

THE PERMANENCE OF THE GREEK TYPE.

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WHEN, a year ago, I was elected to membership in this learned body, I esteemed it a high and valued honor. Now, when, for a brief season, through the invitation of our distinguished President, I have the further honor of holding your attention and directing the current of your thoughts, I can discover no theme more congenial to my own feelings and experience, and more appropriate to the hour, than the topic I have chosen—The Permanence of the Greek Type.

This Society, in conformity to its baptismal name, "Antiquarian," has its eye fastened upon the past. The word "American," prefixed in its title, is not only more specific but broader. It indicates not merely a people or a continent. It is synonymous with that larger outlook and those wider sympathies which render our national patronymic cosmopolitan in idea and far-reaching as the race.

The political gaze of today is riveted upon the East. Our strained ears have been listening every morning to catch the echoes of cannon booming along the fastnesses of Epirus and the slopes of many-ridged Olympus. Mingled in strange intimacy with the telegram and editorial of our daily journal have been the tales and enthusiasms of school-boy and college days, when, through the characters of an unfamiliar tongue, we thrilled to Miltiades and Marathon, and Homer with the matchless story of Achilles and the Plain of Troy. So the war just raging under a Grecian sky differs to us from every other. It seems blent with and a part of struggles which the same people, or a people of the same name carried on in behalf of humanity two thousand, two thousand five hundred, three thousand years ago.

Colonel Vassos, Prince George, Edhem Pasha, Osman Pasha, Ellassouna, Larissa, the Milouna Pass, seem but later names for Themistocles, Leonidas, Artaphernes, Mardonios, Thebes, Plataea. To imagination, marshalling the combatants, this actual war is but the latest agonizing episode of a strife which began when Darius Hystaspes marched against the Scythians, and the Ionian cities sprang into revolt.

Yet in many a mind the question arises, How far is the heroic present a lineal continuation of the heroic past? How far is the living Greek representative and incarnation of those Greeks so many centuries under the sod? Does the Greek race of today resemble some ducal line of England, where, after the earlier house has become extinct, rank and name are perpetuated by men on whom the same proud titles and wide domains are bestowed, but who can boast not one drop of blood or one family lineament in common with the original possessors?

A prominent senator of the United States, a member of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, asked me in Washington a few days since, "Is there any connection between the ancient and modern Greeks?" A cultured lady of my acquaintance remarked last week, in a sentence that had the sting of an epigram, "The Greeks are the spoiled children of memory." The editor of one of our foremost monthlies wrote, last March, with cruel flippancy, "There is no evidence that the modern Greeks are capable of engaging in anything more heroic than the wearing of petticoats, the selling of dried currants and the cheating of the national creditor." Such unfavorable sentiments, perhaps expressed less harshly, are by no means uncommon. Generally such remarks fall only from the lips of persons who never trod Greek soil, yet they may be sometimes heard from men who have lived in the East and are presumably well informed. For example, I never met an English ship-captain who did not speak of the Greeks with aversion and perhaps contempt.

The object of this paper is to answer the question, How far does the modern Greek seem to be the child of, and how far does he resemble, the ancient Greek? Does he touch him only by the coincidence of habitation, by the mere incident of dwelling on the ground which the long-since dead have rendered memorable and historic, or is he legitimate descendant in his father's house? Are the accents with which he speaks ancestral? Do his physical and mental traits bear witness that they have come down to him through the centuries as an heirloom from Hellenic stock?

I shall endeavor in reply to utter, not the words of a partisan, but only those of truth and soberness. Yet, while seeking above all to be sincere, I make no pretence to a real or simulated indifference of mind. Though six thousand miles away from that transparent air and that cloudless sky and those marble shores, I recall gratefully that many of the best, happiest, most fruitful months of my life have been spent among the Greeks, upon the European mainland, in Asia Minor and on their enchanted isles. I recall gratefully days, weeks, it has been my privilege to pass in Greek monasteries and Greek homes, long lingering at Greek boards, cherished intimacy with Greek friends, acquaintance profitable and inspiring with Greeks of all classes, from the humble tradesman to his Holiness the Greek Patriarch on the Ecumenical Throne.

First of all, in the parallel we seek to institute we must compare the modern Greek with the ancient Greek as the ancient Greek really was. That is, we must not compare the modern with some ideal which never existed but is only the figment of our admiring but distorted fancy. Otherwise we do injustice to the modern and to the ancient as well. On a dizzy pedestal limned by a blinding halo we are wont to place the men and women of the classic past. Like the writer in holy writ, we know there were giants in ancient days, and so we are prone to picture them all as

superhuman and colossal. We choose the fairest, bravest, wisest, of remote antiquity, and infer their fellow countrymen and countrywomen were all like them.

It is only an accursed hand which tears a single laurel leaf from the grave of buried renown. The ceaseless homage of two thousand years has not paid the debt humanity owes the arts, literature and heroism of Greece. Religion, civilization, freedom, will be her beneficiaries to the end of time. Yet even in that land which seems so peerless there was by no means universal virtue and light. All the Greeks, most of the Greeks, were not preëminent or illustrious or models for their own time or posterity any more than they were all swift-footed as Chorœbus or strong as Milo. The nearer we gaze upon their faces, the clearer we discern that the average Greek was not a demi-god but distinctively, paganly human, as imperfect and defective as his fellows before or since. We recount the thirty-one immortal cities which withstood and defeated Xerxes. Then we stretch the mantle of their glory over the more numerous known or nameless Grecian cities which welcomed the Persian hordes, or yielded without resistance. We know there were six thousand freemen at Athens, and with instinctive reverence at the thought of their tyrant-defying liberty, forget the existence in that same city of five times as many slaves. We recall the temples to divine, calm-browed Athena, and forget they were outnumbered by altars to Hermes, worshipped indeed as the god of eloquence, but above all as the god of thieves. We forget that skill in deceit no less than indifference to pain or death was a branch of Spartan training. The prevailing sentiment which divinifies the average ancient Greek is no less preposterous than it is inaccurate and unjust. The saintly virtuous, the sublimely heroic, the abnormally gifted, shone like solitary stars among them as they have done in all ages everywhere. Few were austerely poor as Phocion, truth-telling as Epaminondas, devout as Socrates.

The modern, like the ancient Greeks are few in number, and like them are a widespread race. Wherever there is business to be done and a fortune to be acquired, thither some of them wander. Still the great majority, perhaps five millions, inhabit the very places in which they are found in early times. They love best nearness to the sea. Thus their adventurous maritime and commercial enterprise enjoys fullest scope. The tiny kingdom of free Greece, hardly more than half the size of classic Hellas, or of the state of Maine, contains nearly two million two hundred thousand. In the Ottoman Empire, a fringe of Greek population lines every shore, densest along the entire western coast of the Egean. Wherever the stranger quits his steamer, as he follows the vast periphery of Asia Minor, from the Colchis of Jason and the Trapesus of Xenophon to the Gulf of Issus and the harbor of Alexandretta, and then along the Syrtis of Africa, he will be rowed to land by a Greek boatman, eat and sleep in a Greek *locanda*, present his bill of exchange to a Greek banker, and find in every department of interest and activity the omnipresent, restless Greek.

Generations successive in the same localities from age to age must follow the same pursuits. The occupation of a people is determined more by physical and geographic circumstances than by individual will. The Almighty when he planted the earliest Hellenes amid rocky islands and upon mountainous mainland, so deep-cut with tongue-like gulfs and bays as to seem a maze of peninsulas, debarred them from cultivation of the ground and forced them to gain their bread as fishers, sailors and tradesmen. The development of our last inventive age has little modified their pursuits, for their rock-ribbed soil affords neither coal nor iron, the two essentials for manufacturing industry. Their land contains no other treasures in its bosom than the marbles from which in olden times they reared the temples of their gods.

In the seclusion of one's study the American pictures the islands, the headlands, the river-basins of Greece. He

endows them with an opulence of natural wealth and charm, in which mythologic oreads and water nymphs might revel to satiety. If cherished hope of travel becomes fruition, from the deck the voyager watches for the first peak emerging in the eastern horizon, and then peers hungrily to discern some Grecian strand lashed by the waves of the far-sounding sea. The mainland and the islands indeed possess luxuriant valleys and sheltered nooks where nature displays vegetables, fruits and flowers in profusion. These rare paradises are seldom visible from the coast, and almost never seen by the stranger. Nothing more dreary and disenchanting can be conceived than the arid outline of Greece and Asia Minor. Even association and glowing romance fail to robe them with beauty. One marvels that human beings can find sustenance amid those sands and rocks. The sterile, stony, grudging soil seems repeating the ancient proverb of Attica, that, Greece can produce no corn and but scanty wine and oil, nothing but men!

Nature leads us to infer that what the old Greek was, the new Greek must be. The same factors always force the same results. This truth applies no more to national occupations than to prominent characteristics of a people and their physical and moral traits. There can be little of that indolence here which we associate with India and Egypt. In the sweat of thy face must thou eat bread, was never more verified than to him who would pursue a farmer's calling in Greece. Economy, frugality, temperance, follow in the train of hard and unremunerative labor. The sailor, the son of seamen, and the merchant, the son of tradesmen, will of necessity develop and possess every characteristic of his class. Whether those professions are exercised in the remote half-fabulous days of primitive antiquity, or now when every farthest corner is revealed, the veil of mystery torn away and most distant waters ferried with lines of steamers, the sailor is the same daring, jovial, generous being he was when they first went down to the sea in ships.

So too, they, situate at the entry of the sea, the merchants of the people for many isles, are no more susceptible of change. The Greek husbandman, the Greek sailor, the Greek trader of today—and these three comprehend the vast majority of the nation—must each be what he was when the one pruned the olive-trees of Attica and gleaned the vines of Thessaly, when the other breasted the rolling billows of Gibraltar and defied the storms of the Baltic, when the third set up his counting-house in the murky harbors of Britain, and traded the gold of Africa for the tin and amber of the North.

Thus far we have discussed this subject from a single standpoint. The same conditions being given in the present as in the past, we have inferred what would naturally ensue.

Now let us pass to other ground. Let us place the ancient and modern Greek side by side, face to face, and see whether they are alike and akin.

The classic writers abound in description of the ancient national type. No other people, not even the Jews and Romans, possess in the gallery of nations a portraiture so definite and detailed. We read of the olive tint, the ebon hair, the cold and coal-black eye. The shapely head, the oval contour of the face, the forehead broad and low, stand out not only from old narrations but from countless statues and carvings still preserved. The nose, the prominent feature of the face, affords unerring indication as to the nationality of those peoples who have developed an individual type. Applying this nasal test, the Ottoman, the Armenian, the Roman and the Jew cannot possibly be confounded. The nose of the Greek, straight, angular, clear-cut, refined, is as peculiarly his own. In a museum at Athens one beholds more than eighty marble busts, chiselled prior to the Christian era during the lifetime of the persons whom they represent. From the calm repose of this museum the visitor turns to the crowded, tumultuous

street. With eager scrutiny he contemplates the hurrying throng, and is thrilled at the striking sameness between the features distinct on the marble busts and in the glowing faces of the passers-by. Yet Athens is, of all towns in Greece, the least advantageous in which to observe the people. Far better are those sequestered, quiet places, which a foreign foot has rarely trodden, and where dialect, habits and ideas have been little modified in two thousand years. Such a region is the tiny archipelago of Pente Nesoi, the Five Islands, south of Khelidoni Bournou, the ancient *Sacrum Promontorium* of Lycia. The centuries before Christ seem repeated there in this Christian century. The inhabitants of Plymouth and Salem in Massachusetts differ many fold more from the Pilgrim and the Puritan than do the Greeks of the Sporades and Cyclades from the race of which we read in our text-books. At Pente Nesoi, at Samos, at Scio, I have seen physical types of beauty similar in artistic appearance and equal in statuesque perfection to anything which sculpture has handed down. As the historian Byzantios remarked in 1863, "Were Phidias or Apelles to return to earth today, they would find among us at San Dimitri, Smyrna or the Islands as worthy subjects for their chisel or brush as existed in the days of Pericles and Alexander."

The most beautiful woman I ever met in Asia Minor was a Greek girl at Cyzicus. In the cold radiance of her wonderful beauty, she seemed as emotionless and as soulless as chiselled marble. Like that ill-fated daughter of her people who brought calamity on Greece and Troy, she was most divinely fair. Yet she was only an ignorant water-carrier and household servant. One year afterwards every building in the village was destroyed by fire, and a few weeks later the poor girl perished from starvation. At her side my memory places another, a high-born lady, the wife of Alexander Pasha, Prince of Samos and formerly Governor of Crete. To my eyes her jewels were no more

dazzling than her face. She too died and rests in a mausoleum worthy of a queen. Unlike all else, these two represented the perfect flowering of their race.

One is well repaid for entering some Greek assembly, or visiting some spot where the people are wont to congregate. It may be the village market, or a popular café, or the University while the students are pouring out, or the hall of the Boulé, the legislative chamber. What marked the former frequenters of the agora and pnyx which may not be witnessed there? There is the same vivacity and swiftness of utterance, the same copious stream of words, the same sharpness at repartee, the same heat and passion over trifles, the same desire to speak and want of readiness to listen. Always is heard the inquisitive tone that hardly waits for an answer, and the time is passed in the telling rather than the hearing of some new thing.

The casual glance remarks their similarity to their ancestors in appearance and demeanor, but it can hardly reveal how near they feel toward them in point of time. In that strange obliviousness to the flight of years, characteristic of the Greek, the distant past seems to him the border-land of today. The Basils, Justinian, Plato, Agamemnon, become almost contemporary of each other and of him. Constantine XIII., Palaiologos, the Greek hero-emperor who fell before the hosts of Mohammed II. in 1453, seems closer to the modern Greek than does Washington to us. He talks and thinks of mythologic and classic personages as if he had known them, or as if his father did. Once while visiting Mount Athos I remarked on the arm of my muleteer the tattooed effigy of an ancient warrior. "Whom does that represent?" I asked him. "It is the picture of one of our people, called Achilleus, who fought over there." Meanwhile he pointed eastward toward the Sigæan promontory behind which flow the Simois and Scamander. His untaught eye could not have deciphered a single letter of the Iliad, and his knowledge, hardly more than ignorance, was

most vague of that ten years' siege. He was sure, however, that, whether the fight took place a hundred or a thousand years before, his fellow-countryman Achilles was the principal warrior.

Retention of ancient names has done much to bring into almost personal contact the widely separated ages of the present and past. An Italian physician once boasted to me that in Italy people almost never called their children after the ancient Romans. The Greeks maintain a different custom. Men and women alike rejoice to bear the old glorious names. The first class I ever taught after graduating from Amherst consisted entirely of Greek youths. Among them were a Xenophon, a Pericles, a Socrates and a Solon. Each one bore his title with a half-consciousness that it was transmitted to him with his blood. Once in the class-room I had occasion to repeat the word "Mene-laus." A new student just entering came quickly forward and said "Here I am, Sir," thinking I had spoken to him.

Yet similarity of name is trivial in comparison with identity of speech. The essential oneness of the Greek language through almost thirty centuries is a linguistic marvel without a parallel. Exposed to every vicissitude of fortune, outnumbered and overborne by successive barbarian conquerors, schools shut up and education forbidden through many decades, crushed under a poverty and servitude which the occidental can faintly conceive, the suffering children of the deathless race have always held communion with each other in the same deathless tongue. Modifications have crept upon inflection and terminology, foreign words have wormed themselves in, the participle and dative with the infinitive have been almost forgotten. Yet there is less resemblance between the English of Wicliffe and Horace Greeley than between the Greek of Xenophon and the Athenian newspaper of today. The English language has changed more in four centuries than the Greek language has done in a period sevenfold as long. Nine out

of ten words, made familiar in our academic study of the classics, are still in daily use. The inhabitant of Italy speaks Italian; save in the synagogue, Hebrew is forgotten by the Jew; but in every Greek community the signs over the shops, the names of the streets, the terms of salutation, the epithets of the market, are the same now as they were before Romulus founded Rome.

Thus far we have considered daily vocations, physical traits of face and form, distinctive personal habits and audible speech. As to all these what the ancient Greek was, the modern Greek is. Resurrect the contemporary of Cleon or Alcibiades, put on him the European costume of the Nineteenth century and let him stroll in front of King George's palace with the clamorous crowd. There will be nothing in bearing or appearance to distinguish him from these later people born twenty centuries after he was dust. Or thrust the vociferous modern Greek far back on the highway of time, and clothe him in chlamys and buskin. Aristophanes will find in him no new point for satire, and he will be at ease with the frequenters of the market or of the academy; and they will be at ease with him.

There still remains a far more important test of family affinity. Character, rather than externals or customs, indicates the man. No less does it stamp the individuality of a race. Hereby is revealed the truest kinship. No person concentrates in himself every virtue or every vice. Neither does the Greek, but his typical virtues and vices seem less a creation of his own than his natural inheritance. Not an excellence or defect glorified or disfigured the old Greek that does not exist in the new. Not more akin are they in tint of face and hair and in the supple build of their slender figure than in their qualities of heart and soul.

Among commercial peoples, the first criterion to be applied is that of honesty. The average Greek of any social class bears this test as well as the average member of that same class in any other land. The leading Greek

firms of Manchester, London, Marseilles, Trieste, Constantinople, Smyrna, are deservedly esteemed for integrity and business honor. Their probity is a chief element in their distinguished financial success. Not always loved or popular, they are almost invariably respected and trusted. Their reputation is as high as that of French or English or American houses. As far as comparison is possible the modern Greek merchant or banker does not suffer when placed beside his prototype of ancient times.

The seaport towns of Europe, especially along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, nourish a peculiar brood of men, a sort of human scum, that drifts along the coast. Here the dishonest Greek is only the most dexterous among many rival thieves. Once when I was on board an English steamer in the harbor of Syra, a Greek boatman was caught in the act of stealing something from the cabin. Surprised at his detection, the captain swore he was a Maltese or an Italian, adding, that such a clumsy rascal could not be a Greek. The culprit was forthwith chained to the mast. On weighing anchor that evening, the captain remembering his prisoner ordered that he should be released and sent on shore. It was found the man had escaped with all his original plunder, and had also carried off the chain!

Two special characteristics are possessed by the Greeks of every class almost without exception.

The first is a hatred of restraint, a sense of personal independence, an unwillingness to submit to usurped and sometimes to legitimate authority. In its noblest manifestation this is the love of freedom, the passion after liberty, the burning sense of right and justice, to which subjection and slavery are more intolerable than death. This sentiment nerved Sparta and Athens against the Persians, brought on the desperate seven years' struggle of the Greek revolution at the dawn of the nineteenth century, and upheld the Cretans through generations in their resistance to Ottoman oppression.

To this sentiment are due the most thrilling exploits in Grecian history. Yet, seen on its lower, more brutal side, this same spirit has been the unvarying and most persistent curse of Greece. During the Greek revolution, the intestine rivalries and civil wars of Odysseus, and Ghouras, and Mavrokordatos, and Koundouriotis, and Koletis, and many more wrought greater havoc to their native land than did the Moslem hosts of Chourshid Pasha, and Omer Brione and Ibrahim. During that agonizing struggle, no small proportion of the Greeks fell at the hands of their fellow-countrymen, ostensibly battling all the time in the same cause, as well as under the dripping yataghan of the Turk. In 1824, after Ottoman authority had been expelled from the Peloponnesus, and the Ottoman survivors crouched under the walls of their few remaining fortresses, the tribal and partisan feuds of the triumphant chieftains kept the emancipated province in as wretched a condition as it had ever known. Insubordination and insolence in the council chamber, disobedience in the field, intolerance of discipline, jealousies that patriotism was not strong enough to quell, personal pretensions that bordered on treason, have over and over again paralyzed the noblest efforts of Greece, and caused heartache and disappointment to her sincerest and most devoted friends. Yet wherein, through all this painful record, does not the present and the recent reduplicate the past? One historian, indeed, was born two thousand and three hundred and fifty-one years ago to describe that twenty-six years' anguish which we call the Peloponnessian War. That fratricidal contest rises prominent in the current of continuous, similar history, not because of any sudden or unusual feature of its own, but through the personality of Thucydides, its unequalled narrator. The years before and since down to today are an unbroken, monotonous repetition in major or minor key, on larger or smaller scale, of like civil brawls and internecine strife.

We are comparing the Greeks with each other and not

with the peoples of other lands. Still it is only fair to say that they have by no means the monopoly of domestic bloodshed. In this respect the civil wars, insurrections and riots in France, not only during and since, but through centuries before the Revolution give to France a mournful and undisputed preëminence. Nor can we forget that one civil war, among the most destructive to property and life in which men ever engaged, was waged by Americans in America.

The second characteristic, common to the dweller on the mainland and the island, distinguishing all regardless of wealth and standing, is a strong, almost superstitious reverence for education. I have seen Greeks with blue eyes and red hair, with a Roman nose, or a nose unquestionably pug, and some who were neither vivacious nor energetic, but I never saw one yet who did not cherish a profound veneration for what he considered learning. Even their piety in its peculiar attachment to ceremonial and ritual is not so prominent as their reverence for education. To secure it for themselves and for their children they will endure any hardship and welcome any privation. Whomever they judge possesses it, whether foreigner or fellow-countryman, they look upon with profound respect mingled with envy. There is no other so sure passport to their confidence and regard. In Adrianople, I once made the acquaintance of a Greek master mason. He was utterly illiterate, unable to read, but his interest was aroused by researches I was making in the city. My friend, unlike most of his compatriots, was slightly bibulous. In the evening, whenever we met in the café, he would give vent to his emotions of sorrow at his own ignorance and admiration at my supposed learning in maudlin laments and ejaculations. Always he concluded with these words, "Though I am ignorant, my four children shall be learned."

What has modern Greece to place beside the literary masterpieces of her ante-Christian days? If the divine

afflatus still glows in her breast, sluggishness of brain and poverty of production require some other explanation than the penury and prostration in which sixty-seven years ago she crept out, exhausted but victorious, from her revolutionary war. It is true that neither England, France, Italy, Germany, America has at any single period equalled that most brilliant epoch. It is true that the philosophers, orators, poets, sculptors, architects of the whole Christian world still sit in reverent pupilage at the feet of her early sages. Then was the mysterious stupendous culmination of the human mind, unequalled and almost unrivalled since. Nor can it be demanded that in this prolific century Greece with her scanty, impoverished population should equal the literary productiveness of contemporaneous states which boast fifteen-fold, twenty-fold, thirty-five-fold as many sons.

All we ask is this, are there recent Greek writers who reveal their ancestry and show themselves emulous of their sires? It would be tedious to recount the names of all the historians, orators, philosophers, poets and dramatists in which modern Greece is rich. Mr. Rangabé in his "*Histoire Littéraire de la Grèce Moderne*," enumerates eight hundred and seventy-one modern Greek authors whose works have been published, and discusses their merits. The principal and more numerous compositions have been in the fields of history, philology, theology, philosophy, poetry and law. Few have been devoted to mathematics, or the physical sciences; more than fourscore writers have attempted dramas, and some have produced fine romances. Nowhere else is the poetry of the Greeks so opulent as in their popular songs. Many of these songs have never been written down, and live only on the people's lips. Orators like the two Trikoupes and Bishop Latas, historians like Paparrigopoulos and Philemon, poets like Orphanides, Bernardakis, Alexandros Byzantios and Paraschos, do not maintain a humble rank relative to their compeers of the

West. On their pages burns something of that literary fire which—

“Greece nurtured in her glories' prime.”

In great emergencies or solemn crises the soul of a nation is fullest shown. Modern Greece, hurling herself upon the Ottoman hosts, unanswerably demonstrates whether the new Greeks are the old Greeks, and whether the Grecian spirit survives. Olympus never looked down on a spectacle more momentous than the war which has been raging around its base. Dissuaded, opposed, menaced by banded Europe, seeing Christian cannon plough the ranks of her Cretan brethren, and the standards of the six Christian powers float in alliance beside the Mussulman flag, Greece, single-handed and without a friend, did not shrink from the encounter.

Even the apparent sympathy of the American government, on which she had a right to count, was wanting. The American people, as far as official influence was concerned, was ranged against the cause of liberty and on the side of outrage and oppression. There is no call for America to interfere in the affairs of foreign nations. From the entangling alliances or complications of the Old World we are mercifully free. But the single words, “We protest” against the so-called pacific blockade, would have echoed from Crete to Athens and from Athens to Crete. It ill became us at the behest of one or of all the foreign powers to be practically silent when the doctrine of neutral rights was invaded, a doctrine for which we have spoken not only with the lips of diplomacy but from the cannon's mouth! The words, “We protest,” would have tended to disintegrate the monstrous concert of Christian Europe and the Ottoman, and have nerved men fighting only for liberty. The golden opportunity was before us, such as is seldom vouchsafed a nation, to make our voice heard and our influence for humanity felt around the world. The golden opportunity was thrown away; and

instead a precedent was allowed which may some day be used against our very selves with terrible effect.

Asking no intervention, praying only that no European nation on any specious pretext might interfere, putting their trust alone in the God of armies and themselves, the Cretan Greeks girded themselves to fight the battle to its bitter end.

The story of these last months around that rocky island is not only too familiar but too harrowing to repeat. The two hundred and seventy thousand Christian Cretans could conquer, did conquer, the Turks as they had conquered them more than once before, but they stood aghast, confronted by the allied ironclads of a continent? It required profounder brains than theirs to tell why Christian England trained her cannon upon them, whose only crime was, longing to be free!

When Greece at last, wrought to sympathetic frenzy, drew her sword in a cause that to her was holy, she did not find for her warfare that most sacred right of all contestants, fair play and an open field. Through seventy years she has been the football of European diplomacy and is so still. Yet history presents no sublimer spectacle than Greece, heedless of cost, reckless of consequences, in delirious yet almost hopeless battle, throwing herself, with feet and hands half tied, upon the mighty Mussulman oppressor of her kin. It was not prudent, it was not sagacious or discreet; yet such grandeur of rashness and folly ennoble the race, and streams a little light upon a sordid world. During the last few years, the press, the pulpit, the human conscience, have denounced the barbarism and the inhumanity of the Turk. Greece alone has dared to beard him!

In the vastitude of Europe, in the dreary expanse of races beyond the ocean, only two national figures stand out, worthy exponents of the principles they profess. The one, the Turk, challenges a measure of our respect.

He is no other than he claims to be. He puts forth no professions that sicken us by their cant. Warlike, ferocious, sanguinary, fanatic, he is the child and not the bastard of the torpid, unprogressive, despotic, bloody East. He stands today a conqueror, triumphant and erect. Well may the astute Sultan smile, for he knows that to the followers of the Messiah he is in large degree indebted for his freshest victory over freedom and the cross.

The other figure is the Greek. Outgeneraled, defeated, fleeing, with no laurels of success but only the unfading laurels of a high endeavor, he is a kinsman of whom his buried Spartan and Athenian ancestors may well be proud. His was a more herculean task than theirs. They fought only against Asiatic hordes. He contended likewise against Asiatic hordes, but his antagonists were equipped with the arms, were disciplined and commanded by the officers and supported by the statecraft of the Christian West.

With hearts that ache, we turn from the contemplation of today. This latest, saddest episode seems drawing to its melancholy end; but the unknown future is before us. If the modern Greek were not the child of the ancient we might well deem him his twin. Brothers are they, though thousands of years apart!

“Thus fought the Greek of old!

Thus shall he fight again!

Shall not the selfsame mould

Bring forth the selfsame men!”

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