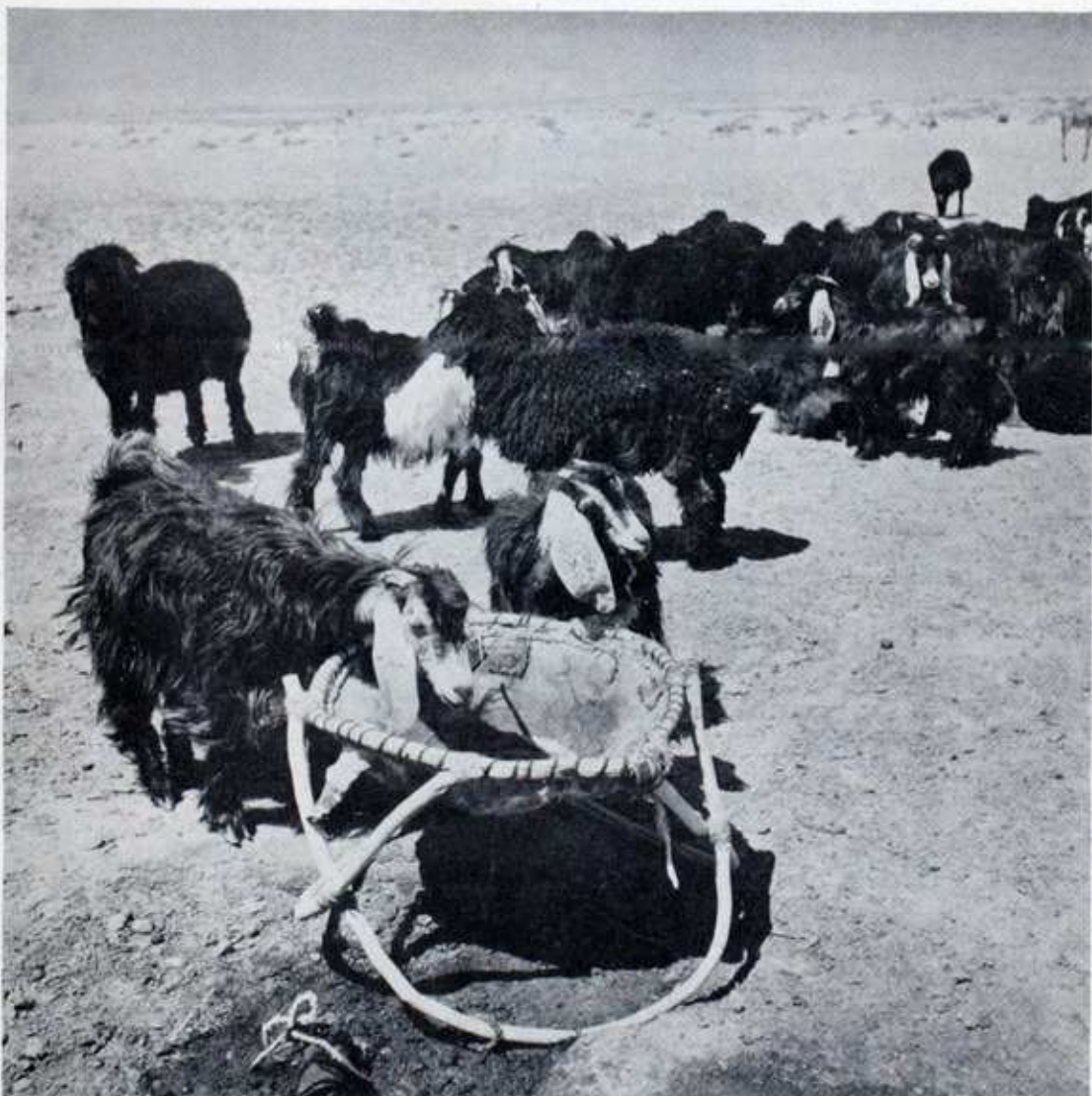


*American*  
*Near East Society*  
*Bulletin*



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JUNE, 1949

# THE ANCIENT WALLS OF ISTANBUL

By EDGAR J. FISHER, Ph.D.\*

There may have been more extensive or more venerable fortifications than those designed to protect the ancient Megarian trading town of Byzantium, which later became the great imperial city of Constantinople, the capital of Eastern Christianity, but the walls of old Constantinople, now called Istanbul, have no equal in historical importance. When Byzas, the legendary founder of this natural seat of empire, chose this site, he had an eye not only for impressiveness and beauty of location, but for strategic defense as well.

## BECAME SEAT OF EMPIRE

It is truly surprising that, when the Emperor Constantine the Great dedicated his seat of empire at old Byzantium in 330 A. D., the city for its previous thousand years of existence carried on its activities in a comparatively restricted geographical area. The land walls, extended several times during these centuries, never comprised more than the land enclosed by a line drawn from the Stamboul end of the Galata Bridge, through the valley of the Grand Bazaar, on over the hill of the Hippodrome, and down to the shore of the Sea of Marmara at the Seraglio Lighthouse. There they met the sea walls, which had been built along the shore of the peninsula that points northward toward the Bosphorus, and formed one side of the acropolis.

Constantine's vision of a worthy capital did not confine the New Rome within such narrow bounds. In solemn procession he is reported to have staked out a line for new walls starting from the inner bridge over the Golden Horn, passing up the hill to a point west of the great Church of the Holy Apostles, now the location of the Mosque of Sultan Mohammed, and then descending to the Sea of Marmara in the vicinity of Vlanga Bostan. Along this line he caused to be built the land walls of his

new city of Constantinople and extended the sea walls along the Marmara and Golden Horn to meet the new termini of the land walls. This more than doubled the enclosed area of the city, beyond which it was supposed the population would never extend.

Within less than a century, however, the metropolis had so expanded and developed that the Constantinian walls were found to be inadequate, both as to strength and location. As far as is known, these fortifications were built as a single line without moat or strong pro-



*R. S. Hardy*

Looking from the Sea Walls of Istanbul across the Sea of Marmara.

TECTIVE towers. But the chief problem was that the imperial city grew so rapidly that a considerable portion of the population was forced to live outside the walls in the unprotected countryside. This development was so rapid that there are practically no surface remains of the Constantinian walls visible. Even the enlarged city burst its bounds, and the people without the walls needed new defenses to protect them from the oncoming barbarian tribes already attracted by reports of the splendor and wealth of the Queen City of the East.

It was the Emperor Theodosius II and his statesmen prefects — Anthemius, Cyrus and Constantine — who devoted themselves to remedying the partially defenseless position of their capital. During the reign of Theodosius, from 408 to 450, the new walls were built, and strengthened upon several different occasions. They enclosed an area approximately twice as large as that protected by the Constantinian walls. But more important still was the impressive size and strength of the new fortifications. It is small wonder that some barbarian leaders, who brought their hosts to conquer and plunder the city, viewed the walls hopelessly, and ordered their men to march on, going to the west to find an easier task.

When the prospective invaders approached the fortifications, they beheld two lines of formidable walls, with broad inner and outer terraces and two series of bastion towers, all of which obstructions were across a deep moat over sixty feet wide, with a scarp five feet thick and a battlement six-and-a-half feet high as the first brick and mortar that the enemy might touch. The outer terrace, between the outer wall and the moat, was sixty-one feet broad, sufficient for the free movement of many troops. Ten feet above the outer terrace rose the outer wall, along which were ninety-six towers varying from thirty to thirty-five feet in height.

## DEFENSE AGAINST AVARS

Then came the inner terrace between the outer and inner walls and sufficiently broad for the easy movement of many additional troops. The inner wall next to the city was forty feet above the ground level and fifteen feet in thickness; along it was another series of ninety-six towers varying from sixty to sixty-five feet in height, and spaced about one hundred and seventy-five feet apart. The distance along the Theodosian walls from the Sea of Marmara to the beginning of the later walls constructed by Emperor Manuel Comnenus in the middle of the Twelfth Century on the hill overlooking the Golden Horn, was about four miles. Between the short

\* Dr. Fisher is Visiting Professor at Sweet Briar College, Sweet Briar, Virginia, and was formerly the Dean of Robert College, Istanbul, Turkey.

stretch of the walls of Manuel Comnenus and the Golden Horn were two parallel lines of fortifications, the inner line built by the Emperor Heraclius to defend that section of the city against the Avars in 627, and the outer line built by Leo V to protect the city from an attack by the Bulgarians in 813.

#### SAFE FOR THOUSAND YEARS

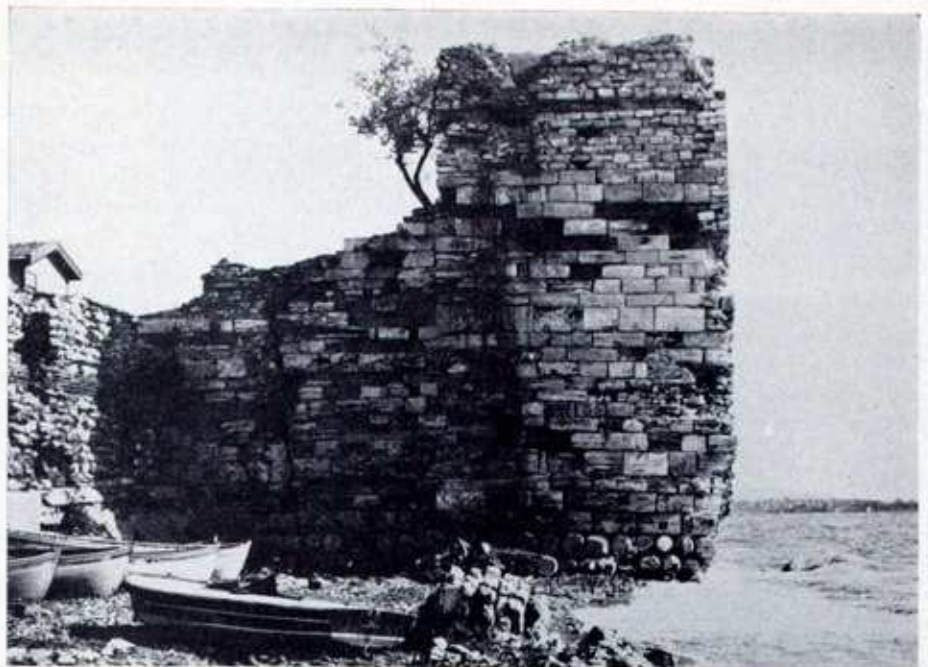
Behind these impregnable fortifications the great city of Constantinople lived its life safe from enemy attacks for almost a thousand years. Each one of the public gates could bear testimony to moving historical events. Indeed, for eight centuries before its final conquest at the hands of the Ottoman conqueror, Mohammed the Great, in 1453, this lordly and natural seat of empire withstood a major siege every generation.

Only twice before 1453 did it fall before attack. In 1204 the impious Latin Crusaders under Henry Dandolo, blind Doge of Venice, conquered this great bulwark of Christian culture, and thereby weakened it irreparably; while in 1265 it was reconquered by the Greeks under Michael Paleologus, last of the Byzantine emperors of Nicaea.

At all other times the walls of the city had been the capital's sure defense. Behind them the city was safe, when in succession Persians, Avars, Saracens, Bulgarians, Russians, Ottomans, and Greek rebels struggled repeatedly to effect an entrance. Secure behind these walls, the cultured life of Constantinople ebbed and flowed during centuries, along streets, in churches, and other public buildings that were the marvel of the visitors who beheld them. And this was at a time when the urban centers of Western Europe were in a woefully backward state.

#### CITY CONSERVED CULTURE

Behind these walls not only Constantinople, capital of the Byzantine Empire, was protected as a great conservator of civilization, but, at a considerable distance beyond, Western civilization, too, was guarded against invaders for several centuries when it could hardly have defended itself had the gates at Constantinople not held fast and firm. Silent sentinels still today are the impressive ruins of these walls that were beneficent for East and West alike!



*R. S. Hardy*

Where the ancient land walls of Istanbul meet the Sea of Marmara.



*R. S. Hardy*

A flock of sheep grazes along the terrace of the Theodosian Walls.



*R. S. Hardy*

The Prison of Anemas, a part of the walls built by Leo V to protect Constantinople.

# THESIS DEVELOPS NEW BUSINESS

Twenty-five years ago, Emile Cortas, a junior commerce student at the American University of Beirut, had a difficult problem on his mind — the selection of his senior thesis subject.

During spring vacation while helping his mother make jam, he decided to see if his teacher would approve a thesis on



JAM COOKING ROOM

the subject of "Fruit Preserving as an Industry for Syria". The topic was accepted and a year later it was completed. The summer following his graduation, he went to Dublin, Ireland, where he spent three months working in a preserve factory.

Returning to Beirut he was employed in the Alumni Office. But he devoted his weekends to jam-making with the help of his mother in the family kitchen. Each week Mr. Cortas returned to Beirut with more jam.

But there was prejudice to face. Grocery stores, hotels, and the public preferred foreign-made jams. They thought these were better than the local products; furthermore, no domestic concern had offered a consistently good jam. Mr. Cortas started to sell to individuals. Sometimes he gave his jam away. He got one student to sell on a commission basis, but after a few weeks he stopped because it didn't pay.

In 1928 after the Cortas' products had met with the approval of many attending the Women's League Exhibition in Beirut, some grocery stores began to handle the line. The next year a turning point was reached — a factory was opened in a Beirut suburb. On the first

day of its operation Mr. Cortas received his largest order to date. Fortunately, everything functioned smoothly and the factory led to greater production, better quality, and lower prices.

Today Cortas Frères list nine jams: Apricot, Plum, Quince, Strawberry, Cherry, Orange Marmalade, Apple Jelly and Quince Jelly. Peach, Grape, and Fig Jam are made to order.

Other products of Cortas Frères are syrups, fruit pulps, and tomato paste. The organization is also canning vegetables and table salts and is experimenting with frozen foods.

Before the war about 70% of the products were exported to other countries in the Near East, to the Sudan, West Africa, and to England.

The Company now has its main plant at Bowshriya in Lebanon and a tomato paste factory at Homs, Syria. In normal times the organization employs about 200. Emile's brother, Michel, a Beirut graduate of 1934, is chief chemist for



PACKING ROOM

the firm and a partner. In fact, three of the four partners are graduates of the University.

Thus the thesis of a quarter of a century ago has developed into a large-scale new business of considerable value to the economies of Lebanon and Syria.

## WHAT IS IT?

The photograph on page eight represents pre-Ottoman Empire Irrigation holes near Al-Kharj, Saudi Arabia. This ancient irrigation system has been replaced by modern pumps and ditches.

## DR. WALTER L. WRIGHT, JR.

Dr. Walter Livingston Wright, Jr., 49, chairman of the Board of Trustees of Robert College and member of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of the Near East College Association, Inc., died at his home in Princeton, N. J., of a heart attack, May 16.



Dr. Wright had been closely associated with the development of the American Near East Society and its Bulletin.

An authority on Turkey and the Near East, Dr. Wright in 1946 returned to his alma mater, Princeton University, to serve as Professor of Turkish Language and History. From 1935 to 1944 he was President of Robert College and the American College for Girls, Istanbul, Turkey. He was presently a member of the Board of Trustees of the Girls' College and Admiral Bristol Hospital. He began his teaching career at the American University of Beirut.

During the war he served as Chief of the Near East Section, United States Office of the Coordinator of Information and Chief Historian of the War Department General Staff.

Among the survivors are his widow, Mrs. Katharine Hine Fenning Wright, and two sons, Walter L. Wright, 3rd, and Frederick Fenning Wright.

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## American Near East Society Bulletin

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W. W. PATTON, *Director*  
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The Bulletin of the American Near East Society is published monthly except for July and August.

ALLEN M. BAILEY, *Editor*  
Membership fees and chapter offices are given on page eight.

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Arnautköy—"Four Corners". This is the business section of a Bosphorus village near Istanbul. Note the three-section tramcar and the clocks at right which tell when the Istanbul ferry will stop.

A. S. Dunlap

# Near East Camera



A Lebanese Barber Shop in Beirut.

W. P. Kinneman



Saudi-Arabian Industries

**CONTRAST**—The motor car is replacing the horse as the mode of transportation in the desert.



A Syrian porter traveling "light".

## VISITS U. S.

Pictured at Princeton, N. J., is Shaykh Muhammad Al Khalifah of Bahrain and his son Shaykh Salman who have come to the United States as guests of the Bahrain Oil Company. They expect to visit the new date industries of California. Shaykh Salman is the uncle of the ruling chief of Bahrain. At Princeton University they saw the collection of Arabic manuscripts. (L.-r.) Dr. Bayard Dodge, president-emeritus, American University of Beirut; Shaykh Muhammad; Dr. Philip K. Hitti of Princeton; and Shaykh Salman.



Turkish Information Office

Turkish copper artisan in his work shop.

A Common custom around 1920

# LEBANON HOST TO U. N. WOMEN

By MARGARET BLISS LEAVITT\*

Crowds pouring into the grounds of UNESCO house at Beirut, Lebanon, cars emptying their passengers, a military guard ready to give the salute, and finally the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hamid Bey Frangieh, accompanied by Dr. Jamal Karam Harfouche (an AUB graduate and one of our finest women doctors) come into the large, beautiful hall where they and the delegates from fourteen countries take their seats, and the Third Session of the Commission on the Status of Women is opened.

## RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED

It was impressive, this twenty-first of March, 1949, to see the hall filled with a large crowd of people, a good majority of them women. For the next two weeks the fourteen delegates and their advisers and consultants put in long hours of work, reporting, discussing, debating, drawing up resolutions, and voting. The following are, in brief, the most important resolutions adopted:

All women should have the right to vote.

More women should be in the United Nations Secretariat.

Educational opportunities should be open to men and women alike.

There should be equal pay for equal work, with no discrimination against sex.

\* Mrs. Leavitt is the wife of Professor Leslie Leavitt, Director of the preparatory section of International College, Beirut, Lebanon.

Laws should be passed doing away with conflicting citizenship for women of one country who marry men of another.

Married women should have adequate property rights.

There was a great deal of friendly interchange of ideas; each delegate was eager to learn of conditions in other countries and to find out how unfavorable conditions could be ameliorated. But the alert Mme. Popova from the USSR, flanked by two interpreters and a man from the Tass Agency, allowed no point to get by unquestioned, and so many times did she vote against a proposition that the newspapers nicknamed her "La Vishinsky".

Lebanon presented a recommendation that the Commission on the Status of Women should submit, at its next session a world wide policy in the interest of the family and the home, to safeguard their existence and well-being, so that women can avail themselves of all the opportunities and new openings resulting from the attainment of equal status in the political, economic, social, and cultural fields.

Near the end of the session the representative of Syria brought in a resolution regarding the question of women displaced from their Palestinian homes, urging that the Commission advocate the repatriation of these women. The Commission, however, felt this to be a political question and there-

fore not in their sphere. They agreed they could do no more than "voice their deep concern and sympathy, and express the desire that the Conciliation Commission would at an early date, reach a solution of the problem in accordance with the resolution of the General Assembly".

The delegates were kept going morning, noon, and night. They all were struck by the beauty of Lebanon, but suffered somewhat from the cold, because of the delayed spring weather. Mme. Begtrup, the Danish representative, who is also Danish Minister to Iceland, said she had looked forward to visiting "Sunny Lebanon", but would be glad to get back to Iceland to get warm! An unfortunate canceling of the reservations of the delegates in Beirut hotels so that the Conciliation Commission could be accommodated forced most of the members of the Commission to move to a hotel in the village of Aley, at an altitude of 2,500 feet, where the social rooms were tomblike and one could get warm only by going to bed, if then! But in spite of these inconveniences, the delegates have taken away with them to their homes, from China to Mexico, and from the United Kingdom to India, the pleasantest impressions of Lebanon with its hospitable and friendly people.

## PERSONALITIES PRESENT

And those of us who live here have made some warm friends among the delegates. We shall never forget the feminine charm yet brilliant alertness with which Mme. Lefauchaux of France presided at the meetings; nor the keen way in which Judge Dorothy Kenyon of the United States presented resolutions; nor the impression made on us by the experience and knowledge shown by Miss Mary Sutherland of the United Kingdom. Mme. Mihri Pektash, graduate of the American College for Girls at Istanbul and former member of the Turkish Parliament, had the honor of being elected "rapporteur"; Mrs. Menon of India, Dr. Cecilia Zung of China, and all the others contributed much. All of them inspired us with their devoted, untiring efforts to bring about conditions in which woman can take her place beside man in the joint work for a better world.



UNESCO House in Beirut, where the UN Commission on the Status of Women met.

# "APARTMENT IN ATHENS"

By GERTRUDE FORD\*

It is well understood, of course, that people who visit a city for the first time and look no further than the center, see nothing abnormal, even though the country may be in great distress. This is true of Athens and of Greece.

Visitors see decent apartment houses and do not think of going outside of the city. They look at the shop windows with practically everything on display, but do not observe that there are very few Greek customers inside. They go to the hotels and get excellent service and all the food they can afford to buy. They do not know that the cost of food has risen so greatly that many Greeks cannot now purchase the basic necessities of life for their families.

Take the subject of housing. There are many apartment houses that are attractive and modern in appearance. Many of them, of course, are attractive and modern on the inside also; many are not. Plumbing may be a sort of communal affair, and bathrooms of the type we are accustomed to in the United States are sheer luxury. I lived for some time in an apartment house where I got a room for \$70 a month. I furnished my own linen. I shared the bathroom with seven others. I nearly froze because the heat was not turned on until quite late in the afternoon. I never had

a drop of warm water for bathing or washing unless it was heated in a small tea-kettle. This was not considered expensive for an American living in the center of town, whose rent, likely as not, was being paid by his government; but the presence of Americans, obviously, has raised the rents for Greek people who are reduced to living several in a room, or staying with relatives.



The modern latrine with flush toilets built in Dourghouti by a foreign relief association. This is the only modern sanitation in the entire camp.

As it is in the United States—or was when I left—the rent of old tenants is controlled by the Government, with the result that they are paying practically nothing in terms of money value today, and the landlords are letting their property fall apart. You can't well blame them, building and repair costs being what they are.

Consider the rentals for Greek people who live on the edge of the city, with two tram or bus fares each way. For two rooms with a kitchen and bath in an apartment house, the price is about \$70. The same space in a private house, which means sharing both bathroom and kitchen, costs about \$50 a month. But this is the joke—the tenant must pay rent for six months or a year in advance! The rents must be paid from meager salaries. This article is being written at the time of the strike of government employees in the city of Athens.



A "street" in Dourghouti from which one can see the elevation of the Acropolis. Epidemics are kept down by a liberal use of lime once every week.

They maintain that they cannot bring up their families on \$1.20 to \$2 a day.

The visitor really should go to the outskirts of Athens if he wants to see "housing". On every side of the city it is possible to find what are still called refugee camps, though they have been there since 1922 or so. That was the year when thousands and thousands of men, women, and children came to Greece from Turkey. Greece did a wonderful job of absorbing these people without too much friction, but Greece has never been able to afford to take the proper care of them.

Dourghouti, still almost entirely Armenian, is one such "camp". The whole village (I call it this, although it is a part of Athens) is built along streets like those pictured. There are little plaster houses, many of them without floors. The fact that the streets are unpaved makes it possible to use them as open sewers, and many have what seem like small sluggish brooks flowing down the middle, where the children play on their way to school. Recently, a good public latrine was built by a foreign relief organization, but it cannot possibly meet the entire need, and the "brook" probably will still flow on. Such a camp has its picturesque value—if you don't see how the people live.

## THE COVER

Goats quenching their thirst from an old-style watering bag near one of the water wells dug by the Arabian American Oil Company in northern Saudi Arabia. Photo by Corsini for Aramco.



One of many open sewers in the narrow streets of Dourghouti, the Armenian refugee camp, only 10 minutes from beautiful Constitution Square.

Students of the American College for Girls, Istanbul, were photographed with President Inon of Turkey in Ankara recently while on a spring vacation tour.



In honor of the memory of Dr. Alexander MacLaughlin, founder and for 35 years president of International College, the Board of Trustees, alumni and former teachers are being invited to contribute to a fund to purchase a plaque to be placed on an International College building at Beirut, Lebanon. Gifts may be addressed to the Trustees of International College, 46 Cedar St., N. Y. 5.

TO HONOR MacLAUGHLIN

In the beginning of the season large quantities of quail are found near Istanbul. Bags of 40 are not unusual. Turkish quail is about one-half the size of the American. Quail last through October. The woodcock season begins in November. Called "chulluk" by the Turks, the local woodcock runs about two and half times the size of the bird so-named by American hunters. Pheasants begin to appear in November, but in regions not too close to Istanbul.

Belgrade forest about 12 miles north of Istanbul.

Open season for all game birds starts in August and runs through February—no bag limits. Hunters must have licenses, easily obtained through the police department which issues a vesika (police card) with 4 photos, upon payment of 2½ Turkish lira (about 87¢), and the registering of the serial numbers of guns. Woodcock are found near Pinarci, near Yeshilkoy airport, about 5 miles west of Istanbul; also in the

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## American Near East Society Bulletin

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Photo by Corsini for Aramco.

What is it? For the answer see page four.

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