THE WORLD TO-DAY

GREECE

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By

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PREFACE

I MUST express my sincere thanks to officials of the Greek Ministry of Information in London, who have provided me with some recent statistics and have also given generous help with the illustrations.

A. W. G.

January 1945

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CHAPTER I

THE TWO TRADITIONS

MODERN Greece—Hellas is her own name—is the heir to two traditions, the Classical and the Byzantine: two traditions so contrary in their natures that it is difficult to imagine their reconciliation. The Greeks of the Classical period, say from 700 to about 250 B.C.—a long period of four and a half centuries—were politically divided into hundreds of small states, wonderfully creative in art, letters, science, politics, philosophy, and commerce, in essentials rationalist and secular, never theocratic, individualist, critical above all things. The states were all Greek in speech and race (which does not mean that the race was pure, whatever that can mean, but that the racial mixture was about the same everywhere); they extended over the whole Aegean area including its northern and Asia Minor coastlands, to Cyprus, the Nile delta and Cyrenaica, the southern and western coasts of Italy as far north as Naples, Sicily, and some parts of the southern coastline of France and north-west Spain, including Marseilles. The Byzantine Empire, on the other hand, was vast in extent, racially divided—it included for long periods Asia Minor as far as the Euphrates, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, the whole of the Balkan peninsula, and, at times, large sections of Italy and North Africa—politically united under an autocratic emperor, secured by a powerful bureaucracy, theocratic, on the whole non-creative and essentially non-critical. The classical Greeks had lived by discussion in politics and in thought; the Byzantines accepted the rule of emperor and priest, living by faith. Their unity was political and religious; and this was (apart from some theological disputes which did not affect the masses) complete.

This great change in outlook had been brought about politically by the conquests of Alexander the Great towards the end of the fourth century and those of Rome in the second and first centuries B.C. These ended, ultimately, the divisions of the Greeks and (according to our point of view) either raised all

mankind to a universal brotherhood or reduced them to an equal subjection; the old Greek homeland became provinces and parts of provinces of a world empire. They also ended Greek creativeness in thought and action. But Alexander's conquests had a further result of overwhelming importance to later Europe as well as to Greece herself: the spread of the Greek language over Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, and northern Egypt—further east as well at the beginning, but there it did not last—by the founding of Greek cities, with Greek institutions, habits, and culture. The Romans, who made Latin the common language throughout the western half of the empire, including in the end the Greek west, did not evict Greek from the eastern half; there Greek became finally rooted till the Arab conquest of Syria and Egypt in the seventh century and the Turkish conquest of Asia Minor in the eleventh. From the first then the Roman Empire was dual in language, with the southern Adriatic as the rough dividing-line between the two halves; yet, since the Romans learned so much from the Greeks, with a unity in the Graeco-Roman 'classical' culture and in the political system.

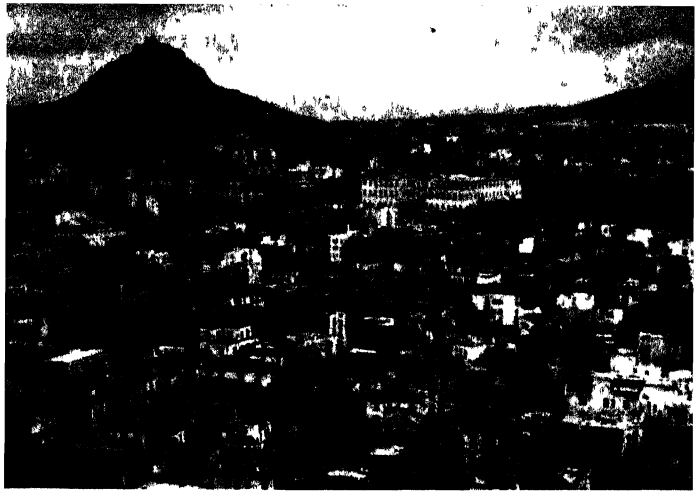
Even the Jews of Palestine were in part hellenized and were surrounded by Greek-speaking peoples; Greek was the language of literature and of trade. Hence the books of the New Testament (and the last books of the Old) were written in Greek; and when the Gospel was preached beyond Palestine, whether to Jews or to Gentiles, it must use the Greek tongue. When learned men began to expand its doctrines, they used the language of Greek philosophy; and a religion which was so entirely Hebrew in origin and which introduced ideas so novel to the classical world became half-Greek in thought. Because there was cultural unity, with no barrier of language or custom, and easy communications, the Apostles naturally went westward over Asia Minor to such old Greek cities as Ephesos, Thessalonike, Athens, and Corinth; because there was yet wider political unity, and no national boundaries, and Greek was still the native language of southern Italy and was understood in Rome, they went beyond the Adriatic into western Europe. Christianity thus became in its early years a European religion; it also became a world religion, supra-national, with a universal appeal.

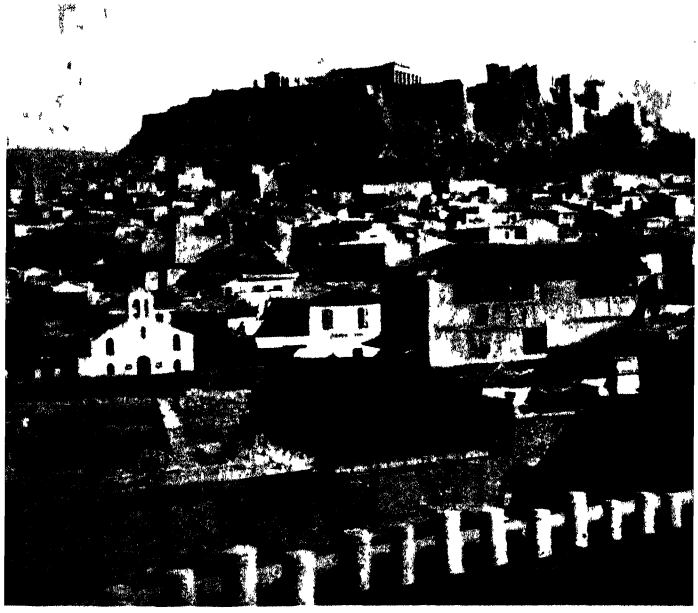
The division, however, between the Latin and Greek halves of the Empire became later more emphatic and more sharply defined. By the third century it had already become administratively convenient to recognize this by a division of authority between co-emperors or their deputies in East and West; and the foundation of Constantinople by Constantine the Great in 325 on the site of the old Greek city of Byzantion (founded, with many another city on the coasts of the Sea of Marmora and the Dardanelles, in the seventh century B.C.), though it was intended to unite the whole empire once more, gave a definite capital and a new life to the eastern half of it. It was still the Roman Empire (the new capital was styled 'Constantinople and New Rome' officially), and the inhabitants were *Romaioi*, citizens of Rome; but, though Latin was at first the official language, Greek was universally spoken, and by the end of the sixth century it had ousted Latin even as the language of administration and law. The destruction of the western half of the Empire by the barbarian invaders in the late fifth and the sixth centuries, the beginning of the Dark Ages there, left the Greek Empire, as the heir to ancient Greece and Rome, for several centuries the one stable guardian of civilization in Europe.

Doctrinal quarrels, moreover, between eastern and western Christians, and the final schism between Pope and Patriarch in the seventh century, emphasized the division; politically, economically, culturally, and now by religious differences, the Eastern Empire was cut off from the West. The Emperor was head of the 'Greek Orthodox' Church (whereas the Papacy, after long struggles, maintained its independence of the political powers in the West), and as such personified the political-religious unity of the Greeks. Nevertheless, in spite of the separation from the Latin West, and many quarrels with it, and despite the constant wars with the non-Christian powers beyond its Eastern frontiers—first with the Sassanid Empire of Persia, then with the Mahometan Arabs—we must not think of the Greek Empire as a national state. It was consciously non-Latin and non-Persian or Arab, consciously both opposed to the Papacy and the upholder of Christianity against the infidel: but it was still the heir to Rome, in conception a world state. When Slav peoples, Serbs and Bulgars, broke into the

northern half of the Balkan peninsula, and were later converted to Christianity (of the Greek Orthodox rite) and for a time conquered and ruled from Constantinople, this meant no break in the political tradition. The Empire was still, as it had always been, non-national and non-racial. The Patriarch, like the Pope, was catholic, oecumenical; and the Emperor was the Emperor of 'the Romans'.

With varying fortunes in war, and with varying boundaries, the empire lasted for several centuries: essentially the same—the home of civilization, but only maintaining it, uncreative; with little enough to show in the arts, except architecture, in letters, in science, and nothing in politics; a large bureaucratic and theocratic machine, living on the past, yet preserving much of it for the future benefit of Europe. The great change came in the eleventh century, about the time when western Europe was waking to a new era, with yet another invasion of peoples from the East, the Seljuk Turks. They failed before Constantinople itself; but their conquest of Asia Minor, strengthened by the second wave of invaders, the Ottoman Turks, in the fourteenth century, proved radical and permanent. It was radical in the sense that nearly everywhere in the Asiatic provinces of the Empire both Christianity and the Greek tongue were finally ousted, and the Mahometan religion and the Turkish language took their place. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Turks conquered almost all that was left of the Byzantine Empire, and much beyond, Constantinople falling in 1453, the last Emperor, Constantine XI, being killed in the final assault. In this extension of their power, however, the Turkish conquest was less radical: the conquered Greeks, like the Slavs to the north, maintained their language and their religion. The Christian Greeks were now limited to the ancient homelands of their pagan ancestors, where they had been since a thousand or two thousand years before Christ—continental Greece, the Ionian islands to the west of it (never conquered by the Turks), all the islands of the Aegean, the coastlands of the north and east Aegean (eastern Macedonia, Thrace, including Constantinople, and the district of Smyrna), the Trebizond province in northern Anatolia, and Cyprus. Only small and scattered groups remained outside of this fairly well defined area: some of them lasted in an isolated pocket as





I. ATHENS

1 THE MODERN TOWN AND MOUNT LYKABETTOS
(*Paul Popper*)

2. VIEW TOWARDS THE ACROPOLIS

far east as Cappadocia till the disaster of 1922, to prove how thorough had been the hellenization effected by the conquests of Alexander and the long rule of his successors.

The new Empire of the Turks in many of its aspects itself continued the traditions of Byzantion; *Sultan-i-Rum*, Ruler of the Romans, was one of the Emperor's titles. It, too, was supra-national and autocratic in government; Constantinople remained the capital. The Turks, when their religious fanaticism was not aroused, were a quiet and tolerant people; the Greeks, the Slavs, and the Syrian Christians were allowed the exercise of their religion and language, and the Jews, not politically active, found a tolerable refuge which was so often denied them in the progressive states of the West. Once their military ambitions and energies were checked, when they were driven off from the siege of Vienna, the Turks proved to be even less active, progressive, and creative than Byzantion had been. The Empire stagnated. During the centuries when the Western peoples were most active in almost every field of human activity, it became a backwater, ignorant and unprosperous. Byzantion had to the end at least preserved a civilization; contacts with the West, begun with Italy at the Renaissance, might have been mutually fruitful (as it was they helped only in the West); but Istanbul (the Turkish name for Constantinople) turned its back. 'Europe' did not include the Balkan peninsula, under Turkish rule; the West looked upon it as infidel and foreign, and forgot its Christian population.

Though Turkey was in many ways the true heir of Byzantion, there was one marked difference between the two Empires: there was now a master race. Under Byzantion, all had been 'citizens of Rome'; the Turks, tolerant as they were of differences in race, culture, and religion, did not attempt to absorb their subjects. All who turned Mahometan became Turks, members of the ruling caste; many Christians of Constantinople took a leading part in the administration, but this did not blur the essential distinction. The non-Turks were divided according to their religion into communities, *millets*: the Greek Orthodox (who included the Rumanians and the Slavs of Serbia and Bulgaria), with the oecumenical Patriarch at Constantinople recognized as their head, the

Armenians, who were Christians of the monophysite sect, under their own Patriarch, the Jews, and others. These religious heads were given authority each over all the members of his community, in civil and religious matters. There developed a tendency to identify religions with national and language groups, a tendency which had indeed been present in the early days of the schismatic Churches of Armenia, Syria, and Alexandria, but which in theory at least had been vigorously resisted. The identification became practically complete during the course of the nineteenth century from political causes. The Serbs got their own Patriarch or metropolitan in 1830 with their political independence (the Greeks about the same time declared their own church autocephalous and independent of the Patriarch, though in full communion with Constantinople—this was to protect it from Turkish influence), the Rumanians theirs in 1860.[1] Most interesting of all was the creation of the Bulgarian *Exarchate* by the Sultan in 1870; for the Bulgarians were both Orthodox and still subjects of Turkey (in Bulgaria and Macedonia); they were formed into a separate *millet* with their own Exarch at Constantinople, and so for the first time a purely racial and language group with its own religious head was created among the Orthodox within the Empire. The Exarchate was denounced by the Patriarch as heretical for this reason; the Church was Catholic, universal for all who accepted its doctrine, not national. But it survived; and one effect of it was that henceforth the Patriarch represented in practice only the Greek subjects of Turkey, who spoke and felt as Greeks (with a few exceptions as among the orthodox Albanians), just as the autocephalous metropolitan of Athens in the independent Greek state was the religious head of all other Greeks. The old universal Church had, by force of circumstances, and by no change in doctrine or in theory, became national in scope and feeling. It was national in feeling not only in relation to the Mahometan Turks, but to Latin Christianity in the West. The old hostility between the Papacy and the Greek Orthodox Church had been revived and intensi-

[1] The Russian Church, united in doctrine with Constantinople, had been independent since the end of the sixteenth century—again for political reasons, since the Patriarch was a subject of the Sultan, whose consent was necessary for his election.

fied by the Frankish invasions in the thirteenth century; the warriors of the Fourth Crusade, as a prelude to the liberation of the Holy Land from the infidel, seized Constantinople, for so long the bulwark of Christianity against Arab and Turk, and held it for some sixty years, and by this single act did more than anybody to weaken the resistance of the Greeks two centuries later. Other Frankish princes, and the Italian republics of Genoa, Florence, and Venice, carved out portions of Greek land for themselves. Their rule was, in general, brief, ineffective, and unpopular; many Greeks were prepared to welcome even the Turks in exchange. The Greeks were cut off from Western civilization almost as much by their hostility to the Latins as by the depressing blight which descended on the people from Turkish rule. Only Venetian rule in the Ionian islands, till the French captured them in the Napoleonic wars, and in Crete, till the Turkish conquest in the latter half of the seventeenth century, proved more lasting and of some benefit to the subject people. Even so, the West gained more from it than the Greeks: El Greco, 'the Greek', whose name was Doménikos Theotokópoulos, was a Cretan.

What is meant by saying that the modern Greek state is the heir as much to the Classical as to the Byzantine tradition, after the long period of fifteen centuries since the foundation of Constantinople, or, to give a truer picture, of two thousand years since the hellenization of western Asia and the Roman conquest? To instance a symbolic action, why did the Greeks after 1821 give themselves the classical name of Hellenes and call their country Hellas, seeing that they still called themselves Romans (Ῥωμιοί) and their language Romaic? The answer is complex. In part it was because the Byzantine Greeks, including the learned men of the Church, different as their outlook on life was, were themselves still under the influence of classical Greece—the early Church Fathers were men of learning in the classics; the classics had not died and the use of the language was continuous; and though in the early centuries of Christianity the name Hellene had come to be used most often of those who still clung to paganism, in later times the learned once again began to call their countrymen by this name. In fact, in language, as in most else, the Byzantines were uncreative, and the historians and theologians to the end,

like the last pagan authors and the early Fathers, tried only to write 'correct' Greek, that is, Greek of the fourth and third centuries B.C.; and during the first hundred years of the life of the new state there has been a struggle between those who would use in school and books this 'correct' language and others who would base the written naturally on the spoken tongue.

More important are, first, the fact already emphasized that after the Turkish conquest the Greeks were confined to their old classical homelands, and secondly, the new national character of the Church. The main achievement of Alexander the Great and of the Romans was the creation of the world-state. That was the great break with the past; and this had now ended. Modern Greece, in this sense, was more like classical than Roman and Byzantine Greece: it was small, independent, and national in character. And because it occupied the original homelands, all the influences of geography played their part in the same direction: the people were living in essentially the same physical surroundings as in the centuries before Alexander with much the same boundaries to the outside world. That outside world had changed out of all knowledge, and modern Greece could not in consequence develop politically as ancient Greece had done; but the physical conditions of life within the state were not very different from what they were in classical times.

CHAPTER II

THE LAND—NATURAL ECONOMY AND COMMUNICATIONS

CONTINENTAL Greece, the nucleus of the modern state, is a land dominated by a long and intricate coastline and a mountainous interior. The mountains are not particularly high—Olympos, the highest, is below 10,000 feet—and, most of them, not very forbidding barriers to communication; but they occupy a vast part of the land. They are generally steep and rocky limestone masses; in the eastern half of the country, south of Thessaly, including most of the islands, where the rainfall is light, they are often bare, with little, if any, surface soil, and grow only scrub, food for many flocks of goats. In the west and north-west, they are largely covered with forest, of fir, with some oak, and beech in the north. Pine-woods are common in the hill-country, especially in Attica and Boeotia. Up the lower slopes of the mountains the land is terraced by stone walls and minute and stony fields laboriously maintained. Towards the coast and in the folds of the mountains are the plains, small in area, though some of them are of remarkable fertility. In particular, for the most part Greece lacks broad alluvial plains formed by the silt brought down by large rivers. In long stretches of the coast, and the Aegean islands, the mountains slope steeply down to the sea and under the sea, so that deep water is found inshore, and there is no chance that the soil made by the disintegration of the rocks by the weather should form a plain at the mountain foot; it is all washed into the sea. Plato said long ago of the country of south-east Attica (compared with what it was supposed to have been in a long-previous, mythical age):

> We must notice that Attica extends into the sea like a promontory, and that she has therefore a longer coast-line than the neighbouring states. Moreover the sea that surrounds her is very deep close in to the shore. But in the course of the long period with which we are dealing, there were, naturally, many floods, which swept away the soil from the high-lying parts of the country; but this phenomenon

did not, as in many other countries, lead to the formation of any alluvial plains or deltas worth talking about. This is owing to the depth of the adjacent sea. The light soil was simply washed away by the waters and sank to the bottom. The result was—exactly as in the small islands of the Aegean —that what is left resembles the skeleton of an emaciated body; the good productive earth has disappeared. Where there are now nothing but barren limestone rocks there used to be rounded hills; and where there is now nothing but stony soil yielding a meagre harvest, there used to be fertile fields. Further, at that period the hills were well wooded, even those that now can only maintain bees. Moreover, the rain, instead of rushing uselessly to the sea in streams enclosed in rocky channels, was absorbed into the soft earth and filtered through it, so that there were springs and streams in plenty, which also added to the fertility of the soil.[1]

The Greeks have a story that when the world was made, God put all the earth through a sieve and set down some good soil here, which was one country, and some there which was another, and threw all the stones over his shoulder, and that was Greece.

There is a great variety of scene and type of country. The small plains of Attica between the mountains, all open to the sea and with the most delectable climate, have but a light soil, suitable for the olive-tree and the vine, not good for corn, especially not for wheat. Just to the north are the rather larger plains of Boeotia, enclosed by hills from the sea, suitable for corn, colder in winter and hotter in summer, with hills good for grazing. In the Peloponnese, the two plains in the south, in Lakonia and Messenia, are of great richness: beneath rows of olive-trees, barley is succeeded by maize in the same season, and fruits, orange, fig, and mulberry, as well as the vine, grow abundantly. In the west of peninsular Greece, where there is much more rainfall, the Ionian islands, except rocky Ithâke,

[1] *Critias* 1.11 (Burnet's paraphrase). It is often said that the denuding of the mountains of soil and of trees, and even a consequent change of climate, is the result of modern carelessness in Turk and Greek alike. There is little evidence that where the mountains are now bare they were covered with forest in classical times; and the extent of existing woods and forests is often underrated. Plato's own picture of a much earlier age of fertility is of very doubtful truth.

are as fertile as man could desire; but on the mainland, mountains almost everywhere predominate, to a degree remarkable even in Greece. Further north, the plains and lower hills of Thessaly, shut in by high mountains on all sides and watered by a true river system, give good soil for wheat and for grazing. But the richest land, in extent and depth of soil, is in Macedonia and Thrace. There the large rivers water the inland plains and have formed true alluvial plains near the sea. Here and in Thessaly is the best land in Greece.

The country is poor in minerals: some lignite ('brown coal') of not very high quality, emery on the island of Naxos, bauxite, magnesite in Chalkidiké, lead in Attica; and there is not much else. Attempts to find oil in worth-while quantities have failed altogether. 'Poverty and Greece are sisters.'

If you take the country as a whole, Greece is thinly populated. It had some 7,000,000 inhabitants in 1939 in an area of about 130,000 square kilometres or 53 per square kilometre. This compares with

Bulgaria	.. ..	53	per square kilometre
Rumania	.. ..	61	,, ,, ,,
Italy ..	.. ..	132	,, ,, ,,

and with the much higher densities in such fully industrialized states as Holland (225), Belgium (265), and England and Wales (254). But by the nature of the country, though wide mountainous zones are never far away, if we take the richer provinces by themselves we find, of course, higher ratios: in Attica and Boeotia (which are combined in one province, the latter being almost entirely rural), because of the capital and Peiraeus, the largest port, 153 per square kilometre;[1]

Saloníka	.. ..	74	per square kilometre
Ionian Islands ..	..	110	,, ,, ,,
Chios ..	.. ..	80	,, ,, ,,
Mytiléne	.. ..	80	,, ,, ,,
Samos ..	.. ..	80	,, ,, ,,
Elis ..	.. ..	70	,, ,,
Messenia	.. ..	72	,,

[1] 1928 figures; a good deal increased since then.

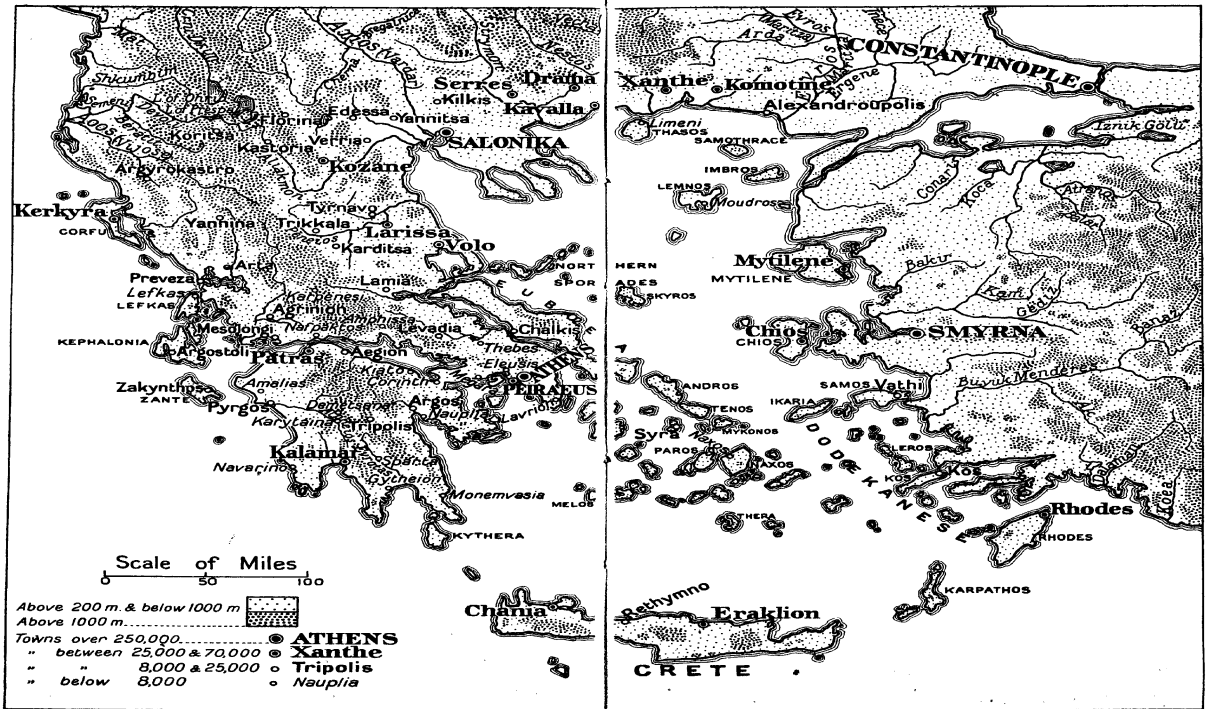
Contrast with the three most mountainous parts:

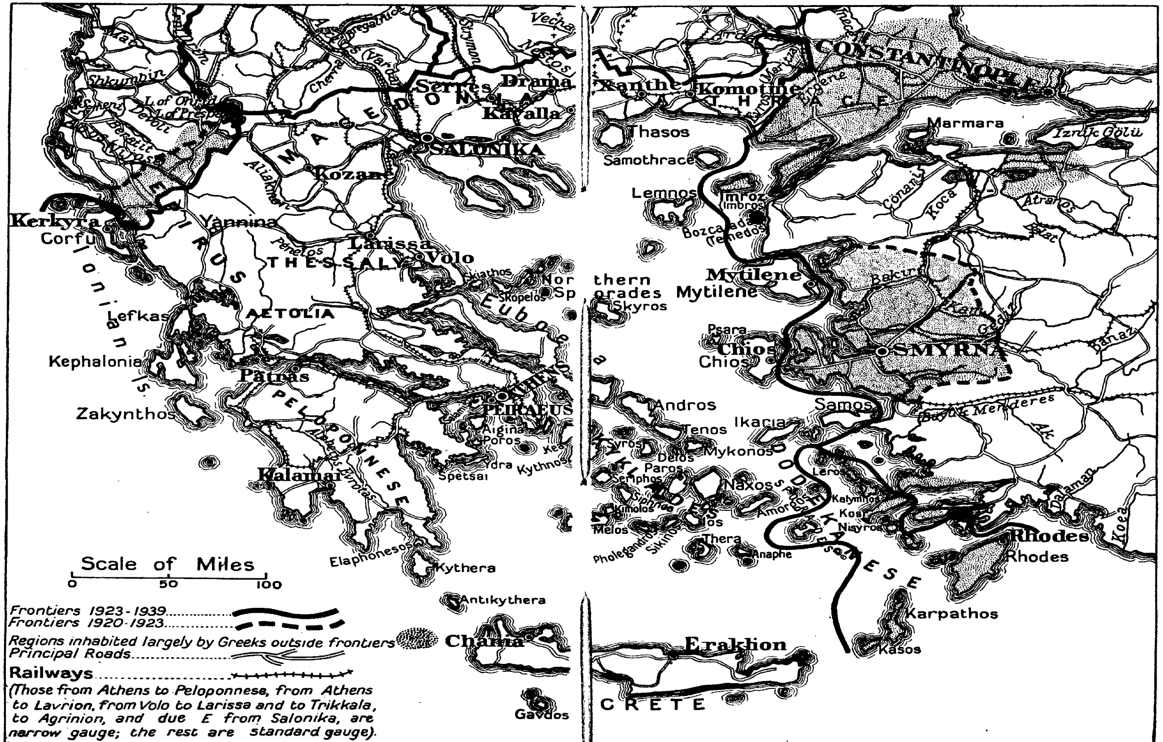
Lakonia	.. ..	32	per square kilometre
Aitolia-Akarnania	..	28	,, ,, ,,
Epeiros	.. ..	33	,, ,, ,,
Kozáne ..	.. ..	26	,, ,, ,,

Yet in spite of this over-all comparative sparsity of population, Greece is unable to feed herself in the basic food, bread: in the most favourable seasons, she cannot grow more than two-thirds of her requirements in wheat and barley. That is because more than half of the country is barren; she has too large a population for her arable area. For milk she depends in the main on large flocks of goats and sheep; dairy cows are rare, for with its Mediterranean climate and long dry summers Greece is not a grass-growing country as we understand it, and butter is scarce. Olive-trees, which can do with a light soil and grow in most parts except the plains of Thessaly, Boeotia, and Macedonia and the high mountain country, are abundant: and olive-oil takes the place of butter. Vines also flourish in most parts, and the Greeks are a sober, wine-drinking people; the special variety of currant-vine, which grows in certain districts only—the thin strip of fertile soil along the southern shore of the Gulf of Corinth (the word 'currant' is a development from 'raisins de Corinthe'), and in Messenia, especially—is primarily a valuable article of export. Mediterranean fruits are grown in the south, mainly oranges, peaches, melons, figs, and almonds; also cherries, but most mid- and north-European fruits such as apples, pears, and plums, though grown in the northern parts of the country, cannot compare in quality with those grown in central and northern Europe.

Lastly, and of vast importance to Greek economy, there is the cultivation of tobacco. Most of what we call Turkish tobacco (because it came from Macedonia when Macedonia was under Turkish rule), including that used in Egyptian cigarettes, comes from Greece; the rest from Bulgaria and certain areas of Turkey. The best Greek varieties are grown in Macedonia and in the provinces of Sérres and Dráma; but much also in the neighbourhood of Vólo, in Aitolia, and in Argolis.

In so mountainous a country inland communications are


CONSTANTINOPLE
Xanthe
Komotini
Alexandroupolis
Limeni
THASOS
SAMOTHRACE
IMBROS
LEMNOS
Moudros
Mytilene
MYTILENE
SKYROS
Chios
CHIOS
SMYRNA
Vathi
SAMOS
ANDROS
TENOS
IKARIA
Syra
SYROS
PAROS
NAXOS
Rhodes
RHODES
KARPATHOS
Kos
Rethymno
Eraklion
CRETE
Serres
Drama
Kilkis
Kavalla
Edessa
Yannitsa
SALONIKA
Kozane
Kastoria
Florina
Kerkyra
CORFU
Yannina
Trikkala
Larissa
Karditsa
Volo
Arta
Preveza
Lefkas
LEFKAS
Lamia
Agrinion
Mesolongi
KEPHALONIA
Argostoli
Patras
Aegion
Thebes
Chalkis
Zakynthos
ZANTE
Pyrgos
Amalias
Corinth
PEIRAEUS
Argos
Nauplia
Tripolis
Kalamai
Navarino
Monemvasia
MELOS
KYTHERA
Chania
Scale of Miles
0 50 100
Above 200 m. & below 1000 m
Above 1000 m.
Towns over 250,000. ATHENS
" between 25,000 & 70,000 Xanthe
" " 8,000 & 25,000 Tripolis
" below 8,000 Nauplia



CONSTANTINOPLE
THRACE
MACEDONIA
Xanthe
Komotine
Serres
Drama
Kavalla
SALONIKA
Kozane
Strymon
Nestos
Vardar
Thasos
Samothrace
Lemnos
Imroz (Imbros)
Bozcaada (Tenedos)
Marmara
Izmit Gölü
Kerkyra
Corfu
Yannina
EPIRUS
Larissa
Volo
THESSALY
AETOLIA
Lefkas
Kephalonia
Zakynthos
Ionian Is.
Patras
ATHENS
PEIRAEUS
Aigina
Poros
Spetsai
Kea
Kythnos
Euboea
Skiathos
Skopelos
Skyros
Northern Sporades
Mytilene
Psara
Chios
SMYRNA
Samos
Ikaria
Andros
Tenos
Mykonos
Syros
Delos
Paros
Naxos
Seriphos
Siphnos
Kimolos
Melos
Ios
Sikinos
Pholegandros
Thera
Anaphe
Amorgos
Leros
Kalymnos
Kos
Nisyros
Rhodes
Karpathos
Kasos
DODEKANESE
KYKLADES
PELOPONNESE
Kalamai
Elaphonesos
Kythera
Antikythera
Chania
Gavdos
Eraklion
CRETE
Büyük Menderes
Scale of Miles
0 50 100
Frontiers 1923-1939
Frontiers 1920-1923
Regions inhabited largely by Greeks outside frontiers
Principal Roads
Railways
(Those from Athens to Peloponnese, from Athens to Lavrion, from Volo to Larissa and to Trikkala, to Agrinion, and due E from Salonika, are narrow gauge; the rest are standard gauge).

difficult. There are no navigable rivers, and, except for a few in which timber can be floated downstream, none is of use for transport; and very few of the river valleys form natural highways—many of the larger ones run athwart the lines of communication and are obstacles, not a help to travel. Contrast the Rhone valley in Switzerland and the Vardar and Morava in southern Yugoslavia, and as well those on the west coast of Asia Minor which was Greek in population till 1922. Though stone for the making of roads is found everywhere, it is friable limestone; in the long dry summers the surface is loosened, and the heavy storms of autumn complete the damage already done. Add to this that the Greeks have never been much given to engineering, and it will be understood that there are few roads and railways and none of superlative quality. Indeed, Greece has a much smaller road and rail mileage than any other European country: due, partly, it is true, to the fact that unlike Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, for instance, it does not lie on an international route, but mainly to the nature of the land. The routes taken by the principal railways will illustrate this. That from Kalamáta in south-eastern Peloponnese must climb to over 2,000 feet to the central Arkadian plains, and more steeply down to the sea south of Argos; thence over not very high hills to Corinth, and along the rocky, winding coast to Attica. That from Patras to Corinth does not climb but must wind about along the narrow strip of flat land that fringes the coast. The important line from Athens to Saloníka climbs first round the shoulders of Mt. Parnes and down to the Boeotian plain, and then by a gradual ascent for fifty or sixty miles up the Kephissós valley—a true natural route; but thence, at 1,000 feet above the sea, over deep valleys and by tunnels through mountains, to a cliff face above the Spercheiós, down which it descends to sea-level to cross the valley (about twelve miles wide). Then at once steeply up again to 1,500 feet and more across the wide mountain barrier before Thessaly, and as steeply down to the plains; then at last from Lárissa by the Peneiós valley and the Vale of Tempe to the east coast, and northwards by the sea, across the Aliakmon and Axiós rivers near their mouths, to Saloníka. The main line to central Europe goes north by the natural route of the Axiós (Vardar) valley till it enters Yugoslavia; but that to the

east, through eastern Macedonia and Thrace to Constantinople, though it climbs no great heights, yet must go a roundabout way to avoid them, and cross, not travel along the major valleys, the Strymón, the Nestós, and the Evros. And because the lines must go by these mountainous ways, they can serve but a sparse population *en route*—there is no town larger than Lárissa (30,000) and Vólo (40,000) served by the 320-mile stretch between Athens and Saloníka, none larger than Trípolis (28,000) between Kalamáta and Athens. It is not therefore surprising that all the railways are single-tracked, and that Greece counts her locomotives by tens where other countries, not much larger, count theirs in hundreds, and her rolling-stock by hundreds where others count in tens of thousands.

This deficiency, however, is in part made up by the ease of sea-travel. With numbers of small but safe harbours all along the much-indented coast, and deep water inshore generally, it has always been a Greek habit to travel by sea; and small coasting steamers for passengers and cargo are familiar sights everywhere. The many islands are of course only reached by sea; but not only are the more inaccessible small ports, as those on the north coast of the Gulf of Corinth, on the east of the Peloponnese and in Epeiros, served most easily in this way, but it is still common and convenient to go by sea from Kaválla to Saloníka, from Saloníka to Vólo, Chalkís and Peiraeus, and from Peiraeus to Patras *en route* to the Ionian islands and Epeiros. When the Greeks in the recent war drove the Italians from the port of Santi Quaranta and aimed to reach Valóna, it was not only to deprive the enemy (who was wholly dependent on ports) of the use of them, but to provide themselves with a new supply route by sea; by far the easiest method of communication for supplies, whether from Peiraeus or Patras, to the armies in Epeiros was by sea to the base of Préveza, and thence for the left wing of the army, by sea up the coast. Only the right wing was supplied largely by the railway from Saloníka to Flórina. In the Balkan wars of 1912–13, the two Greek armies advancing due north, the one from Lárissa against Saloníka and the other from Préveza (after its early indispensable capture) into Epeiros, had no land communications with each other; the latter was supplied

wholly by sea from Athens—so great is the barrier of the Pindos mountains that stretch down in the western half of the peninsula from Albania to the Corinthian Gulf.

It must not however be supposed that in consequence of poor inland communications, the idea of travel from village to village in the interior is foreign to the Greeks. On the contrary, travel over rough mountain paths, on foot and with pack animals (mule or mountain-pony), is usual; and really isolated villages, and peasants who have not been outside their own narrow district, are rare. Commercial travellers visit villages in the mountains as well as those that can be reached by road or railway or by sea. It is one of the delights of travel in Greece, for the wise foreigner, that not only is hospitality so generously offered, but the stranger so easily accepted; and in walking over those lovely hills with a pack-animal and its owner as guide, one is in closer contact with individuals than elsewhere and dependent on their goodwill and sociability rather than on the somewhat impersonal qualities of good or bad hotels, punctual or unpunctual transport.

This general picture of the country will help to explain what was said in the last chapter, that modern Greece is at least as much the heir to classical Greece as to Byzantion; for the picture has in essentials remained unchanged. Some new products have been introduced, as the orange and the all-important tobacco; but the natural features of the land are still the same—the mountains, bare or forested, the poor communications, the tiny valleys, the varied soil and climate, the sea-coast, these still determine the conditions of life for the majority—the dependence on goats for milk, on sheep for meat (eaten with economy), on the olive and vine, on sea-travel and, above all, on the import of a good proportion of the necessary wheat. As soon as towns begin to flourish and the population increases much beyond the minimum who can live off their own farmlands, corn has to be imported. In this, as in the true national character of the inhabitants, the modern state is much more akin to classical than to Byzantine Greece, and Athens, not Constantinople, is its natural capital. Its citizens are Hellenes again, not Romans.

CHAPTER III

POLITICAL HISTORY, 1831–1910

THE Turks have many good qualities, but their admirers will not claim for them that they have been good rulers of their subject peoples in Europe. A certain lazy tolerance is the best that can be said for them; uncivilized by our standards, uncreative by any, incapable of ordinary administration, they made of their European provinces at least a land materially unprosperous, culturally nothing, spiritually discontented because the ruler was alien in race, language, and religion—a forgotten, but not a peaceful or happy backwater, when the rest of Europe was cultivating all its energies. For nearly four hundred years Turkey ruled in the Balkans, for longer in some provinces; and during that period, though the Church and a few schools kept the Christian spirit just alive, the peoples were reduced to a poor and ignorant peasantry. There were prosperous Greeks indeed in Salonika, Constantinople, and Smyrna; Yánnina was always a Greek centre, but beyond these towns (all of which, as it turned out, were excluded at first from the new state of Greece) and a few centres in the Peloponnese, there was little education and less wealth.

The Greeks, after some abortive attempts, rose in rebellion in 1821. There was revolutionary thought, amongst the intelligentsia, in many parts of the Greek world, especially in Constantinople; it was inspired by the ideas of the French Revolution; but the centre of active resistance was among the peasants of the Peloponnese and, a little later, of central Greece, Aitolia, and Epeiros, and in the islands of the Aegean. The priesthood supported them. The struggle was marked by much heroism, by strife between rival chieftains, and between them and the few Greek leaders who appeared from outside—Kapodístrias from Kérkyra (who had served in Russia under the Tsar), Mavrogordáto from Constantinople—and by the savage cruelty inevitable in a war of this kind. The early years

were marked by many local successes of the Greeks on both land and sea, and a good deal of territory was freed. The concert of European powers, still governed by the principles of legitimacy that had conquered revolutionary France—autocracy in Russia, Austria, Prussia, constitutional oligarchy in England—was officially opposed to the Greeks' rebelling against their lawful sovereign the Sultan; but many notable men from all parts of Europe came to their aid, inspired by their ideas of freedom, by the romantic movement, and by enthusiasm for the classical past—*not* by much feeling for the cause of Christian against Turk, nor by any for Byzantine Greece. The greatest and most inspiring of these men was Byron, then the greatest figure in European literature except Goethe; and his early death during the siege of Mesolónghi in 1824 in a manner secured the ultimate success of the Greek cause. For all that was active and creative in European thought was opposed to 'legitimacy' and autocracy; that thought and the long-drawn-out struggle of the Greeks won the day against the governments. An Egyptian army, brought over by the Sultan, conquered and savagely laid waste the Peloponnese in 1825–6, and most of the country north of the Gulf of Corinth was lost; but a combined fleet from England, France, and Russia—a fleet of the reactionary powers—destroyed the Turkish fleet in the Battle of Navaríno next year, and the war was virtually over. Not long after, Greece was recognized as an independent state.

The new kingdom—for a king was found for Greece in the Bavarian prince Otho—was formed from what was only a small part of the Greek world. Only what was later called Central Greece, the Peloponnese, and the islands of the western half of the Aegean were included in its boundaries; Thessaly and Epeiros and all the lands to the north, the rich islands along the coast of Asia Minor and the coastlands themselves, Crete, and the Ionian islands were left outside, all but the last under Turkish rule: the Ionian islands had never been under Turkey, having been kept intact by Venice when nearly all the rest of Greece had been conquered in the fifteenth century and having passed as a protectorate into the power of Great Britain during the Napoleonic wars. What were by and large the richest Greek lands, and especially the best corn-growing lands,

were outside the new state. It was a state that was just viable, but could scarcely prosper even if its circumstances had been favourable; and they were far from that.

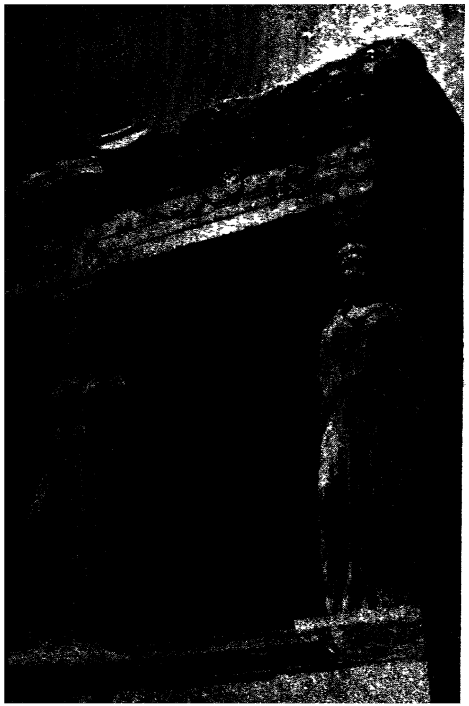
The Turkish method of government of the subject races of the Empire was essentially negative, but it had the merits of its kind: nothing was done for them, but so long as they were quiet, and paid their taxes and their rents, they were left to themselves. The Greeks under the Patriarch at Constantinople (elected by the Church, in the established constitutional way, subject to the approval of the Sultan as he had previously been subject to the approval of the Greek Emperor), were allowed the freedom of their religion, their own schools, and a considerable measure of local self-government. Where the land was rich, it was owned by Turkish *beys*, who were, however, mostly absentee landlords; where it was poor, as in the wide mountain districts, it was left to the peasants. In either case the Greek villages largely looked after themselves, electing their own leaders (*árchontes* or *demogérontes*—the old titles survived); and, within the limits of the new kingdom, practically all the population was Greek. A few Turks lived in the towns, all small, which were the centres of administration, that is of tax-gathering—Athens, Patras, Trípolis, Lamía, and one or two others, the populations of which were again mostly Greek. Only in Thessaly, Macedonia, and Thrace was there a true mixed population of Christian and Turk, with many wholly Turkish villages. Within the new state, however, the natural poverty of the land had been increased by the bitter struggles of seven years of warfare; olive-groves and vineyards cut down, the cornfields neglected, schools and churches destroyed, the considerable merchant fleet, which had played a notable part in the war, largely lost, the population, never big, had decreased, and consisted in the main of a backward and ignorant and now embittered peasantry, led by jealous chieftains, most of them as ignorant as their followers. There was no tradition of central administration, and the local self-government of tranquil times had been broken up. There was scarcely a road in the country; the many natural harbours had no equipment; and, except among the intelligentsia (who mostly came from lands outside the new state), there had been little or no communication with the European world for many

a century. The state began with small resources; and almost everything must be done from the beginning.

The educated few were inspired, as has been said, by the ideas of the French Revolution and, to some degree, by English constitutional principles, by the growing nationalist thought in Europe, and by a dream of the revival of classical Hellas. They were anti-clerical, or at least against the domination of politics and more particularly of the schools by the Church. In all this they were consciously opposed to the Byzantine tradition, which was non-national, autocratic, and religious. Freedom of thought and of political debate, as it was understood, in its different forms, in the France and England of the day, and as it had been understood in the classical age of Greece, had not played any part in the Byzantine Empire.

Yet there were cross-currents. Because the new state included so small a part of the Greek world, the desire to expand, to free more and more Greeks from the autocratic and infidel Turk, was inevitable; and equally inevitable, in many breasts at least, this desire became one for the return of the Greek Empire, with Constantinople as the capital—Athens could only be capital of part of the Greek world. It was a desire inspired by nationalist ideas, but it would have led back to non-nationalist Byzantion, and away from Athens, the natural centre of a Hellas inspired by classical ideas.

A further confusion was caused by the struggle, intensely waged, over the language question. In the course of centuries the Greek language had changed and developed, as Latin developed into Italian, French, and the other Romance languages, though it is remarkable how little it was affected by the languages of the many invading peoples—Romans, Slavs, Albanians, Franks, Italians, and Turks; and just as in the West Latin remained for long the language of the Church, of the Courts, of learning, indeed of most that was written down, so did classical Greek (or rather the later version of it, as practised by writers, both Pagan and Christian, of the first two or three centuries after Christ) remain the official written language of the Eastern Christians. Moreover, as the language in which all of the New Testament had been originally composed, it was especially sacred. And in uncreative Byzantion no poet did what Dante did in Italy—establish the vernacular as the



II. ANCIENT SCULPTURE

1. CARYATIDS O THE ERECTHEUM ATHENS (*Paul Popper*)

2. STONE LION AT DELOS (*Paul Popper*

language of literature and a proper vehicle for thought. A purist and pedantic Greek was written till the end of the Byzantine Empire, and survived after that in the Church and the schools; there was some vernacular poetry, particularly in Crete, but it was not powerful enough to break the spell, and was little known until modern scholarship rediscovered it. Hence by the beginning of the nineteenth century the vernacular (Romaic as it was called, the language of the Romioi or Romans—above, p. 8) was represented only in everyday speech—of learned and unlearned alike—and by folk-songs, and was split up into dialects, some of them mutually almost unintelligible. Which of these tongues was to be officially spoken and taught in the new kingdom, a rude peasant speech, or rather one of several peasant dialects, or the rich and varied ancient speech consciously altered to suit modern needs? Two men stand out as the leaders of the two schools. One, Koraés (1748–1833), a great scholar, who came from Chios or Smyrna, and had long been settled in Paris and had lived there through the Revolution and after, supported the 'purist' view, though being a humanist as well as a *savant* he sought rather to 'purify' the vernacular of 'corrupt' words, idioms, and grammar than to impose the ancient tongue. The Church, naturally reactionary and jealous of its own learning and for the speech of the Sacred Books and the Fathers, supported this side. The leader of the other side was Solomós (1798–1857), from Venetian-held and almost Italianate Zákynthos, a poet of European fame in his day,[1] who attempted to do for Greek what Dante had done for Italian, and establish the vernacular as the written speech. Something will be said about this conflict later; here only the political aspect is to be noted: for the advocates both of classical Hellas and of Byzantion supported Koraés, yet it was entirely nationalist feeling that inspired the supporters of the vernacular. Solomós in particular, the author of the *Hymn to Liberty*, was quite conscious of this. Athens soon became the home of the champions of both sides.

One further point. The foreign rulers of Greece, or parts of

[1] He was a good poet too; but (so obscure was the Greek state) he was later forgotten, and does not get a mention in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* of 1911. Those who wish to learn about a most interesting man and his time should read Jenkins's excellent book about him.

Greece, the Franks and the Turks, had left not only no tradition of government and administration, but no fine buildings, palaces, or churches as memorials of their presence. That the Turks had not was no great harm—a negative attitude to their subjects was the greatest benefit they could bestow; but even Florence and Venice had failed to build. True that in the Ionian islands, so long held by the latter, the great charm of the towns, particularly Kérkyra and Zákynthos, is due to their mixed Italian and Greek character, with a strong element of the former; but contrast Sicily, where the monuments of former alien rule are so prominent and so splendid—Saracen, Norman, Spanish; the history of civilized Sicily is there for all to see and feel, from the classical Greek period, through Rome, to modern times. But in Greece, apart from some good Venetian walls (the best at Kándia in Crete and Methóne in the south-western Peloponnese), the ruins of a few Frankish castles, mostly ill-built with much re-use of material of the classical period, and a mosque or two, the foreigner has left nothing; and a few precious Byzantine churches, especially in Saloníka, with fine paintings and mosaics within, are almost the only visible monuments of the long period between classical and modern times. There is no continuity, as elsewhere in Europe; the contrast between ancient and modern is violent, and would be more than violent but that the modern even in its least attractive or its most poverty-stricken form, like the ancient, fits in well with the landscape. The towns all had to be built as new, and of no town is this so true as of Athens.

Because the Hellenic Kingdom must begin afresh, a brand-new pattern for it, based on the Western model, must be adopted. The old tradition of local self-government—anyhow upset by the War of Independence—was ignored, and a highly centralized state established. This might have served well as a beginning, had the two essentials of a centralized state, a competent bureaucracy and a united leadership (whether in one or in many hands), been there. But there were no experienced officials, and the leaders were many, and most at enmity with each other: warrior chieftains who had played a prominent part in the fighting, 'foreign' Greeks who had had some experience of administration but had no sympathy with nor understanding of the peasantry, well-meaning Philhellenes from

Europe, and a horde of stiff Bavarians who came in to guide the young king. The king himself wanted to play the part of benevolent autocrat without the benevolence or the brains for the part; and over and above all this, there were the representatives of the three 'Protecting Powers', England, France, and Russia, each nervous that the others were trying to take the opportunity to establish their supremacy in the eastern Mediterranean, and to this end playing off one Greek politician against another. A small truncated state, with little natural wealth, already burdened with a foreign debt, a population of not much more than half a million, its capital a small provincial town reduced in the wars to a village and its best harbour possessed of a wooden platform for equipment;[1] with the need for tranquillity to recover from a destructive and demoralizing war, but with vast ambitions for a revival of classical Hellas or of the Byzantine Empire: it is little wonder that in these conditions and with such a government, progress was slow.

There is no need for any but a most summary account of the political history of the country for the first eighty years or so (till 1910) of its independence. The attempt of the Bavarians to rule without the forms of constitutional government was ended in 1843 when a 'revolution', that is, threats of violence and some firing in Athens, resulted in a constitution being forced on King Otho, with a popularly elected parliament and a cabinet responsible to it. Political parties, however, divided at once by local interests and personal quarrels, agreeing only in the desire to expand the boundaries of the country long before it had either the military or the material resources to secure the expansion, produced no sort of stable government; and successive cabinets, all short-lived, neglected the need for agricultural and industrial progress which only a period of tranquillity could have gained for it. The long unrest led finally to the expulsion of Otho (who had no children to succeed him) and his dynasty in 1861; and a new prince, a

[1] Many have said that the choice of Athens as the capital of Greece was dictated by sentimental reasons, because of her ancient fame. This is quite mistaken. Athens is the natural centre of communication for all Greece south of Macedonia, and Peiraeus is the finest natural harbour; the rapid growth both of Athens and of the port is itself a proof of this—as indeed it was the natural advantages of the place that were in part responsible for its greatness in classical times.

younger son of the King of Denmark, came to the throne with the title of George I—'King of the Hellenes', not of Hellas, as a gentle indication of the claim ultimately to include within the kingdom all the unredeemed Greek people, who were then nearly all of them living, it will be remembered, in what had been for three thousand years their home, the northern part of the Greek peninsula and the islands and coastlands of the Aegean. As a gesture, it would seem, of encouragement to their aspirations, though it was not at all so intended, Great Britain handed over the Ionian islands—a birthday gift to the new dynasty.

George I, only seventeen years old when elected to the throne, reigned as a constitutional king, with a Cabinet responsible to Parliament, and the Parliament elected by universal manhood suffrage; freedom of the press and of religious observance was expressly established; education was to be universal and free. This very democratic constitution was guaranteed by the three Protecting Powers, Great Britain, France, and Russia: the first of which was still an oligarchy with a restricted franchise based on wealth and no system of free state education, and the other two were autocracies. For his part in this constitution, George I's long reign (1863–1913) was a success; he allowed the weaknesses and follies of the politicians to work themselves out, and their occasional successes to have full play; he gave at least an appearance of stability. But the new generation of politicians (the names of Deliyánnes, Theotókes, Dragoúmes, and Rálles recur with distressing frequency) was not much more successful than the old; and for the same reasons. With one exception, Trikoúpes, none was able enough to secure the confidence of the people; the Greeks are, at most times, critical and ungenerous to their leaders, with a distrust of politicians as such which may seem to citizens of more stable countries a healthy sign, but in Greece only weakens authority and confidence; and there was the ever-present contrast between great ambitions for the state and immediate weakness. The one success gained in this field, the addition of Thessaly in 1881, was hardly due to their own efforts. Yet it must be remembered that both the weakness and the ambitions were largely due to the pusillanimous, short-sighted, and, as it proved, quite unsuccessful decision of

the Great Powers in 1830 to confine Greece within a narrow and unjustifiable frontier.

One important result of this decision was that it left Turkey with large territories in Europe stretching from the Black Sea to the Adriatic; Greece was still cut off from communication with Europe except by sea, for, it must be remembered, Turkey, at that time an outworn and decaying state, was a barrier, not a helpful neighbour. Serbia, as an autonomous principality (but under a native dynasty) with the Turkish flag still flying over the fortress of Belgrade, had been freed about the same time as Greece (in 1831): a state as small as Greece, and even poorer and more backward, and hardly more viable; but at least connected with Europe, and with the advantages and disadvantages of a common boundary with a great and ambitious power, Austria-Hungary. Her history in the first half-century of her existence was not happier than that of Greece; she was in less of a backwater, but there were other difficulties. Between these two small states was the large Turkish province of Macedonia (the *vilayet* of Saloníka), stretching northwards beyond Uskub, to the west as far as Monastír, Flórina, and Grevená, and to the east to the river Nestós. It was inhabited by a mixed population of Turks, Slavs, and Greeks, not divided by any geographical line except that the Slavs were predominant in the north, the Greeks to the south (the Turks, by which are meant the Mahometans, consisting of peasants as well as landowners). Both the Slavs and the Greeks were of the Orthodox Church, and had earlier both been within the civil jurisdiction of the Greek Patriarchate; but the creation of the Bulgarian Exarchate in Constantinople (above, p. 7) and of bishoprics in Macedonia under it, had given rise to a new political (not a religious) problem, as the Turks had intended. For the Exarchate must protect its own nationals—that was its first and innocent purpose—and the Patriarchate the same; which in practice meant that the former must *gain* as many adherents as possible, and the latter, which had so strongly resented the formation of the Exarchate, partly as has been said for narrow Greek nationalist reasons, but partly also because the Patriarchate, like the Byzantine Empire, had been non-national in character, must seek to retain all Christians within its own sphere. New Bulgarian

schools and Bulgarian churches were set up everywhere, so that the people could worship and the children be taught in their own tongue. What could be more reasonable? Armed bands[1] were formed on both sides, each to prevent the use of force by the other. What, in the absence of all decent security from the governing Turks, more natural? The Turks looked on, or took an occasional opportunity to restore order by a massacre of both rival sets of Christians. Serbia played no part in this; the Greek kingdom was kept in a state of unrest by it, and *their* bands frequently crossed the frontier into the kingdom for safety.

In 1877 Russia, as protector both of her fellow Slavs and of all Orthodox Christian subjects of Turkey, and as well with her ambition to control the Bosporus and the Dardanelles in order to secure free access to the Mediterranean, declared war on Turkey. After a stout resistance the latter was beaten; and the Treaty of San Stefano (1878) would have deprived her of all her European provinces but for a small enclave round Constantinople. The new state of Bulgaria was formed out of the two provinces north of the Rhodope Mountains and of practically the whole of Thrace (the *vilayet* of Adrianople) and Macedonia; a great Bulgaria (corresponding more or less with a short-lived Bulgarian empire under the Tsar Simeon in the eleventh century) would, from the Greek point of view, take the place of Turkey on her northern frontier, a young and aggressive nation in the place of an old and lazy one, and her own claims in Macedonia and Thrace, which on all counts of history and present population were, to say the least, as strong as the Bulgarian, would be ended.

Fortunately for these claims, France and Great Britain, who had fought the Crimean War in aid of Turkey twenty-five years before to keep Russia from the Straits, supposing that the new Bulgaria would be but a puppet state for the furtherance of Russian ambitions, strongly opposed the new treaty; and in the Congress of Berlin (1878) succeeded, largely through the efforts of Disraeli, in upsetting it. The ultimate result can-

[1] *Komitadjis*, i.e. members of the (Bulgarian) Macedonian Committee. The main part of the word is, of course, western European; the termination is Turkish, indicative of trade or craft (as *baltadji*, butcher, *cafedji*, keeper of a café, etc.). This in itself is characteristic of the country and the time.

not of course be estimated, for we do not know what would have happened had the Treaty been put into effect. The immediate results, highly characteristic of a statesmanlike compromise, were the creation once more, of an 'autonomous' state, under Turkey's nominal suzerainty, of Bulgaria with a prince from a German dynasty, with a slightly less autonomous principality of Eastern Rumelia attached to it on the east; the return of Thrace and Macedonia to Turkey with a promise of administrative reforms; and the cession of Thessaly to Greece, as a reward for her correct conduct in only encouraging bands across the frontier and refraining from open war.

Bulgaria soon (1886) established her full independence and incorporated eastern Rumelia, and called her prince Tsar; but the dream of greater Bulgaria remained, to disturb all Balkan relations in the future. Greece gained most valuable land, for Thessaly could supply something of the inevitable annual deficit in corn; but Crete and the eastern islands of the Aegean and Epeiros, as well as Macedonia and Thrace, were still denied her; and the feeling of frustration, that she might have gained more had her conduct been more vigorous and less correct, was inevitable. Macedonia was handed back for another thirty years to the rival peoples, the Komitadjis and the Turkish gendarmerie.

Still, Greece was now stronger and richer, and a statesman, Trikoúpes, was to the fore, inspiring confidence by his ability and honesty of purpose, and taking the realistic view (supported as much by the recent success in the matter of Thessaly as by past failures) that the country's resources must be developed and a period of tranquillity follow before any further foreign adventure be attempted. Between the years 1883 and 1895 he was in power for a long time for a Greek Prime Minister, and did much, particularly for the long-needed roads and railways; but even so the time was short and punctuated by intervals of power for his rival, the heady Deliyánnes. The latter was all for fighting an obdurate enemy, or two if need be, in support of the unredeemed Greeks, and would have nothing to do with the pedestrian need of providing an army for the purpose; with the result that soon after Trikoúpes' retirement, with new roads and railways but half-finished and half-neglected, Greece declared war on Turkey

on behalf of Crete, and was quickly and thoroughly defeated (1897). Yet some good came of it: Crete won a practical autonomy, under a High Commissioner from Greece—Prince George, the King's second son—and a national assembly; the last Turkish troops disappeared, the Turkish flag remained, and regiments of the Protecting Powers solemnly protected it.

For another dozen years governments led by Ráilles (from Athens), Theotókes (from Kérkyra), and the same Deliyánnes (from the Peloponnese) alternated. The lessons had not been learnt, or, if learnt, for lack of authority were not applied. The Crown Prince Constantine, who had been commander-in-chief against Turkey, bore a good deal of the blame for defeat; but little was done to reorganize or re-equip the military forces. The state finances, worsened by the payment of an indemnity to Turkey, were in a poor way, and an International Finance Commission of the Protecting Powers was set up in Athens to look after the service of the foreign debt. There was disillusion and discontent with politics in all classes, but no practical and realistic approach to the problems which faced the country, or else no energy, or no directed energy, sufficient to deal with them.

CHAPTER IV

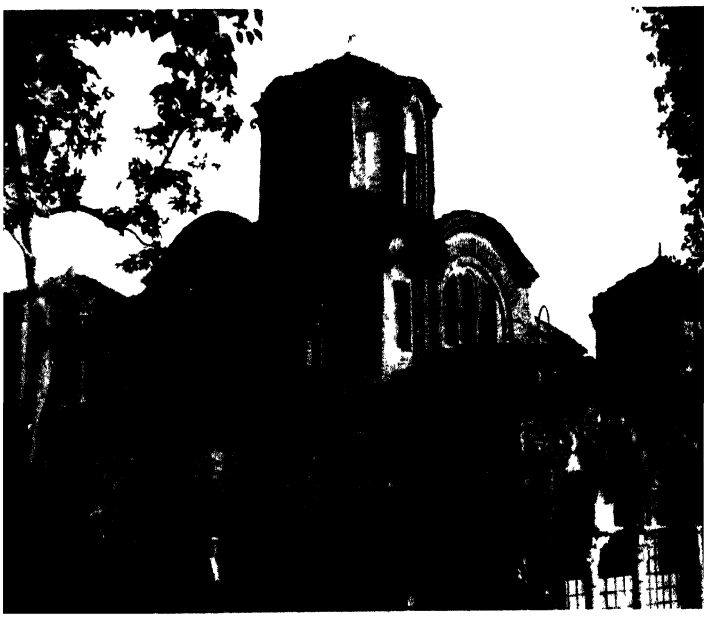
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROGRESS TO 1910

Most foreign observers at the beginning of the century shared this disbelief in the future of Greece; cynics declared that the new state had been a failure, that the Ionian islands (for example) had suffered by the transference from British to Greek administration, and that even Turkish rule would not have been a disadvantage. Even those few foreigners who came to Greece with their eyes open, to learn rather than to teach, while appreciating the good qualities of the people, had little but contempt for their political aspirations, for the 'great idea' of uniting all Greeks in one state. Yet, perhaps in spite of rather than thanks to the Government, progress since the establishment of her independent status had been real and substantial, in some ways remarkable.

To take a few material signs of this progress first. The population of the country, which in 1830 had been only three-quarters of a million, was by 1880 nearly one million and three-quarters. With the absorption of Thessaly another 300,000 persons were added; and by 1907 the total had increased to over two and a half millions.[1] The growth had taken place equally in the country and in the towns; indeed it is not an exaggeration to say that at this time there were but three true urban centres in Greece—Athens, Peiraeus, and Patras; the other towns, with populations varying from five to twenty thousand at most, were centres of rural districts with markets, and much small industry (metal work, textiles, pottery) on which the agriculturists depended, such as Trípolis in the

[1] The density of population was in 1907 about 105·5 to the square mile. Compare this with the figures for other Balkan countries at the time and two countries of north-western Europe, Holland and Denmark:

	Population	*Per sq. mile*
Serbia	2,750,000	146
Bulgaria	2,854,000	77
Rumania	6,850,000	135
Holland (1900)	5,104,000	405
Denmark (1901)	2,450,000	165



III. POST-CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURE

1. ON THERA
(Black Star)

2. CHURCH OF THE TWELVE DISCIPLES, SALONIKA
(Greek Government Department of Information)

Peloponnese, Agrínion in the north-west, Lamía, and Lárissa and Tríkkala in Thessaly, besides a few small ports, Vólo in Thessaly, Syra in the Aegean, Aigion, Nauplia, and Kalamáta in the Peloponnese. Athens, as the capital and natural geographical centre of the country, had grown from a small and ruined country town after the war of independence to a city of about 170,000 inhabitants in 1910; Peiraeus from nothing in 1830 to one of the busiest ports in the Mediterranean, with a population of 75,000. It practically monopolized the import business of the country, while Patras with some 40,000 inhabitants and Aigion with 8,000, as centres of the currant industry, had most of the exports.

Such material progress in the country districts as depended directly on government, especially in communications, had not been great. The obstacles put in its way by nature have already been pointed out (above, p. 18); but Parliaments and Cabinets did little to overcome them; and the Greeks have never been much interested in practical engineering. Roads were few and far between (even in Attica, near the capital): a few trunk roads, with only a handful of feeders (so that these few trunk roads were insufficiently used), and not nearly enough feeders to the railways; not more than 1,600 miles of metalled road all told by the beginning of this century, in a country in which, outside the few places where light-wheeled traffic is possible in dry weather on unmetalled roads, only the roughest mountain paths, fit for pack animals only, are available.

Though it was begun later, the work on railways has been more rapid and more fruitful than that on roads. Before 1881 there were local lines in Attica only; but soon after the annexation of Thessaly, the system in that province was completed (on a narrow gauge). In 1890–1 the principal Peloponnesian lines were opened, connecting Athens with Corinth and thence both round the north coast to Pyrgos and across the centre of the peninsula via Argos and Trípolis to Kalamáta (from Pyrgos to Kalamáta in 1902)—also a narrow-gauge line; of the chief districts only the rich Evrótas valley was unconnected by rail. Finally, in the early years of the century, the line from Athens to the northern frontier (then near the mouth of the Peneiós river in north-east Thessaly) was built on the standard European gauge; Turkey would not complete the section from

the frontier to Saloníka, and Greece was still without rail communication with the rest of Europe. Serbia and Bulgaria were more fortunate in lying on the main route to Constantinople; main through lines were built as a matter of course. Greece had only her own traffic to serve.

Of equal importance for internal communications was the completion of the Corinth Canal in 1893. This could take vessels of up to 5,000 tons; it was of immense benefit to internal commerce between eastern and western Greece, and also to trade with the western Mediterranean, especially with Italy.

When we take into account the weakness of the central government, except when Trikoúpes was in power, this was a remarkable achievement. But more remarkable was the progress made by private endeavour. The devastation wrought by the long struggle for independence, especially in the Peloponnese, was a serious matter for a country that depends as much on vines and olives for its prosperity as on annual crops; for vines need four to five years before giving a return and olives twice as long. It was capital that had been destroyed. Yet in spite of this, of the general poverty, and of some lack of security in the first decades of independence,[1] vines and olives were replanted, the fields terraced, and irrigated where necessary, and the villages rebuilt. The herds of sheep and goats, on which Greeks rely for their milk and such meat as they eat, increased, pastured on the fallow of the plains in winter, on the *maquis* mostly of the hills in summer. The country towns with their markets and rural industries began to prosper (particularly when road and railway reached them), though lacking, as they still lack, certain amenities which other people consider essential—especially a water supply and a drainage system; this defect being due not only to an inherited low standard of living and the lack of engineering skill, but to a native prejudice in favour of water from springs rather than from pipes.

[1] This should not however be exaggerated. It is common to state that 'brigandage was rife', and to think of this as characteristic especially of the Balkans. Substitute 'robbery with violence' for 'brigandage', and western nations may make a more modest comparison. Notwithstanding the last and notorious outbreak of robbery, accompanied by murder, in 1872, foreigners have always been particularly safe in Greece. What is true is that the highwaymen often had friends in high places; but again it is not for every western country to throw stones.

Progress in the urban centres of Athens, Peiraeus, and Patras, notably in the first two, was equally good, but far more in the field of commerce than of manufacture. Banking and shipping had for many generations, as in classical times, attracted much of the energy of the Greeks and it was they who had undertaken this work in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for the Turkish empire. Then and for the first half of the nineteenth century almost all the carrying trade of the eastern Mediterranean had been done in Greek sailing-ships; and the skill of the seamen had had much to do with the early successes of the Greeks in the War of Independence. There was a slump when steam ousted sail; but from the 'eighties Greeks began buying steamships, and after that progress was rapid. In the early years of the century Greek ships were engaged not only in their own essential internal traffic and in the eastern Mediterranean, but in the west and north-west and the Atlantic; the total tonnage rose rapidly to 900,000 by 1915, and Peiraeus ranked after Marseilles, Genoa, and Naples in tonnage handled. Characteristically enough, it had not equally developed the comforts and conveniences demanded by a busy port. Though there were some facilities for repair and supply of vessels, the quays and warehouses were insufficient; and passengers were all landed in rowing-boats from the ships anchored in the middle of the harbour.[1]

Manufacture was on a small scale, and done by small firms—tanneries, distilleries, and other industries treating the agricultural products of the country, especially olive-oil and soap,

[1] All progress is not necessarily for the immediately and obviously better. In 1910 when a passenger ship steamed into Peiraeus it was at once surrounded by a crowd of boats filled with men shouting for custom, while the ship's passengers leaned over the side trying to secure a lift. As soon as the harbour officials gave the word, the boatmen swarmed up the side of the ship; in some way, no one knew how, contact between boat and passenger had been established, your luggage was taken from you, and in your turn you went down the gangway and entered the nearest boat—not necessarily the one that had your luggage. Five minutes' row to the quay, and you found your luggage waiting for you at the customs, where it was soon passed. The tariff for the boat was fixed and modest; and the whole time from anchoring to entry into a cab (horse-drawn) for Athens took about twenty minutes. The modern, efficient method in 1938, with direct landing on to the quay, currency restrictions, careful examination of luggage, and the rest of it, took longer.

flour-mills, and tobacco. It was mainly concentrated in Peiraeus and Athens.

Athens itself was a quiet and attractive town, and though with no great distinction in its modern buildings it yet had the air of a capital. Sentimentalists regret its recent rapid growth. But it was the capital of a state still somewhat isolated from the rest of Europe; not old-fashioned but backward. Schools had been built in large numbers both in town and country (another surprising achievement of ephemeral governments), and the University of Athens flourished, at least in the number of its students. It was the intellectual centre of the whole Greek world, and to it came students from Alexandria, British-held Cyprus, and from Smyrna. It produced a number of good scholars, but few scientists; more lawyers than capable administrators, and more journalists even than lawyers. Medicine was backward, like engineering and all applied science. Nor, since Solomós, had there appeared in Greece any poet or prose-writer of much more than local repute, nor painter nor sculptor.

A small country, making perhaps slow progress, not perhaps of much significance in Europe; but it was not only the varied beauty of the landscape, or the ancient monuments, or the kindly and lively character of the people that attracted the interest of the intelligent traveller. The contrast with Macedonia, which had nothing but plans and promises of reforms from the Great Powers, was complete; *there* there was no progress, material or intellectual, and little security. Greeks and Slavs, and the Turks over them, were always at enmity; and if it was largely an artificial enmity in part created by governments in Greece, Bulgaria, and Turkey[1] among peasants who if left to themselves might have lived in peace, it was not productive of less misery for that. Independent Greece, like Serbia and Bulgaria, was by contrast a haven; and the war for independence, with its nationalist setting, had been justified.

[1] Even Rumania took a hand towards the end, when she discovered that a number of semi-nomad shepherd communities spoke a dialect of Rumanian, and must therefore be 'protected'.

CHAPTER V

THE TRANSITION, 1910–23: ELEFTHERIOS VENIZE/OS

The Balkan Wars

MUCH the most capable of Greek statesmen was Venizélos (1863–1936), a man who combined in a rare degree oratorical power with administrative ability, astuteness with honesty, masterfulness with an intellectual outlook and great powers of mind. It was his fate that his acme fell during the period of the 1914–18 war, and its disturbing aftermath, which alike gave him his opportunity and presented him with difficulties which ultimately he could not surmount and which perhaps no man could have surmounted; but he was fortunate in having a brief period before 1914 in which he was able to prove his remarkable qualities.

He was from Crete, and had taken an active part in both armed and unarmed struggle against the Turks, and later against the autocratic methods of Prince George, when Crete had an Assembly and the Prince was High Commissioner (above, p. 33). He was successful against both; and had become the idol of the Cretans.

In 1908 occurred the Young Turk revolt in Saloníka, accompanied by enthusiastic hopes not only in Macedonia and the rest of Turkey, but in disinterested quarters all over Europe, that the era of misgovernment was over and that Turkey would henceforth be not only good but strong; Greeks, Slavs, and Turks had embraced. But a strong Turkey, even if good, was not desired by nationalist-minded Greeks; and, partly in imitation of the Young Turks, in 1909–10 there was a soldiers' revolt in Athens. The Military League, formed of numbers of the younger officers with a large following amongst the men, protested against the continued failure to improve the army and navy since the war of 1897 and to meet the immediate danger to Greek aspirations caused by the changes in Turkey. The movement was directed against the senior officers in the Services, especially against the royal princes, who all held high commands—the Crown Prince Constantine

IV. AGRICULTURE

1. WINNOWING (*E.N.A.*)

2. PLOUGHING (*E.N.A.*)

was Commander-in-Chief—and against the politicians. Force was threatened; the princes all retired; and Parliament under immediate pressure passed a number of measures at the demand of the League. There seemed little reason to suppose that these measures, with no moral support to back them, would be successful, nor that, with Parliament and all the leading politicians discredited and the army in revolt, this particular movement would not end as others had done in the past—much talk and little performance. But at the critical moment, some of the officers, who had known Venizélos in Crete, decided to summon him to the assistance of the country. He responded, and once he was in Athens the situation, almost magically, changed.

Venizélos, then forty-seven years of age, in the prime of his life, had been a student of law at Athens University, but his whole public life had been spent in Crete, and he was scarcely known in Greece except by repute. Yet within a short time he had induced the Military League to dissolve, he had won the confidence of the king (in spite of his earlier opposition to the king's son in Crete) and persuaded him to dissolve Parliament and summon a National Assembly to revise the constitution. He also got popularity with the masses, not by courting, but by opposing them and addressing them fearlessly as free men. The Prime Minister, Dragoúmes, resigned, and Venizélos was summoned to succeed him. He could not obtain a majority to agree to revision of the constitution, and elections to a new Assembly were held, which gave him a large majority. Already, in a couple of months he had the country behind him. Some useful changes were made in the constitution, e.g. a clause forbidding officers on the active list to sit as deputies and another guaranteeing security of tenure to civil servants; and, incidentally, the Crown Prince was recalled as Inspector-General of the army. French and British missions were asked for to reorganize the army and the navy. In March 1912, eighteen months only since Venizélos' arrival in Athens, elections were held for a normal Parliament again, which gave him a five-sixths' majority. Crete, which had declared its union with Greece in 1908 after the Young Turk revolution, sent deputies to this Parliament; but Venizélos, who knew that the country was not yet ready for a conflict with Turkey, would not admit them

and the Cretans, because they trusted him and no one else, obeyed and withdrew. His authority seemed undisputed; it was won and maintained by his obvious sincerity—his oratory was convincing, for 'he spoke as a man should speak, because he felt as a man should feel';[1] and the people were gaining a self-confidence that had been practically unknown to them before.

But he did more than this. The Young Turk movement was (from the point of view of the Christian subjects of Turkey) proving itself truculent: the early fraternizing between Moslem and Christian had become a policy of uniting all Turkish citizens by making the Christians into good Ottomans—the very reverse of the old method of tolerance of the separate 'nations', Greek, Bulgarian, Armenian, Jewish, each with its own religion, its customs, and its civil administration. The Balkan states, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece, were equally alarmed. With the help of Russian diplomacy Serbia and Bulgaria came to an agreement for mutual aid in 1912; and Venizélos now took a hand, making a treaty first with Serbia and then with Bulgaria; and the Balkan League had been formed—independently of all patronage from the Great Powers. Turkey was still at war with Italy in Libya, though the fighting was nearly all over; and Albania was in revolt. The moment was opportune.

The three states (to which Montenegro, then separated from Serbia, adhered), after presenting an ultimatum demanding the usual sweeping reforms, were at war with Turkey by the middle of October 1912. The Cretan deputies were admitted to the Greek Parliament, and the Union of Crete with Greece was at last accomplished. The Great Powers, who had already (in some alarm because of their own mutual jealousies) made futile suggestions of administrative reforms in Macedonia, declared that they would not permit any territorial changes if Turkey were defeated; the integrity of the Ottoman Empire was guaranteed; but the Balkan states took no notice. Their armies were immediately and overwhelmingly successful. The Serbs conquered northern Macedonia (the Vardar basin, with Uskub as the centre) and Monastír; the Bulgars conquered Thrace as far as the Chataldja lines before Constantinople, though the

[1] Hazlitt, on Chatham.

Turks held out in Adrianople and stood their ground at Chataldja, and sent a small force south-west towards Saloníka; the Greeks, under the Crown Prince Constantine, marched north from Lárissa, and after two pitched battles entered Saloníka on 9th November, the entire Turkish garrison surrendering.[1] A small Greek force had at the same time captured Préveza in the west and was now before Yánnina; the Greek fleet, the only naval force possessed by the Allies, occupied all the islands of the Aegean (except the Dodecanese, seized by Italy during the Libyan war) and controlled the sea-routes. Within three weeks the main campaign had been decided.

Negotiations for peace were begun in London in December, but at first proved fruitless. Yánnina fell to the Greeks in February 1913 (they had moved four divisions by sea from Saloníka to Préveza) and all Epeiros was won. Adrianople fell to the Bulgars and Serbs at the end of March; Skutari in Albania, the last Turkish garrison to hold out, to the Serbs and Montenegrins in April. On 30 May both Turkey and the Great Powers accepted the situation, and by the Treaty of London the Ottoman Empire in Europe was reduced to the area between Constantinople and a line from the head of the Gulf of Ainos to Mídia on the Black Sea, and the Gallipoli peninsula. The one thing the Powers did on their own, on the

[1] It is said that on reaching Verria and thus cutting communication between Saloníka and Monastír (not yet captured by the Serbs) Constantine wished to turn north-west against Monastír, and only urgent orders from Venizélos in Athens directed him to Saloníka; and that this change of plan was dictated only for political reasons. If it is true that Venizélos was responsible, it proves that he was as good a strategist as politician. Saloníka was essential both as a naval and as a military base. Till its capture the Greek army had been dependent for its supplies on the long and inadequately equipped railway from Peiraeus as far as Lárissa (with some help from the small port of Vólo and its narrow-gauge railway to Lárissa), and on a couple of roads from there. Saloníka was not only much nearer and well equipped as a port, but was the terminus of three railway lines. For a Greek campaign towards Monastír as well as for the Allies in eastern Macedonia, it was the only proper base. Supplies were brought there by sea, by the Greek merchant fleet; and it is by no means certain that the force which the Bulgarians had sent against it was strong enough to take it. A resolute defence of the port by the Turks would have done much to neutralize the victories already won. The British forces in Greece in 1941 will have known something of the difficulties of supply from Peiraeus and Vólo, even with the railway extended to Saloníka and the port equipment of Peiraeus and Vólo much improved.

initiative of Austria and Italy, was to create an independent Albania, which had the effect (as was intended) of keeping Serbia still cut off from the sea and of raising an acute boundary problem in Epeiros between the new state and Greece.

The effect of the Powers' action was immediate: the Allies quarrelled. This is not the place in which to pass judgement on the several claims. Suffice it to say that Bulgaria, with the Treaty of San Stefano (above, p. 31) ever in their minds, assumed a right to the whole of the old provinces of Macedonia (including Uskub, Monastír, and the south-western districts, and Saloníka) and Thrace; and, for Macedonia, pleaded the terms of their treaty with Serbia of the year before. Serbia counterclaimed that the whole position had been altered by her exclusion from the Adriatic, and by the Bulgarian claim to Thrace, and said that she must retain the whole of northern Macedonia, which she had conquered by her own arms—that is, the Vardar valley as far south as the Pass of Demir-kapu, in order to have access to the port of Saloníka. Bulgaria was amply compensated by the cession of Thrace, which had not been thought of when the Balkan League was formed; and Greece denied utterly the sweeping racial claims of Bulgaria either to Macedonia or Thrace, where Greeks and Turks were in a large majority, and argued that if Bulgaria was to have Thrace and the part of Macedonia east of the Strymón (which Greece would cede for the sake of peace), Greece must have all Macedonia to the west of that river (except the northern district claimed by Serbia). There had been no territorial boundaries mentioned in the Graeco-Bulgar treaty of alliance.[1]

Whatever the rights and wrongs of these conflicting claims, the Serbs and Greeks were determined to defend theirs by keeping what they had themselves won from Turkey, and the

[1] There is this to be said for the Greek claim. For the elections to the Turkish Parliament of 1911, at a time when Greek and Bulgar subjects of Turkey were working together, if not in true concord, 11 seats were allotted to the Christians of Macedonia and 4 to those of Thrace; and of these, by an agreement blessed by both the Greek Patriarch and the Bulgarian Exarch, 8 Macedonian and 3 Thracian seats were to be Greek, and only 3 Macedonian and 1 Thracian to be Bulgarian. On the whole these proportions were fairly confirmed when there was an exchange of populations between Bulgaria and Greece after the 1914–18 war, and between Turkey and Greece after 1922.

Bulgarians equally determined to enforce theirs by arms. The first two states made a treaty of alliance, each bound to help the other in the event of attack. Bulgaria did attack, without declaration of war, in July 1913, both the Serbian and the Greek armies, but was beaten by both. Rumania declared war on Bulgaria at the same time, and secured a bloodless victory, while the Turks quietly reoccupied eastern Thrace, including Adrianople, as far as the Evros (Maritza) River. Bulgaria succumbed in a month; and by the new treaty of Bucharest (August 1913) Greece secured all eastern Macedonia—that is, the valuable Kaválla, Sérres, and Dráma districts as far as the Nestós river. Bulgaria had western Thrace, between the Nestós and the Evros, for her sole gain in the Balkan war against Turkey, and had lost part of the Dobrudja to Rumania.

The triumph of Venizélos was complete, and his position in Greece seemed secure. In so far as one man can be said to be responsible for anything, it was due to him that his countrymen had proved themselves as brave men and, what is more, as good soldiers and sailors, that they had recovered confidence and had considerable hope of stability in their public life, and that they had now doubled their territory. By this they had more than doubled their potential wealth, for Macedonia is richer in agricultural and even in mineral resources than peninsular Greece, and Chios and Mytiléne than most islands of the Aegean; but they had also far more than doubled their responsibilities. There was an immediate political problem, in that Greece now had Bulgarian and Turkish (that is, Moslem) minorities within her borders: would she make any success of this, where the Turks had so lamentably failed? (I would not imply that this failure was solely due to the Turks; the Christian minorities in the last two generations particularly had not been exactly helpful. But the Turks were the rulers, and so must bear the responsibility.) There was the administrative problem, how to secure good order in the new territories, so that they should be productive and the people lead peaceful and useful lives. And there was a big economic problem, for in both Epeiros and Macedonia, but particularly in the latter, much development was necessary before the resources of the land could be properly used. Much potentially rich land was marsh and swamp; the vitality and vigour of the people were

weakened by the consequent conditions. Had Greece either the financial strength or the energy to tackle this problem, which had been so much neglected for centuries past?

Venizélos was confident, and he could inspire his countrymen; a beginning was made. Order was established; Moslem and Bulgarian deputies were among those elected to the enlarged Parliament at Athens; plans for public works were being prepared. But before anything could be done, the Great Powers, so lofty and condescending towards Balkan squabbles, quarrelled among themselves; and the war of 1914–18 began, in which the Balkan countries were willy-nilly immediately involved.

The War of 1914–18

Soon after the war broke out, with the attack of Austria against Serbia, and of Germany against Belgium, France, and Russia, and Great Britain entering the fray in support of France, Venizélos, with the support of a large majority in Parliament, declared that both the interests and the honour of Greece placed her on the side of the Allies. She was the ally of Serbia; and she was dependent for her existence on the sea, and Great Britain and France were in complete control of the Mediterranean, apart from having been, in spite of everything, far more friendly to Greece in the past than the Central Powers and having recently so greatly helped in the reorganization of her navy and army. The arguments seemed overwhelmingly strong; and no one at that time doubted Venizélos' ability to carry the country with him. But Constantine, now king since the assassination of his father by a poor madman early in 1913, had become almost as popular with the people as Venizélos, because he had been in command—restored to command by Venizélos—of the successful armies in 1912 and 1913. He was the kind of man to believe in the invincibility of German armies because they were well organized, well equipped, and well prepared for war in 1914; and the early German victories in both east and west only confirmed his belief. Constantine was an obstinate man, without imagination and with no great intellectual powers; he was, also, married to the Kaiser's sister; and he began at once quietly to oppose his Prime Minister (himself not the most patient of men). Some of the

leading men of the general staff of the army supported the king, and older politicians who had been so mercilessly swept aside by Venizélos' triumph, and a few younger ones who were overshadowed and resented his dominating personality, saw their chance. The situation in the Balkans furthered the opportunity. The dubious attitude of Bulgaria (still smarting under her defeat in 1913, and not at all likely to feel kindly towards Serbia or Greece) meant that Greece, in order to help her ally, must keep large forces in hand in case Bulgaria attacked; she must remain benevolently neutral. When Turkey entered the war on the side of Germany negotiations were begun between Greece and the Allies on the help the former might give for an attack on Gallipoli. Venizélos suggested a couple of divisions; but the general staff—prominent among them was Metaxás, the future dictator—vehemently opposed: such a force, it was said, was both inadequate for its purpose and would mean a fatal weakening of the defence against Bulgaria. The soldiers may have been right (certainly the subsequent conduct of the Gallipoli campaign by the Allies does not suggest certainty that an earlier attack would have been more successful, even though Turkey was not prepared for it); and military considerations—always of doubtful value, for the chances of war are infinite—were preferred to political ones, and, as has so often been the case, with bad results.[1] Greece was by now divided, Constantine becoming the head of a party, his popularity pitted against that of Venizélos; the people, in any case not wanting to be involved in another war, one in which they had not been primarily concerned, were getting bewildered, beginning to lose confidence.

The Gallipoli plan for Greek help to the Allies fell through; for after a Crown Council had agreed to the sending of one division, Constantine refused to agree and Venizélos resigned. This was the cause of another difference between Premier and King, this time on a constitutional issue. Goúnares, a youngish

[1] It is said, as well, that Russia, jealous of possible Greek claims to Constantinople if a successful attack was made with her help, opposed these negotiations with Venizélos. If so, a typical example of the opposite error—in the middle of a great war, with the final issue so doubtful, a distant and faint political hope was allowed to interfere with immediate military needs. Certainly Venizélos had much to fight against.

V. CURRANTS AND WINE

1. PRESSING GRAPES (*E.N.A.*)

2. DRYING CURRANTS (*E.N.A.*)

man and a bitter opponent of Venizélos, became Prime Minister; and since he had but a small party in Parliament, elections were held, in June, and again Venizélos' party won with a handsome, if smaller, majority (123 out of 184). For long Goúnares refused to resign, alleging that the beloved king was too ill to face another political crisis, and Venizélos was not back in power till August. By now an attack by the Central Powers on Serbia (which had withstood Austria till then) was imminent, and Bulgarian alliance with them probable. Goúnares had declared when Premier that the Greek treaty with Serbia still stood; and indeed the whole argument of those who opposed an open alliance between Greece and the Entente was that Greece must keep her forces intact to neutralize the Bulgarian menace and were serving the Allied cause by so doing. Venizélos, of course, declared again that Greece must stand by her ally and the Entente Powers; and when Bulgaria mobilized, he insisted that Greece must follow suit. This was done, reluctant through Constantine was to sign the decree.

But the country was now deeply divided. The Entente, convinced that they must win over Bulgaria, and having nothing to offer her but the territory of others, brought great pressure to bear on Serbia and Greece to make concessions. They were at least able to offer the latter compensation in Asia Minor—the Greek-inhabited lands around Smyrna—when Turkey should be defeated; and Venizélos, for the sake of the Greek subjects of Turkey and in order to get Bulgaria's alliance, had previously stated that for himself he would be prepared to cede eastern Macedonia (the valuable tobacco district with the important port of Kaválla). Bulgaria however was convinced that Germany would win the war, and chose to attack Serbia; and the vicarious generosity of the Entente had served only to weaken the position of their friends in Greece—Venizélos was denounced as the man who would surrender part of the country to her bitter enemy, and in the face of continuing German victories and of Turkish success in Gallipoli, the offer of the Smyrna district seemed an empty one. As so frequently happens at critical times, when men are acting under the stress of excitement and anger, the cold arguments of legality were introduced. By one of the military clauses of the treaty with

Greece, Serbia was due to send 150,000 men to join the Greek army against an attack westward and southward by Bulgaria. These she could not now supply, for she needed every man she could muster for defence against the Austro-German attack from the north. The treaty therefore, said Goúnares and others, was null and void. Venizélos countered this by asking the Entente whether they were able to supply the deficiency; the optimistic answer was *Yes*. In fact they had a force of some 30,000 men, mainly French, in the neighbourhood, and these were landed at Saloníka by agreement with Venizélos early in October. A great protest was raised, led by the Germans, at this unheard-of crime of invading a neutral state, a protest again met by a nice legal argument that the Protecting Powers of Greece had the right by mutual agreement (among themselves, not with Greece) to land troops in the country. (One is reminded of the second scene in *Henry V*.) Actually they had a paper right to intervene to defend the constitution; and even this argument was somewhat weakened by the fact that this was the one thing the Entente did not do with their army. The recent elections in Greece had been fought on the issue of the treaty with Serbia and Greece's attitude to the war, and Venizélos had won by a handsome majority. He now secured the support of Parliament (though by a smaller majority) for his policy. Constantine refused to act as a constitutional monarch, expressed his disagreement, and asserted his own responsibility for his country's foreign policy. Venizélos, having to choose between resignation and civil war (at such a time) chose the former; and the Entente powers, instead of supporting him, began negotiations with Constantine by an offer of Cyprus (which has a three-quarters' majority Greek population) in return for alliance. But if the previous offer of the Smyrna district, which had now lapsed, had not won Constantine, the new was not likely to prove more attractive. It was refused, and the only effect of the offer was to weaken the friends of the Allies in Greece by showing them that the latter were prepared to treat with Constantine at his own valuation. It was particularly Venizélos' insistence on the constitutional position that was ignored. Soon afterwards Serbia was overrun by the combined attack of the Austro-German and Bulgarian armies, the French troops being unable

to do more than fight a gallant but unavailing rearguard action in the Vardar valley; the Serbian armies were destroyed and the remnants, driven through Albania, were taken some to France others to Kérkyra (an island expressly declared to be neutral—another 'unheard-of violation of treaties'), greeted by a churlish protest from the new Greek Government. But the Allied base at Saloníka was maintained, and the enemy made no attempt to attack it.

With Greece neutral but the Greek army mobilized and several of its divisions in Macedonia, based mainly on Saloníka, there were inevitable difficulties between them and the Allied forces. In face of these and of the unfriendly attitude of the government, the Entente refused to continue its tolerant economic policy, and the Greek troops in the Saloníka area were withdrawn. The economic measures had no effect on the government, but caused some distress among the people, Greece being, as has been said, dependent upon imports for a considerable part of her corn and all her coal and petrol; the position of Venizélos, already weakened by the fall of Serbia and the inability of the Allies to do anything to help her ('What did we say?' was the triumphant reply of his military enemies), was made extremely difficult. A new general election was ordered in December, to get rid of the Parliament with its liberal majority. Venizélos declared this to be unconstitutional, in view of the previous election in June, and, with the army still mobilized, a trick to secure a chance majority. He called upon his party to abstain (he was still anxious to avoid internal disorder) and not more than one-fifth of the electorate voted, as against nearly four-fifths in the previous June. But the government secured an obedient Parliament, and the Entente tacitly accepted the situation.

In the course of 1916 military events brought matters to a head. Fort Roupél at the head of the Strymón valley near where the river leaves the mountains to cross the Greek border, was surrendered to the Central Powers; martial law was declared in the Saloníka area by the French Commander-in-Chief, and Greek sovereignty thereby put into abeyance; Italian troops occupied northern Epeiros, a district including the port of A. Saránda (S. Quaranta) and the towns of Argyrókastro and Koritsá and disputed since 1913 between Greece and Albania;

and in August the Bulgarian army occupied eastern Macedonia (between the Strymón and the Nestós). A small Greek force resisted and retired into the Allied lines, where it later formed the nucleus of the Venizelist army; the rest, unable to get back to peninsular Greece, surrendered as prisoners of war under orders from Athens, and were sent to Germany. A revulsion of feeling in favour of Venizélos followed; and in a speech to a vast crowd in Athens he made a last appeal to the king for a united policy on the side of the Allies, and offered to retire himself if that would make union possible. Soon after, Rumania joined the Allies; but the king and the government remained unmoved; and the quick defeat of the Rumanians made them feel that once more they had been right: Germany must win. Then a revolutionary movement against the king and the Athens government (which, it should be remembered, had been declared to be unconstitutional) broke out in the army at Saloníka; and in September 1916 Venizélos left Athens for Crete, where he was still universally popular, and declared for the revolution. Most of the fleet joined him, under Kounduriótes, the successful admiral of the Balkan wars; with its help Venizélos mastered the islands (not all of them enthusiastic for his cause) and sailed for Saloníka, where he set up a provisional government.

The attitude of the Allies to this move was equivocal. Italy, who for her own purposes was against any increase in Greek power or prestige, secretly supported Constantine (later in 1917, she declared Albania an independent country under her protection and sent forces further south to occupy Yánnina); Tsarist Russia was against anti-dynastic movements (Constantine's mother was a Russian princess); there were influential elements in England and France which still hoped to win over the king. Venizélos was cold-shouldered, though equipment was sent for his army; but pressure was brought to bear against Athens. As a result of some remarkable blundering, troops some 2,000 strong were landed at the Peiraeus to enforce a demand for war material (stated, by a childish manœuvre, to be compensation for the material surrendered to the enemy in Macedonia); but they were opposed by Greek regiments, and after some firing were compelled to retreat, escorted by the Greek troops, and to re-embark (1 and 2 December). This was

followed by savage attacks on Venizelist partisans in Athens. Even now the Allies did not take decisive action: Venizélos repudiated the king's authority for good, and he was formally recognized by the Entente; demobilization of the army was demanded from Athens, and a blockade of peninsular Greece was begun. But at the same time a boundary was drawn north of Thessaly, between Venizelist and royalist Greece, and the Allies promised that no attempt to extend the authority of the former would be allowed; which for the time being satisfied the king, for Allied forces were anyhow there; while the blockade caused a great deal of distress to the generality of people (who had not enough to eat) but very little to the government. Even that was only a half-measure, for by the following June the corn crops of Thessaly were ripening and the Allies found themselves in the humiliating position of having tried to humour Constantine, of having incurred much unpopularity amongst the people, and of having failed to achieve such aims as they may be said to have had. They at last took decisive action. They forced the king to abdicate and leave the country with the Crown Prince (now King George II) and his leading military advisers, including Metaxás, who was interned in Corsica; the king's younger son, Alexander, succeeded to the throne. Venizélos returned to Athens, to the plaudits of one half of the population and the muttered curses of the other; the French, to show that there was to be no nonsense this time, sent troops ahead of him and quartered them on the Acropolis, as though the one aim of the Allies was to prove that the statesman who had stood by them throughout and who had for so long carried the majority of his countrymen with him in spite of every discouragement, was now only restored by foreign bayonets. The German comment was: 'For the first time the Entente has carried through with complete success a joint military action. The success has been won at the expense of an army which had previously been disarmed and a people who had been starved.'[1]

The differences between the two men, Venizélos and Constantine, were profound. The former took the long-sighted view, the latter the short-sighted. This does not mean simply that Venizélos rightly judged that the Entente Powers would

[1] I quote this from Forster's *Short History of Modern Greece, 1821–1940* (Methuen, 1941), p. 129.

eventually win the war; nor only that he saw that the interests of Greece and her general political outlook and ideas were more closely allied with those of the Entente than with Austria (with her ambitions towards Saloníka) and Germany; not even that he believed that by and large the cause of the Entente was just, and that a victory for Germany would mean a set-back in civilization, though this also was true. What he understood most clearly was that a people (assuming that it does not take a purely pacifist attitude, and Constantine and his military advisers cannot be said to have done that) must not allow its land to be invaded and to become the scene of battle, without taking part in it, unless it is prepared to see its fate decided by one or other of the combatants neither of whom will have any interest in its fortunes or (rightly or wrongly) anything but contempt for its conduct.[1] Constantine's policy had the weakness that it could only be justified by success, not by any greatness of purpose; and success was from the outset denied him. For he was not wisely preparing for what he regarded as the obvious end of the war—the victory of Germany; who would, naturally enough, have sacrificed Greek interests to those of her allies, Bulgaria and Austria. But Venizélos, having once decided, stood his ground deterred neither by successive military disappointments, nor by the envy and malice of his opponents in Greece, nor, above all, by the follies and mistakes of the Allied Powers. No matter that the conduct of the Allies was weak here and high-handed there, or, as with Italy, definitely antagonistic; he refused to be diverted from his course—he must put up with their humours if he was to get their support. The lesson he taught was that Greece was anyhow involved in the war, whether she liked it or not, that neutrality did not exist for her, and that she must at all costs make a decision and stand by it. It was a lesson that, perhaps, Metaxás at least among his opponents learnt during his exile in Corsica, and put to such fruitful use in 1940.

On his return to Athens, with the country now reunited under one government, Venizélos had still very great difficul-

[1] Perhaps the most unhappy people of the whole war were the men of the Greek regiments in eastern Macedonia who surrendered and were interned in Germany as prisoners of war, while their country was still neutral; there they remained till the end. They were not even given the chance of being demobilized and returning to their homes.

ties to face. He must once more mobilize the armed forces, so that he could send adequate support for the coming campaign in Macedonia. But the men had been under arms for four of the last five years, the last time with so little dignity and to such miserably little purpose; and large numbers were sullen and hostile. There was active opposition in a few places, and some were killed in the struggle. The absent Constantine was regarded as a martyr by many; the blockade was remembered against the Allies by all. Venizélos had to proceed with care. He had also to see to the army's re-equipment, and to find financial aid. Most of all he desired to inspire his countrymen with respect for constitutional principles. He recalled the Parliament elected in June 1915, which had been unconstitutionally dismissed by the king, and tried to invigorate it with new life. It gave him an overwhelming vote of confidence; but in this last aim, on the whole, he failed. His position had one weakness, that success depended too much on his own intellectual power and inspiring and masterful personality; whereas that of Constantine, by comparison a negligible man individually, but popular as the victorious prince of 1912–13, was strengthened by the unflinching support of certain politicians and soldiers, the former blinded by their intense hatred for Venizélos, the latter by their pathetic belief in the invincibility of Germany. Venizélos, however, overcame all difficulties but one. He created an army, which fought well in the final battles in the Balkans; he kept the country together; he won for it a place in the Council of the Nations out of proportion to its size and its achievements. He failed in one thing, in winning over any large numbers of his opponents, even after he had been proved right by success; he could not get his countrymen to regard the constitution as more important than the person of the king.[1] This was later to have important consequences.

1918–23

After the armistice of 1918, Venizélos spent most of his time in the West, taking part in the peace negotiations. At last a

[1] In the summer of 1918 a shepherd on Naxos Island (which had been within the Venizelist command since 1916) said to me, in the friendliest way, 'Will the Allies let us have Constantine back after the war?'

settlement of boundaries with Bulgaria and Turkey was reached, in the Treaties of Neuilly (1919) and of Sèvres (August 1920). Greece won western Thrace (between the Nestós and the Evros rivers) from Bulgaria, and eastern Thrace as far as the Chataldja lines from Turkey; Epeiros was reoccupied, and the question of its northern frontier was to be decided by an international commission (meanwhile an autonomous government of Northern Epeiros, entirely Greek, functioned in the disputed region of Argyrókastro and Koritsá); and the *vilayet* of Smyrna, occupied by Greek forces in 1919, was also ceded by Turkey, though, true to tradition, the Powers used once more the fiction of a nominal Turkish sovereignty which had served them to such little purpose in the past in Serbia, Bulgaria, and Crete. All the undisputed Greek lands which had been Greek through so many centuries were thus united, except Constantinople, Trebizond, the islands of the Dodecanese (still occupied by Italy), and Cyprus which had been annexed by Great Britain: and by an agreement with Italy (the Tittoni-Venizélos pact of 1919, as well as by the Treaty of Sèvres) the Dodecanese was to be handed over when the Treaty was ratified. Practically all Greek wishes seem to have been fulfilled, even though Constantinople itself was still in other hands.

Greece had indeed undertaken great responsibilities; but there seemed no reason to suppose that she would not be equal to them. There were, however, two elements in the situation which had not been sufficiently considered: friction in the country itself and Turkish recovery. Venizélos' success had not reconciled his opponents: the military only changed their previous scorn for plans which had seemed to them so impracticable and visionary in 1916 for a desire to prove that they could now do as well as he had done; and the politicians only added envy to hatred. Two days after the signature of the triumphant Treaty of Sèvres a couple of ex-officers of the navy tried to assassinate Venizélos in Paris—an attempt followed by reprisals in Athens during which the best and most brilliant of his opponents, Ion Dragoúmes, was murdered. Venizélos returned to Athens, and received the thanks of Parliament for his services. New elections were announced, and all wartime restrictions on civil liberties removed. The

royalists used their opportunities to call upon the country to support the martyr king in exile; and fate played into their hands, for King Alexander, who had played a difficult part well, died from the bite of a monkey. His younger brother refused the throne, which was thus empty unless Constantine were its rightful occupant; and the election turned into a simple contest between the ex-king and the Prime Minister. The former won decisively, the various anti-Venizelist parties (their proper and sufficient designation) winning 250 seats out of 370 (November 1920). Venizélos resigned, and left the country; a plebiscite shortly afterwards voted overwhelmingly for the return of Constantine.

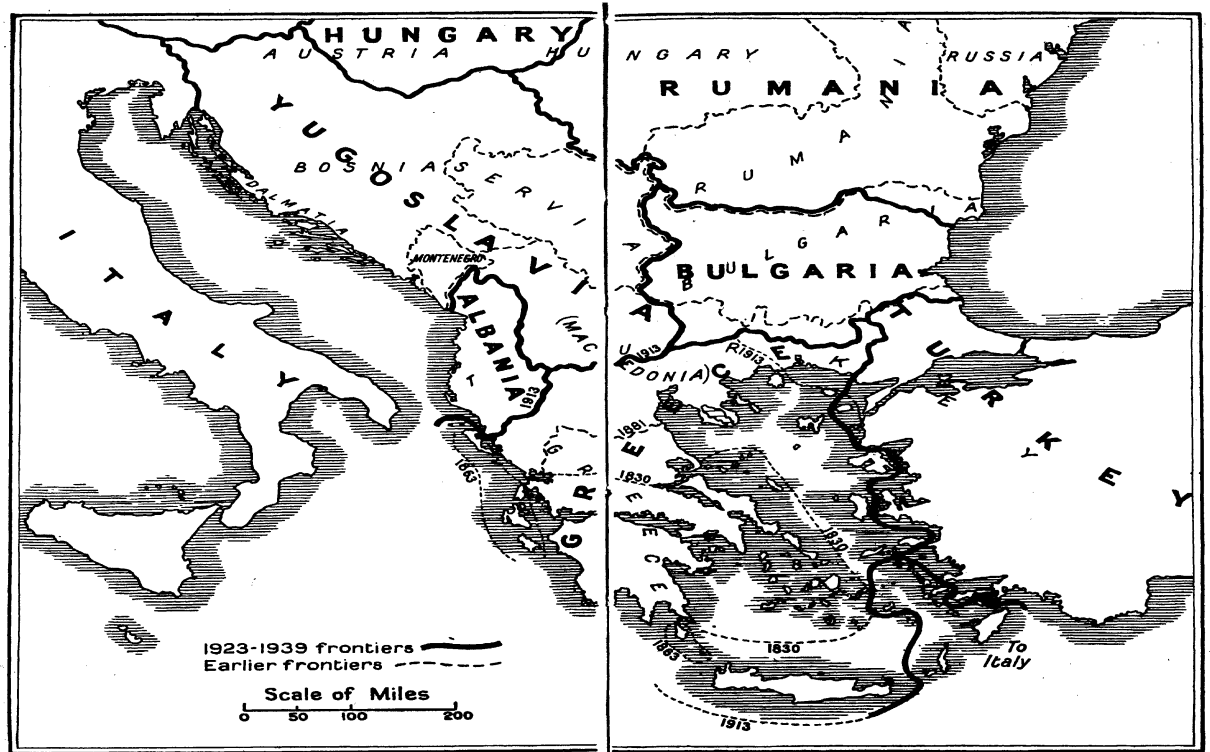
What decided the majority thus to turn against Venizélos at the moment of his own and his country's success it would be difficult to say. War-weariness perhaps, the feeling that he had been too adventurous, that his policy would lead to more wars; and that, now success had been won, they could safely have their king back. More than anything, probably, they were moved by a feeling that Venizélos had been too much tied up with the Western Powers, was almost their creature; by a desire to assert the country's independence—a feeling which had been fostered by so much tactless behaviour of the Powers in the past and by a solemn warning given now by the Supreme Allied Council of the consequences which the return of Constantine would entail. At the same time, with an easy optimism, no one really believed that the consequences would be disastrous or even important.

It was Venizélos' decision to leave the country after his electoral defeat which showed that they were. It is difficult to criticize his action, for his government had definitely decreed the exclusion of Constantine from the throne, and he was therefore a rebel in royalist eyes. It seemed impossible that both he and the king could be in Greece at the same time; he could not be simply the leader of the minority party in Parliament. His envious opponents (with whom his unceremonious pushing of them aside in 1910 still rankled) might well have taken their revenge against him personally. Certainly his departure showed the deep cleavage in the state. It left his party without adequate leadership, and helped further to link him in the minds of the unthinking with France and England

rather than with his own country. It would ultimately have been better for Greece had he stayed and run the risk of revenge. Later, some of his friends said that on King Alexander's death he should have postponed the elections indefinitely, and ruled without a parliament; his reply was that he was not of the stuff of which dictators are made. This was true. Notwithstanding his masterful and impatient temperament, he liked argument—he believed with Pericles of old that prior argument was not a hindrance to action. His aim had always been constitutional government, government by free discussion; and it was the tragedy of his career that, after the success of his first years in Greece, it continually eluded him.

The second factor which was ignored in 1920, alike in Greece and in Western Europe, was the position in Turkey. To all appearances Turkey had been more thoroughly defeated and stripped of all power of recovery than any other of our enemies. For long called 'the sick man of Europe', with an ever-decreasing ability either to govern or to retain her empire, her army—which had been the sole source of her power—recently routed and altogether disorganized, Turkey was left with only Anatolia as her territory—no longer an empire possessed of Christian provinces, nor the leader of Islam, but a small, impoverished, backward, unpopular national state. Clemenceau had addressed her delegates at the Sèvres congress in a tone proper to the feeling that Europe would never again be troubled by her name. Mustapha Kemal, however, decided otherwise. With infinite patience and astonishing tenacity of purpose, he began rebuilding Turkey, getting rid of the old Sultanate of Constantinople and the Caliphate of Islam, accepting the limitations of a national state in Anatolia, but making it strong and well-organized. Never have the decisions of all-powerful statesmen been so completely nullified, their confidence in the future made so foolish, as those of the Allies by Kemal; and it was Greece that was destined to bear the brunt of this mistake.

If war-weariness had been a major cause of the defeat of Venizélos in the 1920 elections—and the people had hoped that a change of regime would mean peace—they were quickly undeceived. The new government not only took over all the commitments in the Smyrna district of Asia Minor, but


HUNGARY
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BOSNIA
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DALMATIA
MONTENEGRO
ALBANIA
ITALY
GREECE
RUMANIA
RUSSIA
BULGARIA
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1913
1881
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1832
1864
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1913
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1923-1939 frontiers
Earlier frontiers
Scale of Miles
0 50 100 200

decided that attack was the best defence, that Kemal's forces must be overthrown; they would show that they could be as victorious as Venizélos, and this without the help of powerful allies. Financial aid to Greece had been withdrawn after the return of Constantine; Italy, which had its own ambitions in Asia Minor and had indeed been promised extensive rights there at one stage during the European war, was openly helping Turkey by sending munitions and refusing to the Greek fleet the right of blockade. France soon followed suit, in spite of all the brave words so recently uttered in support of her ally, Greece, and against her enemy, Turkey, and without of course giving up the provinces which she herself had taken from the latter. Kemal slowly and patiently organized an army. In the spring of 1921 the Greek forces advanced, and were successful in several actions against the enemy rearguards, driving them back into the interior. In August they advanced further, as far as the Sakharia river and not sixty miles from Ankara. But there Kemal was ready for them. He had built up his own supplies and had his base not far away; the Greeks had outstripped theirs, and were in a difficult and barren country. Kemal could choose his own line of defence and his own time for attack and he inflicted a severe defeat on the Greeks. The latter had to retreat, with heavy losses, but stood their ground further back (on the line from Eski-Shehir to Afium-Karahissar) from which Kemal was not yet able to dislodge them.

But he could afford to wait—he was still improving his army and getting more equipment from France and Italy; the Greeks could not. The argument for the advance into Asia Minor was that the Turks must be defeated before they became too strong; once the attack had failed, the only thing to do was to withdraw and to organize the defences in the Smyrna district as energetically as possible while keeping the possibility of an attack from Thrace on Constantinople (still occupied by the Allies and so 'neutral') in reserve. This the politicians at Athens, of whom Goúnares was still the leading light, had not the courage to do. Instead they looked on helplessly as at a hopeless situation, and made visits to Paris and London to implore help. The proud royalists and their king had sunk very low. Worse than this: the efficiency of the troops in Asia Minor had already been weakened by the dismissal of pro-

minent Venizelists among the officers and the appointment of others for political or personal reasons; and in consequence of a growing discontent in the army after the defeat of the Sakharia, morale grew worse. The army was kept in the highlands throughout the severe winter of 1921–22 without adequate food or clothing, for they were still far from their base and supply was ill organized. Worst of all, everybody at home was losing confidence in the outcome. The pathetic journeyings of Goúnares and others in search of money and equipment did nothing to restore confidence, and by the spring the newspapers were hinting or saying that Smyrna was not worth fighting for, and of course blaming Venizélos for the policy which had landed them there. Such depressing matter was the only reading for the troops who for a year, while Kemal was biding his time, were kept inactive, discouraged, ill fed and ill equipped, partly disorganized, in a hostile country. No wonder that when Kemal did attack, at the end of August 1922, they broke and fled. The disaster was complete; they were driven back to Smyrna, more and more disorganized as they retired and losing all their equipment, and then out of Smyrna itself. Only the ability of the Greek fleet and merchant marine to rescue both them and many of the Greek civil population from off the shore and to defend the islands prevented the capture of the entire army; and only the presence of forces to the north and in Thrace, which could threaten a counter-attack, saved the country from the worst consequences of the defeat. It was a sorry spectacle only two years after the triumph of 1920, a triumph due to all the hard work and courageous fighting of the previous ten years.

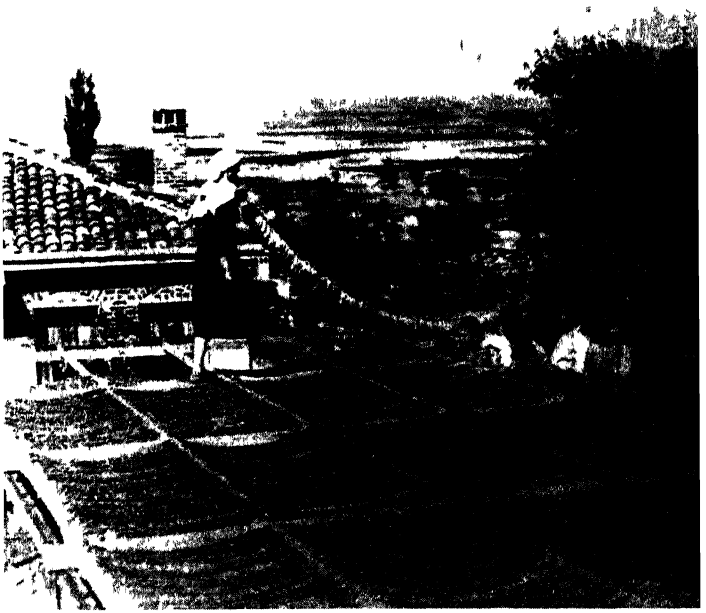
Some of the troops, however, were still capable of acting with energy at least within Greece itself. Under the lead of two colonels, Gonatás and Plastéras, a revolutionary movement broke out in the island of Chios, which demanded the abdication of Constantine. Constantine gave way before the threat, and left the country; the Crown Prince succeeded as George II. The revolutionaries asked Venizélos to return and lead a coalition cabinet; but he refused, and the soldiers formed a provisional government of their own. One of the first acts was to set up a court-martial to try those accused of responsibility for the disaster in Asia Minor—five politicians (including the

two who had been Prime Minister, and those who had been Minister for War) and the Commander-in-Chief, an incompetent court favourite. They were given a fair and patient trial, but were all found guilty and sentenced to death. They were shot soon after.

It is a mistake to suppose that this trial was an act of revenge by political opponents. It was the act of soldiers against politicians who had brought heavy losses and humiliation on a once brave army.[1] And it may be said that if any politicians have deserved death for criminal neglect of their duties, these men did, though, naturally enough, politicians in other countries were horrified. Nevertheless, the trial was both politically and morally wrong. Morally, because there was not in existence a tribunal which was competent to try the case, and one had to be formed *ad hoc*; the accused may have been guilty, but prosecutors and judges were in effect the same—the soldiers; no matter what the accused deserved, justice was not *seen* to have been done. Politically, because the executions caused a breach between the Royalists and the Liberals and Republicans which was too wide and too deep for the working of parliamentary government. They did indeed have a tonic effect on the country for the moment—this spectacle of energy and decision after disaster when there might have been nothing but despair; but the identification of the condemned men with one political party, and the absence of any protest against the action of the soldiers by the other parties, served to link the executions with Venizélos and the Liberals, with the result that the breach took many years, beset with endless political difficulties, to heal. This was the fatal result of 'using men as they deserve', without the aid of the law and constitutional right.

By the Treaty of Lausanne (finally settled in July 1923, after some exaggerated demands by the Turks had been countered by the threat of the still well-organized Greek army in Thrace against Constantinople) Greece gave up eastern Thrace, beyond the Evros (Maritsa) River, to Turkey, and lost the

[1] Actually only two of the nine officers who formed the court-martial were Venizelists; and the President, General Othonaíos, was known as a Royalist and a moderate man. But this is anyhow irrelevant, for it was not a party trial.



VI OLIVES AND TOBACCO

1 GATHERING THE OLIVE HARVEST (*E N A*)

2. DRYING TOBACCO LEAVES (*E N A*)

Dodecanese, Italy refusing to surrender the islands on the ground that the Treaty of Sèvres (above, p. 57) had not been ratified. More important than the loss of territory was the agreement for the exchange of populations, by which the Moslems were evacuated from all Greece (except western Thrace) and Greek Christians from Turkey, except those settled in Constantinople. The district of Smyrna, which had been Greek in race and speech since Homer's day (and had been known to the Turks as 'Infidel Smyrna') was lost. Wise men after the event said that the Greek occupation of Smyrna and its district was from the beginning a manifest blunder. 'All failures are mistakes,' said Venizelos, not a man who measured a cause by success or failure. And we must remember the circumstances in which the venture had been made: not only the opinion, universally held and apparently so reasonable, that Turkish power was at an end, that the sick man had died at last; but the belief in the principles of the League of Nations—that the wishes of the peoples, not strategic or even commercial factors, were to determine frontiers, and that the League would see that they were peacefully maintained.

CHAPTER VI

BETWEEN THE TWO WARS

Political Instability

THIS is not the place for any detailed account of the many political and constitutional changes that kept public life in Greece unstable and in part wasteful in the years between the defeat of 1922 and the assumption of a dictator's powers by Metaxás in 1936. But it is necessary to give a brief summary of the more important events, as a background to the economic picture which follows and in part explanation of Metaxás' success.

The provisional government of Plastéras and Gonatás remained in power, and George II on the throne, throughout 1923. In August occurred the tragi-comic episode of the murder of an Italian officer of the International Boundary Commission and some of his escort in Epeiros—tragic for the victims, a comedy for such gods as watch human affairs. Italy retaliated by bombarding Kérkyra, killing children in an orphanage, and occupying the island. Greece appealed to the League of Nations; and that august body, though an outraged public opinion compelled Italy to withdraw her troops, tamely handed over the settlement of the dispute to a Conference of Ambassadors (including the Italian) in Paris. The Conference awarded Italy a large indemnity, out of which Mussolini, by a gesture as generous as the bombardment of Kérkyra was courageous, remitted a small sum for the victims of that outrage. This was the first characteristic action of the Fascists in foreign affairs, and the first characteristic response of the Great Powers to it.

Greece was meanwhile distracted by the question of the regime—monarchy or republic. Metaxás, who singularly misjudged the situation, tried to anticipate the decision in favour of the former by a petty attempt at force, which failed. Elections were held in December, at which the Republicans gained 120 seats against 200 Venizelist Liberals who wished to have the questions settled in a constitutional manner; the Royalists

were only a handful. At the invitation of all parties, Venizélos returned and became Prime Minister once more; but the Republicans were in fact irreconcilable and active, knowing their own minds, and were supported by the strongest elements in the army and navy. Venizélos left Greece again after a month; and six or seven weeks later a Republic was proclaimed by a vote of the House, and the king was deposed. A plebiscite confirmed the vote. Three Cabinets followed in quick succession, though the last endured for as long as nine months, till June 1925; during this unstable period questions that were all-important for Greece had to be answered—the settlement of the hundreds of thousands of refugees from Turkey, a frontier incident with Bulgaria, relations with Turkey and Yugoslavia, which were badly strained. The Royalists within Greece were still unreconciled. In June, soldiers and sailors seized some public buildings in Athens, and the Government resigned; General Pángalos, the leader of the Republican element in the army, became Premier. After promising a brand-new constitution, he made himself dictator in January 1926, with the avowed object of ending useless political quarrelling and of reconciling Royalists and Republicans; later, he declared himself elected President, the first President of the Republic, Koundouriótes, Venizélos' old collaborator at Saloníka in 1916, having resigned in protest. Pángalos, however, was neither a strong nor an intelligent man, only energetic; in August another Republican general, Kondýles (a man of the old type of guerrilla leader), overthrew him, and locked him up in a fortress in Crete. Koundouriótes was persuaded to return to the Presidency; Kondýles, true to his word, retired as soon as elections were held. These had no decisive result (the parties in favour of a republic had a small majority over the rest), and a coalition government was formed of Republicans and Royalists (Metaxás among them), with the extremists on both sides included. In spite of some reshuffling due to resignations, this government proved itself unexpectedly capable in dealing with many financial and foreign questions. It remained in office till July 1928; but the constitutional problem and the bitter political quarrels were still unsettled. Moreover, the new leader of the Liberals, Kaphandáres, though successful as Finance Minister in the Cabinet, had not the strength of

character to command allegiance or to unite all the Republicans. Venizélos was back in Greece, living at home in Crete, and his old followers were constantly urging him to return to public life. With Venizélos present, even in the background, no one but he could lead, and Kaphandáres found his position impossible. An attempt was made to continue the coalition, with the extremists on either side now excluded (but Metaxás remaining as a moderate Royalist); but while there was still some administrative success, the political quarrelling went on. In July the attempt was abandoned; and Venizélos returned to political life as the head of a party government. Elections next month gave him a large majority.

The new Parliament remained in being, and the government in office, for four years (till September 1932), with one brief but characteristic interruption towards the end of the period. Great success was achieved in the field of finance and economics, of which more will be said later; still greater in foreign affairs. The long disputes with Turkey over the exchange of population were ended; more than this, a Treaty of Friendship, an agreement on naval parity, and a commercial convention were signed when Venizélos headed a Greek delegation to Ankara in 1930—a genuine attempt at a sensible reconciliation between old enemies, which was helped further by the return visit of the Turkish Premier to Athens. Unofficial Balkan Conferences were initiated in Athens in 1930, and were continued annually for some years; all the Balkan countries, including Bulgaria, being represented.[1] The second Conference was held in Constantinople in 1931. There was a nationalist movement in Cyprus in 1931, and much excitement in Greece in consequence; but in spite of the stiff line taken by the British Government, Venizélos refused to regard it as a question in which Greece should intervene. As later, when he would not rouse his countrymen against Italy in the matter of the Dodecanese, he was anxious not to spoil the work he was doing both within Greece and in the Balkans by any act hostile to the Great Powers.

[1] The man who was largely responsible for this praiseworthy attempt at appeasement was Papanastasíou, the Greek Republican leader; a man who seemed far more ready to make peace with ex-enemies outside Greece than with political opponents at home. He was one of the most intransigent of men whether towards moderate Republicans like Kaphandáres and Venizélos, or towards the Royalists.

Venizélos carried Parliament with him throughout this fruitful period of office; but Royalist opposition, both in the House and still more in the Press, was continuous and embittered. In 1932 a bill for proportional representation, which Venizélos had himself got the President to annul for the election of 1928, was forced through the House; and the unbridled and violent attacks of the Royalist press persuaded him, the upholder of Liberal principles, to propose a bill for the restriction of full liberty of expression. It was so strongly opposed (but for party reasons, not on sound constitutional principles), that Venizélos resigned; but, on the failure of an attempt by the Republican party to form a coalition with the Royalists, he returned to office.

Since the life of this Parliament was drawing to a close, and none could foresee the result of new elections, a new military League was formed to protect the Republic; Venizélos was naturally accused of connivance. But the elections were duly held (September 1932), and produced the worst possible result—a stalemate: 102 Liberals, 15 Republicans, 95 Royalists (calling themselves now the People's Party), and 40 divided between various other groups, among which the Communists, mostly from the tobacco-manufacturing town of Kaválla, began to be active. Short-lived Cabinets under Tsaldáres, the new Royalist leader, and Venizélos followed; under the latter new elections were held, which gave Tsaldáres a small majority (March 1933). Another attempt to forestall the result by force in the Republican interest—'because parliamentary government had broken down'—was made by Plastéras; but it failed for want of any substantial support, and Tsaldáres became Prime Minister again. This promised well; but feeling was still high and in June an attempt was made on Venizélos' life, in which high officials of the police were thought to be implicated; and certainly inquiry and prosecution were delayed for months. Tsaldáres was for compromise and reconciliation; on this occasion it was Metaxás, leader of a small group of Royalists in the House, who was intransigent and insisted on the impeachment of Venizélos for complicity in Plastéras' abortive movement. Tsaldáres ended this impasse by declaring an amnesty for all who might be implicated. He also continued the good work of Venizélos in foreign affairs, by a visit to

Ankara and a new Greco-Turkish Treaty to supplement that of 1930; his Foreign Minister also visited Yugoslavia, England, and France; trade agreements were made with Albania and Russia, and even an attempt made to settle economic differences with Bulgaria.

The fourth unofficial Balkan Conference, held at Saloníka, passed resolutions in favour of a multilateral Balkan pact. Early in 1934 a pact was signed between Greece, Turkey, Rumania, and Yugoslavia, guaranteeing respect for existing agreements and the maintenance of present national frontiers; but Bulgaria refused to join in any agreement which implied her giving up her territorial ambitions. Albania also, where there were difficulties over the schools of the large Greek population in the south (that is, in northern Epeiros), kept aloof.

The tenth anniversary of the Republic was peacefully celebrated, under a government of Royalist sympathies; but the deadlock in Parliament remained, and there was constant opposition between the House and the Senate where the Liberals were in a majority; the continued failure to find those guilty of the attempt on Venizélos' life the year before embittered feeling on both sides still further. Tsaldáres, though personally anxious for reconciliation, was not a strong enough man to impose his will; and Venizélos retired to Crete. The economic position of the country, however, was improving; and early in 1935 an agreement was come to by all for a long-term plan of development. But the hopes of political peace were once more overthrown by a revolutionary movement among Republican officers of the army and navy who feared that the Government was secretly paving the way for the return of George II. It had some slight initial success in Macedonia; and the fleet left Athens for Crete and the islands. Venizélos joined the revolt, and by so doing ended a romantic and great career with a pitiable failure. Kondýles energetically put down the revolutionaries in Macedonia; the fleet sailed the Aegean, but there was no popular backing for the movement, which soon collapsed, its leaders, including Venizélos, escaping somewhat ignominiously to Italian-held Rhodes. The ringleaders were cashiered and sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment; one or two were executed, and Venizélos was

sentenced to death in his absence. Many civil servants and republican schoolmasters and university professors were dismissed; what was worse, the House in a needless panic passed measures abolishing the Senate and suspending the permanence of judges and of civil servants. At the general election of June 1935, the Republicans abstained; Tsaldáres had a large majority for his People's Party (243 members), Kondýles had 37 followers, Metaxás 7, and there were 6 Independents. The new Parliament—or rather Constituent Assembly—declared for the monarchy, and a plebiscite in November confirmed the resolution by an overwhelming vote. The plebiscite was probably rigged; but George II returned amidst acclamation. He had said he would not return at the invitation of one party only; and now insisted on a general amnesty for all political offenders, including Venizélos. The latter, from France, urged his old followers not to oppose the king and expressed hopes for unity under the monarchy.

In the same year occurred the Italian attack in Abyssinia. All the Balkan countries joined in the sanctions against Italy; and Yugoslavia, Greece, and Turkey promised support when Great Britain asked for it in the event of Italy's taking military action against the League.

Another general election for a normal Parliament took place in January 1936—the last to be held in Greece. The Liberals were the largest single party, and with the help of the Republicans mustered 142 members; Tsaldáres got 69 seats, and his ally, Kondýles, 63; Metaxás had his 7 followers again; and 4 others gave this group 143 members. There were 15 Communists to hold the balance; and once more deadlock seemed complete. An attempt at coalition between the Liberals and Tsaldáres' party failed; and a government was formed under Demertzés—a one-time Liberal, but now non-party—including Metaxás as Deputy Premier and Tsaldáres. Fortune then had her say. At the end of January Kondýles died, in April Demertzés; and Metaxás, the one extreme Royalist leader, but the leader of the smallest party, became Prime Minister; in May Tsaldáres died; and Metaxás had now fewer outstanding rivals for power. In March Venizélos had died in Paris at the age of seventy-two; his body was brought to Greece, though not to Athens (it was felt that feeling was still too acute for this

honour), and at his funeral in his native Crete the king and both the major political parties were represented.

Still little was done in Parliament, where parties wrangled. It was prorogued to deprive the Communists of their power to play off one group against another, and an attempt was made to control the trade unions.

A strike at Saloníka was put down by force. A general strike was declared for a day in August, but now Metaxás got in his blow first. He persuaded the king to sign a decree dissolving Parliament and suspending certain articles of the constitution and the personal liberties of the subject; he ruled as Dictator, and combined in his own person the offices of Foreign Minister, War, Navy, and Air. At one blow he both ended the Parliamentary debates and curbed the Communists and the Labour leaders, at the cost of law and liberty.

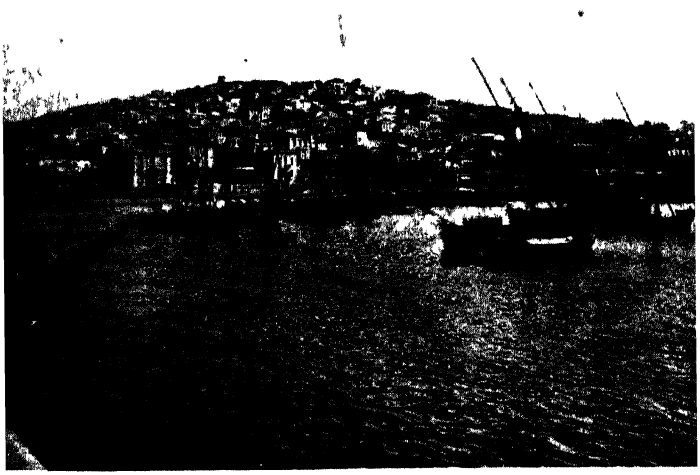
Metaxás' career was a remarkable one. He was doubtless a good soldier; but his judgement in 1914–18, though on particular military problems (as the Gallipoli campaign) very likely sound, was on the main issue proved to be wrong and that of the civilian Venizélos right. He may have kept clear of close implication in the Asia Minor disaster of 1922, but his own little attempt at revolution in 1923 had been a fiasco and only hastened the establishment of the Republic. Afterwards he had only been the leader of a very small group of Royalists, mainly from his native island of Kephallenia, and had played no very distinguished or even conspicuous part in the disturbed decade before he became Deputy Premier in 1936. It seemed to be only the accident of his having that post when the Premier Demertzés died that won him the first position. He was a man of no great personal distinction, and had not by his character won any authority with his countrymen. But he retained his position for nearly five years, from 1936 till his death early in 1941. In many ways his dictatorship followed the fashion of those days, and seemed at first sight a somewhat uninteresting imitation of that in Italy. Communists and Liberal statesmen were exiled to one or other of the islands; trade-union activities were suppressed, and the Press was muzzled; and a strict censorship produced some ludicrous results, such as cuts in the text of Sophocles' *Antigone* if performance was to be permitted, because they might endanger

respect for authority. The king was kept in the background;[1] a secret police which spied on men's movements was instituted; Youth Movements were started; there were to be no political parties; and public buildings (though to nothing like the same extent as in Italy) were placarded with quotations from the leader's speeches. Dr. Ley was invited from Germany to open some sort of Strength through Joy exhibition in Athens, which attracted very little public interest. There was introduced an absurd secrecy about such things as the staff maps of the country, which the public were no longer allowed to buy. But Metaxás had a virtue rare among the dictators, a personal modesty; if he boasted about the achievements of his regime,[2] he did not about his own. He worked hard for certain things: the re-equipment of the armed forces, a few more roads (still very badly needed), and better communications generally, and his foreign policy was both reasonable in aim and moderate in expression; in all this continuing the work of earlier parliamentary governments. Though some of his ministers were violent men of a commonplace type, he secured the collaboration of others who were able and disinterested. By and large he was not unpopular; very many people were tired of the ineffective and petty quarrels of the parties in Parliament and the frequent deadlocks, and hated the many attempts to change the regime by force; and, as in other countries, there was enmity among the people against the politicians in the capital whom they themselves had sent there.[3] A greater man than Metaxás

[1] There was an interesting incident in 1938 when the new recruits from the Military School took the oath of loyalty to the king. The *Eléftheron Véma*, a Liberal and formerly Republican paper which had throughout maintained a high standard of journalism in spite of its struggle with the censorship, took the opportunity of stressing the fact that the oath was to the king as head of the state, not to any party leader: a view that could not be gainsaid, but was by no means agreeable to the party in power.

[2] At least, he gave his followers a loose rein. At one celebration of the anniversary of the dictatorship huge arches were erected along Stádion Street in Athens to represent the three great eras of Greek civilization: first, classical Greece; second, Byzantion; and third, the rule of Metaxás. The Third Reich of Hitler was less ridiculous than this.

[3] After the failure of the great expedition to Sicily 'the people were very bitter against the politicians who had advised it', wrote Thucydides of Athens in 413 B.C., 'as though they themselves had not voted for it'.



VII. PORTS

1. PIRAEUS
(*E.N.A.*)

2. PATRAS
(*E.N.A.*)

could have done what he did without a dictatorship (Venizélos had done much more without it); an autocracy—still more, a totalitarian system—was quite unnecessary, and a healthier public opinion would have avoided it; but the people were apathetic and there was no strong feeling for the constitution and constitutional government as such.[1]

For all that, Metaxás worked hard for his country; his patriotism was simple and sincere—he did not, when the crisis came, lean towards Italy because his method of government was an imitation of Mussolini's. He did not repeat his cardinal error of 1914–16; he neither thought a German victory inevitable, nor that, if it were probable, that must decide his country's action; still less, that Greece could avoid war by passive acquiescence when Italy threatened.

. . . . .

From this brief survey of internal politics in Greece between 1923 and 1936, it might well be supposed that the country as a whole had not advanced beyond what it had been before 1910 when Venizélos so unexpectedly swept the old political parties aside; indeed the instability was greater, and the party strife more bitter and apparently more futile. 'New Presbyter was but old Priest writ large.' Yet progress was substantial, and in some ways even remarkable, in this unstable period (though it is for the philosopher to inquire whether this is because we overrate the importance of politicians, or because their faults loom rather more largely than their virtues); and, if I may spoil Milton's wit, there was an essential difference: the new Greece was writ larger than the old. As will I hope be made clear in the next sections, the country was more important and did more important things; it had more responsibility, and was conscious of it, and more self-reliant. This was in fact the special achievement of Venizélos, far more than of any other individual: to give Greece some greatness and some dignity whether in victory or defeat.

[1] Students of ancient Greek history will contrast the devotion of the ancient Athenians to their democratic constitution through nearly two and a half centuries of troubled history, during which it was more than once overthrown by victorious enemies and at once restored as soon as independence was regained.

Before we can describe the problems with which the country had to deal after 1918, and more particularly after 1922, it will be as well to supplement, with the help of some statistics, the brief account of the make-up of the Greek people from 1830 to 1913 (before, that is, the expansion following the Balkan wars). As has been said above (p. 34), in 1830 the total population was about three-quarters of a million, or less than 18 to the square kilometre; there were only four places that could be called towns, Patras, Syra, Athens, and Trípolis, the two former of some commercial importance, the two latter old centres of Turkish administration in central Greece and the Peloponnese. Patras was the largest of these, but with a population of only 15,000. Athens had been severely damaged during the War of Independence, and must start afresh. Peiraeus did not exist. The large majority of the population were peasants, shepherds in the wide mountainous areas, cultivators in the plains, and craftsmen for peasant needs; the only large minority were the sea-going people—merchants and sailors who covered the eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea, and the carriers within Greece itself. A generation later, at the end of Otho's reign in 1861, the picture was essentially the same: the population had increased to 1,100,000, or 23 to the square kilometre; but this represented rather the slow recovery from the ravages of the War of Independence than any new development in the state. The land was better cultivated; market towns, such as Lamía, Livadiá, and Agrínion, were growing to meet the need of rural industry; but the only new features were the growth of Athens (with 41,000 inhabitants) as the capital and administrative and legal centre of the state, and the seat of the new university (founded in 1837), and of Peiraeus, which soon became the chief harbour of the country—though mainly for imports as the most convenient centre of distribution. Patras, the chief harbour for the export of currants, was moderately prosperous. In 1881 Thessaly was united with Greece; this meant a considerable increase in her rural population, Thessaly being a corn-growing district—much the largest in Greece at that date—with a few market-towns (Lárissa, Tríkkala, Kardítsa) and a port (Vólo) of local importance. The total popu-

lation was then two million (31·5 to the square kilometre, the area of Greece having been increased from 47,500 to 63,600 square kilometres); Athens was a town of some 80,000 inhabitants, Peiraeus had 23,000, Patras 27,000. No other town had shown more than a slow increase.

The census of 1907 showed similar progress, but no essential changes in the past generation: total population, 2,600,000; Athens, 167,000; Peiraeus, 73,000; Patras, 38,000. There were a dozen other towns with populations ranging from 10,000 to 25,000; of these Syra, the old port in the Aegean whose importance had been eclipsed by Peiraeus, and Kérkyra were urban in character, Vólo and Kalamáta were growing as ports, the rest were rural centres, serving in the main the agricultural and pastoral industries. This was the generation which had seen the construction of the railways of Greece, and of such main roads as they had. The total population of the true urban centres was some 12 per cent of the whole; this was higher than that of Serbia and Bulgaria, but shows clearly enough the essentially rural nature of the country; moreover, Athens and Peiraeus together had nearly all of it.

An immediate comparison with the figures of 1928 (the last complete ones available) will illustrate to some degree the change brought about by the expansion of Greece after 1912. The area of the country is now some 130,000 square kilometres, or double that of 1910; the population in 1928 was well over 6 millions (it had reached 7¼ millions by 1940), approaching three times what it had been in 1910. Athens, with 450,000 inhabitants within its municipal boundaries in 1928, and Pieraeus with 250,000, formed practically a single urban area; by 1940 this area, if we include all the suburbs and dormitory towns, had a population of over a million. It is a large city, the largest in south-eastern Europe, and nearly as populous as the two biggest cities, Rome and Milan, of Italy. Greece has now another large town, Saloníka, with 220,000 inhabitants in 1928 and nearly 350,000 in 1940. Between them these two large urban centres have some 15 per cent of the population; this (taking only towns of over 100,000 into account) contrasts with 3·8 per cent in Yugoslavia, 5·9 in Rumania, and 3·9 in Bulgaria. But Greece has only one other town with over 50,000 inhabitants, Patras (with now some 65,000); the other

towns in the old territory which are urban in character, Kalamáta, Vólo, Kérkyra, and Syra, have grown but are still small (25,000 to 45,000). In the new territories perhaps only two or three towns (besides Saloníka) are properly urban: Yánnina (20,000); Kaválla (50,000), the centre of tobacco-manufacturing and export in Macedonia; Mytiléne (28,000). The rural centres have grown to towns of 15,000 to 30,000; and there are some twenty in the new territories of this size and character: they are most of them seats of provincial administration, they have courts of law and maybe their own newspapers, and the chief secondary schools, but they are essentially centres of rural districts. It will thus be seen that Greece is still in the main an agricultural and pastoral country, and that its commercial and manufacturing population is largely concentrated in two cities—Athens-Peiraeus and Saloníka. It can be compared in this respect with Denmark and Portugal, countries chiefly agricultural and each with one large urban centre.

We can now consider the problems which confronted Greece in 1923 and the manner in which they were dealt with.

The Settlement of the Refugees from Turkey

In one way Greece was more fortunate than either of the other two Balkan states, Serbia and Rumania, whose territories were largely expanded as a result of the Balkan and European wars. Serbia had absorbed northern Macedonia, and was later united with Bosnia, Croatia, and Slovenia to form Yugoslavia; but not only was there a compact body of Mahometans in Bosnia, and the Croatians and Slovenes were Catholics in contrast with the Serbs of the Orthodox Church, but they had long been part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, looking to Vienna as their national capital, in spite of their desire for independence. They were part of Central Europe, with all the advantages which that implied, and did not at all look to Belgrade, the small provincial sort of capital of a backward country, as their centre. Zagreb, Croatia's own capital, was more 'civilized'. Nor had even the peasants of Macedonia looked to Belgrade for their deliverance from Turkey. Thus,

not only the religious differences, but those of a cultural tradition of many centuries, made for disunion, and for disunion of a painful kind: the Serb element in the new state had played the most prominent part in the liberation of Yugoslavia as a whole; but the other parts of the country did not wish to go to Serbia for leadership. In Rumania, though the religious difficulty was less important, the majority of the Transylvanian peasantry being of the Uniate Church (that is, Orthodox in union with Rome), the position was similar: the newly freed population, though glad enough (or the majority of them) to be free of Hungarian rule, the peasants especially to be free of Hungarian landlords, had not regarded Bucharest as their centre; they too were rather of Central Europe.[1] But in Greece the position was different. All, or practically all, of the Greek people had been under Turkey; that section of them in peninsular Greece and the islands which had first freed themselves were not only the free representatives of their race, but had made (in spite of everything) most progress. By 1910 the majority of Greeks outside Greece did look to Athens as their natural centre; they wanted not only to be free, but to be part of the Greek state, and not only all those still under Turkish rule, but the Cypriots (like the Ionian islanders fifty years earlier) who had had the benefits of a tolerant and just, if not very enlightened or imaginative, British administration. Men came from all over the Greek world as students to Athens University (the only Greek university), and returned to their native lands—whereas the Croats' own university at Zagreb, not to mention Vienna, was superior to that at Belgrade. We must not of course exaggerate or oversimplify this Greek unity: Athens as an important centre of Greek life, as the recognized capital of the Greek world, was of recent growth—as explained above, it had been but a small provincial capital of Turkish Greece, and had had to begin again after 1830; the Greek communities of Constantinople, Smyrna, and even Alexandria, had much longer traditions behind them, both of trade and of culture, with schools of long standing; they still progressed under Turkish or Egyptian and Anglo-Egyptian rule; and many men from these cities—especially from Con-

[1] Cp. below, p. 113, the percentage of illiterates in all Rumania (including Transylvania) with that of Hungary.

stantinople, the old capital—tended to ignore the mushroom pretensions of Athens. But in general this statement of the difference between Greece and the other two victorious Balkan states is true. At least, except perhaps for a few of the Phanariot families of Constantinople, no Greeks looked to their foreign rulers for employment and enlightenment, as the Croats and Slovenes and the Transylvanians to Austria-Hungary. Smyrna got her first and short-lived university during the brief period of Greek occupation; Epeiros and Macedonia, especially the former, had by persistent and brave effort maintained their Greek heritage against Turkish misrule, especially in the schools, and would have been part of the Greek state long before had they been allowed; and Saloníka too got her first university when she became the second city in Greece. Which again is not to say that Yánnina and Saloníka are in all things obedient admirers of Athens; far from it. There is some stubborn provincial independence of spirit, and jealousy of the capital; but there is perhaps less in Greece than in some other countries, and no one seriously disputes the pre-eminence of Athens.

For ten years indeed after 1913 Greece had minority problems to deal with—Bulgarians and Turks in Macedonia, and Moslem Albanians in Epeiros. Except for the interval of 1916–19 when Allied troops were in occupation of the northern provinces, she handled these problems well, and there was little discontent. But they were solved for her by the handing over of northern Epeiros to Albania, by an exchange of minorities with Bulgaria (a transaction which was not completed for many years, but the obstacles were political and not administrative), and the last by the disaster of Asia Minor which led to the final expulsion of the entire Greek population of Turkey except that of Constantinople and the compulsory exchange for them of the Moslem population of Macedonia —that of western Thrace being allowed to remain.

This was a tremendous problem. With the fall of Smyrna in August 1922, hundreds of thousands of the Greek inhabitants had got away, somehow or other, with the army. They had no homes, no furniture, no clothes but what they wore, no tools, a large majority were women and children and old people, for the men of military age had either been killed, or were detained

by the Turks. They had to be cared for, in the midst of all the political troubles in Greece which followed the disaster. They were housed in schools, in barracks, hospitals, and other public buildings, first in Mytiléne and Chios and other islands, then mainly in and around Athens and Saloníka; a few only, and those mostly of the well-to-do, found friends to take them in. The Red Cross, particularly the Americans, gave generous help in food and clothing; but the problem of settlement remained. Macedonia was the district which could most easily take a substantial increase in the population, and plans were made for settlement there on a large scale. Early in 1923 the convention for an exchange of populations was agreed with Turkey, and came into effect with the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne in July; the Moslems left Greece and the remaining Greeks left Turkey (with the exceptions mentioned above). This released large areas of land and many houses, mainly in Macedonia; and to this extent the problem was eased. Under the Mixed Commission set up by the Treaty some 350,000 Moslems left Greece, and upwards of 200,000 Greeks came in. Over 1,200,000 refugees had reached the country by 1925, that is to say nearly 25 per cent was added to the population.[1] Many of them came from Smyrna itself and were of urban occupation; those of the professional classes, doctors, teachers, engineers, merchants, lawyers soon found much work that they could do; but the great majority had to be settled on the land. For most of them, both urban and rural, houses had to be built, and for most of the latter, land had to be found, surveyed, and distributed, prepared for agriculture and drained, and animals, machinery, fruit-trees, and seed provided. The Greek government began the work at once, but, particularly in the prevailing political and social instability, a steady and systematic progress, the one thing necessary, was beyond its resources; it is indeed remarkable how much they succeeded in doing, for refugees are seldom popular with their hosts. The League of Nations played a beneficent hand in the autumn of 1923, and a Refugee Settlement Commission was established, with

[1] The actual increase was about 20 per cent but some 5 per cent were lost by the cession of eastern Thrace and some islands to Turkey by the Treaty of Lausanne. This is the official figure for the number of refugees. There were probably many more, who settled themselves, and were not so classified.

an American chairman, a British vice-chairman, and two Greek members; money was advanced at once, and finally a Refugee loan of an actual value of about £10,000,000 sterling was raised by the government, under the auspices of the League —with onerous terms however for a poor country, for the interest was at about 7½ per cent.[1] The members of the Commission were men of goodwill and ability; and with these financial resources behind it it was able to undertake the task systematically. By the terms of its charter from the League, it was to be an autonomous organization free from government interference; and except for a period of friction in 1925 when the foolish Pángalos attempted, on 'national' grounds, a tactless interference, relations between the Commission and successive governments were amicable. The large staff of the Commission, which numbered from 1,500 to 2,000 at different times, and which included Directors of Colonization (one each for Macedonia, Thrace, and the rest of Greece), architects, engineers, surveyors, agricultural experts, veterinaries, doctors, administrative officers, accountants, clerks, were of course all Greek. The refugees, helpless when left to themselves, proved, the great majority of them, helpful when once goodwill had been proved. There were endless personal problems; not only had those of rural origin to be separated from the town-workers, but members of families had to be found and reunited, and since the peoples of whole villages had left Asia Minor, they wished to settle together in their new homes, and all had to be sorted out for the purpose. And, even when this was done, if things did not go well, if tools or the proper seed did not arrive in some place in time, or houses of some kind were not built fast enough, or the weather was bad, there was grumbling (because, without the tools or the seed, there was little for helpless people to do but grumble) and discouragement. Moreover, the terms of the treaty with Turkey provided for compensation for property lost or destroyed by the transfer;

[1] The nominal value of the loan was £12,300,000 sterling, at 7 per cent interest, issued at 88. Of this amount, £7,500,000 was raised in London, £2,500,000 in Athens, and £2,300,000 in New York. £3,000,000 of the Stabilization Loan of 1928 was also allotted to the Refugee Commission. This earned interest at about 6½ per cent; and the lower rate indicated the improvement in the economic conditions of Greece, and the confidence inspired by the return of Venizélos to power at that time.

and the difficulty of testing and settling claims was immense. Even at the best of times, when the villagers gathered together at dusk they would look out at the sea, towards their lost homes in Ionia.[1]

For all that, thanks to the steady purpose, the intelligence, and the energy of the Commission and its staff—men determined to carry to completion a piece of work which had been allotted to them—and to the patient courage of the refugees, the settlement was carried out. Where the evacuated Moslems left behind them houses and fields, the task was not so difficult

[1] Readers of Herodotus will remember the story of the Phocaeans who in the sixth century B.C. left Ionia after the Persians had conquered their land. They took refuge in the islands between the mainland and Chios; and now, rather than submit, they resolved to found a new city in the west (in Corsica). They launched their ships, taking with them their wives and children, their household goods, and images of the gods; and the Persians got possession of an empty city. 'They laid the heaviest curse on the man who should draw back and forsake the expedition, and having dropped a heavy mass of iron into the sea, swore never to return to Phocaea till that mass reappeared upon the surface. Nevertheless, as they were preparing to depart for Corsica, more than half of their number were seized with such sadness and so great a longing to see once more their city and their ancient homes, that they broke the oath by which they had bound themselves and sailed back to Phocaea.' The town of Phocaea, on the mainland of Asia Minor opposite Chios, survived, with its ancient name, till 1922: and there is a Néa Phokaía among the refugee settlements in Chalkidiké.

C. B. Eddy, Chairman of the Commission from October 1926 till its dissolution in 1930, in his excellent book on the Commission's work (*Greece and the Greek Refugees*, London, 1931), writes: 'It was necessary to inspire confidence in the refugees. While their vigour and intelligence have been admitted, they would have been more than human had they not been depressed by the difficulties which hampered them on every side. Strong leadership was essential to the creation of a spirit of optimism. Perhaps the Refugee Settlement Commission made no greater contribution than this. As these words are written there came back to the mind of the author incidents which occurred during an inspection tour in 1927 with John Karamanos, Director-General of Colonization in Macedonia. The journey was made among the refugees in the Chalkidike district, where, by reason of climatic conditions, and the unhealthiness of the country, the settlements were in a precarious condition. Everywhere the Director-General talked to the refugees, men, women, and children; he argued with the doubters, he praised the optimists, he reproved the pessimists, instantly adapting himself to the nature of the problem presented. Where the refugees had been so much discouraged by their troubles that they were ready to renounce further effort, his magnetism had an immediate effect upon the morale of the people: "Karamanos, since we heard you speak, we have courage to live another year."'

(though in many cases the original Greek neighbours of the Moslems had claims of their own as well); though the houses were most of them of poor construction and fields had not been very well tilled, yet the standard was as high, or nearly as high, as the refugees had been used to in Asia Minor, and the kind of life was the same. Elsewhere whole new villages were planned and built, called many of them after the villages of Ionia they had left—New Ephesos, New Moudaniá, and so forth. The need for haste and the smallness of the financial resources meant that only the humblest of one-storied houses could be built, which cost, it will interest us to know at the present moment, £80 to £100 each (up to £125 in the towns). It need hardly be said that the results were, architecturally as villages, depressing. Fortunately there was much land in Macedonia and Thrace—not much elsewhere in Greece—that had been long uncultivated, but was good land; these provinces had been underpopulated; and much more was reclaimed by a series of big public works undertaken by the government with the aid of foreign (generally American) engineers. Two of the three rivers of Macedonia that flow down from the north (from Yugoslavia and Bulgaria), the Axiós (Vardar) and the Strymón, made large lakes and swamps in the Greek plains, areas which were as unhealthy as they were unprofitable. These, and other marshlands, were drained and reclaimed, to the benefit of more than the refugees. Another big hydro-electric scheme was started in Epeiros, but had not been completed when Italy attacked Greece in 1940.

In the towns—mainly in the Athens-Peiraeus region and in Saloníka—the urban refugees, after some years of life in petrol-can shacks and the like, many of which still survive, were settled in large suburbs, as depressing in appearance as the new villages. There was in their case the additional difficulty of finding them useful employment; but some industries, such as carpet manufacture, which had flourished in Asia Minor, were begun afresh in Athens; and the general economic improvement in Greece in spite of the slump in the early 'thirties, and the increase in industrial undertakings, especially in textiles, the building trades, tobacco manufacture, and the merchant marine, absorbed many of the new-comers.

The Commission had completed its special task of settle-

ment by 1930, and was then dissolved. Some figures illustrate the nature and extent of what they had accomplished.

The administrative district of Macedonia, which is about twice the size of Wales, and, geographically, consists of four separate parts, received more than half—upwards of 550,000—of the Asia Minor refugees; of these two-thirds were settled in rural districts.[1] Over 300,000 Moslems and Bulgarians left the district, so that between 1920 and the census of 1928 the population as a whole increased by 330,000, or 33 per cent, to 1,400,000. The inhabitants of Saloníka increased by 70,000, or nearly 40 per cent, to 244,000 in 1928, of whom nearly 100,000 were officially classed as refugees; the Moslems in large numbers and the Bulgarians had left. In western Thrace the population increased by nearly 50 per cent to 300,000; but in this province the Moslems were allowed to remain, and most chose to. This created a special problem, for there were few vacant houses and lands for the new-comers (most of whom came from East Thrace ceded to Turkey in 1923) to take possession of. But here too there was plenty of room for improvement in the use of the land, which is rich but in Turkish times had not been fully developed. Moreover, eastern Thrace is a land of a similar character; the change for the refugees was not too marked, and many showed great independence on their own account, especially in the houses they built for themselves with aid in money and materials from the Commission.

No other part of Greece (except Athens) received anything like this proportion of refugees, mainly because the country was comparatively well developed, or at least well populated in relation to its stage of development, already. Thus Epeiros, separated from western Macedonia and Thessaly by the great barrier of the Pindos mountains, and always a centre of a strong Greek sentiment, received only 8,000 refugees to mingle with its population of 300,000; in central Greece (excluding the Athens district) and the Peloponnese the refugees formed only some 2 per cent of the population. In Thessaly, where there

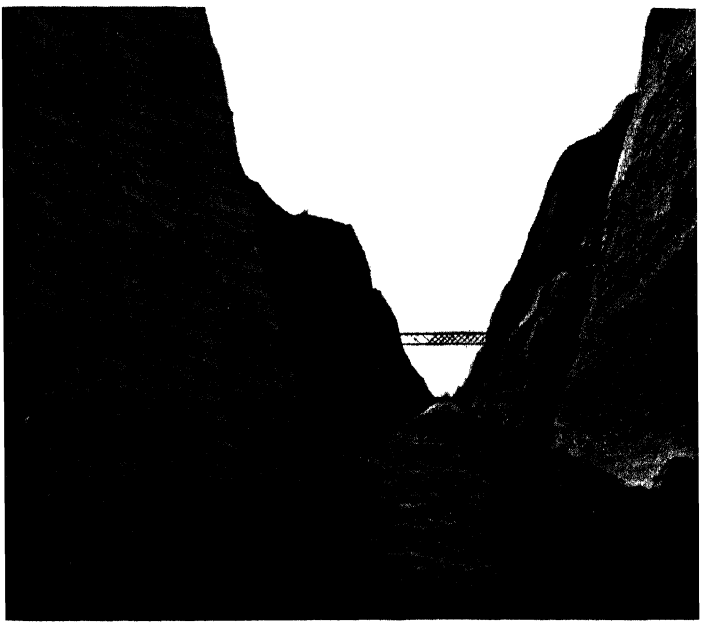
[1] By no means all of those in the rural districts were agriculturists or pastoral; the numbers include the smiths, carpenters, builders, cobblers, etc., who serve the rural community. And, as has been said above, most of the towns—all but Saloníka, Kaválla, and perhaps one or two others—are centres for the rural industry rather than truly urban in character.

is room for improvement in the use of much good corn-land which awaits a difficult drainage scheme, the population increased by 55,000 to nearly half a million between 1920 and 1928, and some 35,000 were refugees, or 7 per cent of the total; and of these nearly 10,000 were settled in Vólo, an urban centre (with a little over 40,000 inhabitants in all). The island of Euboea is an interesting special case: there (as in Thessaly) large estates, originally Turkish, had existed and the owners had been recently expropriated, but not all the land yet taken up; some 7,000 refugees were settled in rural districts (about 5 per cent of the whole population of the island), many of whom brought a developed fishing industry with them from Asia Minor.

As to the Athens-Peiraeus region, the total population of city and suburb rose with extreme rapidity from under 500,000 in 1920 to over 800,000 in 1928 (by 1940 it had passed the million mark). Of the total over 240,000 were refugees. It was natural that large numbers, including many who had, or thought they had, no future before them, should drift to the capital. But Greece was progressing economically. The men of business and of the professions from Ionia added new life to the city; skilled artisans soon found employment, particularly in the building trade and not principally in the building of houses for the refugees, but of big new blocks of flats and large houses in the suburbs. More than that, the great majority of the rest did in no long time find work to do, either in the new and enlarged textile and tobacco factories of the Peiraeus or in the sea-going and commercial business of that very active port. It will be interesting to observe in the future the difference in the development of the refugees in the country and in the towns; for the latter are being rapidly absorbed, as individuals and families; in the former, as already stated, many of the new villages consist of groups of settlers from their old homes. With them, old memories and traditions will survive.

Greece got one substantial advantage from the tragedy of the Asia Minor defeat and the exchange of populations. Uprooted, losing all they possessed, driven from the homes in which they had lived all their lives and where their ancestors had lived for so many generations, in one of the fairest districts of the

Mediterranean, the thousands of refugees at least established the purely Greek character of Greek Macedonia—established it for good, it was confidently thought before the greater tragedy of 1941. With the best will in the world Greece would have had a difficult task with large Bulgarian and Turkish minorities and a discontented Bulgaria and a resurgent Turkey as neighbours; the agreement with the latter, brought about by the wise statesmanship of Venizélos and continued by his successors, was made all the easier by the fact that the peace treaty of 1923 effectively, if roughly and cruelly to individuals, put an end to the cause of much difference between the two countries. Not that the purely administrative difficulties which faced Greece since the Balkan victories of 1912 and 1913 were slight; but by and large she overcame them. With her inextricably mixed population, Macedonia might have been considered a fit country, if ever there was one, for foreign rule. But in fact Turkish rule had been altogether a failure. It was not entirely her fault: rival Balkan neighbours, and rival Great Powers, more distant but more menacing and always ready to call the Balkans the storm-centre of Europe in order to cloak their own greedy and conflicting designs, had made the task abnormally difficult; but the fact remains that Turkey utterly failed to establish either internal peace, or material prosperity, or cultural progress, or security from foreign wars. The state of the country has been wholly changed since its union with Greece. Warring bands and an alien gendarmerie disappeared; schools were built and improved, and devoted to teaching instead of to propaganda; manufacture and trade increased; travel was safe and frequent, in spite of poor communications. (It is in the improvement of communications that the Greek administration has been least active and least successful; few new roads have been built, and the new and regular air lines between Athens and Saloníka and Athens and Yánnina, as well as with the rest of Europe, did little for the internal needs of the provinces. But this lack the new provinces share with old Greece, and trade gets on as best it can.) The remotest mountain districts have been made accessible, if not easy of approach, and what was before unknown country became familiar to many. Old-established industries, such as tobacco-growing and processing, have been technically improved, and



VIII. CONSTRUCTION—OLD AND NEW

1. PACK-HORSE BRIDGE AT KONITSA, EPEIROS 2. CORINTH CANAL
(*Greek Government Department of Information*)

production has increased; Kaválla, the chief centre and port for the industry, more than doubled its population in twenty years. All this we take for granted, without attributing any special merit to the Greek administration; and indeed it was probably not due to any special genius for government which the Greeks as compared with the Turks possessed. But it is a sign that the nationalist solution of the Macedonian problem, as of that of Greece as a whole and the other Balkan countries in the nineteenth century, was the right one. And there is this to be added, in praise of the Greek administration: the twenty-five years which followed the victories of 1912 and 1913 were a period both of external wars which, begun in conflict and doubt and continued to short-lived triumph, ended in disaster and humiliation, and of extreme political instability. Yet the progress achieved, both in the new provinces and the old, was substantial.

I was first in Greece in 1908–9 and again in 1913, and last, with other visits in between, in 1938. The differences observed were very great. They were primarily the differences between childhood and maturity. In 1908 Athens was a quiet city, small, behind the times, attractive in many ways, and with the air of a capital; but not a place of importance, nor apparently of great vigour, its old-fashioned air was not the effect of antiquity, for as a city it is modern; the Peiraeus, wholly modern in aim, commercial through and through, was even more obviously behind the times and inefficient. Even those foreigners who best understood and liked the people for their good qualities did not then take the state seriously. Like other cities, Athens to-day has not been made more beautiful by the growth of sprawling suburbs, though much new building shows a most interesting development architecturally, especially in detail; it has now an adequate water-supply (constructed by an American company between 1926 and 1930), but it still lacks a proper drainage. A great deal has been done in Peiraeus in the way of harbour installations, quay space, ship repair facilities, fuel depots, and the like; yet it remains a congested port, by no means equal to its needs as the third-busiest port (after Marseilles and Genoa) in the Mediterranean. Anybody in fact who wished could find fault with present-day Athens and its port; but it is now an important

city, adult, and its deficiencies can be criticized as such, not as those of a child. Saloníka (which before 1912 had better facilities as a port than Peiraeus) has been more obviously modernized and 'improved' since the big fire of 1916; the provision of a free zone for Yugoslavian trade has considerably increased its business. Similarly with almost every one of the smaller towns, ports, and market centres throughout the country: at the end of the 'thirties, with new houses, hotels, and small factories, they had a thriving air, very different from that of a generation earlier. Except in Macedonia and Thrace, where the whole face of the country had been altered by the new administration and the settlement of the refugees, there has been less change—or less obvious change—in the country districts; but this is because in the most characteristic products of Greece—vines, tobacco, and olives—intensive cultivation had already been well developed by the beginning of the century. The technical improvements since then have however been considerable, particularly in the corn-growing districts.

The great need of the country still, as has been already stated, is roads. A certain amount has been done in the construction of new high roads (one notable one across the Pindos range just north of the Gulf of Corinth, under the Metaxás regime); but what is wanted most is a network of local roads connecting villages with the high roads and the railways. A very large number of villages have still no means for wheeled transport, and till they have, for lack of these feeders, the railways and main roads cannot be put to their full use. Even in the plains, as in Thessaly, metalled roads are rare, and the tracks passable for vehicles only in dry weather. Statistics of all motor-vehicles licensed (in 1934) are illuminating: for the whole country 33,000, of which no fewer than 20,600 were taxi-cabs, 3,800 were buses, and only 8,600 lorries and vans; and of these over 15,000 were in use in Athens and Peiraeus (10,000 taxis, 1,200 buses, and 4,000 lorries and vans). These figures showed a very rapid increase during the preceding decade (there has been little increase since, because it has been the policy to encourage rail traffic); but when we remember that Greece has also the smallest railway system of any country in Europe except Albania (whether reckoned in proportion to area or to population), even taking into con-

sideration the mountainous nature of the country, and the fact that it does not lie on any through land route, and the local traffic by sea, it will be realized how much remains to be done for internal communications.

Industry and Commerce

It would be an exaggeration, but a small exaggeration only, to say that till 1920 a manufacturing industry as it is understood in Europe outside the Balkans was unknown in Greece. There were plenty of craftsmen making tools and clothes, milling corn, extracting oil from the olives and the juice from the grapes, drying currants, and processing tobacco (manufacturers in fact in the literal sense of the word), but practically no industry on a big scale using machinery and mechanical power. Since then there has been a considerable development, mostly concentrated in the Athens-Peiraeus district and Saloníka, with a tobacco industry as well in Kaválla. I give a few figures from the best and latest available; but the comparative usefulness of these is uncertain, for the production figures are expressed in drachmai, and the drachma fell considerably in value between the two wars; and we cannot simply convert the figures into sterling or dollar value, for, since the cost of living in Greece has not varied exactly with the drachma, such conversion would be also misleading. I therefore add columns for these two factors; and the general picture will perhaps be clear enough.[1]

Year	Value of manufacture in millions of drachmai	Dr. to £ sterling	Cost of living index (1914 = 100)
1922 ..	2,000	166	*c.* 650
1928 ..	7,000	375	*c.* 1,850
1934 ..	10,000	544	*c.* 1,940
1938 ..	13,500	550	*c.* 2,200

[1] The figures, like most in this book, are taken from the *Annuaire Statistique de la Grèce.*

During the same period the production of electric power for manufacture has increased from 140 million drachmai in value (1925) to 720 million in 1934, with a further increase of 25 per cent between 1934 and 1938—modest enough figures. The most important industries are textiles (from only 400 million dr. in 1922 to nearly 4,000 million in 1938), food (not including production of wine, olive-oil, wheat, and flour), chemicals, leather, building materials (especially cement). The engineering industry (600 million drachmai in 1938) still occupies only a modest place.[1]

There was continued progress, along the same lines, until 1940.

Greece is a land (as far as is at present known) poor in mineral resources; and production shows no consistent increase. The chief minerals are lead (only 24,000 tons of ore in 1934, much less in 1938), manganese, nickel (22,000 tons of ore, 50,000 in 1938), iron pyrites (150,000 tons, 240,000 in 1938), chrome (30,000 tons and 40,000), magnesite (70,000 tons and 170,000), lignite (100,000 tons), and emery (10,000 tons). Production of bauxite began in 1935, and reached 180,000 tons in 1938; and there are said to be large deposits. The metallurgical industry is similarly on a small scale.

Industrial workshops are still small for the most part; very large numbers are personal businesses employing each only two or three assistants; factories in the ordinary sense are modern and still rare. Thus in the engineering, wood, leather, and clothing industries, the number of workmen does not greatly exceed the number of proprietors (in the leather industry it is less—this includes of course every cobbler, as well as the tanneries); only in the textile, paper, and tobacco industries, and in transport, since this includes the railways, do the workmen amount to 75–90 per cent of the total numbers engaged; and only in these and in the food and building trades are there any considerable number of establishments employing more than 25 workpeople. The total number of workpeople in the principal industries—i.e. employees, excluding working proprietors, technical personnel, clerks, and salesmen—by the

[1] In volume of output there was an increase of from 20 per cent to 40 per cent in most industries between 1930 and 1938; the output of electric power increased by 50 per cent.

census of 1928 was 180,000 only; of these nearly 40,000 were women, of whom 17,000 were under eighteen years of age, most of them in the textile and clothing trades. The total had nearly doubled (320,000) by 1940. Building, transport, food products, textiles, leather, clothing, and engineering were the industries employing the largest numbers, in that order (from 27,000 employed in building in 1928, to 11,000 in engineering); mining employed fewer than 8,000.

Comparison with other countries, which alone can give real life to these figures, is difficult, for it is by no means certain that the bases used are always the same. Thus the total given for those 'engaged in manufacture' in Greece is 430,000 (for 1928[1]); taking into account the figure of 180,000 workpeople given above, this will include every individual cobbler, smith, carpenter, etc., every milliner and sempstress, and it is not certain that the figures for other countries do the same. Similarly in agriculture: some countries may include the women and some of the children, of the peasant and farmer population, because in fact they do much work in the fields; others may include them as not 'gainfully employed', and put them down as 'dependants'. Thus Greece gives about 40 per cent of its total population as employed, Bulgaria nearly 60 per cent; other European countries vary between 40 and 50 per cent. Rumania gives as many women as men engaged in agriculture, Greece fewer than half as many, which suggests that Bulgaria and Rumania include more agricultural 'dependants' than other countries in the total of those employed. For what they are worth, however, the statistics (which do not, moreover, all refer to the same year) give the following comparisons between Greece, the other three Balkan countries, and a few other states chosen as being predominantly either industrial or agricultural.

Taken as a whole, Greece had a larger proportion of its population engaged in manufacture and mining than the other three Balkan states and than the four states of the Baltic; but a smaller one than any other European country (with the probable exception of Russia); and, as indicated above, this proportion has considerably increased since 1928.

[1] 620,000 estimated in 1940.

Country	Engaged in manufacture or mining	Percentage of all employed	Percentage of total population
Greece (1928) ..	436,000	18·0	7·3
Bulgaria (1926) ..	278,000	9·0	5·0
Yugoslavia (1921)	470,000	7·7	3·4
Rumania (1938) ..	760,000	8·0	4·2
Belgium	1,491,000	47·4	18·4
Denmark (1921) ..	368,000	27·3	10·7
Italy (1931) ..	5,095,000	29·5	12·4
Great Britain (1931)	9,717,000	46·5	21·6
Portugal (1930) ..	686,000	19·4	10·0
Czechoslovakia (1930)	2,502,000	43·0	17·0

Because manufacture and mining are not the most important industries, and still more because the former is to so great an extent carried on in small shops, the trade union movement in Greece has played a comparatively unimportant part; and for the same reason there has been no big Labour or Socialist party in Parliament, and until the appearance of the small Communist party hardly any direct representatives of 'Labour'. In a country where class distinctions scarcely exist, labour is not self-conscious; the poor, equally with the well-to-do, are divided between Liberals, Republicans, and Royalists. The trade unions find their membership almost wholly from the few industries, like that of tobacco manufacture, which are organized in fairly large units, and from transport, and therefore are strong only in Athens-Peiraeus, Salonika, and Kaválla. Even there they cannot be said to have been very active. There was, especially when Venizélos was in office, a considerable amount of social legislation for the improvement of working conditions—covering hours of work, wages boards, and the employment of women (especially that dealing with women employees for times before and after childbirth); but this did not result from any direct pressure of trade unions or a political

Labour party. Socialism in Greece has been mainly theoretic and of middle-class origin, and not politically important.

The Greeks have always been notable sailors from the earliest times. In the eighteenth century, under Turkish rule, their sailing vessels had the chief part in the carrying trade of the eastern Mediterranean, and played an important role in the War of Independence. It was long, however, before they got many steamships, and their own trading suffered in consequence; as late as 1890 they had under 100, and those of an average of 500 tons; that is, they were nearly all engaged in local traffic, and they still had 5,000 sailing vessels. But since then the number of steamships has grown rapidly. They lost heavily in the war of 1914–18, the number being reduced from 475 ships and a total tonnage of 900,000 in 1915 to 115 with a tonnage of 126,000 at the armistice (note the fall in the tonnage—it was the ocean-going vessels which suffered most). From then the advance has again been rapid: in 1938 Greece had 600 ships, of a total of 1,870,000 tons, or an average of 3,000 tons each.[1] There are still 700 sailing vessels (of 80 tons each on average), many with auxiliary motors. The large amount of internal traffic by sea, between the many islands and the mainland and from port to port on the mainland, accounts for the sailing vessels and the smaller steamers; the great majority of the steamships (nearly 80 per cent) were of 3,000–6,000 tons, and the average tonnage has been steadily increasing. Most of them also are old, having been bought secondhand when other countries were building new ones: only a little more than 20 per cent were 15 years old or less in 1934, and most were from 15 to 30 years old. But the number of newer vessels is increasing (except, for reasons which will appear later, since 1934); and the older tramps carry on with remarkable success, Greek vessels being seen in all parts of the world, playing perhaps a special part in the carrying trade of the South Atlantic. Of the total tonnage of vessels arriving at and departing from Greek ports in 1934–38 (31,000,000, including local traffic) two-thirds was Greek, the next largest being

[1] Greece then took tenth place in the list of countries for tonnage, and third place in tonnage per head of the population, in which Norway came easily first with a total of 1·8 m. tons or ·72 per head; Great Britain was second with 13·2 m. tons, or ·3 per head; Greek tonnage is ·27 per head.

Italian (over 8,000,000), and British (over 2,000,000). Comparable figures with the past are (steamships only):

Year	Number of vessels (arrivals and departures)	Tonnage
1907 ..	8,000	9,350,000
1922 ..	24,500	15,000,000
1928 ..	51,500	34,500,000
1934 ..	54,000	31,000,000

Of the total number of *vessels* arriving and departing, no fewer than 43,000 were Greek, of which 41,000 represent the coming and going of steamers engaged in local traffic, and the figures for numbers of vessels and for tonnage indicate the great number of small ships so engaged. If we take only vessels engaged in foreign trade, the number in 1934 was 6,600, and the tonnage 12,300,000; of these 1,750 with a tonnage of 2,000,000 were Greek (a number exceeded only by the Italian; the majority of the former carried merchandise, of the latter passengers).

Peiraeus is much the busiest of Greek ports, whether in the number of vessels (both Greek and foreign) entering and leaving, in tonnage, or in traffic handled (goods and passengers). Saloníka comes next, with about one-third of the goods traffic of Peiraeus; then Patras (important for the export of currants), Vólo, and Kaválla.

There are only one or two biggish shipping companies, owning several vessels. Most companies are quite small, and own but two or three ships each. This is true of those engaged in foreign trade, as well as of the owners of coasting ships; the position is much as in manufacture and agriculture.

Communication by air is becoming important for Greece, for Athens has become a link in international traffic. In 1934 Greece had three regular internal lines, Athens–Saloníka, Saloníka–Dráma, and Athens–Agrínion–Yánnina. Three foreign lines had their terminals at Saloníka (from Berlin, Danzig, and Belgrade), and Athens was a station on five international

routes (Brindisi–Constantinople, Brindisi–Rhodes, Marseilles–French East Indies, London–India, Amsterdam–Dutch East Indies), Saloníka on one (Rome–Constantinople).

In close connexion with the trade of the country, especially with overseas trade, was the development of banking and commercial business generally. This has shown steady and continued progress since the foundation of the state. In the census of 1928 some 200,000 were given as employed in commercial business, i.e. banking, merchanting, and shopkeeping (comparable with the 430,000 employed in manufacture—above, p. 94). 'Finance' is successfully and competently managed.

In spite, however, of natural gifts and great success in commerce and seafaring, and of the recent developments of a manufacturing industry, Greece remains predominantly an agricultural country. In 1928 half of the population over ten years of age were listed as employed, and of these well over half were engaged in agriculture (tillage and pastoral)—about 1,480,000 as against the totals of 430,000 for industries (above, p. 94), 210,000 in commerce, and 107,000 in transport (including the merchant marine). Of the total of nearly 1½ million, however, nearly 470,000, or about one-third, were women of all ages, the great majority of whom will be the wives and daughters of farmers, helping with the land and the animals. In comparison with other countries, taken with the caution about the families of the rural population given above, p. 94, we find that the Greek ratio of employment on the land is lower than that of the other Balkan countries,[1] Poland, and the Baltic states, but higher than that of all other European countries. The proportion of those engaged in agriculture to the whole population, and in general of the rural to the town population, has naturally been falling continuously since 1830, except during the ten years between 1920 and 1930 when so many of the refugees were settled on the land; there has been a steady passage from the country to the towns, and, what is more

[1] Rumania, which gives 9,000,000, or half its total population, as 'employed' (cf. above, p. 94), has no fewer than 7,200,000 engaged in agriculture, of whom nearly half are women. 72·3 per cent of its population is described as agricultural, and 80 per cent as rural. Rumania is the great corn-growing country of the Balkans, with a large export market.

important, a considerable increase in the urban character of many of the towns. But Greece is still largely a country of peasants, and the contrast between rural and town life (in the few big towns) is marked.

Big estates are rare. Much of the fertile districts used to be held by Turkish landowners, and let out in parcels to peasant-farmers on the *metayer* system. As the Turks left, the estates were broken up—in Thessaly not till the years after the Balkan wars, in Macedonia when the Moslems left and the refugees were settled in their lands; and throughout in the remoter districts and the less productive areas a peasant-owner system had existed. The large majority of 'farms' are quite small, of a few acres only. This can be illustrated by the size of the plots of land allotted to the refugees from Turkey; the largest were from 20 to 30 acres in Thessaly; in Thrace they varied from 5 to 15 acres; in central Greece they averaged only $7\frac{1}{2}$; and large numbers of holdings were smaller than this, both in Macedonia and elsewhere. In all Greece some 950,000 individuals, of whom over 750,000 were proprietors and only some 130,000 tenants of one kind or another, were listed in the 1929 agricultural census as cultivators (including, that is, hired labourers and members of families who assist): more than 350,000 had holdings of less than $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres, another 400,000 had between 3 and 10 acres—very many of these will have been market-gardeners and cultivators of fruit, vines, and tobacco. Fewer than 4,000, and this total includes the state, local authorities, convents and churches, banks, co-operative and other societies, and agricultural schools, had farms of more than 100 acres (about 400 had cultivated land of 1,000 acres or more).

One important reason for the small average size of the Greek farms is that intensive cultivation, especially of vines, tobacco, and fruit trees, is, as in most Mediterranean lands, of particular importance compared with that of cereals. It is true that of the cultivated land cereals take 70 per cent, but the value of the crop is only 46 per cent of the whole (1934 figures; 66·7 per cent and 45·5 per cent respectively in 1938); moreover, of the increase of $1\frac{1}{4}$ million acres under cultivation between 1929 and 1930, over one million was in cereals (almost all in wheat), and this was at least in part due to the special circumstances of

the time, which will be touched on later.[1] The best wheat-growing districts are Boeotia, Thessaly, and central Macedonia; but the yield of wheat and barley per acre is not high, about the same as that of Yugoslavia, Rumania (an important corn-producing and exporting country), and Poland, less than that of Hungary and Czechoslovakia, and about half that of Great Britain and Germany.[2] The lowness of the yield is only in part due to out-of-date methods of cultivation; it is in part due to the fact that in the more mountainous provinces the soil is, on the whole, poorer and the fields smaller, and modern methods of tilling would be impossible. (It is quite fanciful to suggest mechanical ploughing for much of this land, though probably there is room for improvement in the use of fertilizers.) Thus the yield per acre in the Peloponnese and central Greece was in 1934 barely one-half of that in Macedonia, where it is highest, two-thirds of that in Thessaly. (In 1938, however, a good year, the yield of the poorer districts was much higher, over 80 per cent of the Macedonian.) Moreover, all over Greece the individual peasant will grow some corn (more often barley than wheat) on light and stony soil for his own use, and as a rotation crop. Tiny fields formed by terracing on unpromising mountain sides, the light and shallow soils of Attica, are thus sown; indeed, it was in the richer lands of Thessaly—especially before the recent increase in wheat-growing—that one could see wide areas left for grazing (in the poorer mountain districts the animals, mostly goats, grazed on *maquis* on the hard and stony slopes, where no amount of

[1] Another half-million acres were cultivated in 1938, half of which increase was in cereals.

[2] I take these figures from the interesting pamphlet *Agrarian Problems from the Baltic to the Aegean*, published in 1944 by the Royal Institute of International Affairs; and I would take this opportunity of emphasizing the fact that in Greece agricultural conditions and problems, because of her geographical situation, are really quite different from those of the other countries dealt with. To take but one example, the table (No. 7 of the Appendix) which contains these figures is headed 'Area, Production and Yield per acre of Principal Crops, 1937', and these crops are wheat, rye, barley, oats, maize, and potatoes; but in Greece grapes, currants, olives, and tobacco, and vegetable crops, especially beans for human and animal consumption, are of greater importance, economically as well as socially, than any of these except wheat.

ingenuity could create a field). All this brings down the average yield.[1]

It will thus be seen that, in the ordinary sense in which the word is used of eastern Europe, there is no agrarian problem in Greece; and there has never been a strong agrarian party—much grumbling of course at the big towns and the politicians, and complaints, with some justice, of neglect of the needs of the country, especially in roads; but the problem on which most countrymen's minds in eastern Europe have been fixed, ownership of the soil, has scarcely existed for the older provinces of Greece and had been solved for the newer by the break-up of the big estates in Thessaly and the settlement of the refugees in Macedonia and Thrace. The problem which does exist is one of poverty, due to the natural poorness of the country, especially in minerals; that may be inevitable—'Greece and poverty have always been sisters' was an ancient saying.

As has been said, the cultivation of vegetables, olives, vines (both grapes and currants), and tobacco are of greater importance for Greece than that of any other crop but wheat. The export of grape juice, sultanas, dried currants (the last not much consumed in Greece itself—but the fresh fruit of this variety of grape is the most delicious in the world), and tobacco is essential to the country's economy. Tobacco is grown in most districts of Greece, though the finest varieties are only found in Macedonia and Thrace; grape-vines and olives are more frequent south of Thessaly than to the north; the currant-vine is found almost exclusively in the Peloponnese, Zákynthos, and Crete. The production of oil from the olive is universal; that of alcohol from the grape has increased rapidly.

[1] It should also be noted that the yield varies greatly from year to year, especially of wheat, owing to weather conditions, changes at critical times being far more violent than in the temperate climates of north-western Europe. The figure of 8 cwt. of wheat per acre given in the pamphlet referred to above for 1937 is about the same as that for 1933, a good year. In 1938, another good year, it was about 9 cwt. In 1934 only the best district, Macedonia, had so high a yield as 8 cwt. and the average was for the whole country only a little more than 5 cwt.; in 1932 it was less than that. In Great Britain we should regard a yield for the whole country of 85 per cent of a ten years' average as poor.

Other important fruits are oranges and lemons (mainly in the Peloponnese and Crete), figs and peaches, chestnuts and almonds; apples, pears, and cherries in the northern districts; mulberries for the silk industry, and carobs for tanning.

Greece being a land of hot and generally rainless summers, and of comparatively few plains and rivers, a rich natural pasturage throughout the year does not exist. In the more northerly parts of the country, however, the climate is more favourable to grass and the mountain sides on the whole less arid. Greece therefore has fewer large cattle than other countries, and three-quarters of those they have are in the north; and they are used as draught-animals with the plough more than for food, and, in the south, except around Athens, hardly at all for milk. She is on the other hand rich in sheep, and a positive millionaire in goats. It is these which provide the people with milk and cheese, as well as with meat, wool, and hides. The sheep are fed in winter on pasture and fallow land in the plains, and are folded on young corn, and, where it exists, on mountain pasture in the summer; in some parts it was common for the herdsmen to move their entire households, with their flocks, from the permanent homes in the uplands to the plains fifty miles or more away, for example from western Macedonia to Thessaly. Goats, who will eat anything, are fed mostly on the mountains, and carefully kept from cultivated crops. Writers about Greece generally speak of the destruction caused by goats; and they are destructive, especially to young trees; many forest fires are caused by goatherds, who want the young growth that follows a fire; but the value of goats to a mountainous country with a Mediterranean climate is very great—Greece could not supply herself with milk and cheese without them. She has three and four times as many as any other Eastern country.

Travel in the mountain districts is by pack-animal; and there are large numbers of ponies and mules, and much fodder grown for them.

Greece has much forest land: Corsican pines on the lower hills near the sea; firs in the mountains; oaks, beeches, and chestnuts (the last two only in the northern half). But they are not adequately exploited, nor very well looked after, though much effort has been expended in improving matters

in the last twenty-five years; and again the reason is lack of good communications, roads being almost unknown in the extensive mountain areas, and there being only a few rivers which can be used to bring logs down to sawmills in the plain. The annual value of forest products—timber, wood for fuel and charcoal, and resin from pine-trees (used as a preservative for wine)—is less than £1,000,000 a year.

If we take the whole area of the country, we find that in 1934, that is after much progress in recent years, less than 20 per cent was cultivated land, including perhaps 3 per cent fallow. Permanent pasture—excluding what can feed only goats—accounts for another 8 per cent. The rest is mountain. Perhaps 18 per cent of mountain land is under forest. The rest of the country, over 50 per cent, is uncultivated and uncultivatable (except by an increase in the forest land), useful for the ubiquitous goat, but for little else economically, except for the few minerals, for limestone, and marble. In Yugoslavia and Bulgaria (in 1935), also largely mountainous countries, 35 per cent and 33 per cent was cultivated; in Rumania and Hungary, 45 per cent and 50 per cent respectively; and Rumania has as well another 14 per cent under permanent pasture and forest. That gives in outline a picture, a probably unalterable picture, of the country. I have given above (p. 14) the comparative densities of population for the Balkan countries. A more vivid picture is shown if we compare the densities in relation to the areas of cultivated land.

	No. of persons per square kilometre of cultivated land
Greece	336
Bulgaria	140
Yugoslavia	181
Rumania	128

Something more however must be said about the economic position of Greece, after this brief résumé of its agriculture, manufacture, commerce, and transport. In years of good production and good trade she can maintain her population of 7 millions (6,200,000 in the census of 1928; it has grown rapidly since) in what may be called tolerable comfort, in comparison both with other countries of eastern and south-

eastern Europe and even with western Europe.[1] But this very moderate prosperity is precariously poised. As has been stated above, the area under cereals, particularly wheat, has increased rapidly in recent years and the yield per acre improved, largely because of direct government encouragement—remunerative prices to the farmers, loans on favourable terms from the Agricultural Bank, help to co-operative societies—all with the idea of reducing dependence on imports—and above all, the aid given to the refugees; but no amount of help will enable Greece to grow enough corn for her present population—the land for it does not exist. In 1933, the best year for yield per acre up to 1934, more than one-third of the total of wheat consumed was imported; normally the proportion is higher; and this was at a time when the production of wheat was especially encouraged.

This import is a continuing liability of the country. (Except rice, there is no other agricultural product imported in any large quantity, but much other food—preserved fish and meat.) Further, Greece has no iron for engineering, no coal and no petrol of her own; mechanical transport and electric power for industry would be at a standstill without imports, though in the north and north-west hydro-electric schemes may eventually produce power from water. Lastly, much of

[1] It is notoriously difficult to establish any comparable standard of living for countries with different climates, and of different development. A visitor to Greece, for example, might notice at once that the smaller towns and the villages are not supplied with main water or sewerage, nor with gas or electricity, to anything like the same extent as in this country; that very few homes have a wireless-set; that transport is bad, and facilities for holidays for townspeople—trains, buses, or private cars and bicycles—are comparatively few. But where people live so much out of doors, a poorly equipped house is less of a disadvantage—a slum quarter in an English town is, in spite of comparatively profuse supply of doctors and hospitals, as unhealthy a place as one of the shoddy temporary refugee suburbs of Athens. When all the men of a village meet, anyhow, at a café in the evening, one wireless-set will do for all (except for the women and children at home!); and where such a large proportion of the population lives in villages or small country towns, the need for holidays is not so great. Even in diet, which is now so carefully and scientifically studied, it is doubtful whether all the factors affecting comparison have been considered. Certainly in the country in Greece people can live healthy lives with much less meat and even less bread than most other people; in the towns it is probably deficiency in the milk diet that is the most serious cause of weakness in Greece.

the raw material for the textile industry must be imported, though cotton is grown in some quantities and wool and silk are produced. These four main classes, agricultural products, fuel, metals, and raw materials for textiles, account for some 60 per cent of the total imports, while another essential class comprises machinery, rolling stock and steel rails for railways, motor vehicles, and steamships. Great Britain and Germany during the first half of the 'thirties (before, that is, the special German drive for economic power, which reached Greece as other Balkan countries) were the biggest exporters; but they enjoyed no monopoly, their goods amounting together to some 25 per cent of total imports. The rest was divided fairly between other exporting countries.

The cost of imports per head of the population (in dollars) for the Balkan countries was, in 1936–8:

Greece	17·5
Bulgaria	8·4
Yugoslavia	2·2
Rumania	7·3
Turkey	5·5

To meet these essential imports Greece has to rely mainly on three categories of exports—currants, tobacco and 'invisible exports'. Over 80 per cent of her visible exports are naturally of agricultural products (most of them processed in Greece), but of these tobacco accounts for nearly one-half, and currants for nearly one-quarter; other items of some importance are wine, olives and olive-oil, sultanas, and figs. Moreover, four countries only, Great Britain, Germany, U.S.A., and Italy, took over 64 per cent of these exports (in 1934; in previous years Holland and France also took substantial quantities); Great Britain, Holland, and Germany imported 90 per cent of Greek currants, Germany and U.S.A. 62 per cent of Greek tobacco, France (surprisingly, at first sight) was the chief importer of Greek wine, taking 64 per cent in 1933.

There has been in recent years a marked increase in the export of manufactured goods, chiefly chemical fertilizers and textiles, to neighbouring countries. This might suggest considerable promise for the future; but till now it has formed but a small fraction of total exports. The balance of trade showed

a considerable deficit between 1930 and 1934, though it has been somewhat less in later years through government action, higher tariffs and exchange control. Some portion of imports, as livestock, machinery, ships, railway stock, has been of capital goods: but it is on her invisible exports that the country has to rely for covering some part of the current deficit. These are the profits of the merchant marine, so far as they are sent back to Greece, and of the tourist industry, interest on capital invested abroad, and the remittances of Greek emigrants from abroad. The merchant marine is the most important of these, especially from the point of view of employment; but a large part of it consists of cargo ships engaged in international trade, to and from foreign ports, not to and from Greek ports; with the result that most of the money spent by the owners on the maintenance and repairs of their ships (as well as for their replacement), and on the supply of fuel and insurance, and a good deal of the wages of the crews, is inevitably spent abroad.

The net profits, both of shipping and of the tourist industry, though considerable, are, for reasons immediately understood, especially liable to fluctuation due to external economic conditions outside Greek control. But more important than either of these, yet even more liable to fluctuation and probably destined anyhow to decline, are the remittances sent home by Greek emigrants abroad, whether in support of their families or for investment. As shown below (p. 111) the actual number of emigrants has fallen very considerably since the adoption of restrictions on immigration by the United States; and, naturally, by and large the longer an emigrant has been abroad the more he is absorbed into the life of his new country and the less likely is he to think of Greece still as his home. Indeed, it is a remarkable sign of the strong family feeling among the Greeks that remittances have continued for so long a time. But a depression in America inevitably meant less money to be remitted; and political instability in Greece meant that emigrants were less likely to send home money for investment. The result of all these factors has caused a general decline and wide fluctuations from year to year, for example between 40 million and 15 million dollars in the period from 1926 to 1933, and between 30 million and 11 million dollars from 1934 to 1939.

These three classes of invisible exports, together with the interest on capital invested abroad, sufficed in good years to cover the difference between the values of imports and exports of goods, but seldom the total payments of Greece abroad, which include a large sum yearly for the foreign debt. But what needs emphasizing is that Greek trade, and therewith the standard of living, runs on fairly simple lines, and that it is peculiarly vulnerable: certain essential imports of food and raw materials and machinery, in order that the people may live and work (and the quantity of them in part dependent on the country's own wheat harvest), and exports dependent both on a good harvest of a few crops, especially currants and tobacco,[1] and on the action of other countries. Thus, during the years of economic depression in the early 'thirties, America reduced considerably her import of Greek tobacco; France stopped her import of Greek wine; fortunately for Greece, Britain continued steadily to import currants. The depression naturally affected Greek shipping as well as that of other countries;[2] and besides this, Greek money balances were in sterling, and when Britain went off gold there was a further loss in her balance for trade with America and other countries on the gold standard. Perhaps no other country predominantly agricultural is economically so vulnerable as Greece.

Taxation

The Greek system of taxation has never got away from the primitive methods suitable to a primitive economy. Not only is it heavy, but it is most of it, both state and local taxation, indirect; direct taxes (not always efficiently or equitably collected) form no more than 20–25 per cent of the total receipts from taxation. Greece knows the ordinary kind of indirect taxes on necessities such as sugar and coffee, or through the operation of state monopolies in salt and matches, which inevitably hit the poor more hardly than the well-to-do; but she has also preserved and extended into endless complications

[1] Actually there is often an overproduction of tobacco and currants, which is a constant source of trouble.

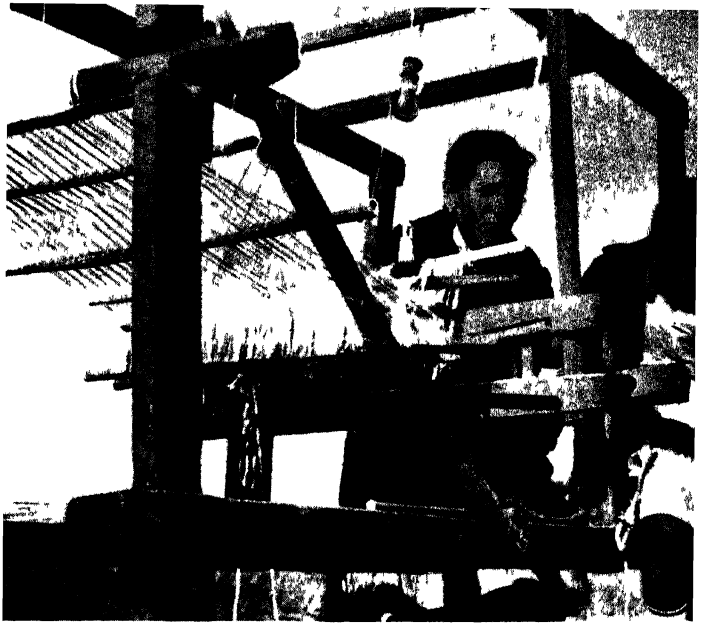
[2] In 1932 26 per cent of her cargo ships and 33 per cent of the total were idle; in 1933 15 and 17 per cent respectively; in 1934 this was reduced to 8 and 10 per cent, in 1937 to 2·6 and 3·6 per cent; but in 1938 it had increased again to 19·6 and 20 per cent.

taxes on the transport of goods, which not only raise the cost of living, but are a serious handicap to internal trade. Such taxes may have been harmless enough when trading was of little account and the population small and scattered; but to-day it is inefficient and inequitable—it is like a malignant growth. Even Venizélos, who did something to increase the proportion of direct taxation and improve its collection, did not change the essentials of the old system; and no one else has made a serious attempt—it is so much easier, when more money is required, to increase existing taxes, to put another drachma on sugar, or half a drachma on port-dues.

Moreover, total taxation is heavy: it is estimated that in peacetime 20–25 per cent of the national income went to the state in taxation. Of this total nearly a quarter went to the service of the foreign debt (an amount equal to about a quarter of the value of all Greek exports)—a heavy drain on the country's stock of foreign exchange.[1] This foreign debt had by no means all of it been incurred for useful and productive ends; some of it had, for roads and railways, for drainage of swamps, for the water-supply of Athens, for the settlement of the refugees (which was in part an economic gain); but a good deal of it had been for the expenses of wars and preparations for and consequences of war. It is not surprising, as a result of this and of her precarious trade balance, that Greece has failed more than once in the full service of her foreign debt. The last occasion was after the world depression in the 'thirties, when an agreement was reached with foreign creditors for the payment of 40 per cent only of the interest due and the suspension of amortization (the service of the internal debt was reduced at the same time). Even this device can only rescue the country for a short time: loans to Greece bear a heavy burden of interest which is one of the causes of default, but the interest rates will, in a free market, remain high, so long as the default is not made good—a vicious circle resulting in ill-will and suspicion all round.

[1] A comparison with other countries gives the following figures (in dollars) for the amount of the foreign debt per head of the population:

Greece ..	48	Rumania ..	25
Bulgaria ..	26	Turkey ..	10
Yugoslavia ..	23	Poland ..	11



IX. INDUSTRY—OLD AND NEW

1. HAND LOOM
(*Topical Press*)

2. PAPER MILL
(*E.N.A.*)

A few figures should be given to supplement those in a previous chapter to illustrate current trends in the population. By the census of 1928 the population of Greece was 6,200,000, with a density of 47·7 per square kilometre; by 1940 it was estimated at 7,300,000, with a density of 55. The birth-rate between 1930 and 1938 varied from 26 to over 31 per thousand inhabitants, falling gradually after 1934, the death-rate from 18 per thousand to 13·3 in 1938; the excess of births over deaths from 70,000 to over 100,000 a year. There used to be an excess of males over females; there is now a very small excess of the latter.[1] The infant death-rate (deaths under one year) is on the whole declining: it was 134 per 1,000 live births in 1931, 129 in 1932, 123 in 1933, and 112 in 1934 (122 in 1937, 99 in 1938); but they accounted for over one-fifth of the total deaths in a year. The necessary comparisons with other countries give:

Country	Population density per square kilometre	Births per 1,000 (1933)	Deaths per 1,000 (1933)	Infant mortality (1933)
Greece (1934) ..	*c.* 50·0	30·0	16·0	12·0
Bulgaria (1926)	53·1	29·0	15·4	14·4
Yugoslavia .. (1931)	56·0	31·3	16·9	16·5 (1931)
Rumania (1930)	61·2	32·0	18·7	17·4
Belgium (1930)	265·8	16·6	13·2	8·5
Denmark (1930)	82·7	17·3	10·6	6·8
Italy (1931) ..	132·8	23·7	13·7	10·0
Great Britain[2] .. (1931)	254·5	14·9	12·5	5·6
Portugal (1930)	74·2	29·0	17·2	14·9
Czechoslovakia .. (1930)	104·9	19·2	13·7	12·7

[1] It is often stated that 15 is a usual age at which Greek girls marry. This is not so: 16·6 per cent only of brides are under 20, the great majority, 71 per cent, are between 20 and 30.

[2] England and Wales; including Scotland the density is 196 per sq. kl.

From these figures it will be observed that Greece holds a relatively favourable position, especially in regard to infant mortality, among Balkan and Mediterranean countries; and it is in general a healthy enough place except for malaria and tuberculosis—the ravages of the latter cause, apparently, a far higher death-rate than in any other European country—mainly in the towns, perhaps owing to deficiency in diet and to weakness caused by the prevalence of malaria. It will also be seen that the natural yearly increase of the population is large. In earlier years, before 1914, this had been largely negatived by emigration to North and South America, especially to the United States and Argentina (which was further of economic benefit to Greece through the large sums of money sent back by the emigrants); since 1920 (owing to restriction on immigration to the United States) this has been reduced to a few thousands a year.[1]

It has been explained above that, scholastically, Athens University, founded in 1837, had for long been the centre of the whole Greek world. In 1932–33 it had over 7,500 students (of whom 700 were women), and a staff of 140. The number of students entering in 1936 and 1937 was considerably lower (the result of the dictatorship), but the staff increased to over 200. Much the most popular faculty is that of law, which is frequently the case on the Continent and does not mean that all those who get their doctorate become lawyers; the next largest is the medical, and the physical and mathematical sciences have about as many students together as medicine. Besides these there are in Athens technical schools of various kinds, with another 1,800 students. Saloníka University (with 1,000 students and a staff of 48 in 1932–33; 1,500 students and a staff of 70 in 1937–38) was founded in 1920, and, as stated, a university was started at Smyrna as well when it was occupied by Greece (a distinguished Greek mathematician who had for long worked in Germany was persuaded to become its head).

[1] Between 1900 and 1921 over 400,000 Greeks emigrated to the Western hemisphere, most of them of course before 1914. This represents an average of 18,300 a year, or 5–10 per 1,000 inhabitants, and a higher average and much higher percentage of the population before 1913 when the population was doubled. Between 1922 and 1930 the number fell to 7,000 a year (1·2 per 1,000 inhabitants) and between 1931 and 1938 to 3,000 a year.

Athens still attracts students from the chief centres of Greek population outside the state—Constantinople, Cyprus, Alexandria, and the Dodecanese when the Italians could not prevent their leaving.

The Greeks have always set much store by education, and have had many schools of their own in provinces which were subject to Turkey, particularly in Epeiros, Constantinople, and Smyrna; but it cannot be said that the state has been especially efficient in organizing at least primary education for all, though it has long been declared to be the aim, and indeed the law of the land. In the census of 1928 the number of those unable to read and write was 41 per cent of the total population of eight years of age and over, 23·5 per cent of males and no fewer than 58 per cent of females. Of boys up to fourteen years old, however, not more than 12 per cent, and of girls 28 per cent, were classed as illiterate; every successive age group shows an increase in illiteracy, till that of sixty years and over in which nearly half the men and as many as 86 per cent of the women were illiterate.[1]

The Asia Minor refugees have not, apparently, lowered the average of education, for the figures for illiteracy among them correspond, throughout the age period, closely to those of the whole population, those for males being slightly higher but those for females being lower. It will be seen from the comparative literacy of the young and the great number of illiterates among the old that elementary education is making rapid progress, but has not yet by any means reached every boy and girl in the country. A comparison with other countries gives the following figures, for those of fifteen years old and over:

[1] In 1932–33 only 77 per cent of the boys and 68 per cent of the girls between the ages of 9 and 14 were reported as getting elementary education. This however does not mean that 23 and 32 per cent respectively were getting none, but that many—mainly in the country districts—were not attending school for the whole period from 5 to 14 years but for 3 or 4 years in all. The difficulties of providing enough accommodation and staff in a greatly enlarged and in many districts sparsely populated country must be remembered.

In 1932–33 51,000 boys and 23,000 girls were at secondary schools excluding technical schools, which took some 20,000 besides; in 1937–38, 68,000 boys and 32,000 girls.

Country	Percentage of illiterates	Percentage of males	Percentage of females
Greece (1928)	45·1	25·9	63·5
Bulgaria (1926)	42·5	26·4	56·7
Rumania[1] (1938) ..	44·3	32·0	55·5
Belgium (1920) ..	7·8	6·7	8·9
Spain (1920)	42·8	33·8	51·0
Italy (1921)	28·0	24·2	31·7
Hungary (1920)	13·4	10·5	16·1
Poland (1921)	33·4	29·4	37·0
Portugal (1920)	65·3	55·6	73·5
Czechoslovakia (1921) ..	7·0	6·1	7·8

In the three Scandinavian countries there were no illiterates. Not, it would seem, very good reading for Greece; but many of the population live in remote mountain districts, and the country had more than doubled in size since 1912 and administrative reforms of this kind and the building of schools met with all manner of difficulties in a period of wars and internal strife. There has been a marked advance since 1928, and the figures above would give an unfair picture of the position in 1940. And the general impression made on the traveller in the rural districts and the remoter villages, where the school is often the most conspicuous building, is certainly not of an illiterate and ignorant peasantry, but of a wideawake and intelligent people, with a lively interest, most of them, in the outside world, and not only hospitable to, but (what is especially welcome) at ease with, strangers.

Intellectual activity

It would be quite impossible within the compass of this book to give any adequate account of Greek activities within the fields of science, art, and letters; and a summary would be

[1] In Rumania the figures are percentages of population of 7 years old, and so, if progress in education is being made, they are weighted in her favour.

meaningless. But they play so important a part in Greek life that a brief word must be said about them. It would be true to say that since Solomós (above, p. 26, who came from the Ionian islands long held by Venice and so never cut off from European culture) no Greek writer, painter, or sculptor, nor any musician has attained international fame, though some poems and stories have been translated and studied, especially in France. The best of the modern poets known to me is Kaváphes of Alexandria, whose original and (in the literal sense) eccentric verse is, however, and will always be, for the few;[1] the most vigorous and lucid of prose-writers was Ion Dragoúmes, a great publicist, whose death in the civil strife (above, p. 57) was a literary as well as a political tragedy. The best Greek music and the finest singing are heard at the religious festivals at Easter. Nor has Greece produced any European figure in science, except Karatheodorés the mathematician (who, however, did all his work in Germany), Andreádes the economic historian, and many in the field of ancient and Byzantine history and archaeology. It was inevitable that when the contacts with Europe were renewed in the nineteenth century the influences of the West should invade Greece and be at first too strong for the native genius; they overwhelmed it. Just as students in medicine, law, or engineering (too few in the last), or the more fortunate of them, went from Athens to the universities of western Europe, so did writers and artists, particularly the painters, look to the West for inspiration. In painting, as in music, the only traditional native style was the Byzantine, which had become ever more stereotyped and lifeless since El Greco developed his own art from it, and which, moreover, was associated solely with the Church. Of sculpture, one might almost say, because it has been excluded from the churches, there had been none since classical times. For that reason, perhaps, the latter in recent times has shown greater vigour and originality than painting; the monument of the Unknown Soldier in Athens is probably the best of these monuments in Europe.

There has naturally been a reaction from Western influence; and it has, as naturally, taken the form of arts and crafts, a

[1] A most attractive essay on Kaváphes' work, with some excellent translations, will be found in E. M. Forster's *Pharos and Pharillon*.

return to peasant industry and native patterns (even as far back as the Minoan, of two thousand years before Christ), and similar movements. These have their attractions; but their permanent value is doubtful. Greece is part of Europe, and her art and letters, to be of value, must accept the influence of other countries and be able to use it and develop it in their own independent manner—as indeed they already do, especially, as has been noted above, in architecture. What in this book must be made clear is the very great activity in all these intellectual fields, an abundance of writing and study of all kinds. It is mostly to be found in Athens and Saloníka (apart from Constantinople and Alexandria outside the Greek state); but there, intellectual life is as busy as trade and politics. This book is, inevitably in the circumstances of Europe and of Greece to-day, overmuch concerned with the latter; but one must not exaggerate the part which even politics plays, or played till 1936, in Greece.

It may interest some readers if I say a little about the progress of the vernacular language in its struggle with the so-called purist tongue (above, pp. 24–6). It was soon accepted that poets would by the nature of things use the vernacular, that is, not the speech of peasants, but one based on the language spoken by all, and, though later, that writers of prose fiction would do the same. It might seem that the powerful profession of journalists must soon follow the practice of all the more important writers, and the question be settled: but journalese tends to be a law to itself; a 'literary' style is regarded as important. This meant in Greece two things: not only the use of obsolete classical forms (as the dative case or the old third declension of nouns) and words (as ἄρτος for 'bread' and οἶκος for 'house', when all the world said ψωμί and σπίτι—it was largely the commonest words which had changed since classical times), but under the prevailing influence of Western culture the literal translations of innumerable Western idioms, most of which are foreign to the genius of both classical and modern Greek.[1] And since journalists

[1] Λαμβάνειν χώραν, 'to take place', will serve as one example out of many, now very commonly used. Λαμβάνειν is not a modern form; and the proper meaning of χώρα is now the principal town of a district or of an island.

are, fortunately, not usually men of pedantic learning, many classical forms and idioms are misused. Moreover, there is no standard; and a Greek newspaper will generally be found to contain not only an article or a story in the vernacular, under the influence of imaginative literature, but almost every degree of the purist tongue, from a carefully composed leader downwards. It need scarcely be added that the official language of bureaucracy is purist, and as official as is to be found anywhere in the world.

There have been, besides, special obstacles to the universal adoption of the vernacular, for Church and State are involved in the fray. The former, naturally conservative, was jealous for preserving the language of the Bible: and a translation of the New Testament into the modern tongue early in the century met with violent opposition as a desecration of Holy Writ. The part played by the State was even more important; for education in the schools, from the elementary stage upwards, was at stake, and changes involved parliamentary debate and every opportunity for obstruction. It was not simply that children are taught to read Homer, Xenophon, and the Bible—that is as obviously proper as that Shakespeare and English history should be taught in England; but in elementary schools the language of teaching was by statute the purist tongue, and children were told that ἄρτος was the proper word for what everybody in ordinary life, including the teacher, called ψωμί (which is, incidentally, a good Greek word). This has only recently—less than twenty years ago—been changed by Parliament, and the vernacular substituted.

The vernacular has now found its way also into the learned world—some historians and archaeologists use it. It is the language of literature. Journalism is still mixed. Official language is still what is fondly thought to be correct and classical. Because the purist tongue uses a greater or smaller number of ancient forms, a foreigner who knows classical Greek soon finds himself able to read it;[1] but the vernacular, whether in the

[1] To read it, not to speak it. Pronunciation of Greek has changed considerably since classical times, the greatest change being probably that the distinction of vowels by quantity has disappeared and the old pitch accent has developed into a strong stress accent: thus ἄνθρωπος is pronounced *ánthrŏpos*, ἀνθρώπου, *anthrópou* (still with *o* nearly as in *drop*, and *ou* of course as in French), κεκρυμμένος, *kekriménos*,

peasants' folk-poetry or in Solomós, or the vigorous prose of Dragoúmes, is from its directness of expression far closer in spirit to ancient Greek than its rival.

the common termination of proper names *όπουλος*, *ópŭlŏs*. Many vowel sounds, η, ει, οι, υ, have coalesced into one—the same as ι (French *i*); the other vowel sounds are much as in French, α = *a*, ε and αι = *é*, with their strength depending on the accent. The, diphthongs ευ and αυ are pronounced *ev* or *ef*, *av* or *af*. β is *v*; δ a soft *th* as in *the*. Since in England we completely ignore the classical pitch accent, and observe the quantities and the old vowel distinctions—but, many of us, at the same time mispronounce them —it will be readily understood that we find the modern Greek pronunciation difficult. A Greek speaking ancient verse, where recognition of quantity is essential and has been taught him at school, and who naturally uses the accent too, comes nearer to the true pronunciation of ancient Greek than anyone else. (In transliteration of Greek names into English it is not possible to distinguish between η and ε unless we write *i* for the former—*Mytilini*, for example—which is against our tradition. I have kept to *e* in this book: the *e* in Plastéras, for example, is an η; those in Venizélos are ε, the unaccented one being pronounced nearly as in English, the accented much as French *é*. The *e* in the termination of personal names is normally η.)

CHAPTER VII

1940

FROM the two preceding chapters I hope there emerges a sufficiently clear picture of Greek political life and of economic and social progress since 1923. I have tried to describe something of what Greece was like before the recent war began; and in doing so I have used the present tense, though in so many respects the picture is no longer true, and perhaps will never be true again. I did so because I am describing the Greece that I know, the friendly country that so often made me welcome. I can say nothing from my own knowledge of what it is like to-day; but a word or two may be added about the war with Italy and the devastating invasion of the Germans.

If the reader has the patience to look once more at the statistics given above, of agriculture, industry, and commerce, of education and health, he will see that the really substantial progress made between 1923 and 1936 was continued under the dictatorship of Metaxás.

It was by no means easy going. Economic conditions in Europe and America were still difficult, and Greece particularly affected by them. More restrictions on imports were introduced; the production of wheat and manufacture, more for home consumption than for export, was encouraged, in the endeavour to make the country less dependent on the economic policies of others.

This was on the whole successful, though Greek shipping suffered (see above, p. 107, n. 2), just as foreign tourists, who made a considerable contribution to the state economy, were hindered by irritating exchange restrictions and a vast deal of reporting of movements to the police and other devices dear to the hearts of dictators. The use of the clearing system for exchange of goods in place of a free currency system was perhaps in the circumstances inevitable: but it put Greece, like so many other countries, too much within the influence of Germany, which was energetically pursuing this policy in the

X. GREEK TYPES

1. PRIEST OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH (*E N A*)

2. PEASANT WORKER (*Paul Popper*)

years before 1939, offering to buy goods (especially tobacco) in large quantities in return for her manufactures.

In his foreign policy as well, as stated above, in spite of his links with the Axis dictatorships, Metaxás carried on the wise policy of Venizélos. He avoided any breach in the traditional friendships of Greece with France, Britain, and America in spite of Axis pressure, and tried to strengthen the ties with Yugoslavia, Rumania, and Turkey (Bulgaria was still obstinate), especially by commercial treaties.

A greater statesman than Metaxás might have made use of his autocratic powers to end or to modify two of the evils from which Greece suffered—the excessive centralization of government which left local authorities with few rights and no encouragement to exercise those they had, and the inequitable system of taxation. Metaxás made no attempt to mend these; and government was even more highly centralized, as was natural in a dictatorship, by the powers given to carefully selected provincial governors and prefects. The mayors of Athens and Peiraeus—hitherto popularly elected—became nominees of the government.

All political freedom was, as a matter of course, ended; but (it cannot be denied) that was not all loss; for Metaxás put an end too, for the time being, to that political instability which had meant not merely weak governments and parliaments, but had penetrated to the foundations of the constitution and of civil order. The later attempts at violent interventions had indeed failed mainly through lack of public support, and there was no need of a dictator to suppress them; but at least Metaxás introduced a period of calm which lasted for four years. The price paid for this, however, was inevitably heavy; not only suppression of free discussion in the Press and on the platform, the exile to some small island, without trial, of political opponents and labour leaders, the end of all attempt at the rule of law, the gratification of personal spites and animosities, and the general corruption of public life, but also the introduction—not perhaps by Metaxás himself, but by some of his lieutenants and many of the smaller fry among his followers —of the doctrine and practice of brute violence found in other dictatorships of that time; with which ruthlessness appears to have been the favourite political virtue. How far the evil of all

this would have penetrated and corrupted Greek life had the dictatorship lasted longer, we cannot say; but the truth must be admitted that the use of arbitrary power directly affected only a few persons, and those all for personal or political (not, for example, for racial) reasons, and that very large numbers, perhaps the majority, of simple people accepted the dictatorship for the freedom from political strife and animosity which it secured. Certainly when Italy attacked in October 1940 Metaxás had the country behind him; and he himself, a single-minded patriot when the crisis came, was under no illusions about Italian intentions and under no temptation to be a puppet dictator under the protection of a powerful one. In spite of the fall of France, the apparently irresistible power of German armies, and the difficult position of Britain in North Africa, he took up the challenge, and with an almost desperate yet cheerful courage his countrymen responded.

When the Italians invaded Greece they met an army better equipped for mountain warfare—for the kind of warfare, that is, that was inevitable in the country where the fighting took place—than they were themselves. This again was in part due to Metaxás' administration—for he had continued the policy of his predecessors. The weakness on the Greek side was in transport and in reserve stocks of supplies, and, as well, in air power. The army must be supplied from two bases, the left and centre from Préveza—not a very well-equipped port—supplemented by the small quay at Egoumenítsa opposite Kérkyra, each with a single road to the forward base at Yánnina; and the right wing by road and mountain-path from Flórina, to which there was a single-track railway from Saloníka and Athens. Only one road passable for vehicles connected the two lines of supply—that over the 5,000-feet pass of Métsovo from Tríkkala in Thessaly to Yánnina, Tríkkala itself being connected with the Athens-Saloníka railway by road to Lárissa and by the single-track, narrow-gauge railway to Vólo.

Neither roads nor vehicles were adequate either in quality or quantity. Here the Italians had a great advantage, for they are good road-builders and makers of lorries (Greece had to import all her vehicles); but once in the mountains, the Greeks were used to transport by pack-animal and to long marches on

foot, so that tactically, though not strategically, they had the better of it. In the air Italy was greatly superior; the Greek air force was small in numbers and the machines old-fashioned, and, well as they fought, they would have been inevitably defeated there had it not been for the support of the R.A.F. Again, this was a strategic rather than a tactical disadvantage, for the aeroplanes could not play a decisive part in actual mountain fighting.

Greece in fact was better equipped as a whole, especially if one includes the support of the R.A.F., than Italy, on a short-term view; and their morale was higher, for the Italians in the main had little stomach for the war. In many ways the situation was not unlike that of the early part of the South African war of 1899: the stronger power, possessed of much superior resources, had neither understood the sort of warfare that they would have to wage nor equipped themselves for it, nor appreciated the quality of the enemy and *their* understanding of its nature and their greater adaptability. The result of the first months of fighting in the two wars was similar.

The Italian plan of campaign was an interesting one. They attacked along the whole front (the boundary between Greece and Albania), but mainly in the south-west. They advanced a considerable distance along the coast (well beyond Egoumenítsa); but the chief weight of the attack was in the centre, by the good road up the Aóos (or Voyúsa) valley. Soon after crossing the border this road leaves the river valley and makes for Yánnina, the Greek base of operations; the Italians were expected to advance by this road, where their superiority both in armoured vehicles and in transport would have told. They did so; but by a bold manœuvre they sent a large force of their best Alpine troops along the roadless upper Aóos valley towards Métsovo. The great strategic importance of this small mountain town lay in its position at the head of the pass already described; for had the Italians captured it, besides cutting the only practicable land-link between the Greek left and centre and their right based on Saloníka and Athens, they would have placed the Greek forces driven eastwards in an awkward dilemma—whether to retreat through western Macedonia towards Saloníka and thus open to the enemy the way to

Thessaly and the main railway, or down to the Thessalian plain, which would have allowed the Italians to threaten either directly the rear of the Greek right or Saloníka itself. Such a dilemma might have been disastrous to the Greeks, leading either to a fatal hesitation or to a division of their forces.

The Greeks, however, though apparently taken by surprise by this attack, did not lose cohesion, and quickly recovered their balance. The Italians mistook their enemy: for while not all Greeks by any means come from the mountains, all are used to them, and practically all the infantry and artillery are trained in mountain warfare as part of their ordinary military service. It was not only picked Alpine regiments, as on the Italian side, who could fight in that wild country, though some of the famous highland troops (the Evzones) were there; all could march and shoot there, and supplies did not fail them. The Italians, eager to reach Métsovo Pass, pressed on too far; they were surrounded, and defeated with heavy losses.

They did not advance again. Driven right back in this sector to the frontier, they had to withdraw their troops who had advanced along the west coast as well. The Greeks pressed their advantage in the mountain warfare—the whole of the fighting area is mountainous—and before the full severity of winter had set in had captured the important towns of Koritsá and Argyrókastro (both partly Greek-speaking and in the old disputed zone of northern Epeiros), and the port of A. Saránda, which gave them a new base of supply by sea. They won, too, an important lateral road to connect the right and left wings of their army though their transport was not equal to making full use of this.

The Greeks pressed on after these notable victories, and defeated several heavy counter-attacks. But the onset of winter, of particular severity in the mountains, stayed full-scale operations. They got as far as the eastern end of the Kleisoúra pass, and in the north to the Yugoslav–Albanian frontier; but they did not succeed in capturing the whole pass and thus win the way down to the Italian base at Valóna, nor in the centre and north get to the plains and threaten Berat and Elbasan. Had they not been pressed for time, they would have waited for the spring to make the attempt; but German help for Italy was obviously pending, and time was short. In January

Metaxás died, fortunate perhaps in the hour of his death; for he had carried the struggle victoriously till that time.

When Hitler threatened invasion of the Balkans in April 1941, all depended on the attitude of Yugoslavia and Turkey, both allied to Greece. With their great superiority in heavy armour and in the air, the Germans could be expected to overrun the Danube basin as far as Belgrade; but in the mountainous country to the south, in the Morava and Vardar valleys through which they must come, a well-organized Yugoslav army could have put up as stout a resistance as the Greeks had done against Italy, as they themselves had done against Austria in 1914 and 1915. Had Turkey joined the Allies she would at the least have neutralized Bulgaria; while the small and hardly-to-be-spared British force from Africa might have cemented the alliance and played a decisive part. But the Yugoslav government failed, and made a pact with Hitler; and Turkey remained neutral. There was some brave though ill-organized resistance by Yugoslav units; but the position of the Greek and British forces at once became critical. Greece had a long land frontier to the north, with a carefully prepared system of defences, and with Saloníka as the base; even had she been willing to give up her plan of campaign there and at the same time to sacrifice Thrace, and Macedonia east of the Strymón river, there was little to prevent the immensely stronger German force, after the almost unopposed march through old Serbia, from pushing on down the Vardar and capturing Saloníka (which was anyhow at the mercy of a superior air force), thereby cutting off all the Greek troops to the east. So clear was this that the British force took up position not on the Greek–Yugoslav frontier, but to the south, based on a line from Mt. Olympos westwards towards Flórina and the pass to Monastír; the small but gallant Greek forces on the Bulgarian frontier were left in the air, and after a stiff but brief resistance were overwhelmed. The main Greek army still faced the Italians in Albania, with a couple of hastily mobilized reserve divisions to serve as a link between them and the British.

The German victory was rapid and decisive. Saloníka fell almost without a struggle. They had troops to spare for the easy capture of Monastír and to push south through the gap, and thus threaten both the British positions to the east and the

main Greek forces to the west. The latter began to retire, in bitterness of spirit; but the Germans were too fast for them, cut all communications with the Allies by an advance on Métsovo and would soon be behind them in possession of their only line of supply.

They saw their victories of the previous months and their hard struggles against the terrible conditions of the winter all apparently turn to nothing. They could not carry out the one thing that might have saved them, at least for a time—a vigorous retreat together with the British to a shorter line; despair took them, and the generals laid down their arms. The British and the remaining Greek forces, now hopelessly outnumbered, were driven back from one position to another. Athens fell on 27 April. Our troops got away, with the loss of their transport and artillery. A few Greeks left with them; others stayed to wage a fierce guerrilla war.

It was a tragic end to the story of the war against Italy. An even greater, an almost overwhelming tragedy followed the Axis occupation, the story of which and its fearful consequences for Greece cannot yet be told. It is right to record here the message which the Greek Government, then under Tsouderós as Premier, sent to the British Commander on 21 April when the unequal fight was nearing its end.

'The Greek Government, while expressing to the British Government and to the gallant imperial troops their gratitude for the aid which they have extended to Greece in her defence against the unjust aggressor, are obliged to make the following statement:

'After having conducted for more than six months a victorious struggle against strongly superior enemy forces, the Greek army has now reached a state of exhaustion, and moreover finds itself completely deprived of certain resources indispensable for the pursuit of war, such as munitions, motorized vehicles, and aeroplanes—resources with which it was in any case inadequately supplied from the outbreak of hostilities. This state of things makes it impossible for the Greeks to continue the struggle with any chance of success, and deprives them of all hope of being able to lend some assistance to their valiant Allies. At the same time, in view

of the importance of the British contingents, in view of the aviation at their disposal, and in view of the extent of the front heroically defended by them, the imperial forces have an absolute need for the assistance of the Greek Army, without whom they could not prolong their own resistance for more than a few days.

'In these conditions the continuation of the struggle, while incapable of producing any useful effect, would have no other result than to bring about the collapse of the Greek Army and bloodshed useless to the Allied Forces. Consequently the Royal Government is obliged to state that further sacrifice of the British Expeditionary Force would be vain and that its withdrawal in time seems to be rendered necessary by circumstances and by interests common to the struggle against the enemy.'

There is resignation in this, but also a magnanimity rare at all times and especially in war, and which in the circumstances was heroic. By their message and by the help given by so many individuals to our troops, the whole of the Greek people showed now that they did not regard success as the sole criterion of conduct nor victory as the only bond of friendship.

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