

THE  
BURTON HOLMES  
LECTURES



OLYMPIAN GAMES  
GRECIAN JOURNEY  
THE WONDERS OF  
THESSALY





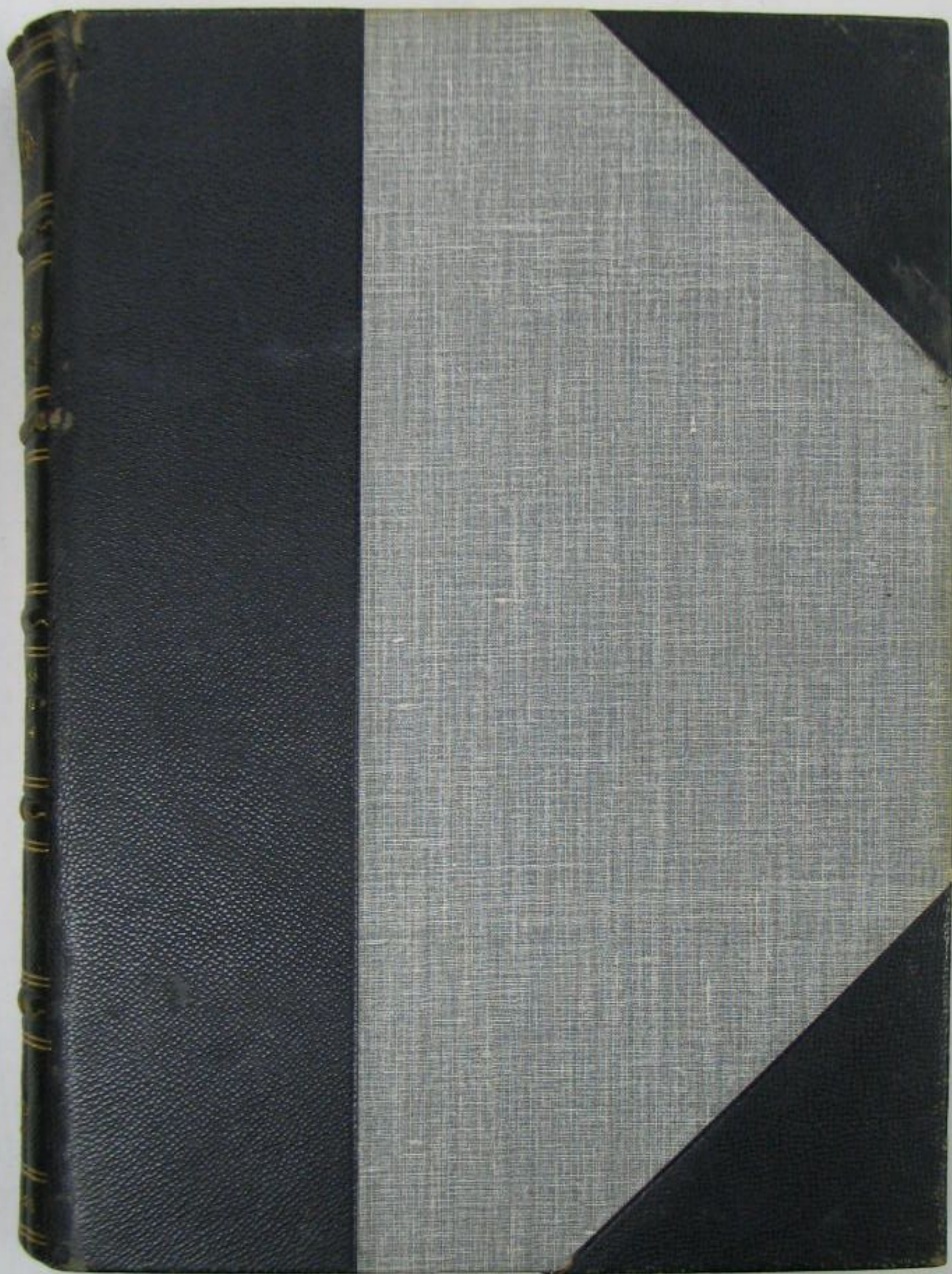
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Volume 163







# SUNSET ACROPOLIS



THE  
BURTON HOLMES  
LECTURES

*With Illustrations from Photographs*

*By the Author*



COMPLETE IN TEN VOLUMES  
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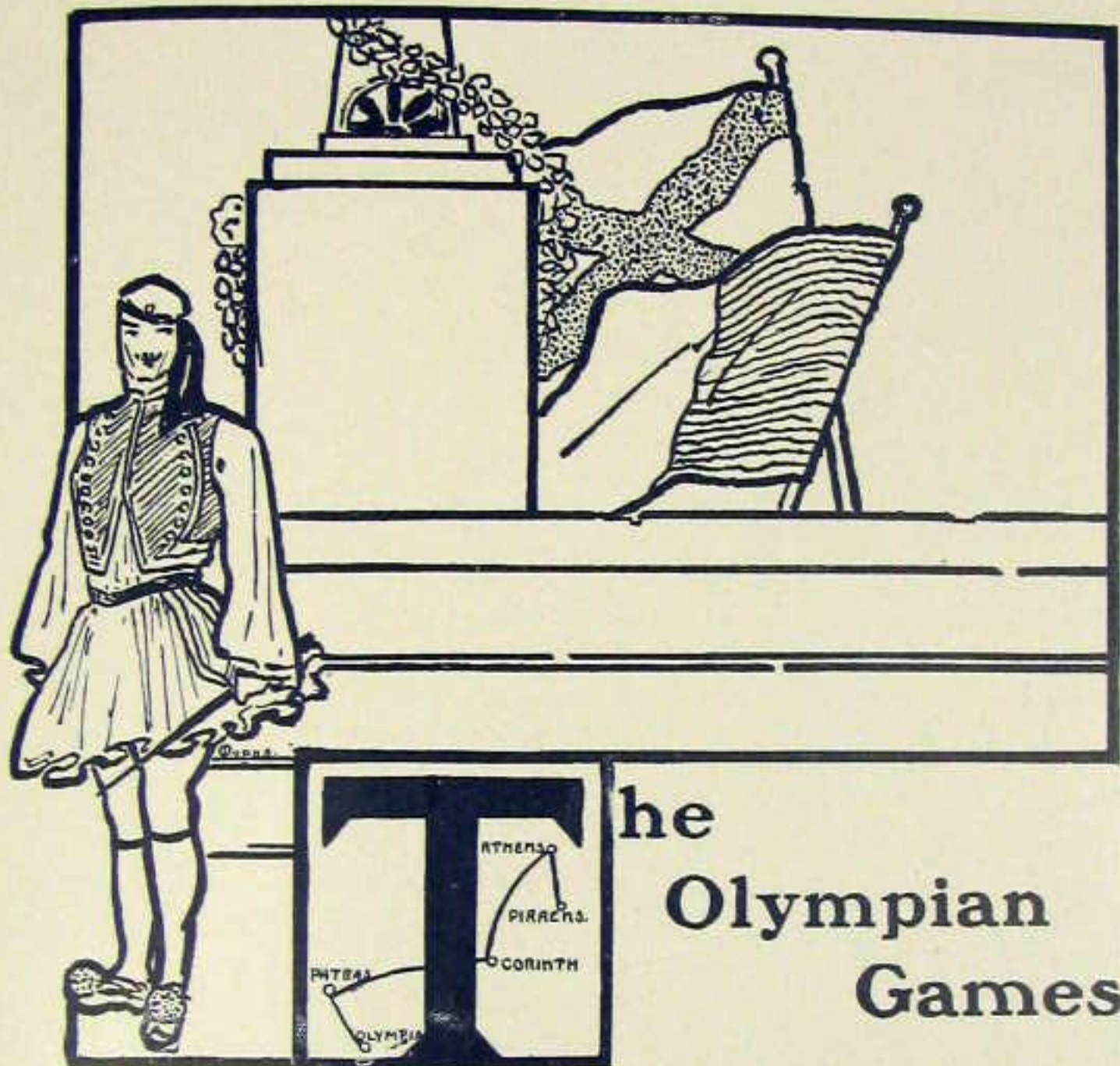


THE OLYMPIAN GAMES IN ATHENS









## The Olympian Games

IT IS a mistaken belief that he who knows not ancient Greece, as revealed in the immortal works of poetry, philosophy, and art, he who has not spent his life in the companionship of the Greek classics, he who cannot in his own soul realize the Greece of old, is not fitted to approach her shores. The Olympian Games were the excuse for my intrusion into the land of the scholar and the archæologist. I knew too well that I would bring to Greece only a love of travel, an eye not wholly blind to beauty, and a deep respect for the history, the letters, and the art of Greece.



While to the student of antiquity Greece offers a larger reward than to any other ; for every one she has gifts according to the worth of his mental capacities, and even upon him who, empty-handed, humbly bows before her, she bestows an ample recompense — the power to appreciate and to enjoy her natural charm. Let no one therefore hesitate to visit Greece. Pallas Athene is no longer stern ; she asks of the children of the present century, not that they sacrifice to her upon the altar of unceasing study, but only that they bring to her hearts rightly turned, eyes alive to form and color, souls in which dwells the love of loveliness. She asks no more than that which almost every one of us can offer.



ON THE ADRIATIC





AN ALBANIAN PORT

Let us, then, without a classical dictionary, without our Homer or our Plato, set forth upon a strictly modern Odyssey.

The shortest way to Greece is from New York to Naples by the Mediterranean route, thence across smiling Italy to Brindisi, and thence in steamers of the American Lloyds to Patras on the western coast of Greece. In nine days we reach Gibraltar, three days later we are in the busy streets of Naples, next night upon the quay of Brindisi, whence we are to cross the Adriatic. And it was with supreme satisfaction that I found myself on the waters of that Adriatic Sea, on which, six years before, I had looked so wistfully from the Venetian towers.



East of Italy I had never been before ; the land which lay before me possessed that charm which ever hovers over the unknown. In the early morning we sight the Albanian coast, still held by the Turk. For hours we steam southward, a wall of barren mountains, grim and cold, upon our left. The land looks desolate and uninhabited, but later our steamer enters a little bay and anchors at a Turkish port, a desolate pile of ruins, near which rise a few new buildings and a custom-house. Albanian shepherds now embark. They introduce us to the Orient. We now feel that our journey has in reality begun. We now for the first time hear Turkish dialects ; while the speech of modern Greece also falls on our ears like a sweet though distorted echo from the past. But



ALBANIANS



we still hear the languages of the Occident — French, Italian, and English. An interesting specimen of Hellenized English may be found in the cabin of the steamer. The rules and regulations are printed in four languages. The following are extracts from the column intended for the edification of English-speaking passengers: "It is prohibited to any



THE ARCHIMANDRITE

passenger to meddle with the command and direction of the vessel, the Captain being the only responsible person." This is not very reassuring, but the awful thought that all the engineers, the sailors, and especially the cooks are irresponsible, is forgotten in our admiration of the elegance of regulation No. 12. It reads, "Passengers having a right to be treated like persons of education will no doubt conform themselves to the rules of good society by respecting their fellow-travelers and by paying a due regard to the fair sex." And then the compiler of this code of ocean ethics concludes by saying to the persons of education above referred to, "Thou shalt not go to bed with thy boots on!"

Our fellow-passengers are not less interesting. Among them is a prelate of the Greek Church — the Archimandrite of Vienna. A striking contrast of smiling youth and wrinkled age is offered by one charming little Maid of Athens — or some other place — and her grim-faced old nurse; the





A CONTRAST

two being a contrast analogous to that presented by the bleak Albanian shores upon our left and the smiling hillsides of the Ionian Isles, which, like a necklace of emeralds, seem floating past us on the right. Of our brief stop at lovely Corfu I shall not speak, the charm of the Ionian Islands, visited in leisure two months later, I reserve for another time.

Athens is now our destination.

We land at Patras, fourteen days after leaving New York. A little railway links Patras to Corinth and Athens with a chain of steel. A more enchanting railway ride than that along the Southern shores of the Corinthian Gulf I have never enjoyed. On one side the mountains of the Peloponnesus, on the other side vineyards stretching down to a gulf



A STATION



whose waters are so blue that artists hesitate to tell the truth in color, fearing the ridicule of critics who have never sailed the Grecian seas. And then beyond the waters, far in the north, rises that splendid mountain wall whose fame is immortal, for its watch-towers are named Parnassus and Helicon. Other names which have thundered down the centuries may be spelled out upon prosaic sign-boards at the railway stations. Sicyon is passed, and in a very short



APPROACHING CORINTH

time we hear the blatant shouting of the railway guards: "Corinthos, twenty-five minutes for luncheon! — Corinthos." Think of it! — railway sandwiches so near the site of ancient Corinth!

Our train, however, now rolls on toward Athens, skirting the shores of the Saronic Gulf and revealing to us glimpses of the famous islands Ægina and Salamis. "But does one travel in Greece on flat cars?" is the question that may be suggested to the reader by the illustration. Although all the



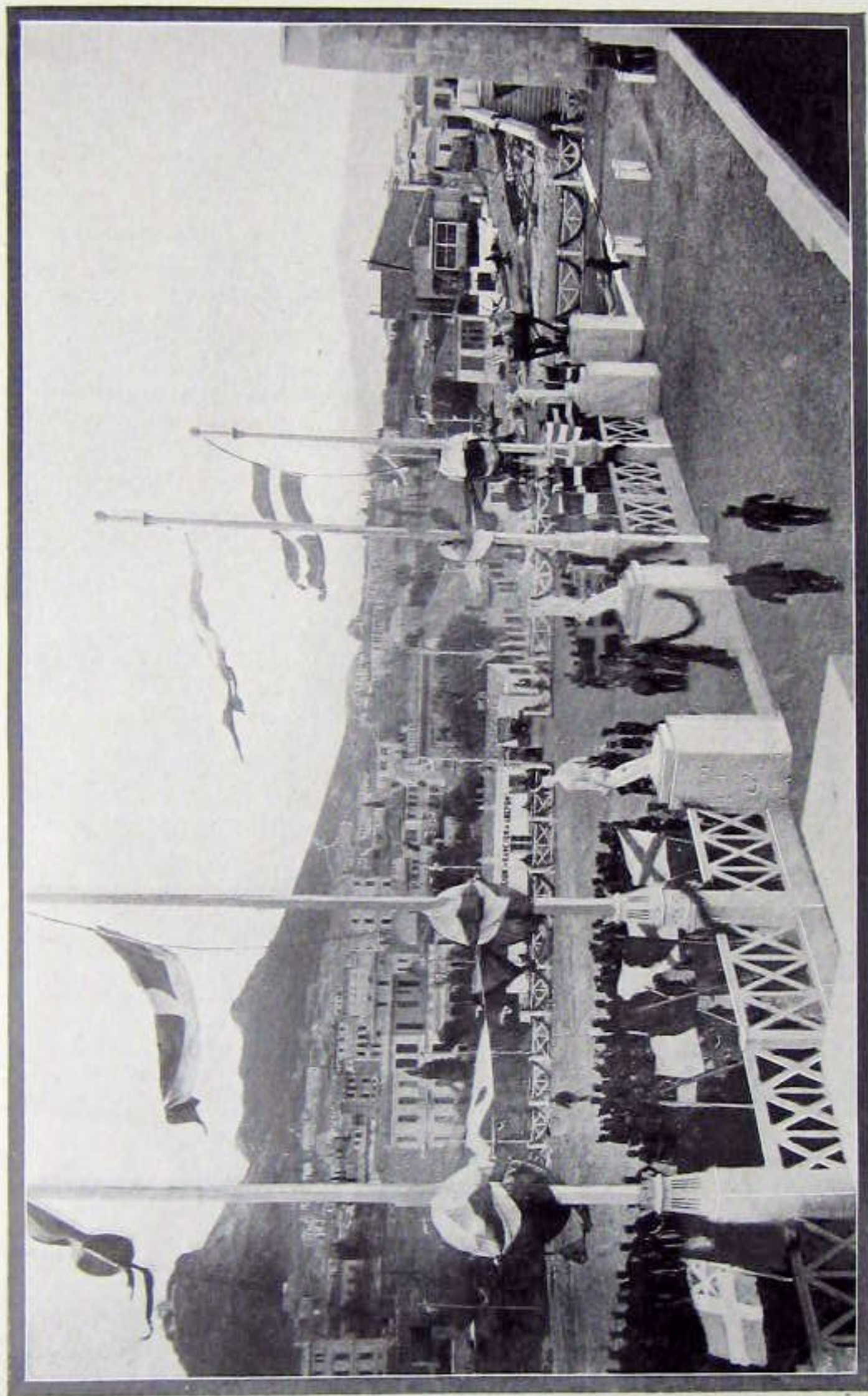
members of our party had first-class tickets, giving us the right to sit in crowded, stuffy, first-class cars, two of us resolved that we would not submit to close confinement, and during a stop at a way-station we climbed into an empty flat car, and then went trailing along through the glorious spring morning across the territory of classic Megaris. Our friends



FIVE MINUTES FOR REFRESHMENTS

look enviously on us from the tiny windows. Greek passengers smilingly point out to their companions the two eccentric foreigners on the tail-end of the train. Meantime we are enjoying the exhilaration of this flight, and losing nothing of the scenery which soon becomes imposing. But as the train begins its dizzy careening around the Skironian cliffs, a sud-





PALACE OF THE KING — ATHENS







den thunder-shower comes rolling over the jagged summits of those rocky heights, the clouds open, tons of water splash down and wash the landscape, and we have the full benefit of this unexpected shower-bath. For fifteen minutes, totally unprotected, we are relentlessly hurled on against a blinding rain. But so brief are these Greek showers and so bright and warm the sunshine which chases them away, that before we reach our destination we are rough-dried, and content in the souvenir of a diverting adventure.

An hour later we arrive in Athens. And as we drive through its modern streets, we are at the same time surprised and disappointed ; surprised to find the handsome shops,



IN MODERN ATHENS



clean pavements, fresh façades ; disappointed to observe that no reminders of the past are visible and that the inhabitants are dressed like those of any European city. But the signs above the shops, at least, are Greek ; and my companions fresh from college read with the accent of the class-room the names of tailors, milliners, and jewelers, while here and there



FROM THE HOTEL D'ANGLETERRE

we see displayed in those almost sacred Greek letters the praises of somebody's pills, of American sewing-machines, or the announcement of a bargain sale.

At a street corner is a sign in Greek and French, which tells us that this is the street of Hermes. At the upper end we see the royal palace, overlooking a large public square ; our hotel faces the palace, and also overlooks this center of Athenian life, the Place de la Constitution. Below our



windows are the tables of an open-air café, at the corner is a kiosk like those in which we buy our daily papers on the Paris Boulevards. Coquettish little tram-cars are drawn like playthings across this square by tiny horses, big enough for toys. Beyond we see the balconied façades of the Hotel de

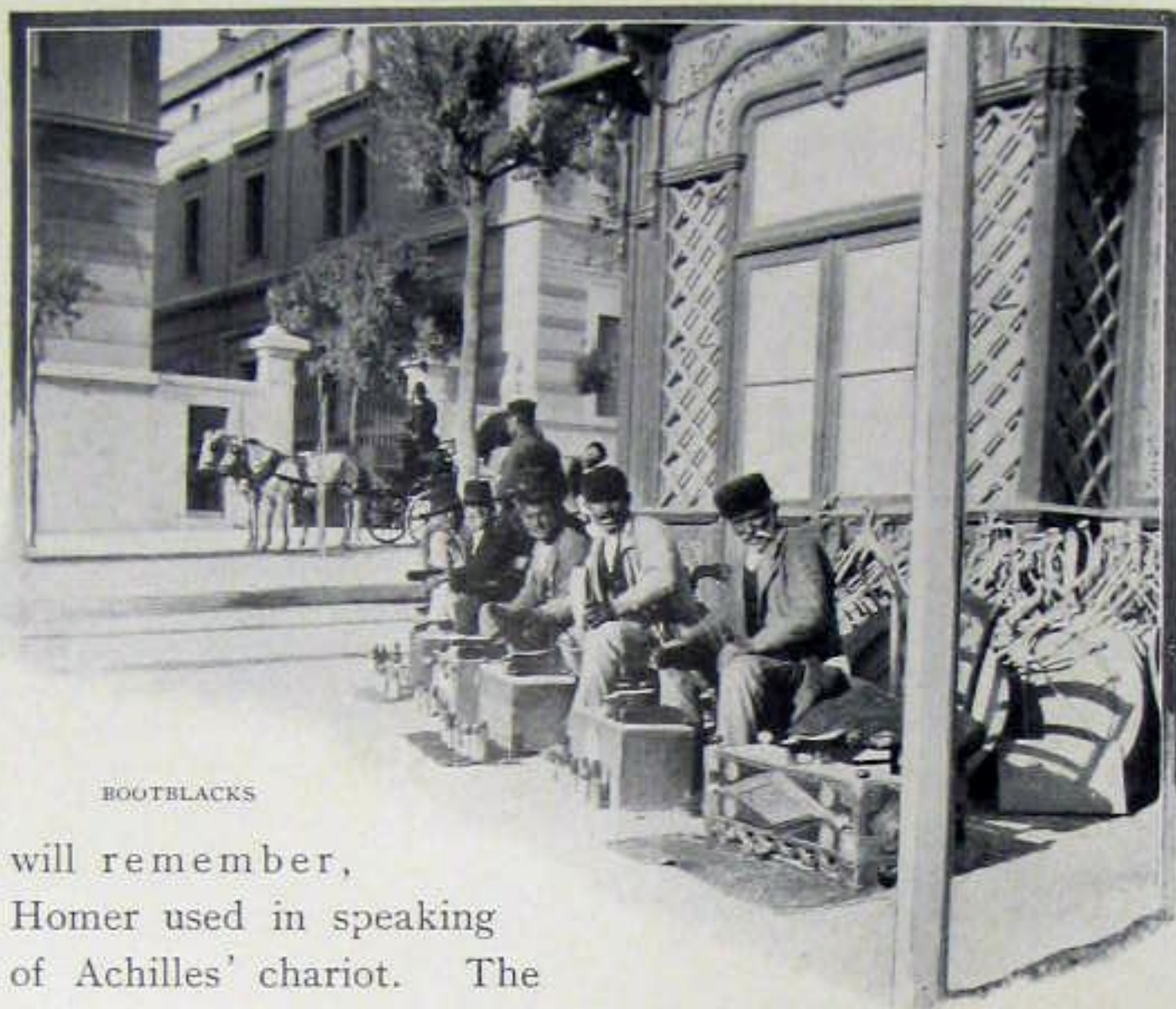


HOTEL DE LA GRANDE BRETAGNE

la Grande Bretagne, while in the distance rises the hill of Lycabettus, crowned by the little chapel of a hermit.

Great indeed is the distance between yonder hermit's abode and the café below us ; they are in spirit at least four hundred years apart. Bicycles flit through the streets, cabs and landaus are stationed at the hotel doors. The public vehicles are called even to-day " amaxa," the very word, you





BOOTBLACKS

will remember, Homer used in speaking of Achilles' chariot. The Greek, before he hires one of these, makes with the charioteer what is called a "symphony." Do not mistake my meaning. The making of a symphony requires no musical talent; it demands much firmness of character and a genius for diplomacy. Unless you make a symphony before you start, there will be a discord when you come to pay your fare.



CONSULTING BÆDEKER

Imagine a New York hackman as a party to a "symphony;" there no doubt would be a "*scherzo*," and a "*con furore*," and all the movements played "*fortissimo*."

The industry of caring for the footgear of the Athenian populace is remarkably developed. At every corner, in every square, we find a line of bootblacks, who, judging



from the magnificence of their outfits, must do a thriving business. They keep on hand all kinds of blacking, polish, oils, and dressings, and are prepared to treat every existing kind of leather from delicate patent-leather to a piece of Attic beefsteak. Nor do we wonder at the importance of their craft. For when my friend sits

down to consult his Bædeker, after our first walk through the streets of Athens, a young bootblack smiles in triumph at the condition of our recently well-polished shoes. Athenian dust is the dustiest dust in all the world. Though it may be sprinkled into momentary immobility by the municipal employees, the dust of Athens never gives up the fight. It dries and rises in the wake of sprinkling brigade, mocking their daily efforts to subdue it. Its vitality convinces us that it must be the dust of those old Greeks who never were subdued. Ere we ruin the luster imparted to our shoes, we take our places at one of the numerous cafés, and tell the waiter to bring us whatever may be the favorite drink of the Athenians. "Mastica is what you want;" and



ALLURING SMILES



SHINE

presently he returns with two big glasses, a carafe of water, and two tiny glasses filled with a clear thin liquor. Following the example of the citizens whose order was like our own, we empty the mastica into



the big glass and then pour water slowly in upon it. This produces a cloudy opalescent mixture, which to our unaccustomed palates suggests weak paregoric. But a week later I have learned to like mastica and drink of it as freely as the Greeks ; for it is not in any way injurious, and is one of the best preventatives of fever known in Greece. Of course coffee is also in great demand at these cafés ; prepared in Oriental fashion, it is thick, delicious, and far less harmful than coffee as we prepare it. The grounds lie half an inch deep in the cup after we have finished. We have sipped only the exquisite savor, the nerve-destroying element has been left undisturbed. Another luxury to be enjoyed at a Greek "cafenion" is the pistachio-nut. "Pistikia" are not served by the establishment but peddled by itinerant dealers. The nuts have been roasted, the shells are slightly parted. Opening pistachio-nuts is as fascinating an occupation as cutting the leaves of a new book, and we sit for hours prying apart the tiny shells and devouring the contents ; every now



PISTACHIO-NUTS





CAFÉS LIKE THOSE OF PARIS









GREEK SOLDIERS

and then hailing a passing vender to obtain a fresh supply. I think I ate about six thousand nuts while in Greece, and in the purchase of them learned how to bargain with a Greek. Fourteen for ten lepta — about one cent — is the usual rate; to obtain twenty for the same price requires courage and persistence. Frequently the ex-

asperated Greek offers to gamble with you. He picks up a handful, lays them on the table, and tells you to guess, "odd or even." If you win, he smiles, congratulates you, and going to another table sells pistachio-nuts for five cents apiece to a stranger newly arrived, and thus recoups his losses.

While sipping coffee and cracking pistachio-nuts, we observe the passers-by with interest. The men as a rule are dressed like the average civilized man in any land; that is, badly dressed, in the most convenient and hideous garb ever devised. The women ape Paris fashions, the officers are well-groomed, tightly laced, typical continental *militaires*. But the soldiers, at least the Evzonoi, are a delight to the eye, with their bright red fezes, long blue tassels, short embroidered jackets, *fustanellas* of innumerable pleats, and *tsarukia* of red leather with tufts of red upon the tips of the turned-up toes. One of these gorgeous warriors presumed to be amused at sight of the broad-brimmed hat with a puggaree which sheltered me from the ardent Athenian sun. I returned



A MAN AND A PIG



his smile finding the swing of his starched skirt equally mirth-provoking. My artist friend thereupon makes a little sketch to illustrate the incident, putting into my mouth the words, "Well, I don't see that people who dress themselves in lamp-shades have any call to laugh at my hat!"

Greek currency also will afford the stranger a little amusement and considerable annoyance. The modern Greek drachma is nominally a franc, twenty cents; but in the unfortunate financial condition of the country the drachma has depreciated. All the gold and silver coin of Greece

has passed out of the kingdom, and is in use upon the Continent. The paper currency alone remains, a paper drachma being worth only about twelve cents. Most of this paper is as depreciated in quality as in value, and unless carefully handled the ragged



The American in Athens.

"Well! I don't see that people who dress themselves in lamp-shades have any call to laugh at my hat!"

A JOKE BY JACOMB-HOOD

bills will fall to pieces in your fingers. In honor of the Games, a new issue of bank notes was made. The new notes come in the form of a long ribbon of fresh, crisp coupons. The American athletes used to rush into Cook's office every morning and ask, "How much to-day for a yard of drachmas?" And the clerks, consulting the latest exchange-bulletins, would measure off the Greek "greenbacks" according to the value of the French or English gold laid on the counter by the delighted purchaser, who by this operation doubled instantaneously the value of his pocket-money. But at hotels, patronized by foreigners the



bills are always made out on a gold basis. To pay a bill of a hundred francs requires almost two hundred paper drachma. Only in dealing with unsophisticated Greeks, if such there are, could we gain anything through the cheapness of Greek money. The traveler is always made to pay in francs (gold value) even for such articles or service as will be given to the native for the same number of paper drachmas. It is affirmed that if the Greek cannot get more from the stranger than would satisfy him if paid by a fellow-countryman he will refuse to sell.

Another curious point about Greek money is that there are no bank notes of the denomination of five drachma.



BUYING DRACHMAS BY THE YARD

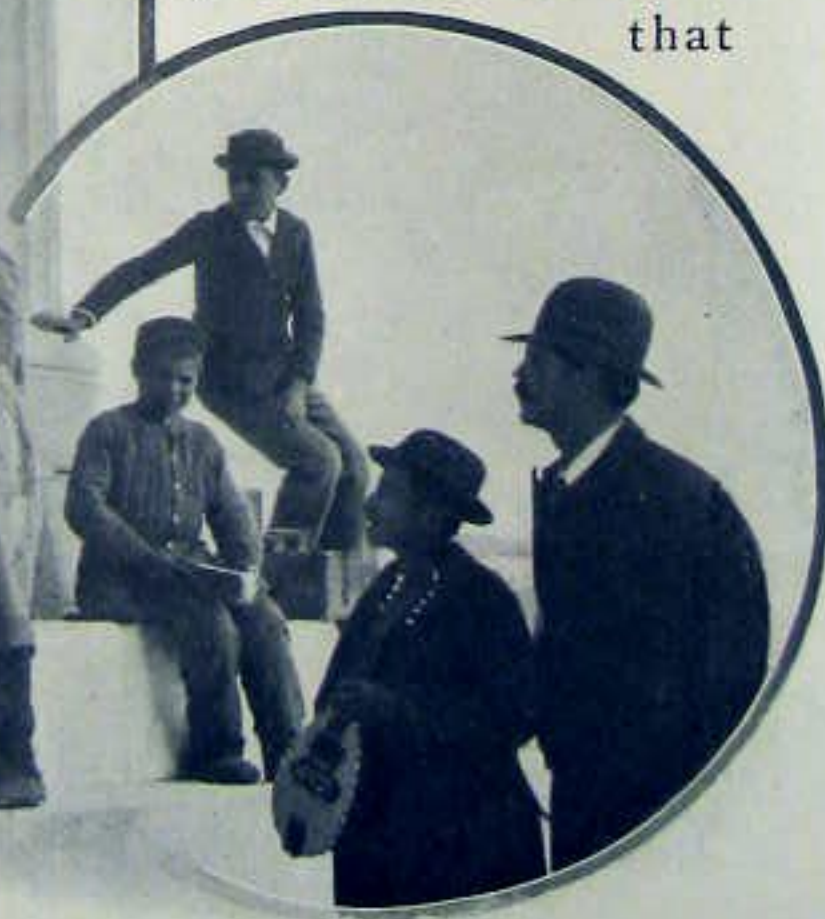


Accordingly, when one day my friend tendered a ten drachma bill in exchange for a bust of the Olympian Hermes, for which five drachmas had been asked, the youthful art-dealer calmly folded the proffered bill, tore it neatly into two equal parts, pocketed the one and handed back the other. He met our protestations with the exclamation, that half of ten was five, and that we had therefore received the proper change ; nor had we any difficulty in disposing of the mutilated half-bill. In fact, I never again saw ten drachma bills intact, for before they have been long in circulation they are cut up into fives. Many travelers object because at the big hotels the charges are not made in the money of the country. To which objection the proprietors reply that there are other hotels and restaurants where any kind of money will be welcome, and where Greek accommodations will be given for Greek money. The competition between the native establishments, called Xenodochion, and the pretentious hotels managed on French and Swiss lines is not

very keen. I think one reason why so few travelers visit the interior of Greece is that the guide-books tell them that



AN ART DEALER





the Xenodochion of Athens is the type of those which the pilgrims in the provinces will be compelled to put up with ; and we can pardon those whose enthusiasm to visit classic sites does not conquer their aversion to a bill-of-fare like the one offered by the native cuisine. Don't ask me to describe it ; the mixture which the Greek chef ladles out to hungry guests is the most impersonal thing I ever saw.

The modern Greeks, especially in cities, are abandoning their picturesque but ridiculously complicated costume in favor of that cheap, ready-made attire which is supposed to be the badge of civilization. This shoddy modern dress, invariably ill-fitting, robs them of all dignity, and successfully conceals whatever of grace and beauty they have inherited from the Greeks of other days. But if in the streets of



A PUBLIC KITCHEN



Athens we see comparatively few contrasting costumes, the most striking architectural contrasts are not wanting. We find side by side with the commonplace shops and churches of to-day, remnants of mediæval Athens in the form of Byzantine churches. One of these stands near the new cathedral. It is called the Small Metropolis, or the church of the Panagia Gorgopiko. Many fine archaic reliefs and ancient



GREEK NATIONAL DRESS

inscriptions have been built into the walls of the tiny church; it is in fact composed of the débris of antiquity. The resulting structure is most quaint and interesting, a sort of curio which ought to be kept safely in a big glass case. It is regrettable that seventy of these little gems of Byzantine architectures have already been torn down to make way for ugly modern structures.





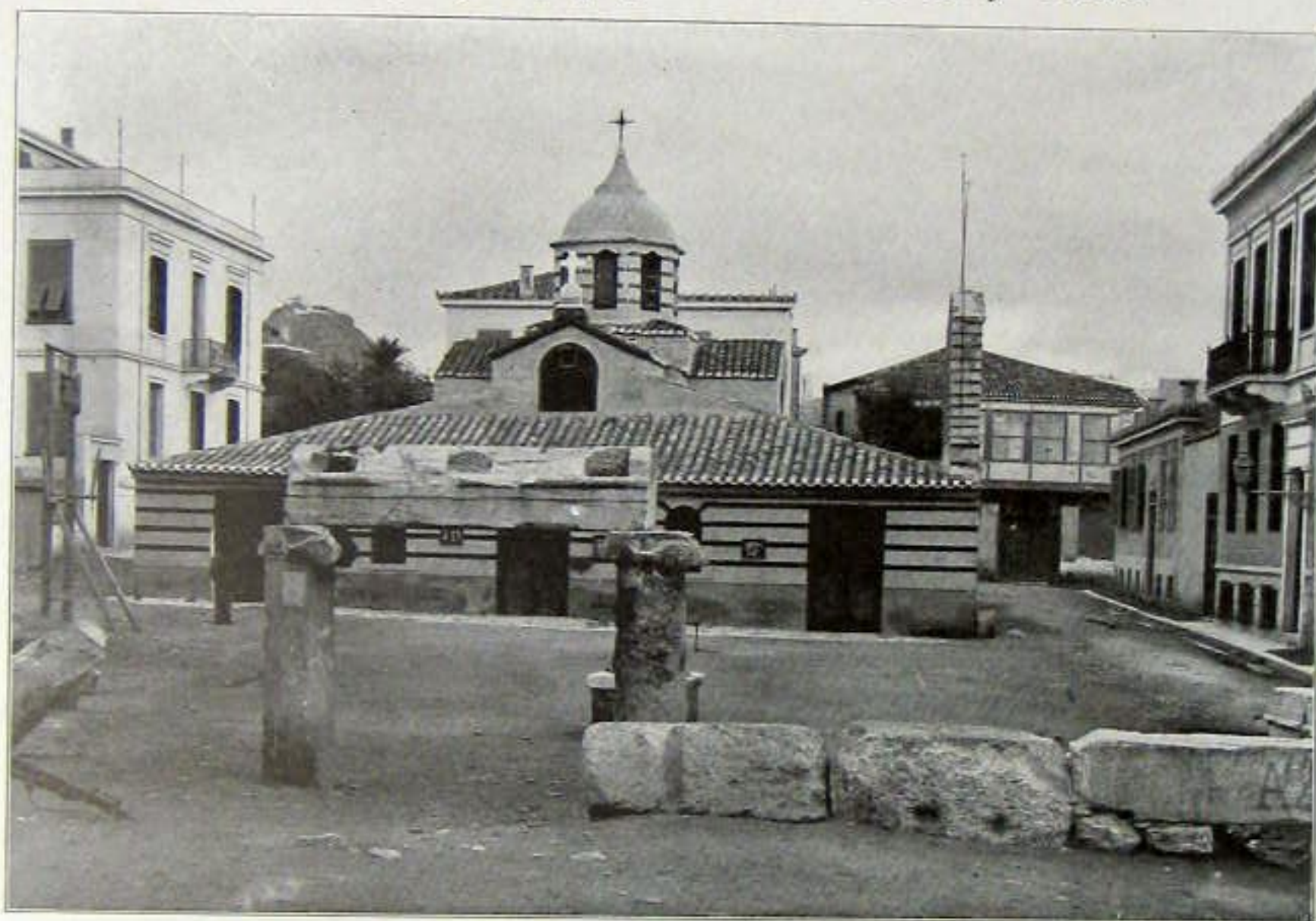
CHURCH OF THE PANAGIA GORGOPIKO







Just outside the doorway of this chapel there lies a large block of gray marble. On it is carved in Greek letters an inscription which, if authentic, and many scholars admit its authority, gives to that stone a priceless value: "This is the stone from Cana of Galilee, where Jesus Christ our Lord turned water into wine." The stone was brought to Athens long ago by pilgrims from the Holy Land.



A BYZANTINE CHURCH

This mingling of the souvenirs of far separated epochs is in many places strikingly apparent. Stately columns reared by Hadrian when Rome was mistress of the world stand like a group of minarets beside an old dilapidated mosque built by the Turk when he was striving after universal sway. Then, looking through the portico of the Moslem builder, we see a modern house erected in the reign of George the First, king of the Greeks of to-day. And, did we care further to prosecute our search, we could find structures built by the



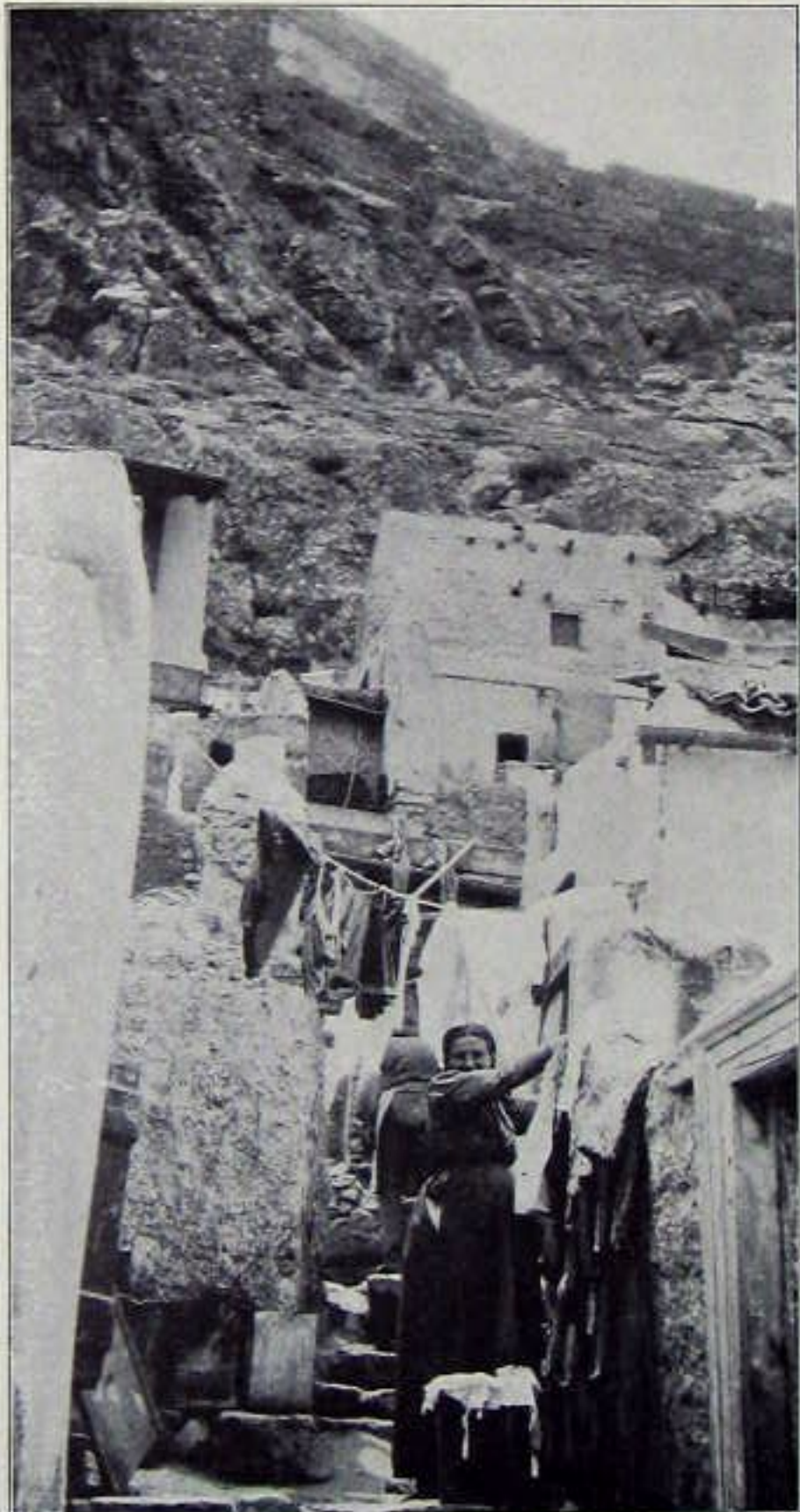
Franks and the Venetians who in turn were masters of the land, and on the slope of the Acropolis, almost within the shadow of the Parthenon, we may find a little group of dwellings so like the whitewashed houses in the native quarter of Algiers that we expect to see at every corner the flowing burnoose of an Arab Kaid. This is, however, the abode of poverty, the headquarters of the laundresses of Athens. The



BYZANTINE AND ROMAN RUINS



newly washed linen of the Athenians is hung out to dry upon the sacred slope of classic Athens. Although old Athens lodged her gods in temples of immortal grandeur, and her rich men in splendid palaces, her humble citizens and her many slaves were miserably provided for. The public life was everything, the home was but a place to sleep. Even to-day the poor Athenians make of the public thoroughfare a workshop, sleeping-room, or restaurant, according to the hour. At lunch-time many a young Pericles and Alcibiades may be seen feasting on bread and jam upon the public curb; and while discoursing upon sweet things I must not fail to speak a word in praise of the celebrated honey of Hymettos which is served us every morning, and it is indeed delicious. The classic bees of Mt. Hymettos, have, it is said, now emigrated to another height, but, perhaps because the honey is so sticky, the old name adheres to it. Another very curious feature of our Athenian breakfasts is the fresh butter, which at first we do not dare to taste, but



ON THE SLOPE OF THE ACROPOLIS



which upon acquaintance we soon learn to relish. It is almost pure white, its consistency is that of whipped cream, and sometimes we are obliged, bidding defiance to table etiquette, to dip up and spread the butter with a spoon.

Midnight and midday are in Athens alike in one respect: the streets and squares are deserted at the stroke of twelve, be it by day or night, for at noon as well as at midnight Athens sleeps. It

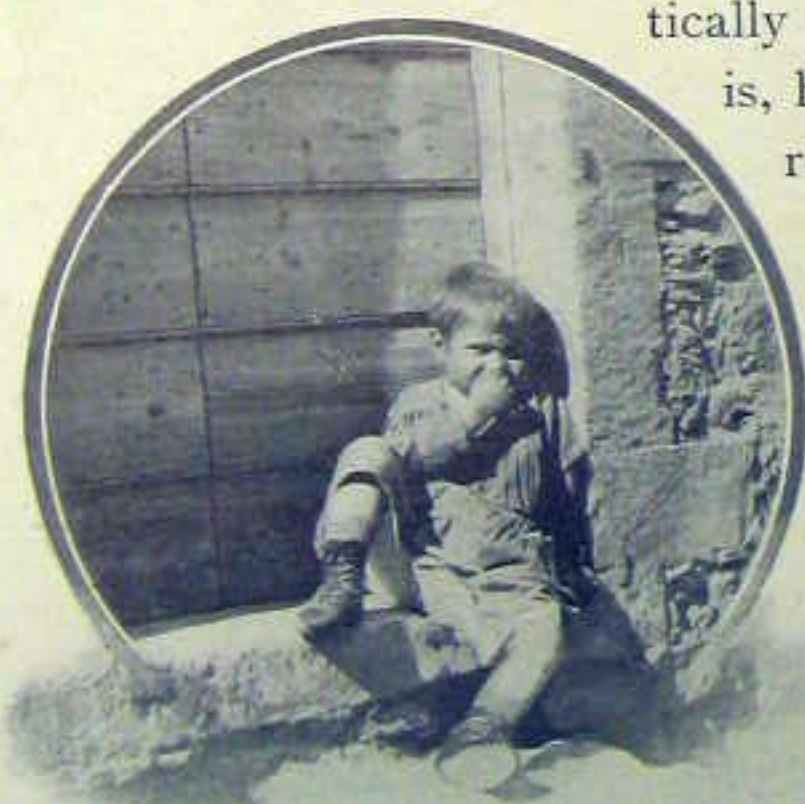


HAPPY

is said that save foreigners and dogs no one ever ventures out when the sun is high. Athenian humanity, having lunched, apparently ceases to exist until the shadows have grown long again, until the magic light of the early evening has banished all that glaring ugliness which at high noon descends upon the city. For it must be said that modern Athens illuminated by the crude vertical rays of the noon-day sun is positively ugly and repellent. There is prac-

tically no shade in Athens proper. There

is, however, behind the palace a lovely royal garden where shrubs and flowers and grass and all kinds of fresh green things are shielded from Apollo's burning arrows by masses of rich foliage. Nor is this garden, doubly delicious because it is unique in Athens, reserved for selfish enjoyment by the royal family. Three afternoons in every week the garden gates are thrown open that all Athens





may for the nonce forget its arid Attic surroundings in the purple gloom of the wistaria arbors. This garden is the most expensive luxury in Greece, for it has been created, as it were, from the Attic desert. Water and vegetable soil are scarcities



AN ATHENIAN HOME

in Athens, and vast sums were spent here by the Bavarian King, Otho, to please his queen Amalie, who longed for shade and verdure which before her time did not exist in Athens.

And as we linger here there naturally rises before us the face of him who rules the destinies of Greece to-day, George





KING GEORGE

he had unwisely taken. King George, although a man of peace, has endowed Greece with more territory than many a famous conqueror. Some thirty-three years ago he came from his home in the far north bringing to the nation that had itself chosen him as king, a royal gift—the deeds by which Great Britain transferred to the new kingdom the seven beautiful Ionian Islands which

the First, King of the Hellenes. He is a Danish Prince, son of the King of Denmark, and brother to Queen Alexandra of England. In 1863, he was called to fill the throne left vacant by King Otho, the unpopular German Prince who had been selected by an International Congress to rule the Greeks, but who, after a reign of about thirty years, was invited to extend indefinitely the vacation which



QUEEN OLGA



the English had long before taken from the Turk. Greece being delivered from Moslem conquerors, Great Britain gracefully returned the islands which by her occupation she had preserved from ruin. Queen Olga, consort of King George, was a Russian princess. Under the sway of this royal pair who came to Greece, the southernmost of European countries, from two lands which lie in the farthest north, the nation has, in spite of her misfortunes, steadily progressed.

King George at his coronation said, "I wish to make of Greece the model kingdom of the Orient." This he has in a



IN THE ROYAL GARDEN





TRICOUPIS

created and improved the ports of commerce, built light-houses on the dangerous coasts, dressed up the soldiers in new uniforms with brightly polished buttons. He has decreed that the Greek navy shall no longer maneuver on land, and that the Greek cavalry shall not march on foot."

And these good works were much approved of by the people. Shepherds from Arcadia and tillers of

certain measure accomplished. The brigands, at one time the scourge of Greece, are now plying their trade on the other side of the Turkish border, and life and property are to-day no safer in Denmark than they are in Greece. Much credit for the progress made by Greece is due to the Prime Minister, Tricoupis, of whom a French writer has said: "He has multiplied the railways and highroads,



PRINCE CONSTANTINE





IN THE ROYAL GARDEN







the soil from Thessaly looked admiringly on their torpedo-boats and men-of-war, on the brisk regiments of the spick-and-span new army and cried, "Zito, Tricoupis!" But when they were asked to pay for these little luxuries they viewed them in another light. The tide of public favor turned against the man whose life-endeavor was to place Greece in the front rank of nations. The suffrages of a people who expected



A NEW PALACE

him to produce revenues without imposing taxes, drove him into retirement and broke his heart. He died in France, of disappointment, they say, a few days after the Olympian Games had been brought to a triumphant termination.

But we have come to Athens, not to discuss political economy, but to attend the Olympian Festival of 1896.

In April, 1896, Athens invited the world to join in a revival of the Olympian Games which had been the glory



and the pride of Ancient Greece. To understand the full significance of this modern festival we should know something of the Olympic Games of antiquity. The old Olympic Festival was never held in Athens. The Attic city had her athletic festivals, the Panathenaic Games, but the great national games were held at Olympia, a sacred place near the western coast of Greece. The site of Olympia had been buried beneath the sands of time until archæologists from Germany uncovered the wreck of its temples, stadia, theaters, and treasure-houses, eloquent reminders of a heroic past. To-day we may travel thither in modern railway cars and look upon the ruins of its temples and the shattered remnants of its mul-  
titude of statues.







HERMES







A modern hotel caters to the comfort of the traveler, a little museum offers him a feast of beauty. Supreme among the treasures of the museum of Olympia is the most perfect male figure that has come to us from the artistic past, the Hermes of Praxiteles. Authorities agree that Olympia was not a city of importance, being rather an assemblage of shrines and temples, a place to which all Greece repaired once in four



Photograph by Wm. H. Rau

HOTEL AND MUSEUM AT OLYMPIA

years to worship the Greek gods and to attend the games here celebrated in honor of Zeus, the deity better known to us as Jupiter Olympus. Olympia was not the dwelling-place of Zeus; the father of the gods held his court on the crest of Mt. Olympus far away in Thessaly. But it was at Olympia that Zeus was honored by the celebration of the games, of which the festival of 1896 is a revival. The first recorded games, those of 776 B. C., when first the measurement of



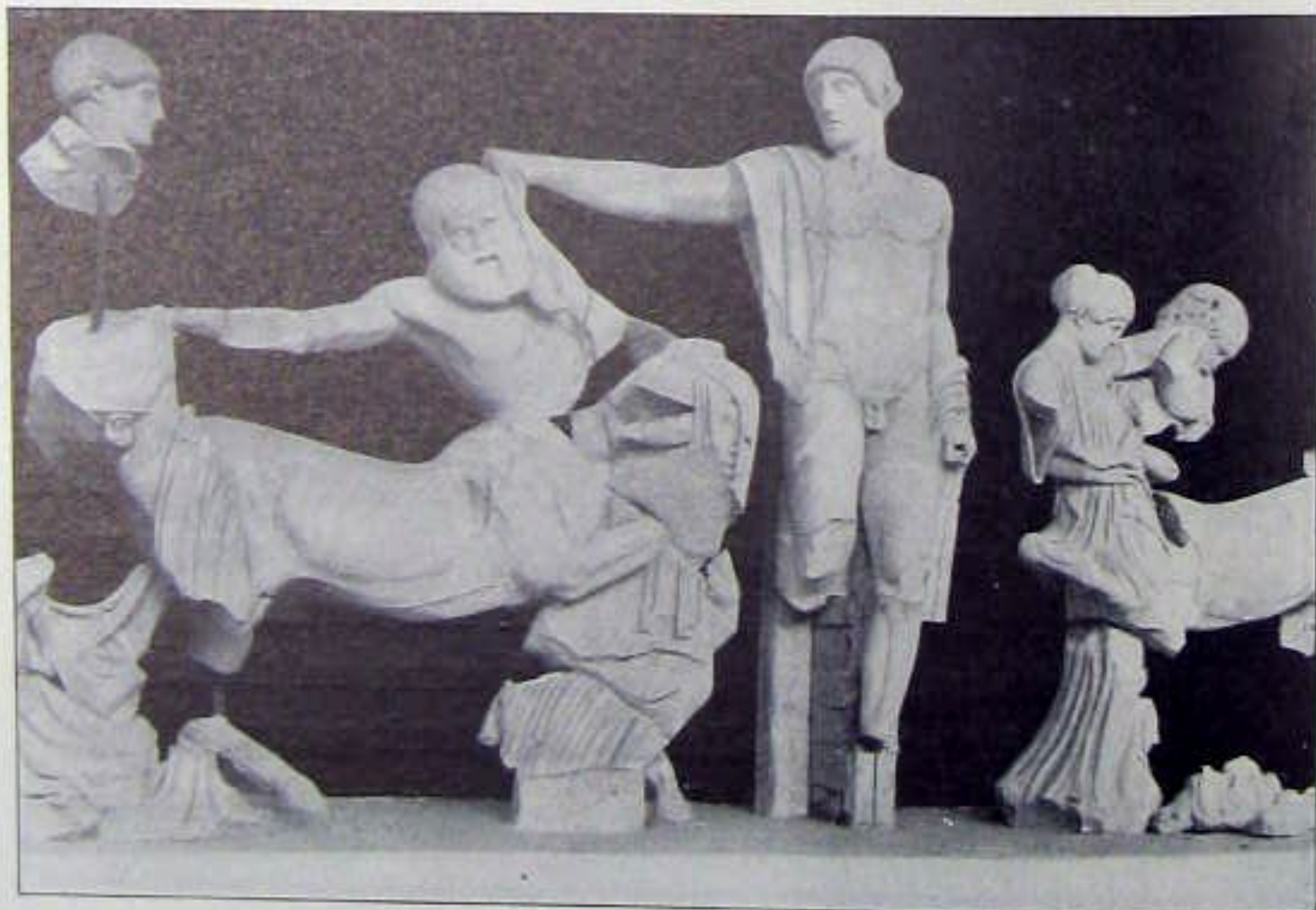
time by Olympiads was begun, were but a revival of still more ancient observances, the origin of which has been ascribed to Hercules.

As we look upon the sculptured gods and men who on the pediment of Olympia's great temple were actually seen, admired, and praised by almost every great Greek who ever lived, our thoughts go back to those old games, and we long to see the athletes, the spectators, and the pilgrims on whom these images of stone looked down. Yet these stones were new when the games were already a long established institution, for Homer describes many of the contests which



RESTORATION OF A VICTORY, OLYMPIA

are known to have figured in the Olympic Games. Some of these are pictured in the Egyptian wall-paintings which



FROM THE OLYMPIAN TEMPLES



are two thousand years older than the earliest recorded games. The ancient games were exclusively Hellenic in character, to be of pure Greek blood was essential in contestants.

The season for the festival, like the Christian Easter, is dependent upon the moon. The games were held between the new and full moon nearest to the summer solstice, that is, late in June or early in July. The sacred month, or

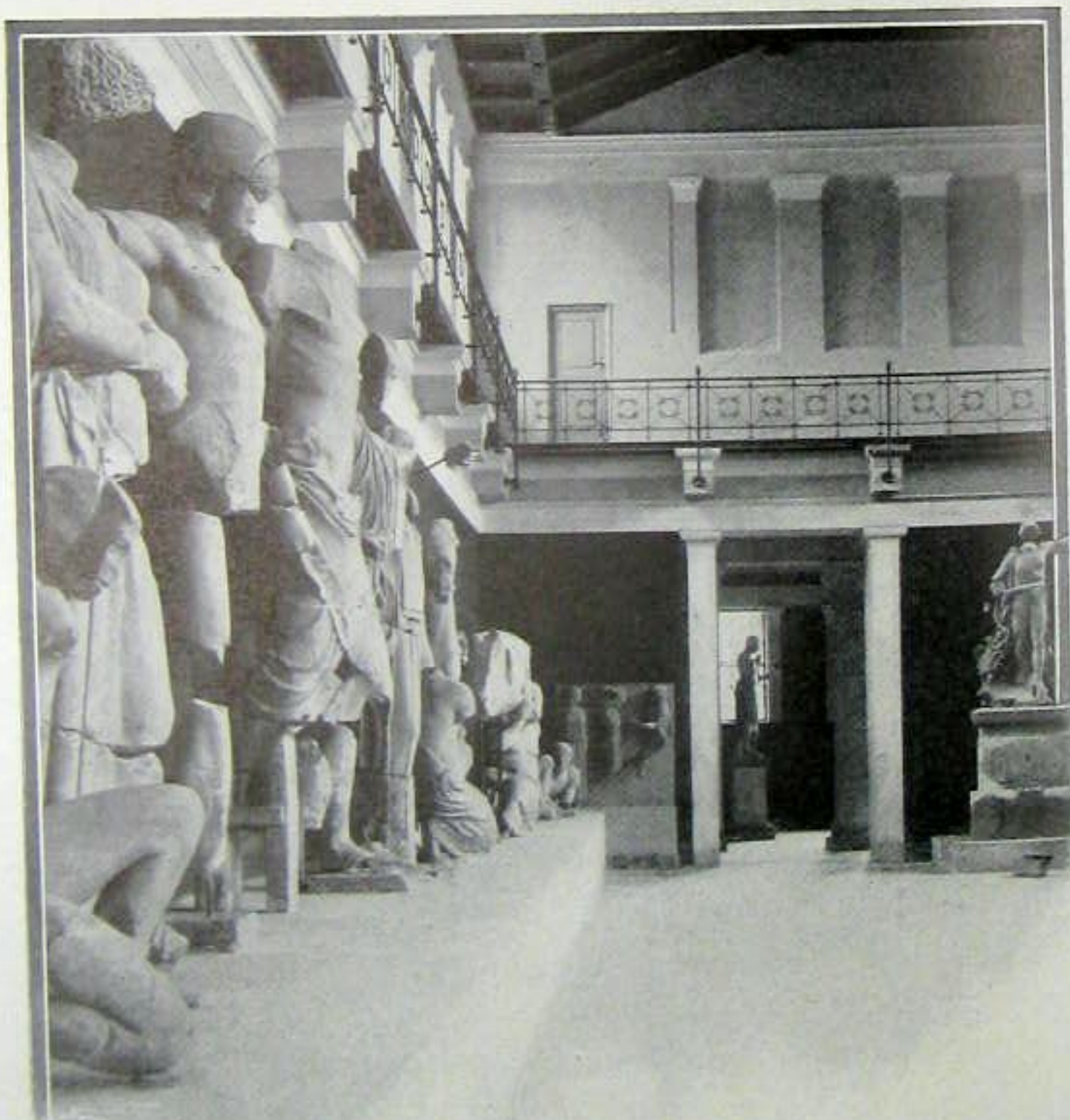


FROM THE PEDIMENT OF AN OLYMPIAN TEMPLE

Hieromenia, began with the new moon. A truce was then proclaimed throughout the Hellenic world; warring states withdrew their armies from the field and sent their athletes to meet, in friendly trials of strength, the youth of other states with which they had just been at war, the warriors with whom they would again contend upon the field of blood after the sacred month had closed. No armed men could enter the territory of Elis. Pilgrims to Olympia were protected by the most stringent measures. Those who assaulted them



were fined, and, worst of punishments, excluded from the temples, and denied the right of witnessing the games. When the old astronomers had determined the precise date of the festival, the proclamation of the games was made, and heralds of peace were sent to the remotest corners of the Grecian world to announce that the lists were open, to invite all freeborn Greeks to enter for the contests, and, most important of all, to bid those who were at war to desist from the struggle until the great Pan-Hellenic festival in honor of the Father of Gods and Men had been duly celebrated.







TO THE STADIUM







One herald traveled northward to the shores of the Black Sea, another sailed away to Asia Minor and the intervening islands and thence to Syria and Egypt; a third was sent into the West to the people of the Greater Greece, of Sicily and Gaul and Spain. From all these lands to which went the heralds, came athletes, pilgrims, and spectators, to throng



ENTRANCE FOR THE PUBLIC

Olympia's courts and theaters, which for four long years had been deserted save by that marvelous population of marble statues of which the ancient writers speak in words of glowing admiration. Even the mutilated marbles which have come down to us attest the justice of that admiration. The treasures of Greece are not of gold or silver; these she lacks; her



treasure is of marble. The Olympian Hermes, that masterpiece of the great epoch of Greek sculpture, is the most precious statue in the world to-day. Every year hundreds of travelers come to Olympia merely to look upon that perfect form. Put all the other discoveries at Olympia in one scale, the Hermes in the other, and it will outweigh them all in the estimation of the cultivated world. And not only were gods honored with statues at Olympia, the victors in the games were likewise carved in statues; but of that vast sculptured army of Olympian victors few traces now remain. Their deeds, however, are recorded in undying verse, for Pindar



ENTRANCE FOR THE ATHLETES





APOXYOMENOS—VATICAN MUSEUM.







wrote and sang of them. The name of the chief victor was given to the Olympiad or period of four years which ensued.

The feats performed by the Olympianikés of old have been recorded by the story-tellers of antiquity.

One, Milo, was so strong, especially in wrist and hands, that no one could bend or even move his little finger when he held it rigid. Another, Melamcomas, stood during two entire days with arms outstretched. Another, Polydamas, if we are to believe the evidence of tradition, could with one hand arrest the mad career of a four-horse chariot.



THE STADIUM



The old boxing-gloves would make a modern prize-fighter pale with terror. They were of leather, studded copiously with knobs and plates of metal. We are told that the short-distance runners "ran so fast as to be invisible," and this upon a sandy track.

Great honors were the reward of him who conquered in the lists: His native city became famous through his victory; on his return the enthusiastic inhabitants tore down a portion of the city wall that he might not be forced to enter at the gate used by common mortals. Ay, those were glorious days for Greece, those twelve long centuries during which two hundred and ninety-three Olympiads succeeded one another! But these Pagan festivals were destined to be engulfed by the rising tide of Christianity, for in the fourth century after Christ, the Roman Emperor Theodosius, thinking to crush Paganism by abolishing Pagan rites, decreed that



ATHENIAN MULTITUDES





ENTRY OF THE KING AND ROYAL PARTY

no more games should be celebrated in honor of the old Greek god. And his mandate held good for fifteen centuries. During the long dark ages of slavery to Vandal, Venetian, Frank, or Turk, the Greeks forgot their ancient gods and their ancient games. The temples and stadia were destroyed, the marble deities and athletes slept amid the ruins until a recent yesterday, when they were brought to light through the enterprise of foreign archæologists. But to the Greeks themselves is due the credit of the revival of the Olympian Games.

Well may the Athenians exclaim, "Ay, it is living Greece once more!" as they throng into the restored Stadium, where in the presence of a Christian multitude a Christian monarch annuls the Imperial decree of fifteen centuries ago and inaugurates the first Olympiad of modern times. The nations of the world have been invited to take part, and gladly has the invitation been accepted. The Greeks have performed miracles of generosity and self-denial to insure a successful issue of this ambitious fête. The grand old



Stadium, non-existent for long centuries, was restored at the expense of one man, a modern Cræsus—a Greek of Alexandria, whose name, Giorgios Averoff, has been connected with a thousand other works of public use and public charity. The Athenian Stadium was first laid out three hundred and thirty years before the birth of Christ. The spectators of old sat on the grassy slopes of the two long hill-like embankments which faced each other on both sides of the race-course, and

were joined at one end by an imposing hemicycle. About five hundred years later, in the days of the Romans, a wealthy citizen, Herodes Atticus, said to the people, "At your next gathering here I promise you a stadium all of marble." And he kept his word.

In 1896 a modern millionaire made a similar promise and fulfilled it. The Stadium was restored according to the ancient plans.

To be seen here and there are darker stones from the original structure among the newer blocks, having been found and set up in



AT PRACTICE







THE BOSTON TEAM

places which they occupied fifteen centuries before. The thirty-three aisles and stairways of the Stadium, the 60,000 seats would be familiar to many an Athenian of the second century ; but the 60,000 people who to-day occupy the seats would puzzle him, indeed ; for among them he would see many "barbarians" from

lands undreamed of in his day. The old Athenian

spectators whitened or enriched with bright colors the marble sides of the Stadium ; we moderns blacken it with our hideous funereal garb. But, in spite of all, the sight is one which thrills us, one the like of which has never before been witnessed in our modern first glimpse of the crowded Stadium is to be numbered among the great sensations of a life time. The impressiveness which attaches to every aggregation of humanity is heightened by a close massing of the people and by the classic outlines of the Stadium.



THE PRINCETON TEAM





DISCOBOLOS — VATICAN MUSEUM.

Past the entrance to this now modern course runs the road from Marathon; the Bay of Salamis may be seen from the higher tiers, the Acropolis is visible from nearly every seat. It was this immortal background that gave the modern Olympic Games a deeper, wider significance than has ever dignified any other athletic meeting whatsoever.

For it must be confessed that the chief interest of the Olympic Games of 1896 lay in the splendid setting given them, rather than in the games themselves. From the standpoint of modern athletics the contests witnessed by the imposing audience were not remark-

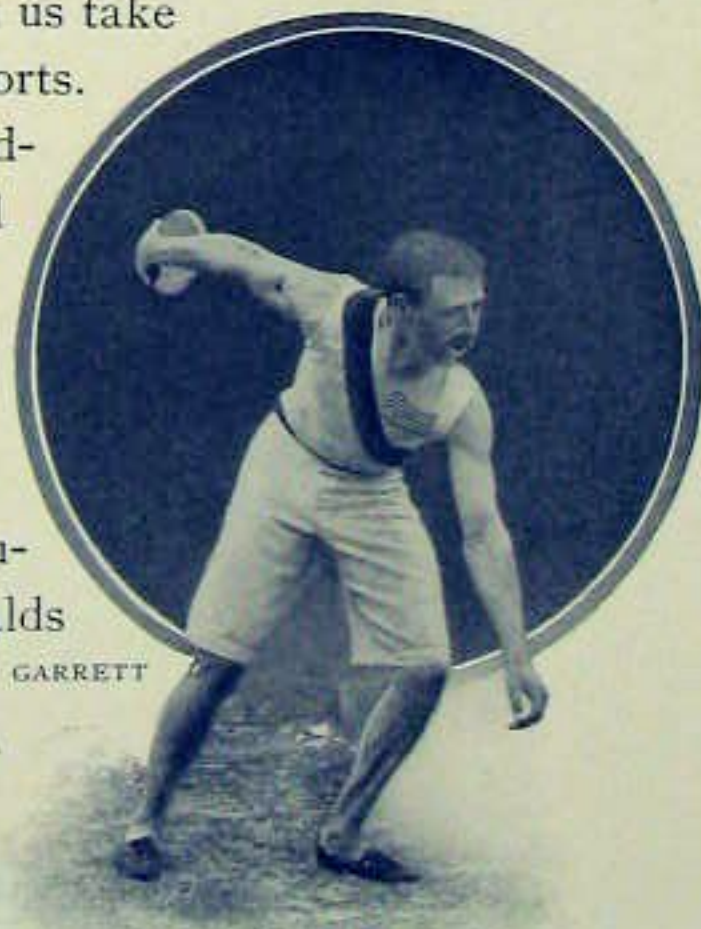


able save in one respect, the invincibility of our American champions. No records were broken, in fact our men were not called upon even to equal their own best previous work in their respective lines.

The spectators being assembled to the number of 60,000, all waits on the arrival of the Royal party. At the appointed hour, with democratic punctuality, King George, escorted by the committees, makes his entry. With him are the Queen, the Crown-Prince Constantine, and Prince George, the second son. To the music of the Greek National Hymn the little procession traverses the Stadium, while the multitudes stand with heads respectfully uncovered. And mingled with the respect there is a sense of gratitude; for had it not been for the unselfish and enthusiastic support of the King and Princes, this splendid spectacle would never have been possible. The Crown-Prince as President of the special Greek Committee was no mere figurehead; he, aided by Prince George, performed much of the work of organization, while without the moral support and sympathy of the Royal Family the successful issue of the festival would have been in doubt.

The opening ceremonies over, let us take up the program for the first day's sports.

The first event is the one-hundred-meter race. This event is considered now, as in ancient times, the most important of those occurring within the limits of the Stadium. Three heats are run. We listen for the victors' names, expecting in the natural order of things to hear the heralds call out such Greek appellations as "Belokas," or "Lagoudakis!" But no! The winning names announced have a familiar



ROBERT GARRETT





ATHENIANS

sound, for they are "Curtis," "Lane," and "Burke!" Not a bad start for us, indeed.

Our little group of spectators from across the sea hugs itself in joy; there are distant echoes of college yells, rising here and there from little groups, and "B. A. A.," and "Rah, rah, rah!" and for the moment the word "*Amerikis*" is on the lips of all.

And thus it is in nearly all the subsequent events. Nine times in ten it is the Stars and Stripes that is run up to indicate the winner's nationality. Our country's flag and honor are upheld by four men from Princeton, and by a team of athletes who come to Athens of the Old World from the Athens of the New, for they wear the colors of the Boston Athletic Association. There were, of course, contestants from other nations, and many ambitious Greeks made brave attempts to prove themselves deserving sons of an immortal race. But fortune did not favor them. Athletic sports had not been practiced here on classic soil for many generations, and the modern Greeks found themselves outclassed in games which were to them unfamiliar if not totally unknown.



The triple jump is now contested. "What, again?" we ask ourselves, as Conolly, of Boston, with a victorious hop, skip, and jump, covers forty-five good feet of classic soil,—enough, more than enough to prove that once more we have triumphed; and a moment later up goes the banner announcing the first victory of the new Olympiad in the "finals;" and it is the familiar red, white, and blue of the Star Spangled banner that lights up the Grecian sky.

And then the discus-throwing is announced. For this, the most truly Greek of all the contests, no American had originally been entered. The discus is familiar to us only in connection with statues of old athletes in our art-museums.



THE ASSEMBLING MULTITUDE



Our men can put the shot or throw the hammer, but not one of them has ever seen a discus, much less tried to hurl one. The Greeks, upon the other hand, have long been practicing their antique game, and one of their number has acquired a remarkable proficiency, equaling the best recorded throws of old Olympian victors. Nor was he less beautiful of form or graceful of gesture than the model who served as inspiration for the sculptor Myron, hundreds of years ago. Those who watched him in practice affirmed that in the grace of his poses and gestures and in the accuracy of his delivery he could not have been surpassed by the famous statue itself had it come to life. Remembering this we are not surprised at the hesitation of one of our boys, a member of the Princeton team, when requested at the last moment to enter the lists and, all unprepared, meet the Greek champion in an unfamiliar game. But although he hesitated, he did not

decline

the challenge. With the same un-  
daunted spirit which has ever char-

acterized the Anglo-Saxon  
race, Robert Garrett, of

the Princeton

team,

took

up a

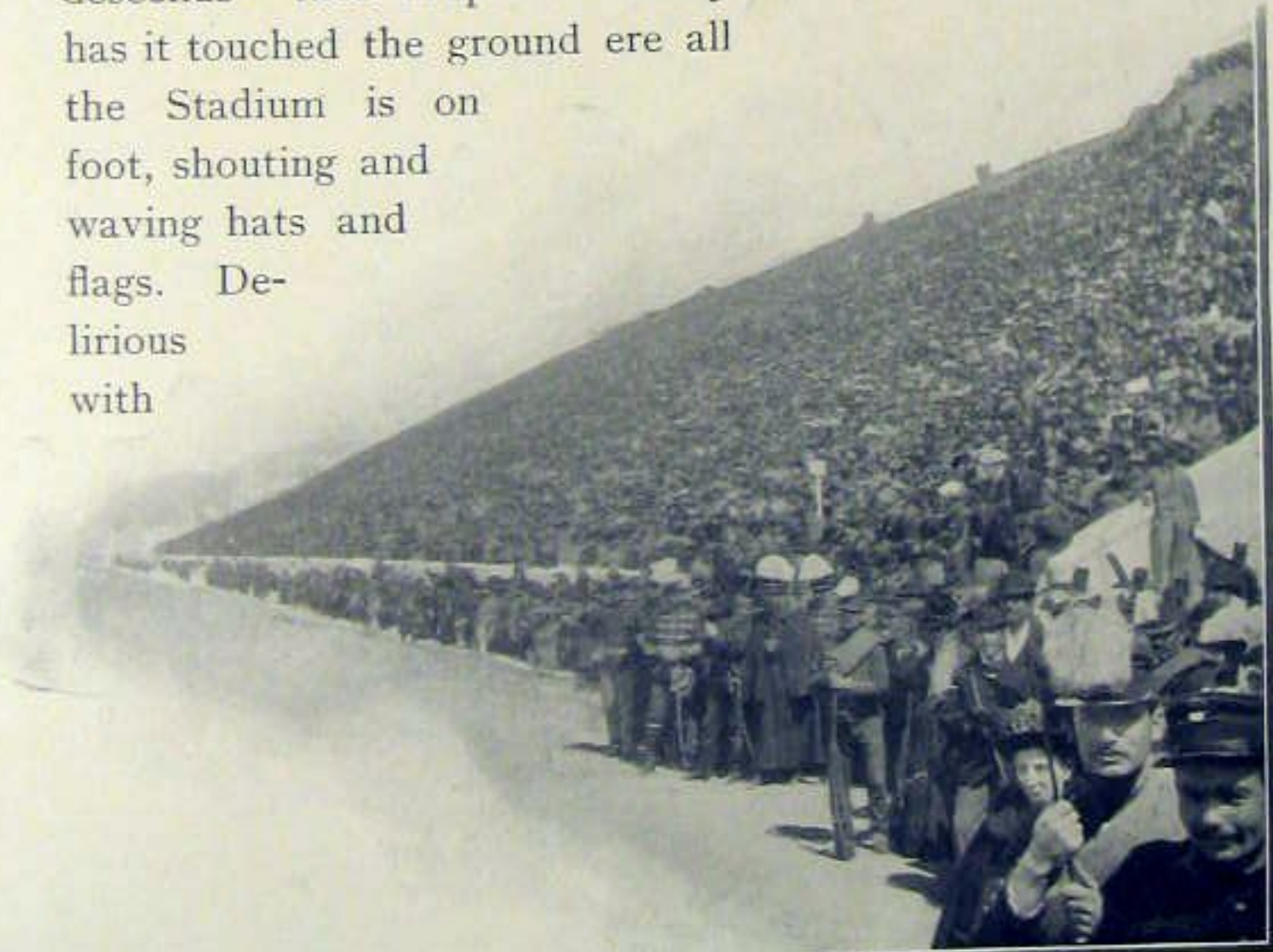


A MOUNTAIN OF HUMANITY



discus for the first time in his life, and stood before the thronging thousands ready to do at least his best for the honor of the Orange and Black and the Stars and Stripes. Our chance of victory seems ridiculously small ; we cannot but hope that our defeat will not call down the laughter of the Greeks.

The first efforts are merely tentative on the part of our champion. Then with that infinite capacity for "catching on," which seems to be the birthright of every Yankee, Garrett improves, and in his final throw wins more than he or his friends dared to hope for : the right to retire gracefully and without ridicule. Then Gouskos, the Greek, certain of victory, comes forward. With classic gestures he picks up his discus, and with the grace of an animated antique statue launches it into space. His final throw is marvelously artistic, the heavy discus soars away, descends—then drops. Scarcely has it touched the ground ere all the Stadium is on foot, shouting and waving hats and flags. Delirious with



THIRTY THOUSAND PEOPLE



delight, Greek gentlemen embrace each other. For the first time the victory seems theirs, and we may readily imagine their great joy — and then their bitter disappointment, almost despair, when instead of the Greek flag the Stars and Stripes is again hoisted to the victors' mast! In their enthusiastic admiration for the grace and beauty of their champion's delivery the Greeks had failed to note the very important fact that Garrett's discus, although launched by an unpracticed hand, had touched the earth just seven and one-half inches beyond that which the Greek had so artistically thrown!

All were stupefied. The Greeks had been defeated at their own classic exercise. They were overwhelmed by the superior skill and daring of the Americans, to whom they ascribed a supernatural invincibility enabling them to dispense with training and to win at games which they had

never before seen.

To omit further details, the Americans in five contests the first day won the only two decided, took all the heats in two of the others; and, in spite of the fact that not one of our boys was entered for the fifth event, I verily believe the Greeks expected us to win it.

The second day our flag went up three times. Our boys are now called the



IN MODERN MARATHON





THE MOUND OF MARATHON

"American invincibles." Garrett at putting the shot surpasses the Greek contestant, whose physical perfection was such that his fellow-countrymen, who still have an eye for beauty, saluted him as "Hermes."

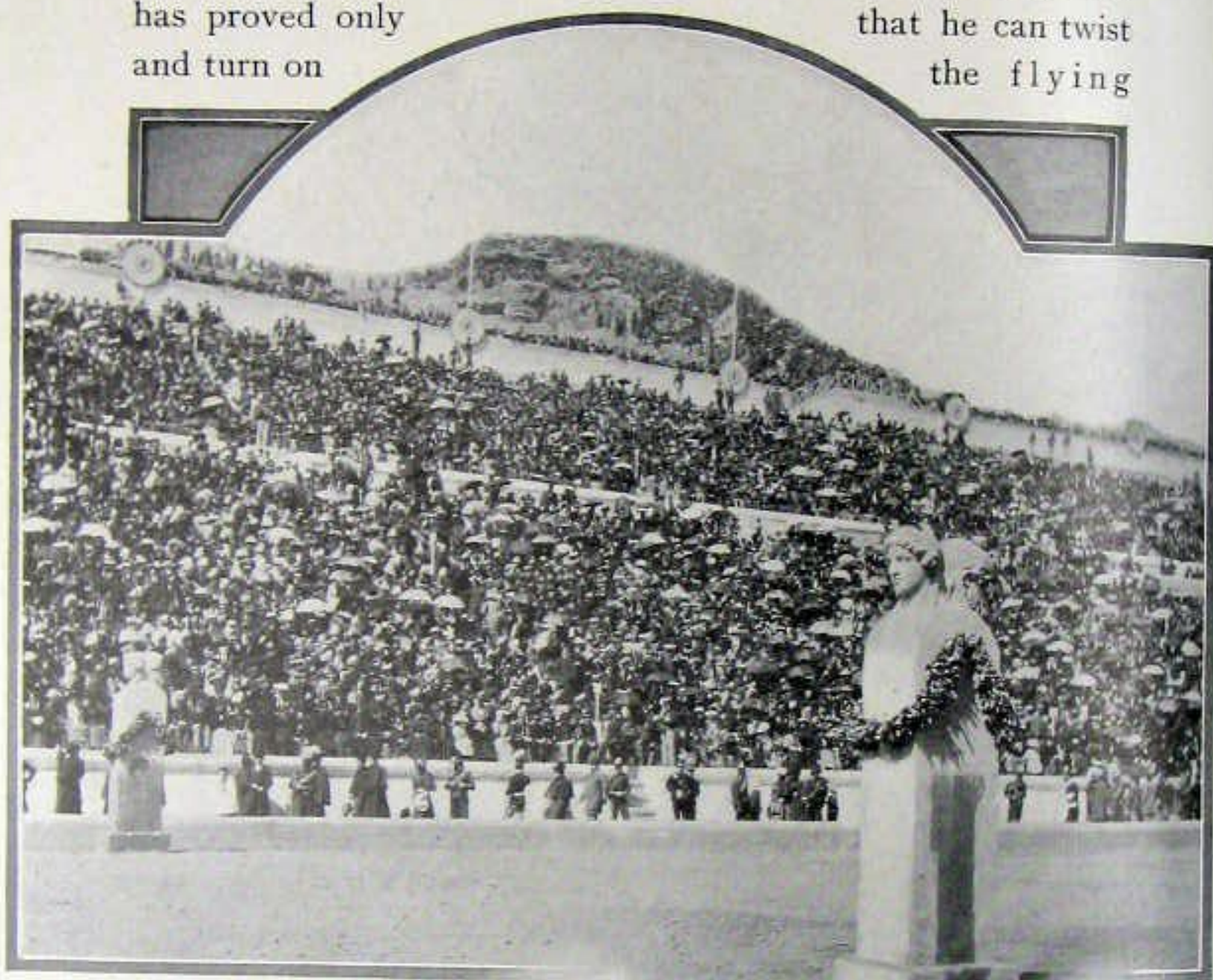
A Britisher and a Dane then prove their superiority in lifting weights; but everything else is ours save one event, the fifteen-hundred-meter race; and even this is credited to us, for although won by a splendid fellow from Australia, it is put down as an American victory. The Greeks are not strong in antipodal geography, and when we explain that Flack, the winner, is an Australian, not an American, they answer, "Oh, well, that is about the same thing; we congratulate you."

And the congratulations are sincere, for the Americans are not begrudged their victories. This is because we are like those people alluded to by Homer as "the blameless Ethiopians" who live so far away as to excite no jealousy.

The third day is devoted to shooting matches in the fine new shooting-stand on the Phaleric plain. The fourth day witnesses the gymnastic exercises in the amphitheater, and



is chiefly notable because on that day for the first time the blue and white flag is unfurled in token of a native victory. It is not a heroic one, however, for the Greek Metrapolous has proved only that he can twist and turn on the flying



THE CREST OF DEAD HILL

rings more gracefully than the sturdy Germans who excel in almost every one of the other contests.

One Athenian daily paper explained the superiority of the Americans on the ground that they joined to the inherited athletic training of the Anglo-Saxon, the wild impetuosity of the red-skinned Indians! Another, having observed the use of chewing-gum, informed an eager public that the Americans had great endurance because they chewed pitch to strengthen the lungs! Still another expressed great



admiration for the piety of the American contestants, for noting but not understanding the custom of blowing on the hands to moisten them before grasping a vaulting-pole or a hammer, the reporter wrote that before each event the Americans bowed their heads in their hands and murmured a brief prayer!

The fifth day is the day of the great race from Marathon. On this event the Greeks founded all their hopes. "If we but win the prize for Marathon, we shall forget all our defeats," was the cry which went up from the vast Hellenic majority of the audience which on Friday fills the Stadium, I had almost said to suffocation. On the surrounding walls, on the hill which dominates the Stadium, on the banks of the Ilyssos, in the gardens of the Zappion, on the boulevards, are massed the thousands who could not force their way into the amphitheater. Never has such a sight been witnessed since the days of antique Athens. The other quarters of the city are deserted, the entire population is massed around and in the Stadium. As early as two o'clock there is not a vacant place, not even on "dead-head hill" which rises high above the marble seats. Still the crowds arrive. On each side rises a huge mountain-range of faces, and all these faces are aglow with expectation and



THE ROAD FROM MARATHON



impatience, all save the four calm marble visages which mark the curve of the course near the royal platform. Why should this scene impress them? They, at least, have witnessed more imposing spectacles, for they stood here during the long centuries of Athenian greatness. They have beheld the splendid Panatheniac gatherings of long ago, they have seen face to face the immortal men whose deeds and songs will never be forgotten. Could they give expression to their thoughts, they would only smile derisively at this throng of moderns, and ask that those who dragged them from their hiding-places deep in the classic earth should bury them again that they might slumber on with the remains of that antiquity of which they formed a part. "We are not of your world," they would say, "let us return a second time into our graves."

I must begin the record of the fifth day with the statement that while the runners are preparing for the start from



FIELD OF MARATHON FROM THE MOUND

Marathon, twenty-five miles away, other athletes are contending in the presence of a hundred thousand people. In the Stadium the Americans again cover themselves with glory. Burke wins the finals in the hundred-meter race. Clarke wins the high jump. Curtis flies to victory over the hurdles. Hoyt and Tyler contest the prize for pole-vaulting with the bar one





PREMIER DELAYNNIS

and one-half feet above where it had been abandoned by their Greek opponents. Invincibility is still with the Americans. The Greeks begin to tremble at the thought that our Blake is even now running against their champions on the road from Marathon. When M. Delyannis, the prime minister, saw the American flag go up for the fourth time, he turned to our minister and asked despairingly, "Why did Columbus ever discover your unconquerable country?"

Meantime we must not forget the events transpiring far away on the Marathon road. There Greeks and barbarians are running with grim determination. They know that he who wins the race from Marathon will gain more than





LOUËS, MARATHON VICTOR

ephemeral honor ; that the story of his victory will be recited to admiring generations long after the other contestants have passed into oblivion. At Athens the high jump is in progress when mounted couriers arrive announcing that at the sixth mile the Frenchman leads, that the Australian is close behind, that our own gallant Blake is next and doing well.

The spectators are all a-tremble with excitement. They remain on tiptoe as if eager for the first glimpse of the runners who are still eighteen miles away. The Princes make their way to the

entrance to await the victor who must soon arrive. The excitement is intense. The suspense is almost painful. All eyes are gazing westward, when at last a cannon-shot is heard. It means that the first runner has reached the outer boulevards, that in a moment he will be here. Who or what he is no one can tell until the crowd outside thunders its joy in a great roar, "A Greek ! It is a Greek ! Zito, Louës !" And a young Greek peasant, Spiridione Louës, all dust and perspiration, staggers into the Stadium, where a hundred thousand people acclaim him as the hero of the hour.

Then, while from the sloping sides of the Stadium avalanches of applause come crashing down ; while the King of Greece so far forgets his royal dignity as to rip the visor from his royal cap in waving it like mad ; while staid and proper citizens embrace each other frantically ; while tears of joy are shed ; while doves, to which long white ribbons are attached, are loosed and flutter in the air ; while all Athens utters a triumphant shout, Louës, the simple peasant, the farmer





Photograph by D. F. McGillicuddy

SILENT COMPANIONS OF THE CENTURIES







from the little hamlet Amarousi, is escorted by two Princes and a Russian Grand Duke — all three embracing, even kissing him — from the entrance to the far end of the Stadium where he is greeted by a royal hand in the midst of such a scene as Athens has not witnessed in a thousand years. All the other runners who arrive in quick succession are, with one exception, Greeks. The native cup of happiness is full. The innate endurance of the Greek peasants prevailed in the great test, over the scientific training of the "American Invincibles." The winner's time, as announced by the judges, was two hours and fifty-eight minutes, the distance forty kilometers, a trifle over twenty-five miles.

The following Tuesday was appointed for the ceremony of the presentation of prizes ; but the ceremony was post-



IN HONOR OF JUPITER PLUVIUS



poned because, the games in his honor being ended, Jupiter Olympus suddenly abdicated, and the reign of Jupiter Pluvius began. Yet in spite of the accession of this unpopular monarch, forty thousand people assembled in the Stadium. Louës, of Marathon fame, arrives, dressed in the national costume. He carries one of the forty thousand umbrellas displayed about the course, and a bouquet presented by admiring feminine spectators. Like a true hero, he is apparently unaffected by his victory, yet enough has already been done to spoil him. Immediately after the race he was overwhelmed with favors. A lady detached her watch and gave it to him ; a pretty girl placed a be-ribboned dove in his hands ; a barber enthusiastically declared that Louës's chin should enjoy a daily scrape at his establishment as long as Louës



TWENTY THOUSAND UMBRELLAS



lived and did not grow a beard ; a hatter vowed to hat him ; a shoemaker swore to shoe him all his days ; a haberdasher took his oath that he should never lack for underwear and hosiery ; free meals for life, free drinks, free theater-tickets, were assured him until his dying day. A rich man gave him land in his native village, and a wealthy lady offered him the choice of a large sum of money or a kiss. And Louës, with

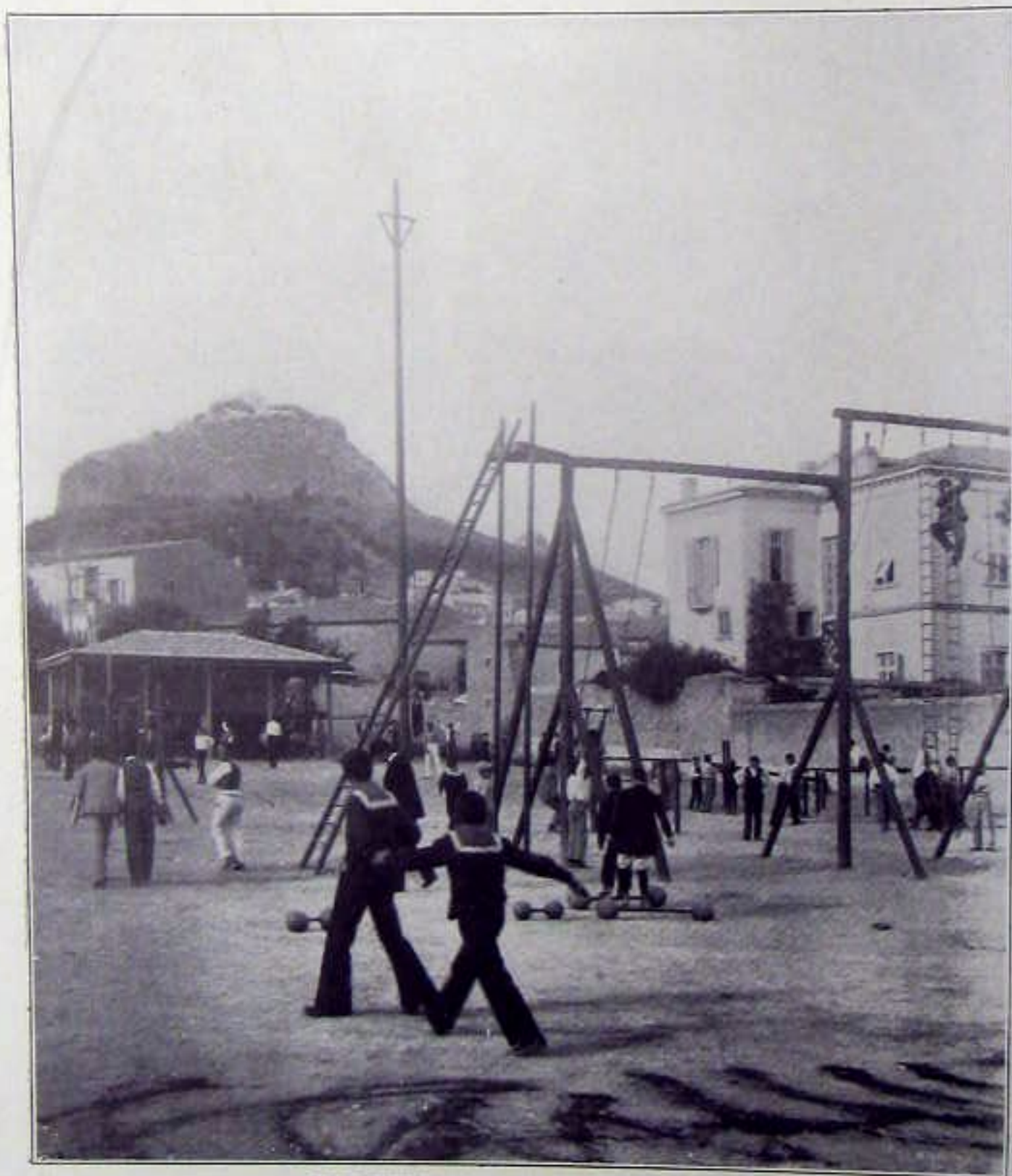


CHEZ MME BAKMETIEFF



a spirit of an amateur, refused the lucre, and with the gallantry of an Olympianiké accepted the other proposition. All these things he received in addition to the regular prizes, the presentation of which is now postponed until a fairer day.

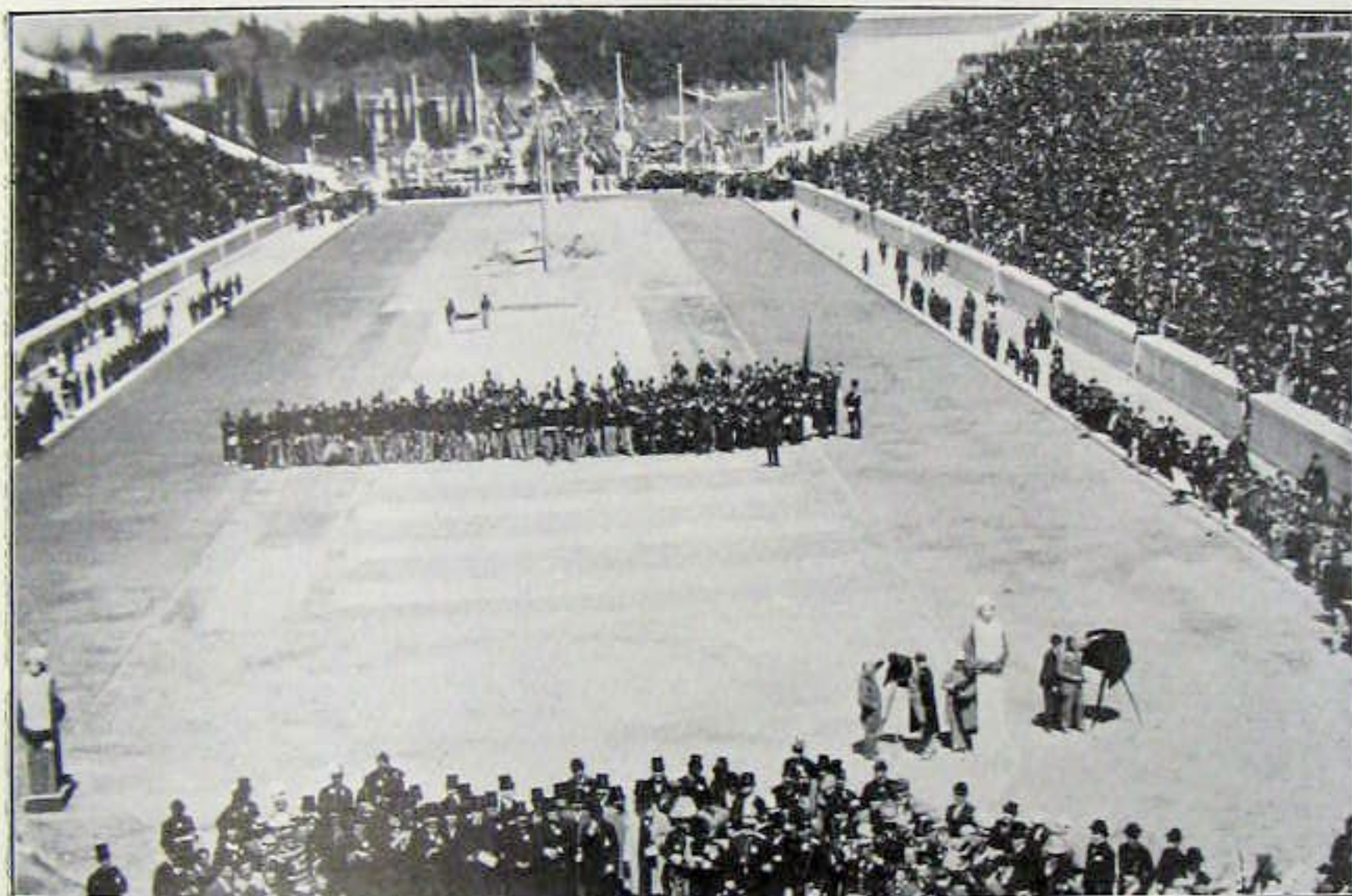
And while awaiting clearer skies let me recall a few of the social diversions that marked the stay of the foreign athletes in Athens. Numberless entertainments were given in honor of those who contended in the games. The King gave a



THE REVIVAL OF GYMNASTIC EXERCISES



luncheon ; the mayor followed with a picnic ; ambassadors and wealthy citizens all did their share. Much amusement was caused at the King's luncheon when his majesty sent his chamberlain to the American table with a request that our boys should kindly repeat their strange "war cries." "The king," he said, "had listened at a distance to these incomprehensible shouts, and was curious to give them a critical



PRESENTATION DAY

hearing at close quarters." All arose and gave a rousing, "Rah, rah, rah — Ellas, Ellas, Ellas, Zito ! Hurrah for Greece !" and his majesty expressed himself as satisfied. The papers alluded to these war cries as "Onomatopoeia," considering them frenetic shouts difficult to comprehend.

Next to the royal banquet the most enjoyable social event was a picnic given by the charming American wife of the Russian Secretary of Legation, who entertained the Royal Princes and the athletes in the grove of Daphne.



Rather democratic, is it not, to see Prince Constantine, Prince George, and Prince Nicholas of Greece, grouped there with the peasant Louës, and our young Bostonians and Princeton men? Prince George, the big fellow seated in the center of the last row, was a prime favorite with all. As an athlete he could have taken many prizes had he contended. During the weight-lifting match he picked up and nonchalantly handed to a contestant a dumb-bell, which the latter



PRESENTATION — THE STADIUM

could barely lift. At the picnic he assured one of our men, good humoredly, "I could wrestle with you, and sit on you, too." Nor was the Crown-Prince a stickler for ceremony. During the games he was ever in the arena, and it was no unusual thing to see him carrying a glass of cognac to a resting athlete, or holding the sweater of another while a contest was in progress. Even the King himself was not above a little dignified familiarity and amusement upon proper occasions.





KING GEORGE BESTOWS THE OLIVE BRANCH UPON TOM BURKE







"You may win this time," he said to Burke, "but we will beat you in 1900, if I have to run myself!" And the King's words were enshrined in the hearts of every young Greek, if we are to judge from the enthusiasm with which the training for 1900 was undertaken. The open-air gymnasias were thronged every day with school-boys and young men, all striving to emulate the deeds of the Americans.

But sometimes, during the games of 1896, imitation rather than emulation was indulged in. This was apparent, especially in the pistol-shooting matches. The American marks-



TOM BURKE OF BOSTON



men, the Payne brothers, arrived on the very day of the matches, and, to steady their travel-disturbed nerves, took frequent sips of whisky from pocket-flasks. On the second day not a Greek contestant sighted a gun, without first applying a black bottle to his lips. The Messrs. Payne also found it necessary to cover their pistol barrels by smoking with burning matches; the sunlight glistening from the polished steel would have prevented accurate aim. Next day, although the sun was overcast, the Greeks smoked their weapons lock, stock, and barrel, almost reducing them to



THE ROYAL PLATFORM



ashes in their desire to do the proper thing. Thus the flattery of imitation was carried to ludicrous extremes.

But let us now return to the Stadium to witness the closing ceremonies of the games. Below, grouped at the foot of the royal platform, are the various committees, the victorious athletes, the herald Hadji Petros, the Royal Princes, and one victor of whom we have not spoken, the winner of the prize



ILLUMINATIONS

for the composition of the best ode in Ancient Greek. It is an Englishman from Oxford University who has proved that he can write a better ode in ancient Greek than any of the descendants of the poet Pindar who sang the fame of the Olympianikés in the days of old.

The herald, taking up the list of victors, cries in modern Greek: "Amerikis, Burke. Dromos ekaton-metron," and fifteen centuries look down on the slight, graceful figure of the youth who, mounting to the royal platform, receives from the hand of the King of Greece the first Olympian olive





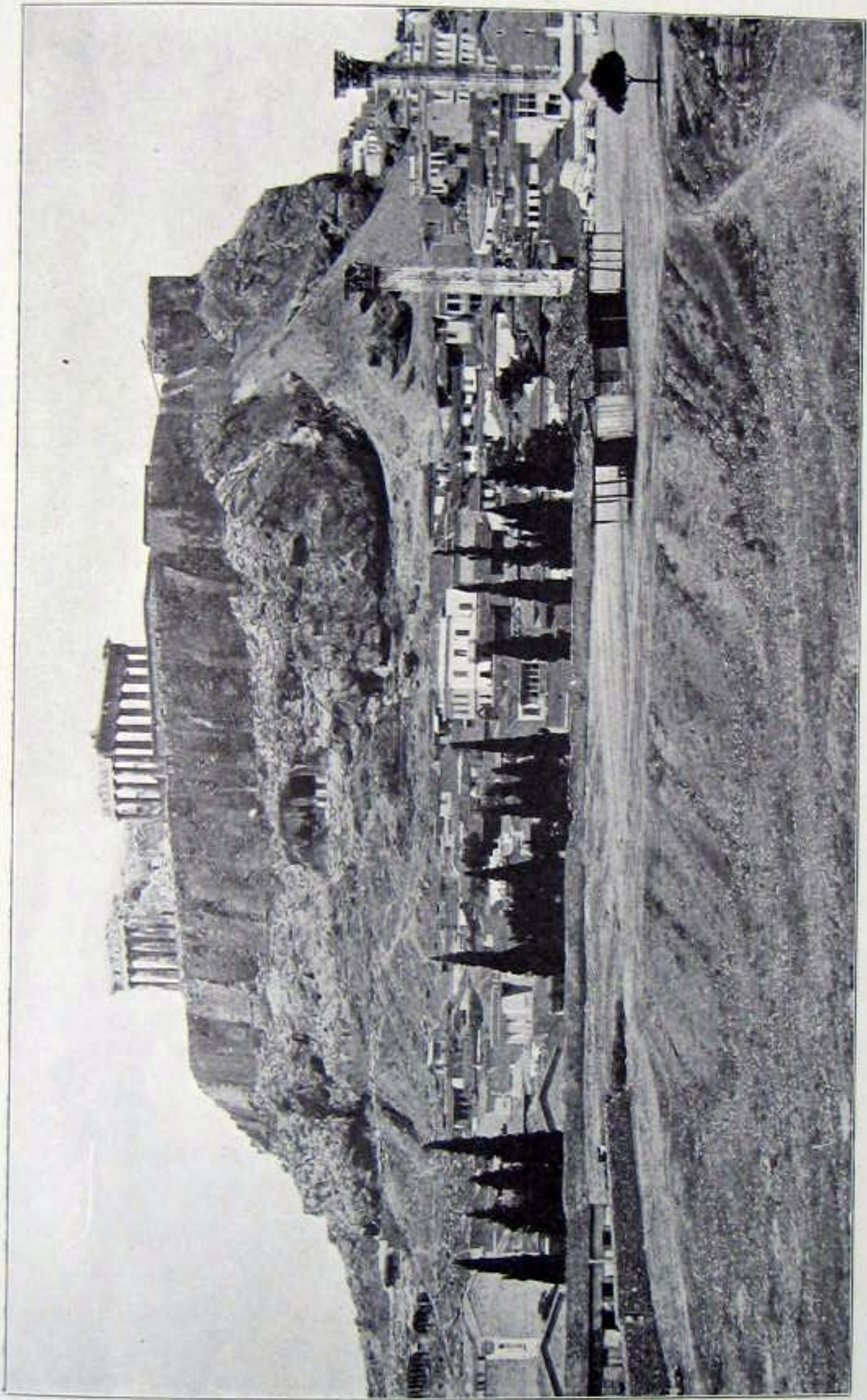
FAREWELL TO THE AMERICAN "INVINCIBLES"

branch ever bestowed since that far-off day in the year of our Lord 394, when the last of the old Olympiads was solemnly inaugurated in the land of Elis. The name of the winner of the one-hundred-meter race was always given to the quadrennial period following the games. Therefore the last four years of the nineteenth century must be known to history as the "Olympiad of Thomas Burke, of Boston"!

It must have been a thrilling moment for him as he stood there face to face with the King, the Crown-Prince, and a host of royal personages, while on every side there arose tier on tier of eager faces, a cloud of witnesses which seemed to touch the sky—that same blue sky of Greece which has looked down upon so many heroes.

But again the herald's voice is heard "Dromos tetra-kosioi-metron," and the prizes for the four-hundred-meter race are thrust into the already well-filled arms of Burke, who, with his double set of trophies, bows himself from the royal





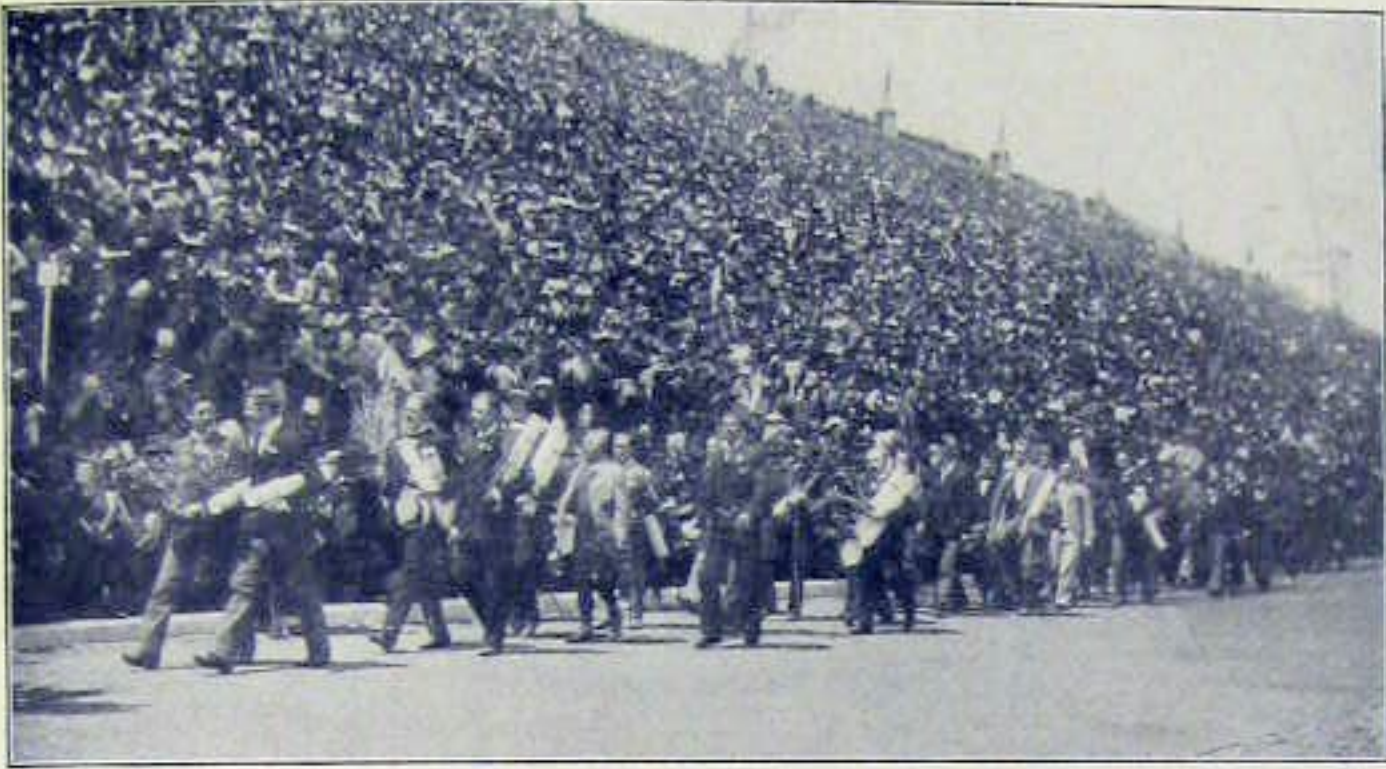
By permission

THE ACROPOLIS









PROCESSION OF VICTORS

presence and reaching the arena receives congratulations of a hundred friends. What are the prizes? First, the diplomas contained in large pasteboard rolls, trimmed with gold paper; next, a silver medal, on which is stamped a splendid head of Zeus, and the classic outlines of the Acropolis and of the Parthenon; last and most important, the priceless branch of olive from the sacred groves of far-away Olympia, a prize purposely valueless that it may thereby be invaluable. These are the official prizes, but they are not the only ones, nor even the first, for during the preceding days the people had



LOUES LEADING THE PROCESSION OF VICTORS



made their spontaneous offerings. One day a ragged bank-note, worth about sixty cents, was thrust into Burke's hands; another day a set of postage-stamps was given him by a small boy, and never could our athletes enter a public cab or carriage without creating a good-natured turmoil among the passers-by, who each and every one claimed the right as Greeks and hosts to pay the driver of the triumphal chariot. The other athletes having received their prizes and diplomas,



OLD ATHENS

the victors, according to an ancient custom, march several times around the vast arena. The long parade is headed by the hero of the run from Marathon, resplendent in his gorgeous Greek-attire. He holds aloft the flag of modern Greece and waves it in response to thunders of applause. Happy indeed should be the lives of all these victors if the poet's words be true, for Pindar, who wrote many odes honoring those who bore off the highest prizes in olden games, informs us:—

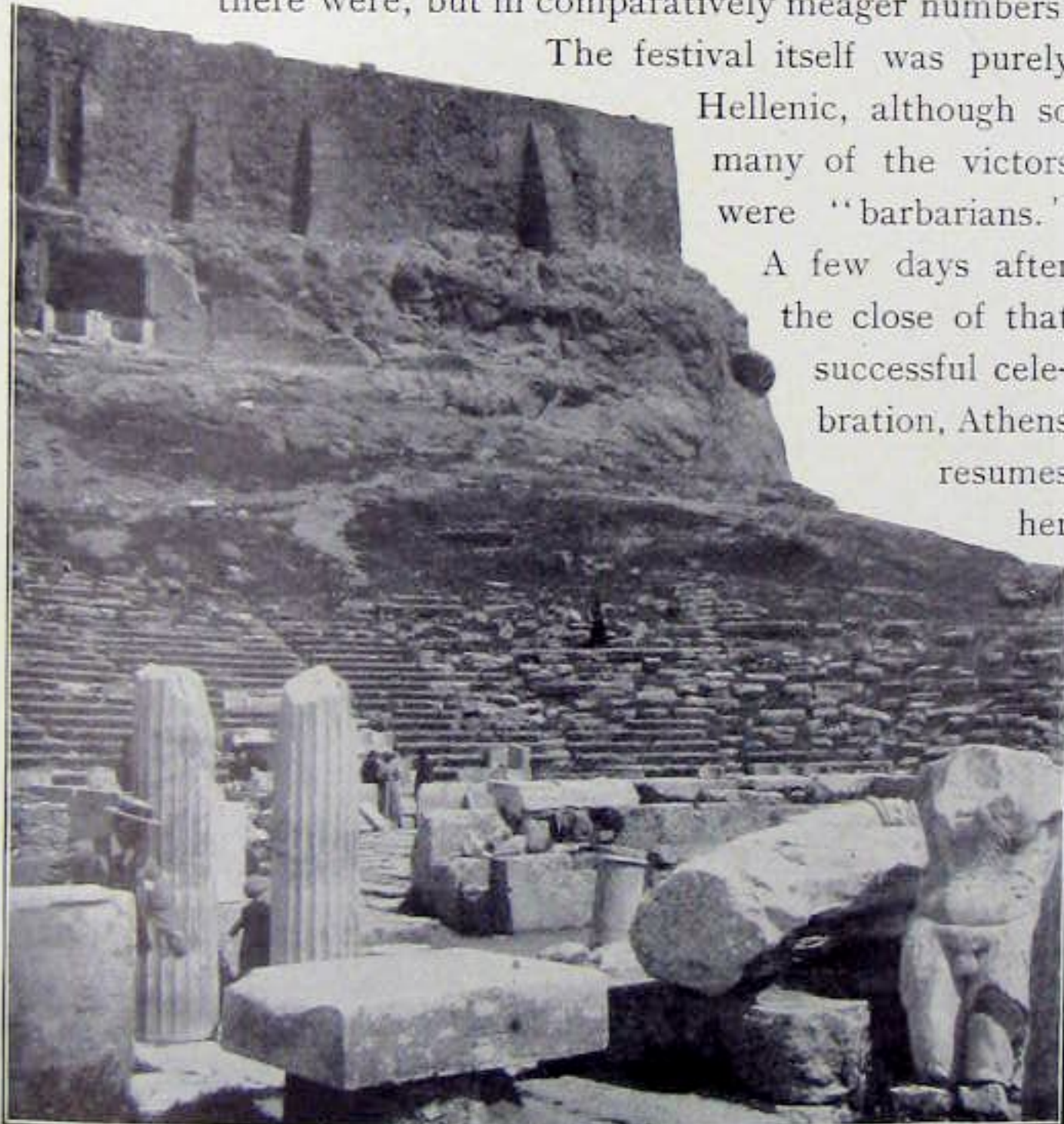


"That he who overcometh hath because of the Games a sweet tranquillity throughout his life forevermore."

As they file past, bearing their prizes in the shadow of the cheering multitude, you may ask who are these unknown thousands massed above us? Are they Greeks, or do they come from foreign lands? It is admitted that the vast majority of these spectators were citizens of Athens; almost the entire population (for Athens boasts only about 130,000 people) was present at the games. The poorest could afford to come, for prices ranged from 12 to 25 cents, according to the proximity of the sections to the royal seats. Strangers there were, but in comparatively meager numbers.

The festival itself was purely Hellenic, although so many of the victors were "barbarians."

A few days after the close of that successful celebration, Athens resumes her

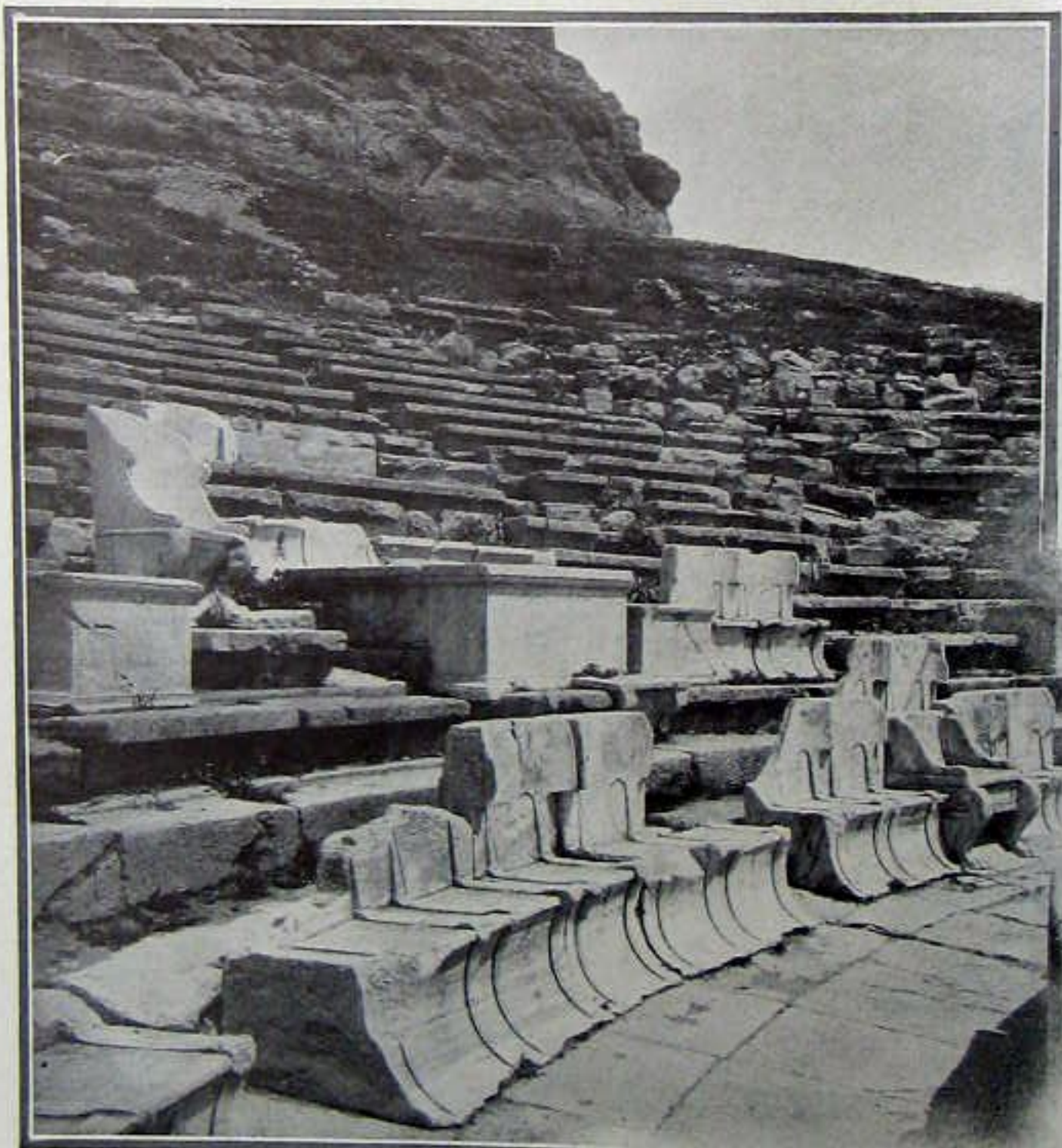


THEATER OF DIONYSOS



accustomed air of dignity and calm, and we who do not follow in the train of the departing crowds become more keenly conscious of the attraction of that magnet which for centuries has drawn men to Athens, that rock which is the eternal glory of Athens—the Acropolis. The old Greeks set upon that rock a crown of beauty. It is there to-day, magnificent in its mutilation.

Greece was the earliest home of the beautiful, and her structures and her statues are still the most beautiful, nearer to perfection than any that have been reared or carved since



WHERE THE AGES SIT AS SPECTATORS



the Parthenon was new. It is difficult at first to believe this, yet those whose lives have been devoted to the study of the arts tell us that it is true ; that when in the mind's eye these ruined monuments are reconstructed, when the fragments of Greek statues have been imagined into an unbroken whole, they will rise before us in absolute perfection, defying modern art and architecture. At the base of the rock is the theater of the wine god, Dionysos ; above looms the wall of the Acropolis, a wall suggestive of a fortress, for in fact the Acropolis was first a fortress then a sanctuary.

To describe properly the various features of this height, to tell of their significance, must be the task of one much better versed in history and art than I. I shall but speak of a visit to the summit of the sacred hill, and say a word of the buildings which helped to make the fame of Athens.



Photograph by D. F. McGillem.

THE SHRINE OF VICTORY





CICERONE

Our cicerone endeavors to make our visit doubly interesting for us by pointing out two things at once, describing one in mongrel French, the other in a sort of Volapuk, composed of the elements of many languages. In the Propylea guides lie in wait for visitors. It is well worth while to listen for an hour to one of these guides on the Acropolis, not for the accurate information to be extracted from them, but for the many new side-lights which their genius throws on history and art. What could be more original than the distinction drawn between Ionic and Doric columns by one guide, who said : " Now, see, old Athens people, all same Ionic people, very luxury people ; when they go fight always wear fine hat, fine shoes. Now, see, Ionic column like peo-



DORIC PILLARS OF THE PROPYLEA



ple who make him ; ” and, pointing to the graceful capital of one of the Ionic pillars of the little Temple of Victory, he goes on : “ See on top the fine hat ” ( pointing to the base ) ; “ See the fine shoes. Now, Spartan people all same, Doric people very plain people. When they go fight, no hat, no shoes. Now see, Doric column no got a capital, no got a base, all plain like Doric people. ” After listening to this succinct statement, who could ever mistake an Ionic for a Doric column ?

Meantime we have observed with some surprise stains of reddish brown upon the classic columns. Why is it that so many travelers speak of the dazzling whiteness of these walls and pillars of Pentelic marble ? They are not white. I quote a recognized authority when I say that they have been toned by centuries of Attic dust to that rich, gold-brown which has turned the Parthenon from marble almost to ruddy gold.

Yes, the Parthenon stands to-day as a ruin, all in white and gold ; the whiteness typical of its extreme old age, while the gilded pillars suggest that Nature, conscious of the



THE PROPYLEA



priceless value of this architectural treasure, had resolved to preserve it by covering its columns with protecting lacquer of pure gold.

But ruin glares down upon us from every angle of the noble pile. Time and decay have done their little, and war and man's thoughtlessness have done the rest. Only two hundred and fifty years ago the Parthenon was practically



Photograph by Wm. H. Rau

THE WRECK OF AGES

intact. The Turks were masters then in Greece ; a Turkish garrison occupied the Acropolis ; the Erectheum was a seraglio ; the Parthenon, after having served as a mosque, had been converted into a powder magazine. Venice, in 1687, sent her armies to dislodge the infidels. A shell from the Venetian batteries upon a neighboring hill, found its way, like a messenger of destruction into the former temple of





Photograph by D. F. McGillicuddy

ON THE ACROPOLIS







Athena, and with a roar, which still echoes in the hearts of all who love the beautiful, the Parthenon, after delighting the souls of men for 2300 years, became a ruin. Yet what a ruin is there!—more perfect, despite its mutilations than the proudest structures of the modern world.

The Acropolis, however, owed much of its splendor to an early disaster. During the second invasion of the Persians, four hundred and eighty years before Christ, the Athenians returning to their beloved city, which had at last been delivered from the Asiatic barbarians as a result of the battle of Salamis, beheld a spectacle which stirred them to indignation and to grief. Their proud old rock still loomed above the city but, alas, how changed! Its splendid temples were



THE PARTHENON, WEST FRONT



burned, their walls and columns were cracked and defaced, the precious offerings all were gone, and, worst of all, the marble population of the sacred hill had not escaped the fury of the Asiatic host. The statues of Athena, of the gods and goddesses who had so long been worshiped here, had been tumbled from their pedestals, their members shattered by the fall, their faces marred by vandal hands. The arms, the legs, the hands, the dainty fingers, the noses and the ears of innumerable divinities were scattered here as if an avalanche had swept across the sacred height. We do not wonder that the Athenians wept at sight of all that ruin. But then with an indomitable energy the people of Attica resolved to make a New Athens which should surpass the old whose loss they mourned. And first of all, that this determination to begin from the beginning should be plainly understood, they buried all those mutilated deities in



THE PARTHENON, EAST FRONT





Photograph by Wm. H. Rau.

#### IMMORTAL MARBLE

this consecrated ground, just as the soldiers slain in battle had been buried under the mound at Marathon. And then, at the command of Pericles, two men, Iktinos and Callicrates, whose fame will be immortal, conceived and constructed the most perfect buildings that the world has ever known and Phidias adorned them with his immortal sculptures.

Meantime the entombed gods and goddesses slept on, new statues were reared, the Acropolis became the wonder and the admiration of the ancient world. The entombed gods were worshiped, but in other bodies, for their resting-places had been long forgotten. The centuries roll on and the cult of the Olympic Deities becomes a dead religion. It is well



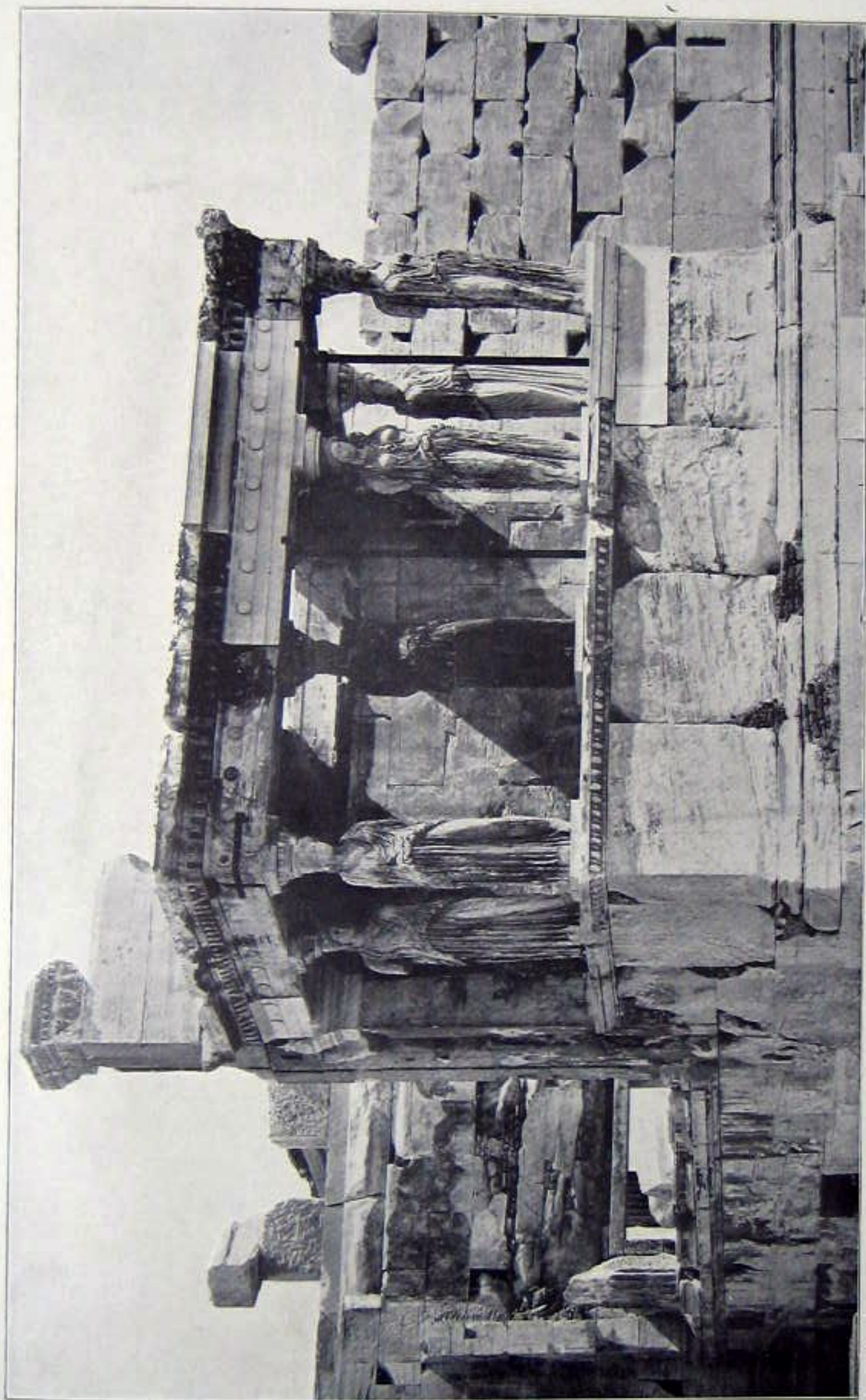
that the sleeping goddesses know not that the Greeks have totally forsaken them. It is well that their sleep shall last until the world, which has long scoffed at their ruined shrines, should have learned to worship that perfect art which was but the expression of Greek religious thought.

It was not until 1886 that the fates were satisfied that the world was ready to render homage before the divinities which the old Persians had cast down. The modern king of Hellenes was strolling here, watching the excavators at their work. Suddenly one of the men shouts from a trench :



VISTA OF THE ACROPOLIS





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CARYATIDS OF THE ERECHTHEUM

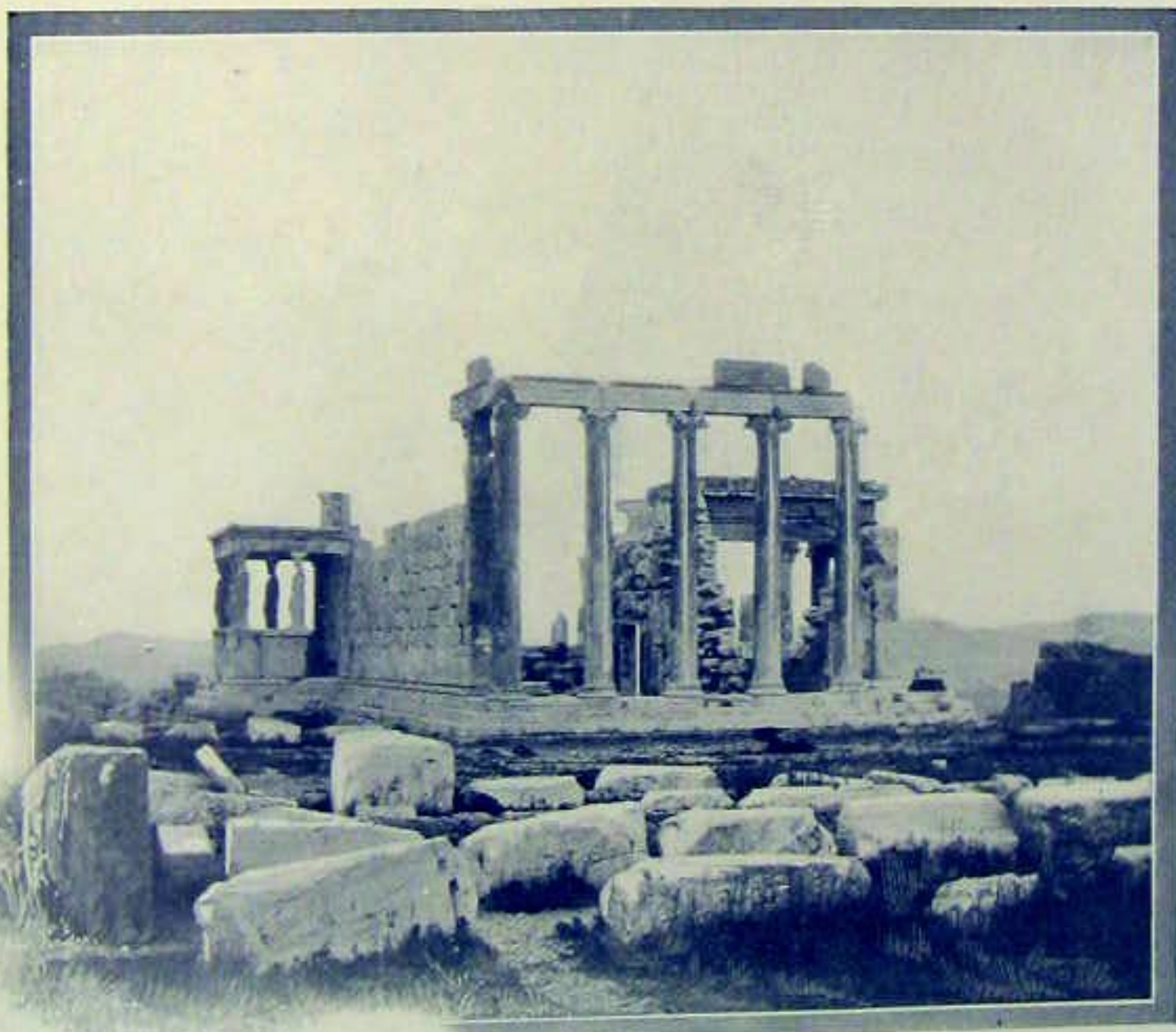






“ Majesty, we have found the gods ! ” And King George looked and beheld the awakening smiles of fourteen resuscitated goddesses, who, after a sleep of 2300 years, were awakened like sleeping princesses from a magic spell, and saw again the soft light of the Athenian sky.

It was a revelation of a new antiquity ; of an unknown art with a strange exotic charm. Of the gorgeous tinting of these statues, traces remain, but so delicate are these traces that it appears as if the powdery pigments could be dusted off with a feather. The thought that these are the creatures of an epoch not only far removed from our own, but even separated by a wide gulf of time from that of classic Greece gives them a fascination difficult to define. They seem to have come to us, not out of the past of this world, but from another, a pre-existent sphere.



THE ERECHTHEUM



But other fair women of a later epoch grace the ruins of the Acropolis. Beneath the Portico of the Maidens stand those tireless beauties, the Caryatids, who for more than two thousand years have borne all uncomplainingly their heavy burden. They have witnessed here the sacrilege and devastation of the Turk; they saw with horror the pillars



Photograph by Wm. H. Rau

A FALLEN COLUMN

of the Parthenon cast down; but bravely have they stood unshaken by any terrors, worthy daughters of a mighty race.

An Athenian journalist of to-day has compared the Greek people to a Caryatid, upon whose head fate has amused herself by piling up a weight of discouragements and misfortunes. If we look back into her history, we shall





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THE PARTHENON

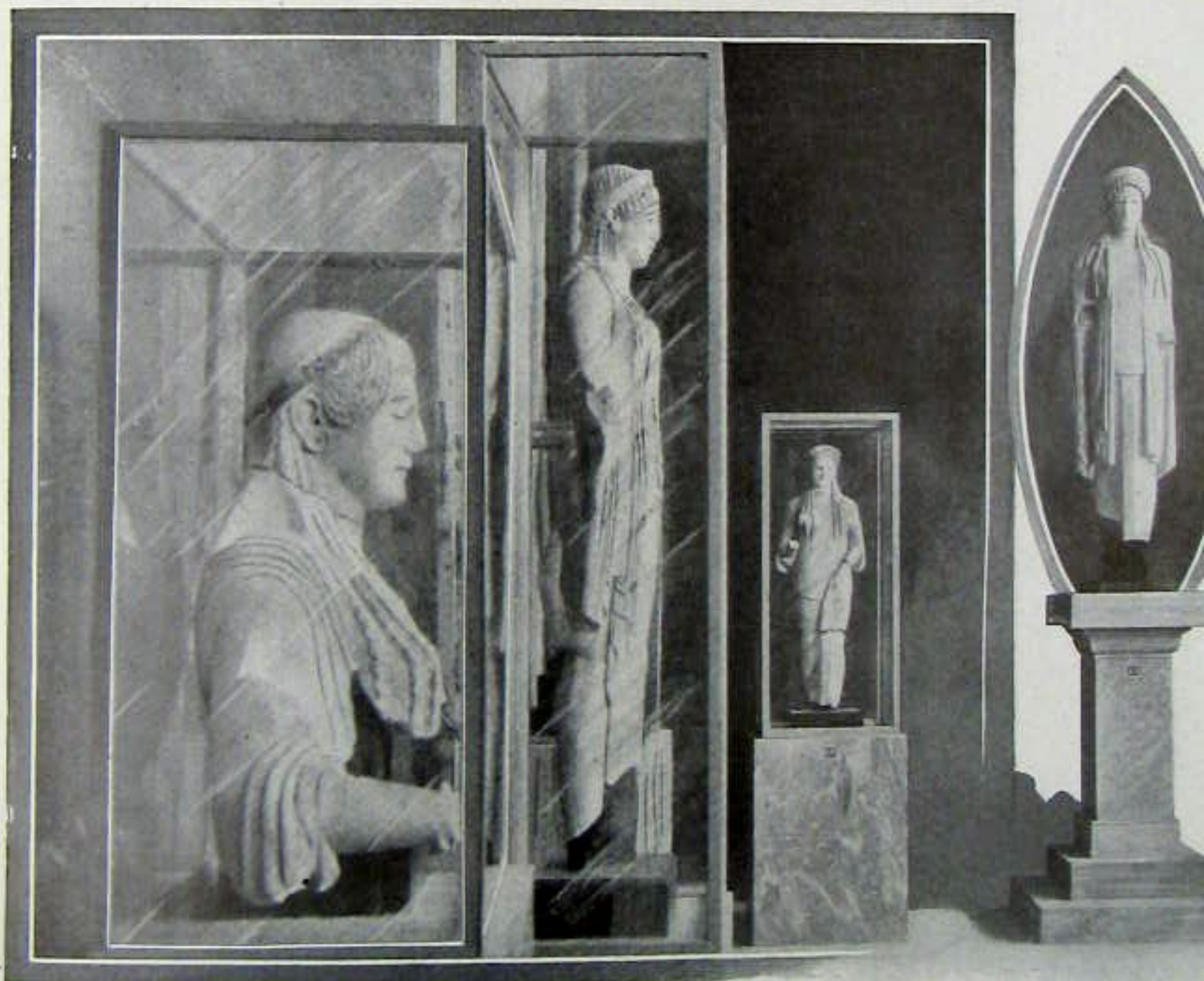






see that Greece has borne up beneath the burden of the Romans, Goths, and Ostrogoths, of the Vandals and the Slavs, of the Franks, the Catalans, and the Venetians, and—for the list is not yet finished—of the Florentines, the Genoese, and for nearly four hundred years she has all but succumbed beneath the barbarous oppression of the Turk.

But the traveler need not be deeply versed in history nor in art to feel the charm that with the evening descends upon the sacred height of the Acropolis. The time-stained pillars of the Parthenon are bathed in an atmosphere of rosy glory, the fluted columns reflect the sunset fires once again as they have done unnumbered times before. No; not unnumbered; for we know the date of their erection,



ARCHAIC GODDESSES





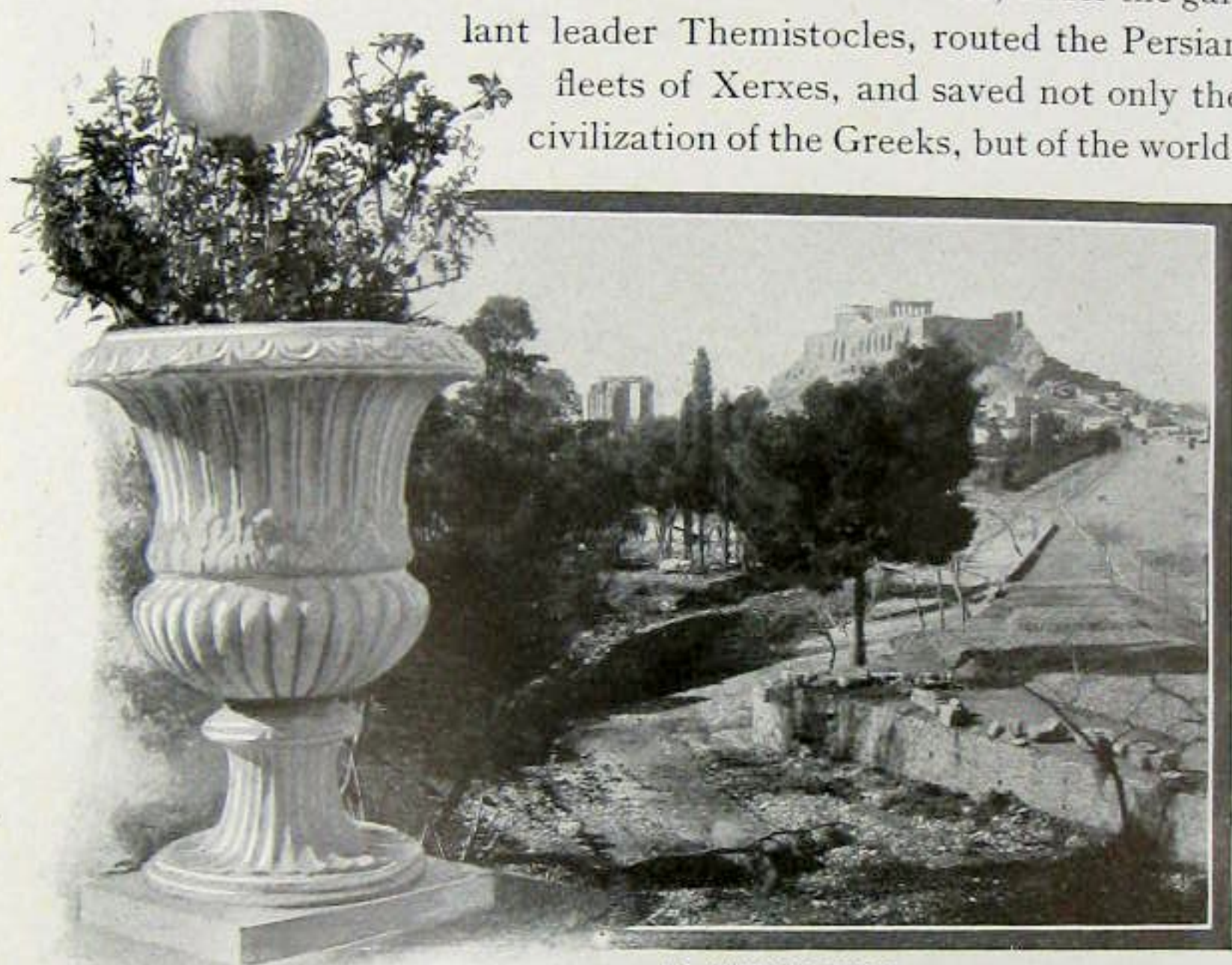
THE CARYATIDS



TEMPLE OF THESEUS



and by a simple reckoning we learn that they have stood here for about nine hundred thousand days—that nearly a million sunsets have gilded these immortal marbles. And see how the glory seems to hover over Salamis and that narrow strait where was fought the greatest naval battle of antiquity! There the Athenians and their allies, under the gallant leader Themistocles, routed the Persian fleets of Xerxes, and saved not only the civilization of the Greeks, but of the world.



AN ATHENIAN VISTA

Photograph by Wm. H. Rau

But if at sunset the Acropolis enchants us, moonlight amid the ruins brings a new inspiration and makes of those who linger there mute poets who feel within themselves a thousand cantos and strive vainly to give forth in words the thoughts that crowd upon them. But since Byron sang, no poet has found voice to utter all that these immortal marbles whisper to him. We are reduced, then, to mute wonder and admiration for the magnificent creations of those old Greeks, which after



more than two thousand years of the world's progress are still the nearest to perfection.

The Greeks of classic times soared higher than the greatest of our moderns in philosophic thought, in poetry, in the drama, in architecture, and in art. All that is best in us has been bequeathed to us by them. Let us, then, ere we bid farewell to Athens, freely and gratefully acknowledge our infinite indebtedness to Greece!



HERMES



