ESCAPED FROM HAREM TO EMANCIPATE WOMEN

Fatima ed Melmed, Wife *of* a Prince, Was Smuggled Out of Her Home by a German Governess, Studied the Women's Movement in Berlin *and* Returns to Free Her Countrywomen

By Howard Wetmore.

CONSTANTINOPLE, Nov. 26.—Princess Fatima ed Melmed, a mere woman, is destined to exercise a very great influence in the future of Turkey. Women, heretofore, have been a negligible quantity in this country, but if the princess has her way they no longer will be, for she is trying to bring about the total emancipttion of Turkish women. A princess, reared in a harem and speaking in public to thousands of women—yes, men too—about women's rights in the very heart of the sultan's dominions! To European ideas this seems incredible and yet it is one of the wonderful transformations worked by the recent revolution.

Princess Fatima's meetings are attended not merely by the European visitors, but by the wives of merchants, small officials and under officers—the most conservative classes in Turkey. The most wonderful part about the gatherings is the fact that the women come unveiled. She is an excellent speaker and talks in an earnest, convincing way. She advocates every thing that will tend toward emancipating her sex. She is forming a league whose members are to promise not to marry a man unless he undertakes to confine himself to one wife. There is already a huge membership, even amongst the women of the lower and middle classes.

Fatima's energies seem to be limitless. She is founding schools for Turkish girls whose parents cannot affard to have foreign governesses. Now, this means a great deal, because the Turkish woman of the middle class is about as ignorant as a human being can be. If her husband is wealthy enough to keep slaves she does nothing all day long but sit on a cushion, eat a sickly sweetmeat and play with cheap German toys. She never reads, rarely sews and has not an interest in the world beyond the heram and its petty squabbles and intrigues.

Though a princess, Fatima de Melmed knows this wearisome life very well. Her father was a rich merchant of Medina, one of the most conservative town in Turkey, and married her to a poor prince. When she entered her husband's family she saw how great was the difference between the life of aristocratic Turkish harems and those she had been used to. She saw that the inmates of the former had French and English governesses, spoke foreign languages fluently, wore dresses from Paquin and hats from Virot and had their rooms furnished in a strange fashion, including brass bedsteads and wooden chairs. She, on her marriage, could not even read and write Turkish.

In a few years after her marriage she had not only mastered her mother tongue, but could speak and read French and English as well. But the more she learned the more she longed to learn and see. She longed to walk about in the streets and go to visit her female friends on foot. Only on very rare occasions did she leave the garden of the harem and then she was always in a closed carriage, with the blue silk blinds lowered and a stifling veil over her face. Her husband had but one wife, not so much because he approved of European ideas, but because he said he could not afford more since French cookery and English furniture had become the fashion. His brothers lived with him and their wives lived with Fatima. If the wives gave a party, only women were present, amongst them being the wives and daughters of men engaged at the different embassies. If the husbands gave a party, only men were present.

When Fatima heard the foreign ambassador's wives and daughters describe their parties, where men and women conversed freely, and talked, not only of love, but of books, people, politics and art, she says that she determined that if she could possibly bring it about, Turkish women should also be free and be treated like grown-up people instead of dolls. But this was not so easy as it seemed. Not only her husband, but his and her own family refused to let her change her life in the least.

"You speak three foreign languages and that is enough emancipation for anybody," they said.

Then Fatima determined to run away to Europe, to study and to see how women lived there, so as to speak with some authority when she came back again. Even running away was almost impossible so closely was the harem guarded, but at last she bribed a German governess to smuggle in an European woman's dress and hat and one morning after her German lesson she walked boldly out of the harem, her hair cropped close to her head, the paint and powder (which even Turkish men use to an enormous extent) washed from her face and a hundred dollars' worth of Turkish money, secretly hoarded up during three years, in her pocket.

Aided by the German governess, Fatima went to Germany and wrote thence to her husband and her father, telling them what she had done and her reasons. They wrote back to say she should not have any money at all unless she swore to return home at once. This she refused to do and began to fight against starvation in Berlin while attending some higher courses for women. Only a Turkish woman, delicately nurtured in the lap of eastern luxury, can form an adequate idea of what this woman went through. It was then that she saw the other side of the medal—the rough side of independent women who must thing for themselves and keep the wolf from the door.

As her small stock of money was soon gone, she gave Turkish lessons in the afternoons to a few youths who wished to enter a diplomatic academy, going to her lectures in the mornings and preparing for her examinations all through the evenings and into the small hours of the morning. But very few people wanted Turkish lessons at all, and Fatima often dined on nothing better than a plate of ill made soup and a piece of coarse bread—fare that she would not have touched a few months before. But perseverance had its reward, and finally Fatima obtained her diploma of higher education. More than that, she had studied the rights and wrongs of the women's movement in Europe, and as soon as the revolution broke out in Turkey in the summer of 1908 she determined to take advantage of what was going on there to return home and persuade her sisters not only to insist on being educated, but to institute home life in place of harems.

Having no money, she went to the editor of a Berlin paper and asked for a loan, in return for which she promised to send him "copy" about the revolution. He was very much surprised at this offer from a woman who looked like a foreigner, but on hearing her story acceded. A week later she was in her native town of Medina, preaching emancipation to a crowd of women of the lower classes. Her husband and father wished to have her arrested and brought back to her "home" by force. This would certainly have been done had she arrived there a few weeks earlier. But revolution had already wrought great changes in Turkey. The members of the "Young Turkey" party who were in the town declared that not a finger should be raised against her. At this the reactionaries, to whom her father and husband belonged, were furious, and called a meeting at which they declared that all the revolutionists wanted to do was to get a constitution in order that the women might go about unveiled. This announcement caused such an uproar in the town that all the "Young Turks" would have been mobbed had not a number of troops arrived and dispersed the crowd, arresting the agitators.

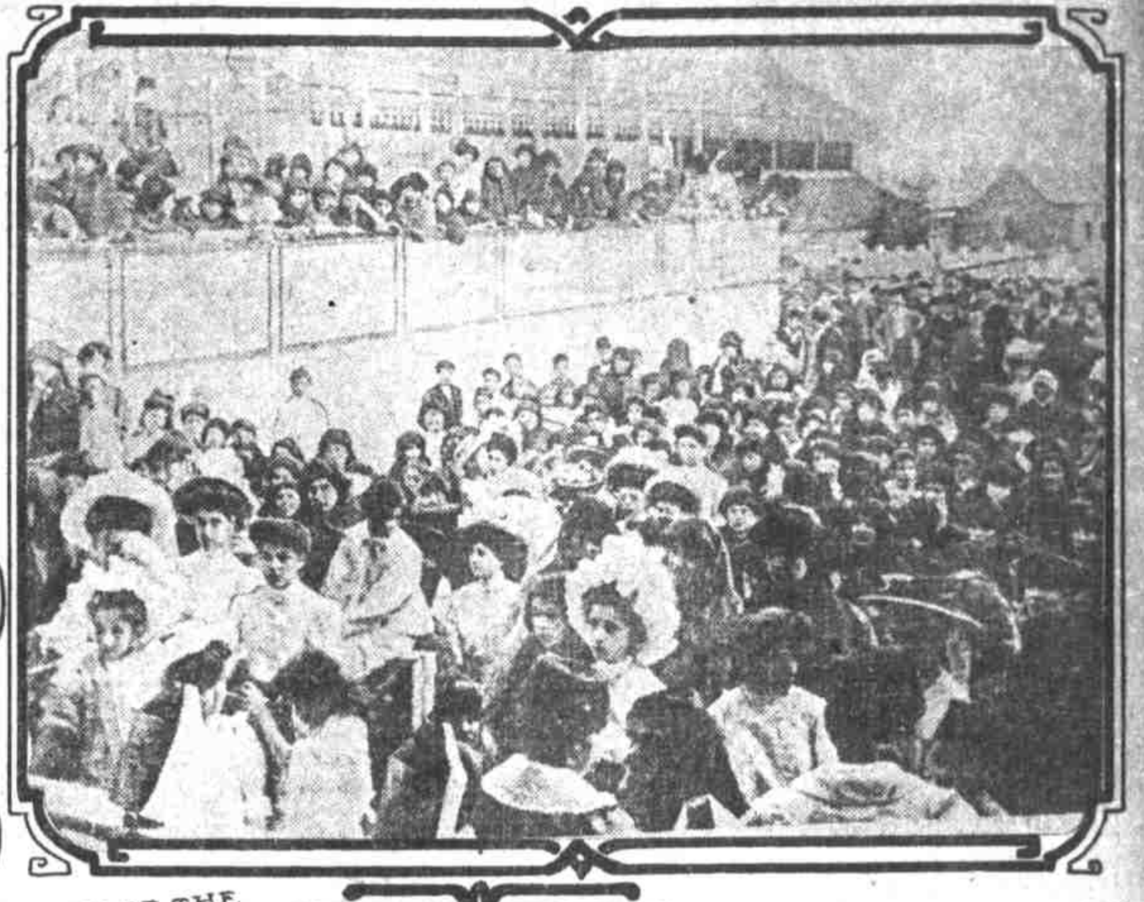
After this Fatima began a preaching tour through Turkey, which she is still continuing. Her story soon became known and very many educated Turks declared themselves to be on her side. But this was not a difficult fortress to storm, because no aristocratic Turkish household keeps up eastern customs in their entirety, and when revolutions are going on great changes can take place in a short time. Amongst those who support her warmly is Prince Sabah ed Din, a prominent liberal and a very cultured man.

"You are perfectly right," he said to her at a recent meeting she held in Constantinople. "Our women must be educated, enjoy home life, should go about unveiled and receive visitors without restriction like other women do. But you must be prudent and moderate or you will not only spoil your own cause, but that of young constitutional Turkey as well."

The prince put the situation in a nutshell. If Princess Fatima and her followers press their cause too hard, they will not only turn middle class Turks and the lower orders against them, but will turn them against the new Turkey and its constitution, against progress and reform of all kinds, throwing them back into the arms of reactionaries. For, in spite of the revolution and the foreign customs observed in aristocratic houses, the provincial Turk, though he may have but one wife, is averse to any changes at all in his house and private life. Badly educated himself, he does not see why his wife and daughters should be taught to read and get "new ideas." Most—nay, nearly all—of the small provincial towns are like Medina, and the inhabitants would mob anybody who advocated women's emancipation.

It is amongst this class that the changes ought to be made if Turkish women's future is to be more enlightened than their present; and it is just this class who will receive changes with anything but a smile of welcome. This is what makes Princess Fatima's task so hard, though all really liberal Turks wish her success and help her, not only with words, but with gold, which she spends upon the cause she has so much at heart.

PRINCESS FATIMA ED MELMED



ONE OF THE PRINCESS'S MEETINGS.

PRINCE SABAH ED DIN

Of Course.

Judge—Have you ever been cross-examined before?

Mr. Trouble—Have I! Didn't I just tell you I am married.

THE LOST SCOOP

By Grace D. Thompson.

A CAREER or a husband—it was an enormous question for such a slim slip of a girl to answer, but she had already decided it a full two hours ago and was now only amusing herself by playing the arguments on either side against each other to see how Morton would win every time.

Kate Trent, this yellow-haired, impulsive maid, was only a sophomore in a great western university and far too young to be choosing either husband or career, but having no mother or other living relative, aside from a chemistry-engrossed father, an under professor in the science department had taught her knowledge beyond her years.

As she sat curled up like a kitten on the window seat in her own special den, of the suite she and her father occupied, her mind quickly reviewed the important events of her college life which led up to these two alternatives. How well she remembered, during her freshman year, the first little stories she had contributed anonymously to the various college publications; her joy at seeing her own fancies in print, then her bolder ventures in the city papers till, at the beginning of this year, she had been asked to write a daily half-column, under the nom-de-plume "Violet," for the Herald. She had no confidents and no one suspected her as being the author of those witty college notes. Kittie Trent, her friends would have agreed, had anyone suggested such a thing, had a soft, warm flush, a round dimpled chin, two very merry eyes and a bewitching mess of yellow curls, but as for writing, bah! Besides, her father wouldn't let her. The facts were her father didn't know any more about the matter than they, being, figuratively, buried in atoms, he had little interest in his daughter aside from paying her numerous bills and seeing that she passed her examinations.

Just before Christmas began to appear sketches of much the same character in a big rival daily, the Tribune, under the name Mac. Then such a competition as there was betwen the two unknown correspondents for news. Kate didn't know the sex of her opponent, but every indication led her to believe it was a girl and she had worked to beat her, oh, so hard, and, she prided herself with not indifferent success. These minor triumphs had led her to think seriously of taking up journalism as a profession. Being very independent and not caring for the society life open to her as a professor's daughter she had quite set her heart on her "career," as she called it to herself.

Now the alternative! Since before she had donned long skirts and stuck her yellow curls full of hair pins Kate had been a little tyrant with men. Those who worshipped at her shrine had been hers body and soul, ready to sell their patrimony for a mess of pottage, were this synonymous with sips from those enticing, rosy lips. Small wonder then that this roll of queenship had given birth to a most independent spirit and an imperial little toss to her dainty head. But the advent of Morton Cramer, a tall senior, soon after the winter holidays, had changed all this. Though she would not own it openly, there was a new ruler who had no tantalizing dimples and wore no frills, but she knew he was king, she was now no more than subject and after the manner of all that's feminine, having found her master she proceeded to worship.

She had not even mentioned the subject of journalism while with Morton for fear of betraying herself, knowing instinctively that he would be displeased, so had kept her two absorbing interests wholly separate, but this afternoon circumstances had drawn them together and one must triumph.

The noon mail had brought a letter offering Morton a fine government position in Manila, which must be filled immediately after commencement, only a month away. It was an unexpected turn of affairs and made Kate catch her breath quickly. She had never thought what life would be separated from Morton, but his next statement was a much greater surprise.

"I will get a license and tomorrow afternoon we will drive over to Preston, where I have a friend who will marry us and ask no questions."

"Marry us!" Kate gasped.

"Why yes; is it anything unusual for lovers to be married? That will give you a month to get ready to go away."

In her bewilderment, all Kate could think of was being married first and getting her trousseau afterward.

"That is doing things backwards, Mort. Why not get ready first and then be married later?"

"Your father would refuse to let you leave college before you graduate if you waft to ask him and this way he can't help it."

When his plans had been carefully demonstrated to her Kate had finally agreed and was now waiting in a tremble of excitement for the morrow. Her father, always so busy with his researches that she hardly knew him, had gone out of the city for a few days, so there could be no stumbling block in the way, and tomorrow she was to be Mort's wife!

She felt that she could not sleep but, in spite of her exciement, was beginning to doze, when, suddenly, she seemed to hear newsboys calling, "Special! Special! Kittie Trent, only daughter of Professor Trent, married secretly to Morton Cramer."

In an instant she was thoroughly awake again. Wouldn't that make a great scoop! Why couldn't she write it up, sign it "Violet" and if any one suspected who she was that would surely throw them off the track again. The sentences began to form in her mind; she would be the scoop of the season and wouldn't she score against the unknown Mac!

In the morning she wrote out her story that it might be sent in as soon as she returned from Preston, leaving a space at the end for any little incident of the journey. If she was excited at knowing this was her wedding day she was doubly so at the idea of her triumph over her opponent.

Although she went to no classes the day passed very quickly. They drove to Preston and Kittie Trent came back Kittie Cramer. She had read that girls often hesitate at the last moment to give up their old liberty for one man and she had wondered at the time how she would feel but as Morton, tall and strong, stood beside her in the minister's little study, she knew that her old life was nothing to her love for him.

It was just dusk when they returned and Morton went to his own home promising to come back later in the evening. Left alone she began to feel weary, so curled upon the window seat for a nap. Just 40 winks, she thought, then I'll slip down and mail my story, adding, "Oh, you dear scoop you," out loud.

Hardly had she closed her eyes when again came clear and strong the "Special!" cry of the newsboys.

"Kittie Trent, only daughter of Professor Trent, married secretly to Morton Cramer! Times, Times!"

She jumped to her feet. Was it the same dream? But no, the cry was repeated. Throwing open the window she listened—yes, it was a real newsboy and a real call!

"Bring me a paper," she cried.

A moment more and she had the Tribune in her hand and was eagerly scanning the first page. There it was a whole column, signed Mac.

"Oh, my scoop! my scoop!" she sobbed to herself as she read and reread the story of her marriage. It was all there, even about their little dinner at the Wayside Inn, not three hours ago. Who could have told? At last she began to wonder, for her mind seemed too startled to think quickly. Who could have told? The minister probably knew Mac and wired in to her. Yet how could he have known about where they dined? No, it must—no, it couldn't—it was Morton. Her own Morton, who never even mentioned another girl's name in her presence, to have confided at once to this unknown their secret! He must have phoned the news to her from the office at the inn. She remembered now that he went out for a smoke.

Never before had Kate known jealousy. She believed herself immune to this monster, but now she felt that he was tearing her very heart out. How Morton had deceived her, had led her to believe that he was all her own, when he must belong—partially, at least—to some other girl! She had given up all her former friends and that independent spirit in which she gloried so. Was it any more than fair that he should do the same? To be made a plaything of—on her wedding day, too!—Professor Trent's daughter! It was too much, and her whole body shook with the force of her emotion. Not a thought of the lost scoop now; there was no room for such a trifle when her mind was filled with bitter, bitter jealousy, with wounded pride, with betrayed confidence.

Before the storm had even begun to subside Morton came in.

"Why sweetheart, what is it?" he cried.

"Don't touch me! Don't come near me, Morton Cramer!" came the voice from the cushions, trembling with anger and shrill as a child's.

"Kittie, what do you mean?" he asked in astonishment. Never before had she shown the least bit of temper.

"Go away at once. I don't want to see you again. Never—do you understand?" Her old spirit was fast returning now. "I hate you, loathe you; go at once."

The next moment she heard footsteps on the stairs, slow faltering footsteps as of a person dazed.

That night, and the following day were the most terrible she had ever experienced in all her butterfly existence. Never before had she known pain and now it came to her with the blinding, benumbing force of a flash of lightning, with greater effect, since there was no preparation. Morton had been her whole world so long that now she was left completely alone. Every moment seemed a century, and by morning she felt that she had lived forever. The first force of her anger had spent itself and only her extreme independence kept her from repenting for her outburst. By 10 o'clock she tried to find some excuse for Morton's seeming disloyalty, but none seemed adequate for the offense. She had given all, why should not he? And again she was overwhelmed by passionate jealousy. Then noon came. The crowds of students self absorbed, hurrying by only seemed to increase her loneliness and desolation.

"I will go wild if I don't see him. If he would only come I could forgive him anything now, for oh, I can't live without him," she cried, as the afternoon dragged slowly by. But no Morton came. At last she had found a will as strong as her own.

Finally the idea of sending for him flashed across her mind and was as quickly dismissed. What—Professor Trent's daughter send for a man, even if he be her husband—never! Still no Morton. As the shadows commenced to lengthen her spirit seemed gradually to break, her pride to melt. She felt that she could not live through that twilight hour, so filled with happy memories of former days, alone. So, with trembling, uncertain fingers, she wrote the recall.

In a short half hour, ages to the waiting girl, there was a well known step, the door opened and in a flash she was in her husband's arms.

"What was it, dear?" at last he asked.

"Why didn't you tell me about the other girl? I wouldn't have minded so much, at least, if you had only told me."

"What other girl? I don't understand."

"Why, Mac, the girl who writes for the Tribune. You told her about our marriage."

Astonishment, surprise, incredulousness passed over Morton's face in rapid succession. Then the light of a puzzle solved.

"Didn't you know before, dear? Couldn't you guess by my name, Morton A. Cramer? I am Mac!"

GREAT NEW BRIDGE MAY STAND IDLE--Traction Commission May Refuse to Allow Brooklyn, N. Y., Traction Company to Connect Its System

BROOKLYN, N. Y., people are greatly stirred up over the probability that the great Manhattan bridge now near completion will be compelled to stand idle for a period of from one to five years after it is finished and ready for service. The recent action of the public service commission in denying the application of the Brooklyn Rapid Transit company to connect the Brooklyn elevated system with the bridge, destroys all hope of any adequate operations of the railroad tracks on the bridge when that structure is completed.

Civic organizations are taking up the problem in the hope that the borough may be spared a similar handicap to its growth to that which was caused by the five year delay in the operation of the Williamsburg bridge. Mass meetings and other actions, designed to compel some quick and effective measure from the public service commission, are contemplated; and, according to sentiment expressed the commissioners must show their hands very quickly in remedial action or vacate their office.

The public service commission defends itself by the contention that certain traffic problems preclude at present other action than that already taken. In the first place the Fourth avenue subway project planned for the operation of several tracks of the bridge and authorized by it is tied up by tax payers' suits and must await the disposition of the courts; and the application of the Interborough Rapid Transit company for a subway connection with the bridge cannot be granted at present because the route prayed for is identical with that of certain sections of the Fourth avenue subway route. And too, the denial of the application of the Brooklyn Rapid Transit company for an elevated connection was based largely upon an alleged popular sentiment against encumbering the new bridge approach by an elevated structure and the fact that no provision has been made for an elevated terminal or distribution system at the Manhattan end of the bridge.

According to such authorities as William M. Ivins, not a dollar of private capital will go into the Fourth avenue project and no municipal funds could be available for such purpose for a year or more.

Expert engineers claim that while the Brooklyn elevated system may have been connected up with the bridge, according to the plan submitted, by the time the span is completed, it would be impossible to construct the necessary subway connections within that time even if the contracts were now let and worked under the most favorable conditions. But that under present conditions there is no probability that rapid transit can be established across the bridge under two years at least after the structure is ready for traffic.

In the mean time the work of constructing the bridge is progressing rapidly. The Glyndon Contracting company, erectors for the Carbon Steel company which holds the general contract for the production of the fine steel for the bridge, has built up the big 21¼ inch cables above the core strands and expects to complete the cables by January 1 after which the building up of the superstructure will begin.

Frank B. Robinson, president of the Carbon Steel company recently said:

"The lack of provision for the operation of the Manhattan bridge on the completion of the structure, stands in curious contrast to the pressure for haste brought a year or so ago upon the contractors for the material and construction work of the bridge which resulted in our giving the Manhattan bridge contracts a precedence over others. In turning out the great tonnage of nickel steel and other open hearth steels specified for this bridge, we broke all records and prepared ourselves to supply the material months ahead of the time required. And also the Glyndon people who are stringing the wires for us, will have the cables completed in one third the time it took to build up the cables of the Williamsburg bridge though the latter are smaller. We have, therefore, done our part, and since the Manhattan bridge will be completed in December of next year. It is very unfortunate that the people cannot then have the use of the structure."

The Manhattan bridge is the third span across the East river to connect "old New York," or the Borough of Manhattan with the Borough of Brooklyn. When completed it will be the largest suspension bridge in the world, having an eight track railroad capacity of 200,000 passengers an hour one way or 400,000 passengers an hour east and west. In addition there will be a vehicular roadway 35 feet wide and two foot paths 12 feet wide. The main span of this giant structure is 1470 feet long and the bridge completed including real estate will cost over $29,000,000.

Manhattan Bridge, the Third East River Span to Connect "Old New York" and Brooklyn, to Be Completed In About a Year.

The Wearing of the Green.

That the styles in Porto Rico are quite up to date is evidenced by these remarks in a San Juan newspaper:

"Green is the thing.

"Ties, hats, spots, even garments are green. To be a sport one must be dressed in green.

"The new style ought to fill people who are out of a job with delight. Just consider how many suits which used to be black are now in the height of fashion!"