all the Ambassadors' wives. She is a talented writer, a keen observer, and writes books with "a purpose." Her *Moths* was a plea for the

establishment of national education. What an interesting book she will be able to write on England, especially since she has taken the trouble to learn our language and study our literature and history. She is determined to make Turkey appreciated in England and studies public opinion very carefully.

With all the Turkish charm free from snobbishness, Mme Ferid has real kindness of heart. When acting as Ambassador in Paris someone took upon themselves, seeing how young she was, to warn her that she must not receive a certain actress—actresses not being admitted into French society. "I am sorry," said Mme Ferid, "that actresses are not admitted into French society, but this lady will always be welcome at the Turkish Embassy."

What a difference it makes to both countries to have a Turkish Embassy that counts. English people like to have an elegant, gracious Turkish hostess, and the many Turks who now come to London will have someone to take their interests seriously to heart. Perhaps more than in any other profession diplomacy can congratulate itself on the freedom of women.