



It is really surprising the Piraeus' growing during the 19th century. From an almost desert town it passed to the second city of Greece. Of course the change of the New Greek state's capital to Athens was a revolution for this area so near Athens that began to attract more and more people from all parts of Greece without stopping.

But not only that, at the end of the 19th century a great number of factors were there to make from Piraeus a leading city, like: the ultimate declaration as the country's leading port (taken this name from Syros), the creation of a rail and road connecting with Athens (1869) and slowly with others cities, the starting of the industrial development of this area from 1860 to 1870, the creation of the Corinth Canal in 1893 that makes Piraeus more strategic than ever and the adoption of the stream by the Greek Navy. The end of the 19th century was really the time of Piraeus; it was really a good opportunity to all those people who tried to make their fortune connected to this city.

At the end of this century Piraeus had suffered such a sudden grown that a lot of new buildings were needed to cover the new necessities . So, a fever of construction dominated the city for those years: educational institutions (the High School, the Rallion Girls' College, the Lyceum - which began operating in 1862 - the elementary schools), churches, the Stock Exchange Building, the Town Hall ...

By the end of the century, all the necessary educational institutions had been built , also many large churches, the Stock Exchange Building, Central Market (1861-63), the old and disappeared Town Hall (known ROLOI or Clock-Tower (1869-73)), the Municipal Theatre (1884-95) and the old Post Office Building (1899-1901), as well as some charity Institutions (the "Tzannion" Hospital, the "Zannion" Orphanage for boys, the Old People's Home, the "Hadjikyriakon" Orphanage for girls).

At the same time the port, vital part of the city, suffered some redefinitions (dredging operations, construction of the Royal Landing, the Troumba Pier and the quay-ways up to the Customs House area, the commencement of construction work on the Outer Moles and the permanent dry-docks) to make it more modern and able to cope with the modern times: 2,500 vessels with a total 1,500,000 tones of cargo per year at the end of the century. But not only the activity of this new Piraeus was dependent of the port and its Merchant Firms, because it was the time of

the establishment of the first factories (the L. Rallis Silk Mills, ship-yards and engineering workshops of Vasiliades, John McDowel and Varvour, Perrakis, Kouppas' silver foundry, the Retsinas, Volanakis and Lyginos Textile Mills, the Dilaveris Tile Works, the Metaxas, Pouris and Barbaressos Distilleries, the Dimokas, Seferlis, Loumos and Panagiotopoulos flour mills, etc.).

Piraeus said goodbye to the 19th century with a population of 51,020 and as the most part of the big cities of the world with the arrival of the electricity: the gas-lighting (1878) was replaced by the electricity between 1903-1904 and in 1904 it was the time for the old train Piraeus-Athens.