

What's What the World Over

New Phases of the World's Thinking Recorded in Current Periodicals

Who'll Own Salonika . . . A Well Beloved Poet . . . Mexico's Sickness . . . Imperial Dilemma

WHO'LL OWN SALONICA

*"Like a Pearl on a Summer Sea" it Sits,
the Desire of All Nations*

SALONICA, according to Alicia Little, in *The Fortnightly Review*, has never talked much about its dervishes. But besides the dancing dervishes so often written about it has also howling dervishes, though it would be more polite to call them singing dervishes. During our visit we saw fourteen of them with a leader, swaying from side to side and singing not unmusically, till at last they began to jump, if one can call it so, for they never rose off their feet. They were then panting, and from time to time uttered a howl like that of a hoarse dog. This went on for over an hour. One especially exerted himself, raising himself on his feet and bowing from side to side with what appeared like frantic energy. He wore a fez and seemed quite exhausted. But directly the performance was over he came and talked with us quite quietly, showing no sign whatever of agitation beyond that his eyes were somewhat staring. He wanted a Sister of Charity, who was with us, to prescribe for him, because he could not sleep at nights. She felt his pulse and found it quite normal; nor was he even perspiring, though from the extraordinary activity he had shown, one would have expected him to be streaming. And, to crown all, he was being educated at the German college. The other dervishes, when they ceased whirling and howling, looked particularly worthy and discreet members of society. They gave us excellent Turkish coffee both before and after howling, and were quietly courteous, apparently neither flattered nor displeased that people of another race and creed should come and look on at their religious exercises.

Salonica, however, shines in its cemeteries rather than in hospitals. There are many cemeteries for different nationalities, different creeds, but it is the Turkish cemeteries that are the most picturesque, a rose-bush denoting a woman's grave, a sword or fez a man's, with the solemn cypresses over all, such a soothing dark green by day, looking burnished in the

the water always safe to drink when sold by a Turk, are both a lovely and refreshing sight. I have seen Turkish transports arrive, the men letting down buckets and arrangements of string to draw up lemonade and water bottles; nothing more heating. And as the setting sun touches up outlines with a warm rose colour or splashes great warm colour tones, and the evening breeze curls the little crisp waves in the very blue bay, one looks across at Mount Olympus and wonders why "the gods all left it long ago," yet is thankful that at least now Salonica is in itself a museum, as one takes a seat behind the White Tower at the eastern end of its crescent, and, gazing out over "the many-twinkling smile of ocean," meditates on many things.

Like a fair pearl on a summer sea sits Salonica, and the nations all desire her. How would it be if the race that most contributed to her wealth and prosperity were considered thereby to have established a title to the place and the Jewish people established as lords in a free city? For the Greeks have thrown away Salonica. It surely cannot be theirs any more. If only the trees had been encouraged to grow that King George of Greece so enthusiastically planted, they would not only be keeping his memory green, but would be making of Salonica a scene of enchantment that might even rival with Constantinople, that other beautiful apple of discord. Is any nation yet sufficiently enlightened, sufficiently Christian to be trusted with either of these grand sites, the one suggesting Paradise, the other recalling the old dwelling of the gods?

A WELL BELOVED POET

*James Whitcomb Riley's Death Stirs
American Writers*

HE was the best-known, the most instantly recognized figure in our capital, declares Meredith Nicholson, of James Whitcomb Riley, in an article in *The Atlantic Monthly* dealing with the Indianapolis poet. This was true, indeed, of the entire commonwealth that he sang into fame. He was below medium height, neatly and compactly built; fair and of ruddy complexion. He had been a tow-headed boy, and while his hair thinned in later years, any white that crept into it was scarcely perceptible. A broad flexible mouth and a big nose were the distinguishing features of a remarkably mobile face. He was very near-sighted, and the rubber-rimmed glasses he invariably wore served to obscure his noticeably large blue eyes. He was a compound of Pennsylvania Dutch and Irish, but the Celt in him was dominant; there were fairies in his blood.

In his days of health he carried himself alertly and gave an impression of smartness. He was meticulous in the care of his person; there was no slouch about him, no Byronic affectation. He was always curious as to the origin of any garment or piece of haberdashery displayed by his intimates, but strangely secretive as to the source of his own supplies. He affected obscure tailors, probably because they were likelier to pay heed to his idiosyncrasies than more fashionable ones. He once deplored to me the lack of attention bestowed upon the waistcoat by sartorial artists. This was a garment he held of the highest importance in man's adornment. Hopkinson Smith, he averred, was the only man he had ever seen who displayed a satisfactory taste and was capable of realizing the finest effects in this particular.

He inspired affection by reason of his gentleness and inherent kindness and sweetness. The idea that he was a convivial person, delighting in "boon" companions and prolonged sessions at table, has no basis in fact. He was a domestic, even a cloistral being; he disliked noise and large companies; he hated familiarity, and would quote approvingly what Lowell said somewhere about the annoyance of being clapped on the back. Riley's best friends never laid hand on him; I have seen strangers or new acquaintance do so to their discomfiture.

No background of poverty or early hardship can be provided for this "poet of the people." His father was a lawyer, an orator well known in Central Indiana, and Riley's boyhood was spent in comfortable circumstances. The curtailment of his schooling was not enforced by necessity, but was due to his impatience of restraint and inability to adjust his own interests to the prevailing curriculum. He



THE TASK OF SISYPHUS.

Helping Mexico.

—Herald, New York.

spent some time in his father's office at Greenfield, reading general literature, not law, and experimenting with verse. He served an apprenticeship as a house-painter, and acquired the art of "Marbling" and "graining"—long-abandoned embellishments of domestic decoration. Then, with four other young men, he began touring Indiana, painting signs, and, from all accounts, adding greatly to the gayety of life in the communities visited. To advertise their presence, Riley would recite in the market-place, or join with his comrades in giving a musical entertainment. Or, pretending to be a blind painter, he would laboriously climb up on a scaffolding and before the amazed spectators execute a sign in his best style. There was a time when he seemed anxious to forget his early experiences as a wandering sign-painter and entertainer with a patent-medicine van, but more recently he spoke of them quite frankly.

He had a natural talent for drawing; in fact, at one time or another he dabbled in most of the arts. He discoursed to me at length on one occasion of musical instruments, about all of which he seemed to have much curious lore. He had been able to play more or less successfully upon the violin, the banjo, the guitar, and (his humour bubbling) the snare and bass-drum! "There's nothing," he said, "so much fun as thumping a bass-drum," an instrument on which he had performed in the Greenfield band. "To throw your legs over the tail of a band wagon and thump away—there's nothing like it!" As usual when the reminiscent mood was upon him, he broadened the field of the discussion to include strange characters he had known among rural musicians, and these were of endless variety. He had known a man who was passionately fond of the bass-drum and who played solos upon it—"Sacred music!" Sometimes the neighbours would borrow the drum, and he pictured the man's chagrin when, after a hard day's work, he came home and found his favourite instrument gone.

Riley acquired various mechanical devices for creating music and devoted himself to them with childish delight. In one of his gay moods he would instruct a visitor in the art of pumping his player-piano, and, having inserted a favourite "roll," would



Kaiser (to Franz-Josef): "Don't you dare to come into my boat. Don't you see it's leaking?"

—Vsemirny Jourmor, Petrograd.

evening sunshine. Whatever the Turk touches, however negligently, he seems to adorn. The streets, full of latticed windows projecting at different angles, so that in each case she-behind-the-screen may enjoy the view in its fulness, are bewitching not only from the charm of suggestion, but from their pleasing lights and shades. Pavilions, each with a fountain in the middle, looking upon gardens where the luxuriance of the growth is more evident than the repressing hand of the gardener, at once invite to idle away an afternoon or revel in a romance. Then the lemonade and water sellers,