

MENDING TURKISH MANNERS

Christians Are Better Treated Now in Constantinople.

TURKS SELF-SATISFIED PEOPLE

Soldiers No Longer Permitted to Molest Women in the Streets as of Old, but Fanaticism in Army is Very Strong.

CONSTANTINOPLE, April 17.—It used to be necessary for a Christian woman here in the Ottoman capital to step off the narrow sidewalk into the street whenever she had to pass a Turkish soldier. If she did not give the Mohammedan the right-of-way he seemed to be bound by some barrack regulation to go as far as he dared toward throwing her on her face, and it happened daily that some luckless Christian girl or old woman in a quarter where no one dared to interfere was shoved headlong into the filthy slush of the roadway.

No matter how much room the woman gave the soldier on the sidewalk, there was never enough for him to pass without lunging his heavy shoulder into her. Not a few women have been injured for life by such assaults, from which there seemed to me no recourse. The native Christian, the subject of the sultan, of course had none, while for the foreigner it was practically impossible to identify the offender, it was, therefore, unsafe for Christian women to walk alone anywhere but along the Grand Rue de Pera—a filthy street, but the best Constantinople affords—and even there covert shoulder blows or pinches were not infrequent.

Embassy or consular women generally drove, or if they went out afoot they took with them a kavass, an armed protector, usually a Montenegrin, carrying in his hand a stout stick and in his waist belt prominently a huge revolver.

For an European it is often most unpleasant to accompany a woman on a walk through the streets of Constantinople, where fanaticism against infidels has been cultivated to a degree which does not exist in most parts of the country. This is the city which the European countries want to take from the padshah; this is the imperial city which held out longest against the Moslem, which was the world capital, the gem for which he paid a river of blood; this is the city of the khalf.

Fanatics Recruited for Army.

When the sultan's authority was unchallenged he made up his Constantinople garrison of the most fanatical elements in his dominions, sending every officer educated at the military colleges to serve in Macedonia, Mesopotamia or even the pest-laden Yemen and keeping here only old men mad with religious zeal and ignorant young men promoted from the ranks.

The influence of these soldiers, who, unlike regiments away from the capital, were well fed, well clad and well cared for, told upon the population, and even the hammals, or porters of the street, were rude to Christian women. If one understood their language there was but one thing to do when walking along the street with a lady—to close one's ears for unseemly remarks were directed at her. Even today the lower class Moslem objects to yield an inch of ground to let an unveiled woman pass.

Army officers and the better class Turks are generally polite in this respect as well as in many others. Whereas under the old regime officers and most civilians dared not be seen showing deference to Christians and generally bore themselves offensively against their own inclinations, today any man is at liberty even to associate with non-Moslems, and many young officers are seeking to be taken into Christian families in order to learn foreign languages and western ways.

But things have not changed to a large extent among the soldiers, as is indicated by the curious lesson which I am told is being taught in the barracks. Privates are being informed that for the moment absolute equality must be given to infidels, especially to foreigners. Of course the officers cannot tell the ignorant soldiers to forget in a day what tradition has taught for centuries, that infidels are but their "trayah," their cattle.

The soldiers are made to think that the courtesy now demanded for subject races is due to pressure from Europe, the infidel world, which is powerful and threatening. By this deception the officers hope, it seems, to get fair treatment started, and it is noticeable everywhere how much room the soldiers, especially the khaki clad men from Salonica who launched the revolution, give to women as well as men along the streets.

Gross assaults are a thing of the past.

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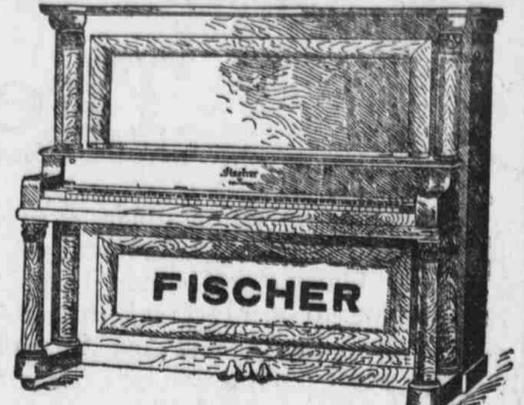
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for the punishment of a noncommissioned officer and some men who laid hands upon two American girls soon after the Young Turks came to power has had its effect. Nevertheless it is still advisable for women to give a wide berth to Albanians and Arabs in zouave costumes and to Kurds in ordinary uniforms of dark blue, for these men are likely to be soldiers of the imperial guard, who have their barracks within a stone's throw of the palace. The palace guard has no liking for the new movement and several times already sections of it have caused small mutinies which have resulted in killings.

Desperately Mean. Along the main streets, where they are likely to be seen by officers who are pledged to the new movement, reactionary troops are careful not to be seen shouldering women, though they make up for such compulsory decency when they encounter a Christian woman in the suburbs or in unfrequented streets. An American woman of my acquaintance recently saw a burly soldier cross one of the broad sidewalks of the city and throw a young woman flat upon her face in the roadway simply because she was a Christian. A gentleman out with his wife coming upon three Turks who were standing talking upon the sidewalk, taking up unnecessarily all available space, asked them politely to let his wife and himself pass and the reply, with insulting gesture, was that people like him could pass by in the street.

It is not difficult to understand the extent of the bitter hatred between Moslems and non-Moslems in a country where such abuses prevail, nor is it easy to become optimistic about the future of the Turk as a ruler of many conquered races who have suffered many centuries under his unjust yoke. The faults of the Turkish soldier are those of a religion which has everywhere until this day taught the subjection or extermination of men who would not conform to its tenets, and his virtues likewise are those of the creed of Mohammed. Until this time the Turkish soldier has been willing to suffer anything, to die in the cause of the prophet, at the command of the sultan, his caliph, "It is the will of Allah" was sufficient to make him stand in the forefront of battle, as brave a man as the world has ever known. With the new order of things the character of this soldier must necessarily undergo material change, and it is a question what the result will be.

Will Emancipation Result? At any rate he will be no longer the blood-thirsty fanatic which he is now. A shaking of his blind belief by officers and reformers, young Turks as they are called, who from western teachings have come to see that it is likely to destroy the race as to revive it.

I have seen Turkish soldiers under many circumstances and while I cannot admit them in the abstract because of their unfeeling attitude toward mortals not of their grand fraternity, I cannot fail to like certain individuals with whom I have traveled, sometimes against my will. On one occasion, like every other correspondent, I had a spy attached to me for awhile. He was a most gentlemanly young man, who would rather have had some other occupation. Of course he knew that I knew his mission, and so whenever he wanted to know anything about my movements he would ask me and I told him everything I could except the names of men I interviewed, whom he might have denounced. In traveling I used him often as guide and interpreter, and while with him I always got the best that the poorest towns and villages afforded.

When a stranger penetrates this country beyond the few railways soldiers always accompany him to protect him from brigands and highwaymen. Under the old regime the object of attaching an escort to a foreigner was also to spy upon him and to prevent him from conversing with revolutionary Christians who would tell the tale of government extortions and outrages.

Treacherous Killings. Under these circumstances it was always peculiarly interesting to travel with a Turkish escort, who while generally faithful to a degree, have once or twice been known to shoot their charge. At the little town of Mitrovitza, where I went once to investigate the killing of a Russian consul, prudence kept me almost constantly confined to the consulate, where I was a guest, for we could go out only with a guard, who walked behind us; and this guard tending to us an official air, caused every sentry we passed to salute us, and it was by one of these sentries guarding the consul's house that he had been shot.

The killing had taken place in a curious manner, and is worth retelling. The Albanians had declared when the consulate was established that they would have no Russian in their country. But the consul came with a guard of several Cossack servants and an escort of Turks who did not relish their task; and the Albanians let him stay for several months. But when he began reporting their raids upon unarmed Christian villages and bringing pressure to bear to have them stopped, there was serious trouble.

One night at a cafe a fanatical derwish after working his hearers up to a frenzied pitch, finished a long tirade by exclaiming: "And is there not a single Mohammedan who will rid us of this scourge?" "I will," said a piping little voice. "You! Oh, no, you will not," said the derwish with mock contempt intended to provoke the fellow. "I will," he repeated.

He was a soldier, a slim, sickly fellow with a sad visage. I saw him tried later at Uskub.

Consul Shot by Sentry. The next morning the consul, attired in Russian uniform, followed by a Cossack, two heavily armed kavasses, and a troop of Turkish soldiers, officers and officials, went out to inspect the fortifications about

the town designed by the Turks to protect the consulate from the Albanians. As the consul passed the sentries each presented arms, but one man required to degrade himself in this way lowered his gun quickly as the consul passed before him at three yards distance and without aiming put a bullet into his body.

Dropping his gun the little soldier then took to his heels as fast as he could go over the rocks down the Metrovitza slopes into the Albanian valley. The consul's retinue were surprised for a moment, but were soon after the soldier, firing rapidly. Either the consul's Turkish guards were very bad shots or else their sympathy with their brave comrade influenced their aim, for it was the Russian Cossack who brought the fugitive down, wounding him, if I remember rightly, in the leg.

The Turks, contrary to prevailing opinion, are not generally very good horsemen. The men we had with us on a journey in Macedonia seemed to understand their animals very little, for though the ponies we rode could have been managed without a bit at all, yet they kept a heavy hand always on the curb. The ponies were small and had none but natural gait, and the short trot was most uncomfortable unless one rose in the saddle. This the zapieh were unable to do, and in consequence the horse suffered. Two at a time they took turns riding with us at a steady trot, while the others galloped or walked alternately, thereby covering the same distances as we by leaving us behind and then allowing us to overtake them.

Rolling Race Brings Blight. Our route the first day lay through open country and our escort was therefore small. We traversed the length of the Monastir valley and stayed the night at Prelop. It should be a happy prosperous valley, for nature smiles on it, but the blight of the race that rules is visible here as elsewhere throughout the empire. The cornfields, small and poor, cling close about the towns and the villages seem to hide themselves in obscure corners of the mountains in order to be as little as possible attractive to the marauder.

The high road, a wagon track, which we followed, skirted one village and passed through another, but they were made of such huts as only Macedonian brigands would demean themselves to rob. A sheep dog, big framed and thick coated, but a head fed, shifty animal with an uncertain lops and a hollow bark, came upon us. One of the zapieh drew his sword and gave it a trial swing at a low bush near his horse's feet, but a peasant came crying after the dog and called it off before it came within reach of the Moslem's blade. This was a Turk who did not respect the life of a dog in the same way as most of his fellows.

The zapieh smoked continually as they rode and rolled cigarettes for us. They gave us lights from their cigarettes, but only the irreligious fellow would accept the same favor from us, for which I asked the reason.

"I will not take fire from a Christian," he said. It is rather a bore to dine with Turkish officers—a thing one seldom had an opportunity to do in the days of spies. In Constantinople the table manners of Europe are closely imitated, and the most conspicuous differences that strike one are the presence of sumachs, or ordinary black boys, the absence of Turkish women, though European women may be present, and the general wearing of the fez. But in the interior many things are different. There few officers know the ways of Europe and almost none follows them.

Cueer Table Manners. If a Turk is to be your guest, say at 7 o'clock he will probably arrive at 5 in the afternoon and he will stay on after dinner till 12 or 1 o'clock. It is polite of him to give you demonstrations of the extent to which he appreciates your food, and this he does by making as much noise as possible in eating. If he is a real old Turk he laps the soup from his spoon audibly and smacks his lips; he rights over his coffee and sucks his teeth. At his own home towels, soap and a basin of water are provided after the meal.

The Turk is a self-satisfied being. He is

quite certain that his ways of doing things are best. He believes today, in spite of his apparent turn for the better, that his knowledge and intellect are superior to those of Europeans. For many years foreign officers from European states, chiefly Germans, have been employed to give instructions in the army, but the army has not been brought up to an effective standard, largely because the officers generally believe that their little knowledge is sufficient and their natural skill and bravery beyond that of the European.

Today the new government is proving to the army that the old regime robbed the soldier of his pay and proper food and clothing. It is accomplishing this by depriving other departments of the government of much needed funds.

The army is the mainstay of the new regime and the army must be paid and fed and clad. It would not be well, I venture to say, to put too much confidence in the success of a movement conducted by young men of very little knowledge yet permeated with the Mohammedan conviction of superiority. These are the officers of the Turkish army who are striving to break down in the ignorant masses of their troops a serious contempt for the infidel.

A Bachelor's Reflections. The more daring a man has on the battlefield the less courage he has in a sick bed. The comfort a woman can find in grow-

ing stout is it's because of a happy nature she has. The meanest trick a man can play on a girl is to believe her when she says she won't marry him.

An engaged man is a terrible liar to make out he doesn't mind being stuck with this every time he shows her how much he loves her. There's nothing makes a man grow so much about at home and brag so much about downtown as what an expensive family he supports.—New York Press.

ADD FIVE YEARS TO LIFE A Doctor Puts Insurance Companies Next to an Increase in Revenue. Dr. Burnside Foster, editor of the St. Paul Medical Journal, and chief examiner of the New England Mutual Life Insurance company for Minnesota, speaking before the Association of Life Insurance Presidents, said it would be possible to add at least five years to the life of the average policy holder by adopting a plan of re-examination once in five years, as frequent medical examinations would indicate the beginning of unsuspected diseases in time to effect cures or materially retard the progress of disease.

Dr. Foster urged that as the life insurance business was more directly concerned with the health of the people than any other business, the companies form a combination to carry out his suggestion. He referred to the large amount of capital in-

vested in life insurance and to the great number of persons interested, either as insurers or insured, as proof that some action was needed. The re-examination, according to his plan, would be free to policy holders, and the trivial cost, he said, would be more than balanced by the increased premiums that would result. Dr. Foster said:

"Modern medicine has, above all, two chief aims—the prevention of disease and the recognition of its earliest signs in the individual. In both of these aims the life insurance business has an immense interest, since the nearer we approach to their accomplishment the more we add to human longevity. Preventive medicine becomes more nearly an exact science all the time, and, while its possibilities are far from being recognized, this is not because of its own inexactness or shortcomings, but because the people have not yet awakened to the fact that those diseases which cause the greatest number of deaths and the greatest amount of suffering are actually preventable if money enough be spent to prevent them. The only way to enlist all the people actively in the crusade against preventable disease is to present the subject as an economic one, which it surely is, and one which appeals directly to their pocket books.—New York Times.

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