

THE SHRINES OF ATTICA

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Though thy life be fixed in one place, and thou neither sailest the sea nor treadest the paths of the dry land, go at least to Eleusis, that thou mayest see those great nights, sacred to Demeter, through which thou shalt keep thy soul serene among the living and go to join the great host with a lighter heart.

The visitor is well repaid by the charming view across the bay to Salamis. The new town of Eleusis has been moved down from the hill to make way for the excavations. The houses are small, with walled gardens, but the Greeks live mostly out of doors, and the cooking is done in huge stone ovens in the garden. Under a grapevine we saw a woman running a sewing machine, — the scene itself a little patch of new life set into the old garment.

The mountains around Athens always present their challenge to a walker. I was not satisfied till I had scaled Hymettus and got the commanding view of the sea from the top. It is a rough climb, and the ridge is not so near as it seems to be in the clear air of Attica. The unobstructed view gives a good idea of the topography of Athens, lying on the plain between Lycabettus and the Acropolis. Far in the distance rise the snow-capped peaks of Parnes. I found upon Hymettus no bees and no honey, though I am told they are there, but the old ruined monastery of Kæsariani had a picturesque interest, and near it was a shepherd's hut in which mother and daughter were spinning wool on a bobbin, holding one end on the ground and whirling it rapidly. The scene was as archaic as the woman at Eleusis with her sewing machine was modern.