

and staring at the clean, white town that went straggling up the hills in a childish attempt to cover the naked sides of the verdureless mountains.

"They raise silk worms and manufacture silk," answered the ship's doctor; "don't you see the mulberry trees off yonder?"

The clamor of the watermen cut off further conversation. The silk factory buildings were all one story in height and covered considerable space. They were either of white stone or of stucco whitewashed, with frame sheds and extensions in the rear. We entered a sort of low vestibule with a dirt floor. Two women were seated at what looked very like an old spinning wheel such as figures in modern boudoirs, but the wheel was much larger and it had a longer and clumsy foot treadle that was little more than a rough board. The two women were winding raw silk around the wheel. Both were barefoot. The older woman—a veritable hag—had her foot on the treadle and was winding the rich yellow skein over the wheel. The younger of the two, who still had traces of youth and beauty, was deftly throwing the raw silk with her misshapen hands. These women, if skilled and rapid, can earn a drachma a day—a long day it is, from six o'clock in the morning to seven in the evening. The drachma is worth a few centimes more than a franc. They glanced up at us curiously for an instant, but did not allow their pace to slacken nor hands or feet to be lifted from the task that their eyes had for a moment forsaken. The boss was with us.

The manager led us into an anteroom well paved with a stone floor, where another old woman was busily picking over and sorting cocoons from a great pile that she dumped from sacks upon the stone floor. She seemed stolidly pleased to see us, and at a sign from the boss presented us each with one or two of the fluffy, creamy cocoons.

Thence we passed into a long, low apartment where clouds of hot steam made the warm air, that had been dry and not unpleasant out of doors, insufferably humid within. Here young women and little children were at work be-

Some Greek Children

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A day in port while the ship was unloading and reshipping cargo, with nothing to do but do the town, and a Greek town at that—Kalamata.

"What do they get busy about here?" I asked the doctor who was loafing on deck as we crawled up the harbor and inside the breakwater. The doctor was affable and tolerated bad French. We were both leaning over the starboard rail

fore long elevated gutters or troughs of steaming hot water where the cocoons lay soaking. Into the hot water they thrust their hands and drew out, clinging to their fingers, the fine threads of released silk, which they deftly separated or drew together and threw quickly over revolving spools, first catching them through tiny hooks or loops of metal. The finer part of this work was done by women. The children, for the most part, used coarse brushes that resembled bundles of fine twigs, with which they tickled and teased the steaming cocoons. They also fed the cocoons to the troughs, and distributed them evenly throughout the length of the gutters to the older girls and women.

And what very young children they were! Many of them appeared to be under ten, and twelve would have been an average age. Some little tots of seven and eight quit work entirely to watch us, strangers and foreigners, and had to be sharply ordered back to duty. Some of them had old, queer faces, and all had the strange, big eyes that recall the reproductions of the ancient Greek burial pictures done in colored wax.

There were small boys, too,—little gamins carrying spools, sweeping up the floors, assisting the girls. Some of them were stunted and deformed, some looked like dwarfs, with large heads and spindly limbs. They didn't seem boylike or careless; they were all too careful and too mindful of what they were doing. I could not speak to them for they would not have understood me.

"Don't you have any child labor laws in Greece?" I asked the manager. He smiled in a very amused sort of way and looked me over quizzically.

"No," he replied, as the smile broadened, "we have no such laws here."

"How much do these boys earn?" I queried.

"You are an American, are you not?" he rejoined, and on my nodding affirmatively, he added:

"It would amount to about five cents a day in your money."

"And how long is the day?"

"From six in the morning to seven at night."

The back yard through which we passed next was foul and unsanitary. A dozen of the less busy children crowded to the door to see the last of us as we passed out of that long apartment. Their eyes were strangely wondering and haunt me now. I was glad to come away.

In Athens, when they showed me the palace of the king, they told me that his majesty spent most of his time at some distant European watering place and took little interest in the internal affairs of his impoverished kingdom. I wondered if he had ever been over the Kalamata silk factories.

Our carriage stopped before an old iron grilled gate that opened on the central garden court round which was built an ancient villa of aristocratic appearance. It was a school for boys. The wife of the French postal official had brought us to call on an old acquaintance who had taken orders and become a teaching brother. Although plain of feature, he had a genuinely fine countenance that was framed in sandy hair, untoussured, with a most unusual square-cut red beard, and reminded me of one of Albrecht Durer's old German saints. He started in to tell us of his school and his boys. He had come near losing one of his seniors. He had entrusted the boy with a bag of money for a distant mission station in the Macedonian mountains and had sent him off on horseback with a trusty guide. But a band of Greek robbers had carried off both boy and money. The money he never recovered, and only after a weary search and an exasperating importuning of the Turkish authorities was the young man restored to his preceptor. The guide had been shot. What between roving Greeks, pillaging Bulgarians, and oppressive Turkish taskmasters, he explained, poor Macedonia was in a sorry plight, and the terrorized peasants were one day swearing allegiance to Greece, the next to Bulgaria, and the third thrown into a Turkish prison.

Then he took us over his school. The boys were at work in the class-rooms,—boys of all tongues and nationalities, a few English and French pupils mixed

in with Macedonians, Greeks and Jews. There were classes in mathematics, physiology and physics, Latin, French and English. Each class was presided over by a kindly faced, patient, dignified, black-robed brother, and their pupils had generally a more studious look than has the average American school boy. One of them was preparing to go to America, his teacher said, and was learning English. It was an ancient house, our host informed us, and had belonged to a very rich citizen of Salonica who had died and

left his villa, with a handsome endowment, to the cause of Catholic education.

The sun was setting when we sailed out of the harbor of Salonica, whose slender white minarets were like so many ghostly fingers against the purple mountains pointing skyward. Surrounded by that wonderful Levantine color scheme, I wanted to devise some equally surprising but yet harmonious plan by which the silk factory children of Kalamata might be at the school of the good French brothers of Salonica.