

luxurious yachts, and these beauties attired in the latest and most extravagant Paris fashions. All the blood of the country is congested at Constantinople, while the provinces are starved and anæmic. For every salary that is paid to the collectors of revenue, as much more is stolen and appropriated and never reaches the treasury. The stranger lands at Constantinople with fear and trembling, which he would not feel perhaps if he had carefully measured the venality of the custom-house officers; he leaves splendid waters and scenery with disgust—with a bad taste in his mouth. As I was making my preparations to depart, I learned with surprise that I must have my passport vised before emerging from the Turkish trap. I left it for that purpose with an agent who returned it next day, remarking, "It is quite useless to send this to the consul and pay ten piastres, when every one knows that they will let you off at the custom-house if you pay them three piastres." The ladder which begins with the petty officers of the custom-house ends with the Sultan. When the new railway was laid out which starts at the Golden Horn, and sends fast trains to Vienna, it was obliged to buy the right of way round Seraglio Point at the foot of the Gardens of the Harem. The Grand Vizier was paid one million piastres and the Sultan was paid three million piastres. This was simply a blackmail—the gentle exaction of licensed brigands. The Grand Vizier had of course no rights in the matter; and no one pretended that the beach of Seraglio was damaged to this extent by a railway which any sovereign of any civilized country would have encouraged and assisted to the extent of his ability. Another brigand, Captain Anastase, who stopped and robbed an express train near Adrianople a year ago last May, (1891) cost the company much less than the Sultan. He and his men were captured by Bulgarian gendarmes, and he was discovered, naturally enough, to be a highly respected citizen of Galata, who lived luxuriously not far from my own quarters in Pera. I may mention by the way that the outskirts of the city in some directions are quite deserted on account of the insecurity of life and property; and it is highly characteristic that the Turks should depend on their neighbors of whom they are so jealous, for the favor of having their own brigands captured and hanged. As to the management of the Provinces, I will not go into statistics, but will only give a slight sketch drawn by eye-witnesses. Of all the countries on which I set eyes in my wanderings, the richest, the most superb in opportunities was that of Asia Minor—that vast region of vineclad hills and wheat-bearing plains and