

# HAREMS AND HOMES

## SOCIAL LIFE IN TURKEY TO-DAY

**F**IVE years ago, when I was the only person of British nationality allowed to penetrate behind the long line of bayonets which separated Angora from the rest of the world, I had the privilege of discussing many important questions with Mustapha Kemal Pasha, the great ruler who has the destinies of Turkey in his hands to-day. We spoke amongst other questions of woman's freedom. "In less than two years from now," he said, "every woman is going to have her face uncovered and work side by side with men."

Just as the Pasha had announced, in less than two years the women were given complete freedom.

Twice during the last twenty years I stayed with my friend, Makboule Hanoum, wife of General Nadji Pasha, the President's military instructor, when her father, the most pro-English statesman Turkey has ever known, was grand Vizir. I have just returned from paying her another long visit in her Turkish home at Konia, for harems have gone for ever. The comparisons I was able to make were interesting indeed. In honour of my visit, and in order to get funds for the Turkish Red Crescent, of which she is president, my friend organised the first public ball that was ever given in the sacred city of the Dancing Dervishes, and I shall always congratulate myself that I was able to be present on this most interesting occasion.

**I**N order to understand a little what Mustapha Kemal Pasha's enormous reform means, I must ask you to step back twelve years and come with me into my friend's father's Harem.

It is a large palace on the shores of the Sea of Marmora, and has one of the most exquisite views it would be possible to find. The house is divided into two—the Harem, or women's quarters, and the men's quarters for the Selemlik; and the separation between the sexes is very strictly kept. I could drive out with my friend, on which occasion I used to wear a veil, because it amused me to do so, or I could put on my hat, borrow my friend's husband or brothers and go wherever we liked, but my friend could never come with us.

My meals I had alternately with the men and the women, and when the Grand Vizir gave an official banquet, the only part the women took in the proceedings was to dress me and look at the banquet through the little lattice window.

My friend's father had had three consecutive wives and twenty-five children. When his sons or daughters died or any member of his family, everybody took up their residence at the Pasha's. And besides his relations and their children, he had many visitors who came thirty odd years ago and have never gone away since—in fact, they are still there now, the Pasha's widow has inherited them.

The first change that came with the new reform was an attempt to better the health of the people. In the old days with a lack of air and exercise, proper diet, the women and children just died. There being no women doctors and a great deal of fanaticism with regard to men doctors, the wise woman was called in to attend to the sick women and children. Her prescription consisted of prayers, the burning of certain plants, and above all the use of charms against the evil eye. The infant mortality has been as high as 85 per cent. and that in a country bled white by wars and revolution. To remedy this, Mustapha Kemal Pasha, whose eagle eye notices everything, has sent women to study medicine at home and abroad. He has had Swedish Drill instituted in all the schools, has teachers from America to train the women in Home Economics, and has started children's welfare centres under his own special patronage, wherever it has been possible. Turkish nurses, trained in the foreign hospitals, are teaching the mothers how to care for their babies on Western lines, and babies are housed and fed with good milk in the many tekes left vacant by the Dervishes, whom the Pasha has disbanded.

**B**UT to return to our Harem. There must have been over ninety women living in some part of my friend's father's house. It is true, in those days

makers, in short, all the work that was formerly in the hands of the Greeks and Armenians is now in the hands of the Turks, and a great deal happier they are in every way. There is no work now a Turkish woman may not do. "Will you let them become members of Parliament?" I asked the President recently. "Why not?" he answered.

When I arrived at Konia my friend and her husband, and her other friends and their husbands, were there to greet me. How strange it was to see my friend sitting at the head of her dinner table, which in the old days was her mother-in-law's place, without a veil and her guests all in evening dress.

I was present at the ball given in Angora by the Prime Minister, Ismet Pasha. This was the first ball ever given by a Turkish Prime Minister for the people of his own nation as well as for foreigners, and all the Diplomatic Corps and their wives came from Constantinople to be present. Madame Ismet Pasha standing beside her husband received the guests, her arms and shoulders bare for the first time. Perhaps she felt a little uncomfortable—she is still very young—for she wore a scarf of tulle over her shoulders. When the President arrived she opened the ball with him. It must have been something of an ordeal for her, but she did it remarkably well and seemed quite unselfconscious.

When the other ladies arrived they seated themselves amongst the other women, as the Turkish women always seem to do when they go to balls. Some of them also could not make up their minds to take off their veils. When the President arrived, however, he gave them a helping hand. It was extremely amusing to see him calmly walking up and removing the ladies' veils himself. The women were flabbergasted, but what could they do? One noticed, however, that when they next appeared in public these ladies came unveiled.

I have met all the rulers of Turkey from Abdul Hamed to Kemal Pasha; perhaps I am the only European who was ever invited to the Imperial Harem, and at Ismet Pasha's ball I could not help making the comparison between the curious function at the Ottoman Court and this simple dance where the present ruler, not even in uniform, danced with the women of his own nation, who owe the privilege of being able to do so to him.

When my friend and I went to the Imperial Harem, I had almost an uncanny feeling when the carriage drove in behind that great high wall which separated the Imperial Harem from the rest of mankind.

The Lord High Chamberlain, the Keeper of the Privy Purse, etc., were all women, and wore costumes that dated from the foundation of the dynasty. Added to this, their bright hennaed hair and much blackened eyes made one wonder very often whether one had not strayed behind the scenes at Drury Lane.

We lunched with the Sultan's stepmother, who was the highest lady in the land, with his wives, and the Imperial princesses, and it was only after the meal was over that the Sultan came from his side of the house to receive the homage of the ladies, who knelt before him. Now the Imperial family has been swept away and most Turkish people, happy in the new Government, seem to have forgotten they ever existed.

**W**HEN we gave our ball at Konia, one of the most fanatical of all the cities of Turkey, the question of all questions that had to be decided and which might have made or marred the ball, was whether the ladies should or should not wear sleeves. My friend's husband, who had to decide how his wife should go to the ball, had become accustomed to unveiled hair and bare necks, but he had a strong objection to short sleeves. However, finally he gave his wife permission to go to the ball without sleeves, and the other ladies promised to do as she did.

On the night of the ball, however, the courage of many of the ladies seemed to fail them; many who came without sleeves covered themselves up with Spanish shawls. Others came in long sleeves and high necks; many came in veils and others dared not separate



A PORTRAIT OF MELEK HANOUM, THE HEROINE OF PIERRE LOTI'S "DISENCHANTED"

money had not the value it has to-day, nor was it as evenly distributed, and the women were content with a mattress on the floor, which was rolled up and put in the cupboard during the day. To-day all this is changed. The women who once lived on the charity of the Pasha would be to-day working in some capacity or other. There is always the demand for teachers and secretaries. Added to this some are students of law or medicine, some are shopkeepers, others dress-



A TURKISH LADY OF TO-DAY, WEARING A BECOMING HEAD VEIL

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# THE

**I**N making the Company have is *Chung an* ever will please even Plaza or the P with the low-brow I cinematograph worl For once there ne absence of artistic q or of pretentiousne his actors are the act help to nourish or to



Kru, the Lao tribe children and Bimbi actors

any young people v in the art of acting, go and study these complete lack of self- plete absorption in t do on the screen. B to expect of any Eu he should have the We are too vain; th acting. We cannot excitement and the s own sake. There dancing or departme teach a girl to walk woman walks, and might be called her "her supple precision object of all physical As for the story of the method of its tell Chantui his wife and spent in searching fo that, in fighting th it from them. You tiger that has killed the leopards that ha You see them flying the elephant that has and their hut, and their companions f driving a whole herd

Sept. 21, 1927

# THE JUNGLE FILM

By Helen Beauclerk

**I**N making the picture *Chang*, the directors of the Paramount Company have positively done mankind a service. Not only is *Chang* an excellent film; its excellence is of the kind that will please everybody, so that while it continues to run at the Plaza or the Polytechnic, the high-brow lion will lie down with the low-brow lamb, and there will be peace in all parts of the cinematograph world.

For once there need be no talk of improbability in the story or absence of artistic quality in the production—no talk of over-acting or of pretentiousness. *Chang* was taken in the jungle of Siam, and its actors are the actual natives of the jungle and the wild beasts that help to nourish or to destroy men in those places. And if there are



Setting a trap to catch a tiger: a scene from "Chang," the jungle film at the Plaza Theatre.

forests and the lakes. All these incidents, the flight through the jungle, the elephants' destruction of the village, their final hunt and capture, are more dramatic than a hundred criminal chases in Arizona or a hundred Don Juans galloping over simulated campagnas with avenging husbands in pursuit.

**T**HIS picture is so well done and is in such admirable taste, that personally I am ready to forgive the Paramount Company anything for its sake. It is a pity nevertheless that the same group should have launched *Rolled Stockings*, the film of American college life that was shown with *Chang* at the Plaza not long ago. Paramount is not responsible for the series of "College" pictures that have been all over London lately, yet they should not encourage even with a single "shot" this quite deplorable subject. The entire "College" series makes me feel like the man listening to his friend's music—"Even if it was well done

I shouldn't like it." For though they are, in fact, moderately well done, these descriptions of ragging and bullying on a large scale, these long-drawn-out illustrations of games and sports, are really very tiresome. Diving and swimming and rowing and boxing have their place in the "Gazettes," and very interesting they are there, especially in slow motion. But one can have too much of them. The sight of even the best-looking young man dressed in the very naggiest of swimming suits palls after an hour or so.

Oddly enough the Germans have also been bitten with the sports idea. They, however, being nothing if not thorough, have dispensed with the swimming suit almost entirely, and have produced what they call a classic film, all Greek wrestlers and disc throwers and young women dancing, nymph-like, in the dew. They have entitled this result of Greco-Roman inspiration *Health and Beauty*, and it is intended to show how beautiful and long-lived and happy we should all be if we really did our exercises of a morning and ran seven miles before breakfast and indulged generally in Greek poise instead of the Charleston.

Yet it is, to my mind, an extremely dull production; as dull in its own way as the American glorification of ragging and the "Great Outdoors"; travellers in France or Germany will miss nothing if they do not see it.

But it has, of course, caused great delight in all truly uplifted and artistic homes. The latest high-brow monthly, *Close Up*, speaks of certain admirable effects that are in it, and suggests that it may help to guide us towards the real classic film we shall find some day if we are good. In point of fact, if this is all that the "little band of pioneers who run ahead of the larger body of intellectuals" (or words to that

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Kru, the Lao tribesman, with his wife and children and Bimbo the monkey, the chief actors in "Chang."

any young people who wish for instruction in the art of acting, I suggest that they should go and study these natives and see what complete lack of self-consciousness and complete absorption in the business in hand will do on the screen. But perhaps it is too much to expect of any European or American that he should have the natural dignity of a Siamese. We are too vain; that is the root of our bad-acting. We cannot forget ourselves in the excitement and the fun of doing a thing for its own sake. There is certainly no school of dancing or deportment in the West that could teach a girl to walk as Chantui the jungle-woman walks, and yet her grace and what might be called her "propriety" of movement, her supple precision of gesture, is the aim and object of all physical training.

As for the story of *Chang*, it is as simple as the method of its telling. The life of Kru and Chantui his wife and their children is entirely spent in searching for food, and having got that, in fighting the animals that would take it from them. You see them pursuing the tiger that has killed their buffalo or trapping the leopards that have devoured their goats. You see them flying in desperate haste from the elephant that has trampled their rice-field and their hut, and at last you see them with their companions from the native village driving a whole herd of elephants through the



Bimbo and one of the children. The actors' complete lack of self-consciousness and complete absorption in their business adds much to the beauty of "Chang."

## HATS FOR EVERY HEAD

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the hat, this being an echo of the up-in-front arrangement of flounces and trimming on the new frocks. The hat may achieve this effect by the upward direction of lines of converging tucks in the front of the crown, by the position of a flat feather (as in a hat sketched on page 14) or by an upright slender brooch.

Black, of course, takes the leading place where colour is concerned, as it is the most generally becoming and the most generally wearable. Nowadays, with glossy materials and brilliant brooches, the black hat need have no suggestion of sombreness. After black come beige and brown in all the shades from mushroom to dark chestnut. There is a lovely new prune-juice brown this season which is extremely becoming, but which requires to be worn with a suitably coloured outfit.

Another excellent new colour for felts is a bright red, neither scarlet nor vermilion though nearer the latter. Perhaps I might describe it as the colour of a carmine lipstick. Somewhat unexpectedly this new red looks equally well with the more "dressed-up" black clothes (as Alphonse calls them) and with all the grey and brown tweeds. Molyneux was showing good hats in this shade. A touch of make-up might be required for its wearer—but that is true of almost all coloured hats!

Wine reds, purples and blues—the autumn fruit colours—are all shown, and there is a fair amount of green. But for the average woman her hats will most usefully be in black and beige-brown. Should she want a coloured hat it should be chosen to match her coat or her dress, and she will find it a good working rule to match her hat, her gloves and stockings, to the colour of the fur on her winter coat.

N. S.

## HAREMS AND HOMES

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themselves from either their veils or their fur coats. How curious they looked! As usual when the ball began, the women had seated themselves in one room and the men in another. Some of the women danced only with their own husbands; some of them dared not dance at all; but the majority enjoyed themselves immensely and had only one idea—to stay at the ball as long as possible.

What struck me most, coming from the West where all dancing men, attached or unattached, are welcomed at most balls, open armed, was the Government Official, who stood at the door and questioned those men who came without their wives as to why they had done this. It appears that some of the men were quite willing to take part in the frivolous proceeding and leave their wives at home. When the Government Official found that they were guilty of these unsportsmanlike sentiments they were refused admission. How interesting it was to see these men and women arriving at the ball with the prejudices of ages, and before the end of the evening those prejudices had gone for ever.

It was strange to see in Konia my friend, who during my previous visit was unable to go out with her own husband, this time riding horseback astride and accompanied by her friends and her friends' husbands. As they passed, the veiled women of the people, who still cover themselves entirely with the exception of one eye, looked at them curiously through that one eye. They did not understand in the least why my friend should be dressed in this way, but they said to themselves, "Since the great Gazi says it is right, it must be; it is not for us to interfere."

In the old days I used to be particularly interested in weddings, and attended as many as I possibly could. In those days it was the parents who arranged the wedding and the bride and bridegroom met for the first time when their fate was signed and sealed. There was, of course, no falling in love, though often the "unknown fate" had a strange fascination. In some cases the young couple when they met disliked one another and were very unhappy in consequence.

A bridegroom never plays a very important part at any wedding, but with us he has to be present. In the old days in Turkey he was conspicuous by his absence, and the bridal ceremony consisted of the bride sitting on a bridal throne to receive the congratulations of her women friends.

To-day with the new laws, the Swiss code, all this is at an end, and the Turkish woman is allowed to meet and choose her own husband. I went to a marriage at Adana; the young couple were married at the Town Hall by the Mayor. Both were present, and the bride was unveiled. I had hardly time to take my seat when the ceremony was over. Both the bridegroom and bride had been asked separately whether they consented to be husband and wife, they affixed their signatures to a document, and it was over. By my watch it lasted exactly five minutes. When I expressed my astonishment at the brevity of the ceremony, my companion asked me what more I

required; they were legally married, and only divorce could separate them.

Another great change that I noticed between the past and the present was the very healthy life that my friend's little daughter leads, compared with the existence of the little Turkish girls I met when I was in Turkey before. She goes to school like a little European girl, she works hard at her lessons, and when she is old enough, she will have a profession as a matter of interest, if she does not require to work for her living. Her mother said to me, "How happy it makes me to think how different my child's life will be from mine, in spite of the fact that my father allowed me more liberty than most women. When one sees all these happy children, and all these girls who will not even know what a veil means, one can understand the veneration that we Turkish women have for our great Ruler who has made this change possible and has given us all the right to take part in the life that is going on all around us."

GRACE ELLISON.

(Author of *An Englishwoman in a Turkish Harem*.)

DONATH HANOUM

the president of Constantinople's first women's sports club. Women's sports have become very fashionable in Constantinople, and Mustapha Kemal is lending his support to the movement towards greater physical fitness for women.

## BEDROOMS AND BED BOOKS

(Continued from page 6)

with her because she has done what she meant to do extremely well, so well indeed that I wish she would now write a book about people who are made of sterner stuff.

IN another guest room (this time a very modern room in a brand-new house) which had painted walls in soft shades of blue, a silver ceiling, and silvered cornice and framework to the doors which, like the skirting, were painted to resemble walnut, walnut furniture, and curtains and carpet of a greyer shade than the wood, I read another novel of modern life, *Chained*, by Frank Hird. Here again the heroine is, as old-fashioned folk used to put it, "no better than she should be" (the strangest description, for who is better than he should be?); but at all events she does some good solid work for she runs a cattle breeding farm and, what is her true love, a biscuit factory. An uncommon heroine, decidedly, though I think her author might have been better advised to leave her in love with the biscuits and not complicate matters with an unconventional hero who says "pish-tush, what does that matter" (or words to that effect) when she acquaints him with the other affair, which I feel that a girl such as Jane would not have done. It seems to me that having indulged in an illicit temporary liaison, when the end to it came Jane would have said, "Well, enough of that and now for something less sordid and better worth having," and again given her whole mind to the biscuits.

But there is no accounting for what people will do, and whether I am right and Mr. Hird is wrong or vice versa, I expect *Chained* will be greedily demanded at all the libraries and read both by night and by day.

THE last bedroom which I inhabited during the course of my visits was an attic in a country cottage where live an exceptional spinster and her exceptional maid, one highly educated and one scarcely educated at all other than by the reactions of her lovely mind to life as it has presented itself to her, and both people for whose existence the world is better. The walls of my attic were washed a deep parchment colour and the paint was a soft grey-green-cabbage green. The simple wooden furniture was painted green with black lines and black knobs, the handiwork of my two hostesses (for that they truly were), and the floor was covered with a multi-coloured carpet, the general effect of which was grey. Curtains and bed cover were of biscuit-coloured casement cloth embroidered in what I believe is known as decorative stitchery in coloured wools and is surely an adaptation of the embroidery one sees on shawls in Italy and on other garments in Roumania.

Such a fresh pretty welcoming room and here the bed books were Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*; a reprint of those delightful travels of Mrs. Trollope, the mother of Anthony Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (Mrs. Trollope departed to America with her family in order to earn money by keeping an emporium, failed to do that but made money by writing her experiences and voicing her opinions of the American people); and a large Bible in large print and a shiny black cover and written in it in childish lettering:

"Ann Jane Coventry. Her Book 1823.  
The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.  
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:  
He leadeth me beside the still waters.  
He restoreth my soul:

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I will fear no evil; for thou art with me:  
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:  
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

A year's subscription to the "Queen" (abroad, £3 10s. od.; Canada, £3 ps. od.) is as acceptable a gift as one could make to one's friends abroad.

NE really no to be strange as I was once an isolated twenty miles from any source of supplies, and roads are impassable for weeks to discover to what the produce of a small family fed and healthy. I considered that the apple most invaluable of fruits, fortunate enough to own a purchase apples at reasonable loss for fruits with which I was cooking apples the mind is that each variety and also that the apples fresh from the orchard apples that have been kept impossible, for have been from apples that have been lying substance is added, cully whatever in making jelly.

The making of fruit jelly eyes of many Englishwomen manner in which the product is simpler is perhaps no

When the preserving picking fruit for jelly I al stererroom or the kitchen done, and the apparatus over. This is followed t

jelly bags of butter muslin thickness. It is a mistake as it not only removes a go helps to set them firmly, deal of flavour. I sling weighted chairs, or one ch the window sash; the flo

two or three thicknesses amount of fruit is invariably easily taken up and in bag is placed a deep grani pan, and this remains th full, when it is removed to

WINDFALL apples mixed together make be well washed, topped and or worm holes carefully cu

preserving pan three parts enough water to cover th until they have gone compl from the fire and transfer that well supplied until al

will not hurt to squeeze it jelly bags should be chang

When there is enough measure and transfer to t and add half a pound of su

Most people think this small amount of sugar the jelly, but it is perfectly used in the Annapolis Va

I have made hundreds of and never had a failure.

If the fruit is in good boiled long enough, it sho

deep rich crimson colour— know exactly how long to kept cooking until it has t

original quantity, poured uncovered until the morni

not firm enough to turn o back to the pan and be boi jelly that is rather tart, and in place of jam, but as a Swiss roll, for decorating sweets, and as a substitute

most mutton or game. NEXT to jelly the appl in the form of sauce. however, it becomes a mu of food. Apple sauce in E brown pulpy mass served v