A Romance of Real Life.

HOW I ESCAPED FROM THE HAREM AND HOW I BECAME A DRESSMAKER

TOLD BY Melek Hanoum,

The Heroine of Loti's Great Romance, "Disenchanted."

"KISMET"—it could not be helped. That I was to be a dressmaker was my written fate. And a dressmaker I have become! It is true, the luxurious existence of a Turkish Minister's daughter in her father's harem is not exactly the training most women receive for the profession of dressmaking. And it was certainly a roundabout way to my ultimate end. However, here I am; not only a dressmaker, but the first Turkish woman to enter the business world. And a dressmaker I must remain, whether I like it or not. Fortunately, however, I do like it. Fortunately there is no work in the world I love more than dressmaking, and, strangely enough, as a child I loved above all things making dresses.

But please let me introduce myself. My grandfather, the Marquis de Blosset de Châteauneuf, belonged to one of the most exclusive of the old French Faubourg St. Germain families. They made it a proud boast that their family had won undying glory in the Crusades, and they must be for ever honoured for the part they played in helping to exterminate the hated Turk. Rome also had blessed them in consequence.

I notice with awe and shame that I, the "Infidel Turk," have inherited the Crusader ancestor's large aristocratic nose. Nature does play us funny tricks sometimes; and when and where we least expect it.

Melek Hanoum, the first Turkish woman to enter the business world.

My grandfather, of course, followed the old French society traditions, and went into the army. It was a military mission of some kind which first took him to Turkey, and almost at once he became passionately interested in and attached to the Turks. Yet his final decision to change his nationality, drop his title, abjure his faith, and become plain Reschid Bey (a Moslem) was

prompted above all by his love for a beautiful Circassian, my grandmother. Others, less charitable, have declared it was the idea of having four wives that decided him to become a Moslem. That may be so. He was a Frenchman. At any rate, he used the Prophet's permission to the full. And his family was so large that he did not even know all his own children, though, according to the Moslem law, they are all legitimate.

One day they came to tell him that one of his children had died; but he had forgotten the child, and almost the existence of the mother. Alas, in this case he was neither a Frenchman nor a Turk! That, however, was the frivolous side of my grandfather's change of nationality. He was a charming man, with exquisite manners; a man of great culture, whom the Turkish nation held in respect. His influence, too, was widely felt, and to him can be traced indirectly the whole modern Turkish movement.

It appears that a cultured Turk, by name Schinassi, became very friendly with my grandfather. They studied together, and so delighted was the Turk that he left no stone unturned till he went himself to France "to see and learn." In Paris he was, one might almost say, intoxicated with ideas. He studied all the new movements, political, literary, or otherwise, and steeped himself in Rousseauism. To him J. J. Rousseau was almost a god, and far more than a prophet. He knew nearly all the Frenchman had written by heart, and when at last the Turk's long stay in the French capital came to an end, he came back with a very carefully-prepared plan and sowed the seeds of what was to be the Young Turk, and later the Nationalist, movement. He also began a literary campaign which reformed the whole Turkish literature. Under his influence the involved Persian and Arabic constructions vanished for ever. He showed his compatriots that Turkish could be written in the straightforward, clear French way, and with Turkish, not Arabic and Persian, words, and gradually the new style was adopted. That, then, in a nutshell, was my grandfather's work for Turkey.

MY father, Noury Bey, my grandfather's eldest child, went into the Turkish diplomatic service, and finally became Abdul Hamid's Minister of Foreign Affairs. What this high honour meant only a Turk could understand! How lucky one was to be alive at all under that terrible *régime* only a Turk could tell! We were all, men and women and, above all, the Ministers of State, at the mercy of any calumny. Any lie reported by Abdul Hamid's spies to His August Majesty could have resulted in death, expulsion, or ruin for us all. No morning could possibly tell what the end of the day could bring forth; and none dared guess. How is it possible that in this enlightened twentieth century such a monster as Abdul Hamid could have lived and reigned and made us all suffer so horribly?

But, above all, the cloistered, pampered existence we were forced to lead in our father's harem did not satisfy us. The European blood in us seemed to revolt against this "slavery," and we were in consequence far more unhappy than we ought to have been.

And my father, after all, was only half a Turk, and very much more than half a Frenchman in his moments of leisure. He had above all the Frenchman's love of his children. We were the apple of his eye, he was so proud of our poor little accomplishments. Educated by English, French, German, and Italian governesses, we soon learnt and spoke, besides the three Oriental languages necessary for cultured people, five European languages. We also learnt music, singing, painting, drawing, embroidery; in fact, every possible accomplishment. And our mother understood nothing of this extraordinary education. She spoke only Turkish, and cared not at all for Europe and its ways, though she never once raised her voice to question the master's (our father's) will in any way. She would have accepted anything. She was a Turk of the old school, and between her and us was a gulf that could not be bridged.

There being no Moslem society life in the Turkish capital in those dreadful days of Hamid (there were, of course, social functions at the foreign Embassies), it was my sister and I who supplied our father with social life. When the Ambassadors accredited to the Porte came to see him, it was we—hidden behind screens—who played and sang for his guests. My sister, by the way, was a very good musician. It was she who composed the triumphal march for the Kaiser's entrance into Constantinople. For this quite good composition she was decorated by him. Considering that she had never been privileged, till she came to Europe, to hear a better performer than herself, she was, indeed, to be congratulated on her achievement.

Without in the least realizing what he was doing, our father gave us a European education; first of all for his own enjoyment. It never crossed his mind that when the time came for us to be Eastern women it would be perfectly impossible for us to be Eastern in the full sense of all that it meant. Also we "embroidered" our father's stories

of his beloved France, created for ourselves a France that never could exist, and envied not only the Europeans from the Embassies with whom we came in contact, but the tradespeople too. To us every Oriental was unhappy ; every European happy. Ah, how foolish we were !

IN those far-away days high-born ladies did not go shopping ; the shops came to them. Enterprising French dressmaking firms sent their representatives round the harems for orders ; and a roaring trade they did. The wives ordered—the Pashas paid the bills. One could well understand the answer a witty Pasha gave as a reason why polygamy had vanished for ever. " When four wives meant four tillers of the land," he said, " there was some sense in polygamy, but not when they bought their dresses in Paris." And how I envied these free-born women dressmakers, who could come and go as they liked ; their faces unveiled. Yet when I told them how willingly I would have exchanged their lot for mine, they thought I was joking. Little, however, did I think then that a day would come when I should really be a Paris dressmaker.

But I did take up dressmaking seriously in those days of my youth. It was forbidden, therefore to me it was doubly attractive, and I set to work with real ardour to learn my new profession. First of all I studied anatomy in books I found in my father's library. What a valuable asset for a dressmaker ! I studied above all the old Greek forms ; also the old Circassian forms of dress. They are so hygienic, and so exquisitely lovely ; all our dresses have come from these races. Circassians, I believe, have the finest figures of all women ; they ride wild horses bare-backed and are rarely unseated, and walk with the carriage of an Empress. And who has not heard of their golden hair and dark eyes ? No wonder our rulers selected their wives from amongst these beautiful women.

When I had once mastered anatomy, my next step was to cut out figures in cardboard and dress them in paper dresses, until finally I was able to cut without fear and plunge my scissors into the lovely stuffs of my own country. I always feel like a fairy handling a rainbow every time I cut into a lovely stuff. How I love to touch its soft texture ! And to me making a dress is, and always has been, an unending joy. Then I dressed the slaves. They asked for nothing better, the dear little creatures ! The eternal feminine all the world over will always respond to dress ! Then I had processions of slaves round the rooms of the palace. This game became one of our favourites. It passed the time. I never see a procession of mannequins in our dressmaking establishment now without thinking of my dear slaves away yonder ; although, let me add, my childhood slaves were far more beautiful than my Western mannequins.

For a while, then, I was happy, absorbed in my dressmaking. Then came a day when I said to myself : " You are only an amateur ; you have had no professional experience ! " And when I saw how impossible it was to get professional experience, I at once set out to find the way. I took my life in my own hands, it is true, but I got my experience. And this is how I did it. For a very large bribe one of the Greek merchants who visited our harem to sell her wares arranged for me to work in a dressmaker's establishment. For a few hours daily I worked. Dressed in a shabby cloak and veil of one of the slaves, I slipped out of the harem ; changed at the merchant's house into a coat and skirt and hat, and then went to the dressmaking establishment, and none asked who I was, none guessed, and I worked at my new profession, which was a real delight to me. Had I been caught, as I so easily might have been, what would have been my fate ? How many dressmakers have had to risk their lives as I did to have my training ?

And so, with my new hobby absorbing my attention, life became bearable. My sister and I, it is true, were veiled. Up till the age of ten we had led the existence of little European children—dancing and riding and mixing with European boys. After we were veiled all frivolity had to cease. Only male relations visited us from that unhappy day, and one does not always appreciate the society of relatives. Only a Turkish woman, able to understand the good things of life, can know what a young girl suffers when she is veiled. It makes life from that time an existence of mourning. There is always a barrier between you and life. And it should not be so !

The great Prophet of Islam, when he legislated for a people brought by him from the darkness of barbarism to the light of civilization, thought it wiser that a married woman's crowning glory, her hair, should be veiled. He had no idea that jealous manhood could turn and distort his suggestion in the way they had done. Alas, is not this the tragedy that follows the work of all reformers ? What would Mohammed himself have said had he seen us swathed in the thick canvas veils the Hamidian *régime* required us to wear ? What would he have felt had he known (he who loved the sun and the light) that a black veil shut out for ever the sun and light ; and above all a pall of mourning, as it were, had been placed over our souls ; we who, as a nation, never wear mourning for our dead ?

Then came the tragedy. My sister was married, and married according to our Eastern customs. For a thinking woman the outrage of such a situation was impossible. Only after the contract was signed and sealed and the woman bound for life did she see her "fate" for the first time. He, the male, with the simple words, "I divorce you," could set himself free. She, the wife, had to stay as long as he wished. She was his possession, given away to him without ever having been consulted, and without having seen him.

My brother-in-law, let it be said in all justice, was a fine man. A kind husband and a gentleman, he has had a brilliant career, himself ultimately becoming Minister of Foreign Affairs. He was my father's secretary, and my father was devoted to him, and thought he would make an ideal husband for the daughter he dearly loved. Simply because she was a victim of this iniquitous system, my sister hated her husband, and made me hate him too. Poor man! Was it his fault? The whole system was wrong and must be changed. But who would change it? We made up our minds we would do so. We would find some way to work for the freedom of Turkish women. And we did.

But even that was not easy. How could we get a hearing? Supposing we wrote articles, who would publish them? Besides, we should be discovered and punished. Would that advance our position? Our neighbour, a poet, had come to grief. Abdul Hamid made short work of anyone who could handle a pen. In the middle of the night His Majesty's spies "descended on" our neighbour's house, and a very careful search was made amongst all his papers. Only some very innocent poetry was found. Yet he and his family just disappeared, and for a long time none dared to ask where they had gone. No, the question of airing our grievances by our pen was impossible. We must find some other way.

Since my sister's marriage, and since our sworn resolve to do something, we created for ourselves a new "hobby"—our cause. Every day we met to talk about grievances. We read about the women of other countries; we read everything we could lay our hands on—good, bad, and indifferent; "our cause" soon became a *religion* for us. Then we arranged dinners—women's dinners, naturally; no men were admitted—to discuss the improvement of our lot. Yet "our cause" made no progress. What could we do? How could we make ourselves heard? It was just at that period, too, that our dinners, and above all the music, the excuse for the meetings, were stopped by order of our Sovereign Lord Abdul Hamid. A very serious attempt to assassinate him had been made by a Belgian anarchist. How could we dare to wish to play the piano and sing when the life of our "beloved" Emperor had been in danger! The whole nation was plunged into a kind of social mourning—as a thank-offering for his miraculous escape.

Nevertheless, my sister and I continued to work at "our cause." Our arguments were these: How could the civilized world help us to change our suffering if it did not know what we were suffering? How could we find a foreign pen powerful enough to defend us, able to understand us, above all willing to do it? Fate at that moment brought Pierre Loti to our shores. We made up our minds we would meet Loti, and Loti should defend us.

It is true, Loti had always been a friend of the Turks. He loved our civilization. He could help us. We knew his works almost by heart. We knew that he was a poet in prose, although

Zeyneb—Melek Hanoum's sister—seated on her bridal throne to receive the congratulations of her friends

Photo: E. N. A.

Pierre Loti, the famous French author, whose well-known novel, "Disenchanted," is based on the romantic story of Melek Hanoum and her sister.

he always based his novels on real life. This was the case with his stories of "Aziadé" and "Madame Chrysanthème," and we knew that if he wrote our story he must make that story his own; it was for us to construct it for him. And so the story which ultimately became "Les Désenchantées" became for us a passionate interest. It began by our writing to the naval officer Viaud (Loti)—*poste restante*, and our making a rendezvous with him, just as Loti describes it in the book. The danger of the meetings fascinated him. He was interested in Turkish women, and the long letters in the book signed Zeyneb, Melek, and Djénane were written by my sister and me—a French lady we took into our confidence corrected them for us. But the letters are ours, and our diary.

Although the story of "Les Désenchantées" has been translated into all languages and very widely read, it would perhaps be as well to recall the story. Three high-born Turkish women, Djénane, Melek, and Zeyneb, educated by European governesses, are discontented with their lot. One of them is married according to the Eastern custom to a man she has never seen, and dislikes him in consequence. In order to make their grievances known to the civilized world they write to a well-known French novelist, begging him to take up their cause. He is interested, and comes to Constantinople. As they are Moslem women, and cannot make his acquaintance, they arrange the most extraordinary meetings for him, in the most out-of-the-way places; in the meanwhile they pour out to him, in letters, all their innermost soul. Melek dies; Djénane kills herself for love of the French novelist who has never seen her unveiled. Zeyneb only remains. That is the story. Almost our life story—arranged by Loti's magic pen, and framed by the most exquisite pen pictures of our glorious country that any man ever wrote.

Now that Loti is dead, and it has been an open secret for some time that we (my sister and I) gave Loti the material for that work, it would be as well to speak of Djénane. Who was she? No one in particular was Djénane. One day it was one cousin; one day another; we were always three veiled women; not till we met in Paris did Loti ever see our faces. We have been accused of making a dupe of Loti. But this is untrue. For the sake of the story Djénane had to live and die; for the sake of the story Loti had to believe she died for love of him and was buried. A coffin with an imaginary Djénane was put in the earth. Loti had a little altar erected in memory of her at his home in Rochefort. Was it our duty to kill his illusion? Are not some lies finer than the truth?

Our book, "our cause," had to be the finest story that could be produced. I, Melek, did not hesitate to die in order to supply Loti with the necessary material to describe a picturesque Turkish funeral. Why not then Djénane? Her tragic death at the end was necessary for the story, and Loti could not have written it had he only "imagined" her dead. Besides, a gentleman is a gentleman. A woman whose face he had never seen killed herself for love of him. She had poured out her soul to him—the whole cause of Turkish women was henceforward sacred to Loti, in memory of Djénane; that is what we wanted.

It is unjust to say "Les Désenchantées" was to us only a pastime or a joke. That is not the case. How we plotted and planned to make our meetings as romantic and picturesque as possible! How we schemed to arrange things so that Loti should feel both the sadness and the futility of our existence! With no gift of psychology at all, this "painter" was to write a novel. We had to dot all his "i's" for him, and the book was, therefore, ours, though he wrote it; if it is not his best work, as many say it is, it certainly was the most read. And the letters we wrote! It is true, French was our language; we wrote French before we wrote Turkish, and, of course, much better. Nevertheless, for anyone who knows Loti and his work, anyone who knows his perfect style, it goes without saying that to write those letters for him at all we had to give ourselves up to hours of careful thought and work. We had to make up our minds that the whole civilized world should hear our story, we had worked with that sublime end in view, we sought no notoriety; we could rely absolutely on the discretion of Loti; he had no idea who we were; yet the book was about to appear! Loti's preface stating that "the heroines never existed" was useless. We could easily be recognized behind the thin veil of fiction; there was nothing to do but risk all and fly. If we stayed, we said, we must meet our doom. But if we fly, we have one chance out of ten to reach Paris in safety; so escape we must and without delay. We knew that our departure meant good-bye to Turkey, perhaps for ever. As long as Abdul Hamid was on the throne we could never return, yet surely a day would come when his death, or revolution, would free us from that hideous criminal madman, and gain the position of women. But we said, once in France, we will live with our French relatives, and all will be well. Fate, however, had willed otherwise. We had whole chapters of tragedy yet to live. It just had to be. It was written. KISMET!

WE have so often been reproached with not having counted the cost of our flight! Does anyone in the face of grave danger ever count the cost? We were not prepared to face the inevitable scandal at home; we were, so we supposed, utterly wretched and bored with our useless harem existence. All our lives we had dreamed of France, where we imagined everyone was happy and free; our great dream now was to work for the liberty of Turkish women; our flight would be a public protest. Alas, how could we have supposed we were simply leaving the frying-pan for the fire?

It is true we were not lacking in courage; even our most severe critics have not denied us that attribute. To give us our due, however, one must have been a Turk under the terror of an Hamidian *régime* to understand what it meant for the two daughters of a Turkish Cabinet Minister to leave Constantinople and go to Europe! Turkish women in those days did not travel. All the families of high officials were watched day and night. We, because of our French blood, were specially supervised. Our Greek and Armenian servants were all bribed, and our black attendants hardly ever left us. Yet so exasperated were we that we dared all to leave the country and find freedom. In order to leave the country the first thing to do was to procure passports. These we purchased from our Polish music mistress. She and her two daughters, fortunately or unfortunately for us, were leaving Constantinople to live in Egypt, otherwise she could not have sold us the passports. One daughter was to come with us to Paris, and we used the three passports, whilst the mother travelled to Egypt with the other daughter and false passports. Naturally, the price we had to pay for this favour was exorbitant; one can imagine the jewels and precious things we had to dispose of to pay this bill; practically the price of seeing the good lady installed in her new home. However, we paid the price. There was no other way—who else could give us passports?

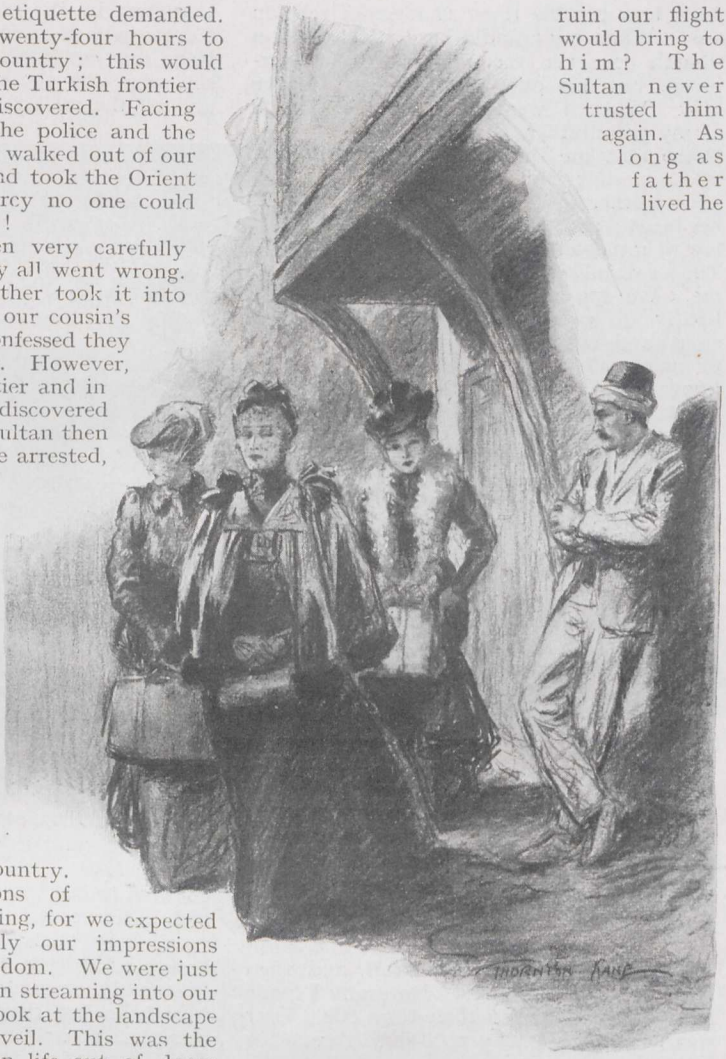
My sister, who was a wonderful actress, played the part of the mother to perfection. She had studied the old lady's every gesture, she had acquired her voice and mannerisms to perfection, and her corked wrinkles and grey curls were charming. I and Mademoiselle X. played the part of the other two daughters. We spoke less, so it was not necessary for us to study our parts as carefully as "our mother." We had prepared everything. All the servants were dispatched on errands. A pair of shoes was placed outside the harem door so that, should the master of the house appear, he would understand a lady visitor was within,

and not enter as our etiquette demanded. We were to go for twenty-four hours to visit cousins in the country; this would give us time to cross the Turkish frontier before our flight was discovered. Facing the vigilant eyes of the police and the secret police, we boldly walked out of our Polish friend's house and took the Orient express. What a mercy no one could hear our beating hearts!

Our plans had been very carefully laid, yet they so nearly all went wrong. That afternoon our father took it into his head to join us at our cousin's country house—they confessed they did not even expect us. However, we were over the frontier and in Belgrade before it was discovered where we were. The Sultan then telegraphed for us to be arrested, as I was still a minor, and my father quickly followed us there himself. Nothing could have saved us but the devotion of Serbian friends, who resented our being taken back to our sure and certain "fate." With another change of plans we finally arrived in Paris—the goal of all our years of waiting and planning and scheming — the capital of France, our grandfather's beloved country.

Our first impressions of France were disappointing, for we expected too much, and naturally our impressions were impressions of freedom. We were just overjoyed to see the sun streaming into our rooms at Nice and to look at the landscape all around without a veil. This was the first time we had seen life out of doors except through a veil, and indoors through latticed windows, and we enjoyed the change to the full. To give our impressions of France, however, would be unfair. The France of our dreams never could exist. Our French relatives were frigidly polite to us poor Moslem fugitives. What interest could they take in us, since they had ceased even to pronounce the name of our grandfather, who had given up his land and abjured his Faith? We were in Europe, and in Europe we had to stay. We had left our land and were disgraced. The shame of it killed our poor mother; our father followed her very shortly; and my young brother became head of the family.

Poor father! How could we guess what ruin our flight would bring to him? The Sultan never trusted him again. As long as father lived he supplied us with ample means. This he did in secret, for he had to pretend to have nothing more to do with us.



Facing the vigilant eyes of the police, we boldly walked out of our Polish friend's house.

Shortly after father's death I married a rich Polish nobleman with large estates in Russia, and began quite a new chapter in my life's story. My *fiancé* was handsome, and a very talented composer. His music was even then much appreciated and had been performed at the best concerts. And I loved him with my whole heart.

In order to make my marriage valid, I had to embrace the Roman Catholic religion, the religion of my grandfather. The Pope, for our wedding, sent us his special blessing.

Alas, how terrible these changes of religion are! When my grandfather left the Roman Church for ever the Moslems were overjoyed, but his own people never forgave him. When I went back to the Church of my grandfather, Rome sent me its blessing, but my poor mother broke her heart; and the law of my country, Turkey, disinherited me. We speak so lightly of conversions and changes of nationality; I know something of what they mean; and most sincerely do I pity all those who change either their religion or their nationality. Is the best man on earth worthy of this sacrifice—or the best woman?

Melek Hanoum and her sister Zeyneb.

My married life passed with very little to record. Comfort and leisure and happiness are really quite inartistic. After the storm I had come into the haven for a while, and therefore the story was without interest. Four little lives were quickly given to me. I was like a girl again playing with her dolls, and, although I did not require to do so, I made all their clothes. What a delight it was for me to see a pretty model in a shop-window, quickly buy the stuff, and then make it for my children! Naturally I made far, far more dresses than they could ever wear. After all, why not, since it was for me such a pleasure?

Being both rich and hospitable, my husband and I were not lacking friends. We had a house in Paris full of artistic treasures, a house in Nice, and my husband's parents had large estates in Russia from which they drew their immense revenues. Our ample means allowed us to help musicians, writers, and artists, who stayed with us for weeks at a time; it was a joy for us to discover talent and help it to have its chance. The story of those years, then, as they slipped by, and we never realized how happy we were, would be, if it were written, the story of the great men and women who honoured us with their friendship.

But, alas, happiness is so seldom of long duration. The war, which brought so many tragedies in its train, threw a cloud of sorrow over us at once. My sister, who had been my companion throughout my life, she who was the ringleader in our flight and all the mad things we undertook, was sent back to Turkey. She and I, she and my Turkish family, were henceforward enemies. I had to mingle my prayers with those of my husband's country, and pray for the defeat of my Turkish family, the family I loved so deeply, because I had made them suffer. Then followed the Russian revolution and ruin for us. We, like others whose fortune was in Russia, first of all sold our works of art, then our jewels, and then our property, and finally had to face life and all the sadness and hardship it means when you have to work without having any particular training for work, and no capital to go into business.

Musical composition is a very delightful hobby, it is true, but when one has four children to keep, one has to give them bread and butter and education, and this is not possible on musical composition. My husband was lucky in finding a position as conductor of a cinema orchestra. The only profession he had supposed he would exercise was that of a leisured gentleman. Therefore, I consider it fortunate for him to find a job at all—particularly as his aristocratic appearance and manners have been distinctly to his disadvantage—in getting work.

For me there was no hesitation. I at once decided to take up dressmaking professionally. One of the leading firms, Drecoll, where in the old days my family were good customers, gave me a position as saleswoman, and again I consider I was lucky to get my experience in this admirable house before starting my own business.

And so my childhood's dream has come true. Here I am, a dressmaker, and really quite satisfied with my lot. But then, I am a fatalist. Would I change my lot? Would I do again what I did? Would I, if I had the chance, go back to Turkey? How many times a day am I not asked those absurd

questions by curious customers! I smile—one sells dresses more easily when one smiles. "Supposing it is 'written' I must do a second time what I have done," I say, "then do it I will." And the more I think of it, the more I wonder how anyone but a fatalist can live at all. How it has helped me in all I do and endure!

That is why, when the great ladies who used to be our guests, and who kindly give me their custom, whisper together about my "better days," I wonder if the words are quite accurate. They were "other" days—I wonder whether they really were better. They were other days, days so different it seems futile to try and compare them. Indeed, when a few words of Turkish spoken by a compatriot bring back the whole story of my youth, our family palaces on the shores of the Bosphorus, our luxury, our jewels, the exquisite scenery and the unforgettable sunsets of my own beloved land, I wonder if I am not just dreaming that someone else—some ancestor—some distant relation—did not lead that strange life away yonder, and not I, the dressmaker. Sometimes, in spite of myself, the tears will flow. Then I quickly escape to a fitting-room, brush them away, and say to myself: "Provided you can bring up your children to be honest citizens, what does anything matter?" What, after all, does society mean? I have as colleagues other Ministers' daughters—we are a very happy company. I read enough works in my youth to store my mind with treasures for ever. My talent for languages is a great asset; now and again I can go to theatres and appreciate them more now than when I could go as often as I chose.

And my early Turkish training in true democracy (even in the terrible days of Hamid Turkey was the country where the principles of true democracy were best put into practice) is perhaps my finest business asset.

One has to recall our manner of entertaining away yonder to understand exactly what I mean. We were all sisters. To our marriage feasts came the wives of Grand Viziers, the wives and daughters of Ministers and diplomatists, and the poor woman who served. Each was welcome. Each was treated with respect. Each knew her place. The serving woman sat on the floor, and, although she was full of respect for the great ladies, there was none of the snobbishness and cringing of the lower orders in the West. Ah! the beautiful democracy of my own land! How I long for it above everything else! Why have social distinctions and money and worldly gain crushed out from the Western civilization the beautiful words "brother and sister"? Why has Europe, in its race after wealth, forgotten those words? And so, thanks to my early Turkish training, I can hold my own with the most exacting and disagreeable customers, and help my workers do the same. Sometimes they say to me: "Who are you? You are not just an ordinary business woman!" But I laugh and say: "I

Thanks to my early Turkish training, I can hold my own with the most exacting customers.

am only a woman trying to do her duty and to make the lives of my workers as happy as possible." I feel so sorry for them all. I know what a hard, exhausting day can mean. I know that I, too, have to go back to a hard evening's work of dressmaking at home, but I have a home and children—they have nothing. They are beautiful—indeed, I wonder how in the face of all the terrible temptations of Paris they can keep their heads above water at all. Poor children!

That educated women are now finding their way into business is, after all, a great asset. Women of education ought to direct big business houses, women of education ought to set the taste in dress, women of education will have for some time to guide those who are finding their way socially, and help them spend their newly-gotten wealth, and, above all, prevent them from making themselves ridiculous.

And now I ask myself, since I have shown Turkish women the way into the business world, will they follow? They have proved they can have energy and courage when it is necessary. They have done their part in saving their country from foreign invasion; why should they not bear their share of the family financial burdens, as I do? Their fatalism will help them as workers, and a new sense of dignity will be theirs when they are doing their best to help their husbands. The dignity that has come to me as the helpmate of my husband is my greatest comfort in my business life. I never felt it when I was simply the wife of a rich husband and the mother of my children. But I feel it now, and my husband, too, feels it. He does not say so, but I know.

And so, after all, my whole career, hard and interesting as it has been, was "written," and I could not change it. So I regret nothing—of what use?

Our flight from Turkey, however, so unkindly criticized, was nevertheless necessary. After all, we, with the help of Pierre Loti, struck a blow for freedom which was heard throughout the civilized world. Now that Turkish women are free—the *régime* of Mustapha Kemal has brought for Turkish women an indescribable *bien-être*—and now that the old days of Hamid are remembered only as a terrible nightmare, it has been forgotten, but we paid for our altruism with the bitter sorrow of exile. Yet we struck our blow—the first—and surely some honour belongs to the pioneer.

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 151.

(The Third of the Series.)

A POET died; in memory
A poet wrote an elegy.

1. They tell of wood and shade; but still,
   Made hot, they tell of camp and drill.
2. A trench. What has to be in time,
   If it would save, provides a rhyme.
3. Abandoned one! And here one reads
   How one its anagram succeeds.
4. A Standard holds no longer sway—
   'Tis Twentieth Century to-day.
5. A coin, a messenger divine,
   Winged innocence adorning shrine.
6. The family here comes in sight,
   The lady is quite definite.
7. A sudden outburst, sudden start,
   She is the darling of my heart.

PAX.

Answers to Acrostic No. 151 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on February 11th.*

To every light one alternative answer may be sent; it should be written at the side. At the foot of his answer every solver should write his pseudonym and nothing else.

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 150.

(The Second of the Series)

Two well-known stations here we see,
Whence you may travel south or west;
And each of them, you will agree,
A victory may well suggest.

1. By many made, by many also broken.
2. Here is a thought, conveyed when words are spoken.
3. The outer surface of what's often eaten.
4. This flies; no wonder! For it's often beaten.
5. Reverse this light, and last will now be first.
6. Thrust back; or man with foul disease, reversed.
7. A treacherous villain on the scene appears;
8. Behead him, and we see the bygone years.

VIPER.

1.	V	o	W
2.	I	de	A
3.	C	rus	T
4.	T	im	E
5.	O	rde	R
6.	R	epe	L
7.	I	ag	O
8.	A	g	O

NOTES.—Light 6. Leper. 7. Othello.

The correct answer to the second light of No. 147 was "Roger." No satisfactory alternatives were offered for any of the lights of this or the following acrostic.

THIRTIETH SERIES: RESULT.

The highest score possible was 32, and no competitor succeeded in obtaining this number, even though none of the lights remained unsolved. Dun, Forest, Mancu, and Reg scored 31; these four solvers win prizes of £2 10s. each. Iver, Nazrat, Perky, Wals, and Yagnit scored 30; these five solvers win prizes of half a guinea each. Dun, Forest, Mancu, Reg, and Wals must be now ineligible for prizes in the current (thirty-first) series—the first four as winners of major prizes, and the last as a winner of a minor prize in two consecutive series.

Dun is Mr. D. G. Robertson, Torrie, St. John's Road, Newbury, Berks; Forest is Mr. P. E. Herrick, 40, Arodene Road, S.W.2; Mancu is Mr. L. A. Jones, Asterley, Goldsmid Road, Tonbridge, Kent; Reg is Mr. H. Lees, 3, Campden House Chambers, W.8; Iver is Mr. A. Birch, 164, Broom Road, Teddington; Nazrat is Mr. J. Greaney, 7, Prestbury Road, E.; Perky is Mr. A. T. Hill, Incents, Chesham Road, Berkhamsted, Herts; Wals is Mr. W Stradling, 3, Charlbury Road, Oxford; Yagnit is Mr. C. Tingay, 15, Cranbourne Road, Muswell Hill.