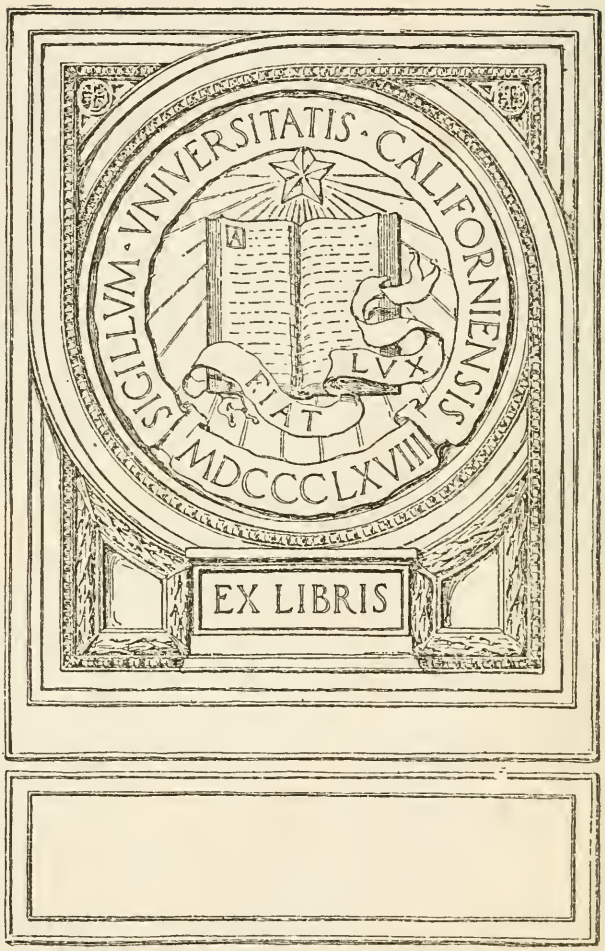

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A RIDE THROUGH THE BALKANS

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COLONEL PHILLIPS AND THE CASTLE OF SCUTARI [*Frontispiece*

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A RIDE THROUGH THE BALKANS

ON CLASSIC GROUND WITH A CAMERA

By
AGNES ETHEL CONWAY
Author of "The Children's Book of Art"

With Introduction by
SIR MARTIN CONWAY, F.S.A., F.R.G.S.

LONDON: ROBERT SCOTT
ROXBURGHE HOUSE
PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.
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1995

Magistrae dilectae
quae Graecarum litterarum artiumque
dulcissimos fontes
princeps mihi aperuit
IOHANNAE HARRISON
Litterarum Doctori
inter Graecos hodiernos peregrinationis
imaginem hanc qualemcunque
D. D. D.

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The photographs from which the illustrations are taken were secured by Miss Evelyn Radford and the author, with the exception of that of Sparta, for which they are indebted to the kindness of Miss Dorothy Lamb.

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INTRODUCTION

WHEN you have made an unconventional and miscellaneous journey from and to nowhere in particular and have written an account of it, your real trouble begins. You have to find a title for your book and one that will attract a reader and give him some sort of notion what the book is about. If only you had confined your steps to some single country or district, there would be no difficulty. "Travels in Transylvania," "Sites and Cities in Serbia,"—the commonest alliterative jingle serves your turn, and the booksellers'. Your problem becomes yet more complicated if you did actually have a well-conceived plan, which you had thoroughly discussed, prepared for, and arranged with the older members of your family, but which, when you were well out of their way and off "on your own," you abandoned for any goal that the chances and attractions of the moment made desirable. A glance at the track on the map will show that it resembles nothing so much as the course of a fly

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buzzing about a room, which turns at sharp angles and goes hither and thither for no apparent reason whatever. Excellent fun we are told does a fly enjoy in its irresponsible existence, "flitting, flirting, feasting at its will"—so John Ruskin assured us, and an excellent time these two young carriers of a camera seem also to have had with the unexpected turning up from day to day and every one they chanced upon co-operating to help them along.

What they, or at any rate one of them, went out for was to pursue a very definite piece of archæological work—not to take but to buy, date, and annotate a collection of photographs of works of ancient art of a certain period and school. The reader, of course, has not collected photographs in a systematic fashion. The number of people who do is very small indeed, but they are the very cream and elect of the earth. Most children and many older persons collect or have collected postage stamps, and have learned that it is not merely the gathering of a number of bits of printed paper that counts, but still more the identification and arrangement of them when gathered. The objects themselves are mean as works of art and of exiguous interest, but the collecting and arrangement of them is provided for by a vast commercial organization, an extensive literature, and a large body of rivals, to equal or to surpass. The stamp collector can so easily meet with another of like calibre whose nose

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he may have the good luck to put out of joint. Even a beginner may enjoy that felicity with another beginner.

The photograph collector is not thus favoured. There are plenty of photographs purchasable, but all of the moment. There is no organization to provide old ones or to sell them second-hand. Suppose one were to decide to form a collection of photographs of European statesmen of the Victorian age at home and abroad; how could he set to work? Where would he go for a photograph of Palmerston or the middle-aged Gladstone or Disraeli? That is but a single instance. Or suppose the subject chosen were British birds photographed from life in their English and foreign haunts. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of such photographs have been made and published, notably in the pages of *Country Life* and in various books issued in more or less restricted editions. If one had only thought of it in time what a fine collection one might have made at a small weekly expenditure. The prints would have been cut out and logically grouped together, mounted on cards and arranged in boxes—a joy for others and a life-interest for oneself. But try now to recover what has thus slipped by and you will find your work laid down on a very different scale. You will have nothing like the postage-stamp shops and catalogues to help you. You must do all your hunting for yourself, and the books in small editions will have

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risen in price, and you won't like to cut them up when you get them.

Our sport of this kind is the collection of photographs of works of art—in the case of the author of this book, works of classical art of the great ages of Greece and Rome. Of course, if you have the money, it is easy to buy in a block from the great photograph-publishers prints of the statuary in the chief museums of Europe and the voluminous publications issued at Munich; but such wholesale buying will not be very satisfactory and will merely land you in a colossal chaos. The original of the famous Fawn of Praxiteles was destroyed ages ago, but there exist some seventy copies of the whole or parts of it—heads, torsos, and so forth, and they are by no means all in the great museums. Some are better than others; some are quite unimportant. The photographs of the figure therefore need careful selection and careful grouping and annotation. It is work for an expert.

Again there are a quantity of quite important objects which have only once been photographed, perhaps by some distant local photographer, or for some specialist publication, or by some amateur, and each of these has to be pursued and attained with patience. Some statues have been photographed in sale catalogues and the originals have gone from the auction room, no one knows whither. The sale catalogue is probably out of print and hard to come by. These are only a few of the collector's problems.

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If his attention is attracted to works of the decorative and industrial arts, such as gold ornaments, arms, cups and other vessels, or the infinite varieties of pottery—the very grammar of archæology—he finds himself led into a yet more intricate and troublesome area. For here the ordinary commercial photographer hardly helps him at all and he is dependent upon the plates in expensive journals of societies and the luck of obtaining from the authors of papers, perhaps several years old, separate copies of their contributions.

The first necessity is to discover what it is you actually want, and that means mastering some branch at least of your subject. For us it matters little which; for our collection, arranged chronologically and subdivided according to arts and schools, aims at embracing all the art of all the world from the stone-age down to the end of the eighteenth century, and already numbers between a hundred and fifty and two hundred thousand prints. In such a collection works of ancient Greek art of the golden age, the fifth to the third century before Christ, could not be and were not lacking. But there were wide and lamentable gaps, and the arrangement and annotation left much to be desired. Of sculpture there was a good deal, of architecture a moderate amount, a fair selection of vases, but the minor decorative arts were poorly represented, and such objects as swords and helmets were few and far between. The primary object of what

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developed into the journey here recorded was the improvement of this photograph collection. The author was to visit Athens and Constantinople. At the former city she was to work at the British Archæological School (as in previous years she had worked at the British School at Rome), when experts could be consulted, with a library of books at hand, the museums and monuments accessible, and a collection of photographs to duplicate where required. There were also the schools of other nations, notably the German, which were hospitable and helpful to foreigners, and of which the German at any rate was older, better endowed and better equipped. If, as seems probable, the war puts an end to the freedom and international helpfulness of archæologists and breaks them up into two isolated camps, it will damage the cause of scholarship for a generation. Such a division seems inevitable, at all events for some years to come.

At first the plan was textually carried out and a great deal of good work was done. There is, in fact, more archæology in the background than the reader of the following pages might suspect. It has been intentionally suppressed. After several weeks Athens was left for Constantinople, where plenty of work had to be done according to the plan, and it was supposed that a return would then be made to Athens and the routine taken up once more, varied perhaps by a few excursions to the

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famous and easily accessible sites in Greece. But at Constantinople a change came over the spirit of these travellers. Whether it was their excursion to Brussa, or to mere contact with the romantic East and the pulsation of modern Oriental and Levantine life as there experienced I will not venture to decide, but thereupon and thenceforward our archæologists went on strike and gave themselves over to an orgy of wandering and brisk adventure. Thus at length I am brought back to my thesis that it is hard to find a title for your book when the journey it recounts is one without a plan. "Two Archæologists on Strike" was the title first suggested, but they would have none of it, and now I don't remember what is the name selected to carry the weight of the pages that follow.

That which Fate intends for a person will overtake them. The gods cannot be circumvented. Some people are born to wander and some to stay at home. "Adventure," it has been said, "comes to the adventurous as laughter to the merry." It irks me to think that I was not of this party, but it would be ill-fitting to complain. I also have been in Arcadia—that large region in every continent which is outside the boundaries of motoring roads and Ritz Hotels and all the wearisome paraphernalia of highly organized societies. Till you come where you have to sleep upon the ground you are not really free of the bondage of the crowd. To mount your horse in the morning with all your goods upon a

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beast of burden and only rough tracks or none to follow, and not to be sure where you will find shelter next night—that is freedom, especially if you are without a camp and equipment and must rely upon the hospitality of a simple folk living in primitive fashion. Civilization is, alas! a great spreading wen that threatens to destroy all the nice wandering regions of the world. I am unfortunately old enough to remember how one could wander in almost this simple fashion through a large part of the Alps now definitely engulfed in Touristdom, and threatened if not conquered by dress clothes. Where one year accommodation can only be found at the cottage of peasant or priest, the next there is a little inn, presently an hotel, and a decade later one of those crowded caravanserais called into existence wherever the tourist flood sets. How different from the old caravanserais of the East through which the stream of the Arabian Nights used to flow and where romance and insects reigned supreme!

Romance!—is not that the clue to Arcadia? the key-note of the endless, everlastingly delightful Arcadian symphony? Where shall we find her? how catch her? She will not be caught; she is always just beyond, just out of reach. She lives in the blue distance, on the top of the unclimbed mountain, away off on the glittering waters of lake or ocean when we are on the shore. You cannot even hope to pursue her in the conventional world,

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unless you are an exceptionally gifted poet. The ordinary man must get out of himself, out of the routine of his daily life, and away—away off somewhere among sights and folk that are strange to him, and then perhaps he may for a moment feel the touch of her garments as she passes by. We are nearer to her in childhood because our surroundings are fuller of unfamiliar things and the other side of a wall may enclose some region where fairies dance and gnomes burrow. But familiarity spreads and drives Romance farther away—utterly and for ever away from most folk. The few start in pursuit, drawn on and on by an ever-renewing hope. Sometimes she is near them when they awake on the margin of a new day and the wonder of its infinite possibilities pervades their waking moments. Or she may approach in the summer sunshine, or amid ruins gilded with glory from the past, or by running water on which no man can stray, though, if only he could, might not that highway lead to wonderful places and glorious adventures?

> Where Alph the sacred river ran
> Through caverns measureless to man
> Unto a silent sea.

Thus it is that the passion of travel arises in some, and with such keenness of desire as to amount to sheer pain till it attains fruition. And then—why then perhaps fruition may in time kill the desire

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because it may kill Romance. The longed-for sight is beheld—Niagara, Mont Blanc, the Sahara, the Vale of Kashmir—and lo ! the mystery is gone and nothing has been felt to correspond with expectation.

Where thou art not, there is happiness

—if that be all the lesson of travel a man may as well stay at home. He that would preserve to the end of his days the joys of Romance must have something within him to respond to the stimulus from without. That is the only prophylactic against boredom. Who does not remember the travelled personages in some of Henry James' earlier novels who had seen Europe, seen all the sights, and had no more use for them ? Seen Europe ! The trouble is that such persons have no power of sight. In the presence of the Parthenon they behold only so much masonry. They have no mental vision to thrill to the exquisite beauty of those stones or to apprehend them, not as in the mere foreground of to-day, but far off down the long avenue of the centuries in the great distance where the heroes dwell. To see anything you must bring with you the special power of sight and insight that is demanded by the particular object. And so it is with Romance in all its forms. The spirit of Romance must be within if the power of beholding it or merely of feeling its proximity is to be attained. This spirit may not always come without taking thought. It is sometimes like the Kingdom of

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Heaven " which suffereth violence and the violent take it by force."

In the lifetime of most young persons there comes a critical moment when they are liable to lose for ever sense of the romance of the external world. This is particularly true of those brought up in towns. Their surroundings have become familiar; everything they see in their daily peregrinations is commonplace to them because well known. It has been truthfully said that there is as much beauty in a bank of grass on which the sun shines as in a great vista of mountains, but it takes experience and long habit of observation to realize it. Old folks, faithful through a long life to the beauty of the world, may find their fill of beauty anywhere. The young must generally be struck by it in some overwhelming and to them unusual form. Hence the advantage of travel to them, if they are rightly natured and nurtured. A vision of the Alps in all the glory of a cloudless day may awaken to the sense of beauty some youth who might otherwise have remained blind o it all his days. So also is it in the domain of art. The young have generally to be aroused to its power by sight of some great and world-famous work. The emotion once experienced, the capacity for receiving it can be increased indefinitely by intention. None of us by taking thought can add a cubit to his physical stature, but our spiritual growth can be fostered at will, once the life-germ is present. There are

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those who never thus enter into life, and for whom the whole world and all that is within it remain matter-of-fact to the end. There are others, perhaps, but they are very rare, by whom the divine voice in nature is heard from childhood and on, with ever-increasing distinctness and compass. Most of us have to be born again and well remember the hour of our rebirth, when we became free of the Kingdom—the Kingdom of Romance which is also the Kingdom of Heaven.

To travel in lands fair and far away, if so it may be, is thus a great privilege and high education for those capable of profiting by it—for those who have been thus born again. Their observation in surroundings where all is strange and entertaining needs no quickening; their memory cannot fail to be retentive. They derive impressions from hour to hour which generally prove to be indelible. Later on impressions are more evanescent and memory more intermittent. It has sometimes entertained me to cast my eye over a few chapters of one of my own travel-books and note how many of the recorded scenes can still be conjured up by memory in mental vision. Some are still as clear as if colour-photographed within the brain; others have utterly faded away. Pages follow one another which might have been written by some other person and now read by me for the first time. Memory is a blank. I have no recollection whatever of the incidents described. Then I come forth

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into light again and what follows is vivid once more. But the journals of my youthful travels contain no such *lacunæ*. All is remembered. The vision of that past is still clear. Travel then if you can while still young. There are few sights more pathetic to me than that of an ageing individual, some man of business who has worked hard and made money, and at last taken a holiday with wife and grown-up family and launched forth to see the world. How it bores him! He has no eyes to see it with. The eyes he might have had have not been developed and now it is too late to develop them. It is the young—the suitably educated young to whom the outlandish world opens its arms and its heart.

The journey, parts of which are described in the following pages, happens to have been made at a peculiarly interesting moment in the life of the Balkan peoples. They had just passed through the discipline of two successive campaigns. The effects were still visible and passion still throbbed in the bosom of the folk. Moreover, in Albania and some other parts refugee camps were in existence and settled conditions had not returned. It was the springtime of 1914. Few of the general public then realized that a far more tremendous convulsion was at hand and that the Balkan disturbance would not finally be ended till all Europe had been set afire. For the time tension in Greece at any rate was relieved. In Albania representatives of the

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powers were cordially co-operating together to bring order among the distracted mountaineers. Everywhere things seemed to be settling down.

One of the most disturbing features of war in its effect upon an individual's judgment is the unavoidable tendency we all feel to ascribe to every national the crowd-characteristics observed in his nation as a whole. In peace-time we are well enough aware that the individuals within a nation may and do differ from one another even more widely than national characters may differ. Two Englishmen may be even more diverse than is the typical Englishman from the typical Frenchman. In war-time such personal divergencies are forgotten. To-day we find it hard to remember that all Germans are not necessarily bestial and cruel. Events seem to us to have proved that such is the character of the German crowd and we transfer to each German individual the crowd-character. Thus it was with our popular notion of the Turk. We attributed to every individual Turk the potentiality of Bulgarian and Armenian massacres, because the Turkish Government had been responsible for them. It never occurred to the man-in-the-street to inquire what kind of a Turkish subject had been the murderer, nor under what kind of orders or promptings he had acted. It was not remembered that within the Turkish Empire are many races and that the Kurd and the Osmanli Turk are on different levels of civilization. Our

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own experience of the Turk as enemy has changed a great many prejudices. Moreover, we have to remember that the human crowd is a far more brutal creature than most men, and is besides unintelligent, passionate, and ruthless; and that an individual when infused with the crowd-passion as in war or revolution will perform atrocious deeds which he would shrink from when acting under the guidance of his own reason and emotions. So few of us know individual Serbians, Albanians, or Bulgarians. We know them only by newspaper repute as representatives of their nations—as crowd-units—and we are liable to regard every inhabitant of the Balkans as a kind of half-civilized person, violent, dangerous, and untrustworthy.

The fact that two young ladies, in the months immediately succeeding a bloody war, could wander unescorted through regions thus recently disturbed, and everywhere meet with nothing but kindness, helpfulness and hospitality at the hands of people belonging to or little above the peasant class is noteworthy. It is indeed no unusual phenomenon. Potential kindness and hospitality are very widespread, especially among simple folk. If all crowds, such as nations, are potentially hostile to one another, almost all individuals are potentially kind one to another. Every Greek because he was a Greek hated every Bulgarian because he was a Bulgarian, but race apart these same individuals would have had no hatred toward one another. At

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that time there was no racial hostility to the English in any part of the Balkans, but rather friendship, and our travellers gained the benefit arising from that mental attitude, but they owed far more to the natural willingness of simple folk to be kind and helpful to two young wanderers who could talk their language and were not exigent. They took things as they came with excellent temper and obvious enjoyment. Their pleasure continually renewed itself in every adventure of the way. It seems to me that that pleasure finds unconscious expression in the pages that follow and communicates itself to the reader.

I cannot persuade myself that the simple account of the journey here printed is of any great importance, but it may possess one value. It may open the eyes of other young women to possibilities which had not previously occurred to them. The world is wide and is worth seeing. It is not necessary even for young women to be confined to the beaten tracks of railways and the accommodation of first-class hotels. Women have shown themselves to be as venturesome and as capable travellers as men. No one could have been bolder, more efficient, or more successful than Miss Gertrude Lothian Bell in her difficult explorations of the ruined cities and palaces of Mesopotamia. The fact is that in the East women actually enjoy certain advantages in out of the way and disturbed parts. The natives are not afraid of them. It is fear even

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more frequently than any other emotion that makes a man shoot first in a country where every tribe's hand is against its neighbour. Even where conditions are not so unsettled the normal chivalry of man is helpful to a woman-traveller. She is a novel sight. She is generally gifted with the power of making friends. Her thanks and pleasure are a reward that needs no baggage animal to carry it.

Thus there is a great future for women-travellers if they start out with a suitable mental equipment. By nature they are good observers and they look out on the world from a standpoint different from that of men. They come home with a novel kind of story and they tell it in a fashion of their own. They seldom bore the reader with the kind of detail a serious man-traveller is likely to be obsessed by. It is true they drink a good deal of tea, where the records of men lay stress on solid meals. Whoever has travelled in thinly populated regions knows how large food bulks in the emotions of those who have often to go hungry. After a long day's ride to reach some famous ruin, sight of which perhaps has been the desire of years, when the traveller actually arrives at it there are ten chances to one that the cup of tea and the food which he is able to obtain will for the moment seem more glorious to him than the shattered walls of the monument he has at length attained.

With these few reflections I commend the following pages to the consideration of the patient reader.

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The traveller father of a travelled daughter has to obey orders. An introduction demanded must be supplied; but the responsibility lies where the order emanates. That also a benign reader will not fail to remember.

MARTIN CONWAY.

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A RIDE THROUGH THE BALKANS

CHAPTER I

ATHENS

WE took an hour and a half to land at Peiræus amid a noisy mob of boatmen, and drove up the long, dusty, shadeless road to Athens and our quarters in the Plaka. The house proved delightful. It stood at the end of the street leading to the Tower of the Winds, and the main entrance gave access to a little courtyard full of orange trees, on to which various humble rooms opened. I thought at first that these belonged to retainers of the Greek family with whom we were going to live, but the rooms proved to be tenement dwellings let out to country folk who had followed the family fortunes to Athens when they moved. An outside staircase led from the courtyard to the front-door on the first floor, the first three steps being of marble, the rest of wood. From the dining-room window the Acropolis towered above, and we could just see the top of the Erectheum over the ancient walls.

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The Plaka, years ago, was the fashionable quarter of the town. Now the modern city has spread northwards, and left it bereft of visitors, but whenever we turned the corner of the house and saw the great stone steps leading straight to the walls of the Acropolis, only five minutes' walk away, we would not have changed quarters with the aristocracy of Athens.

The family, consisting of two sisters and a brother, never interfered with us, and we saw them only at lunch and dinner, during which time they took infinite pains with our Greek, correcting all our blunders. The Greek servants were very interesting. Elene cooked superlatively well, and looked much less than eighteen, her real age, for she was always laughing. Marigo, a peasant woman from Eubœa, with long dark plaits that reached to her knees, supplemented the housework, and was good and beautiful. It took her a long time to learn our names, which she wrote on a piece of paper and carried about with her at her work. She haunted our rooms, talking very slow and careful Greek; her children, from below, came whenever they were free, and corrected our bad grammar with equal enthusiasm. Elenitza, the eldest, danced and sang Greek songs for us, and Joanna, the baby of three, played perpetually with my enormous walking-boots, which were almost as large as she was.

At first the town was riotous with the Carnival. Troops of people danced around the maypole to

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weird music, and in the evening they drove about in an endless procession of carriages, throwing confetti. A general jubilation was following the success of the two wars. We were noticeable for not wearing dominoes, and a child whispered to her mother: "Are *they* masqueraders?"

One day there was a public holiday, and fifteen thousand people went to the Stadium to see Loie Fuller and her chorus dance. The building, a reproduction of the ancient Stadium, may seem a brilliant marble ostentation when empty and glittering in the sunlight, but even half-full it is impressive. The Royal Family walked the entire length of the course to their seats, amid shouts of "Long live the King!"; then the chorus danced in the semicircle below them. At the end, Loie Fuller appeared before King Constantine as Victory, in a white dress with enormous white wings modelled upon that of the Nike of Samothrace. A high wind flapped the wings rather too much, but at moments she seemed to be flying, and justified the fine idea, and the great enthusiasm. The modern Athenians turned out almost to a man and flocked to the festival, as the ancient Greeks did to the Pan-Athenaia.

On the last day of the Carnival, a Sunday, we walked to Eleusis; but our archæological investigations in the Hall of the Mysteries were interrupted by the glimpse of a great crowd of people standing in front of the church. We ran down the hillside,

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and found a solemn ring of beautiful girls, holding hands and dancing. With three steps to the side and two back, they progressed slowly round and round in a circle. The crowd only just gave them room, but we, being foreigners, were at once courteously pushed to the very front. The dancers wore creamy silk underskirts and red three-quarter length embroidered plush and velvet jackets, and red plush aprons. Long white gauze veils were wound around the head and chin, and many wore a breast-decoration and head-dress of gold coins, which, we were told, were their dowries. Some of the women looked very beautiful, but there were no men there to watch them; the crowd was entirely female with the exception of the priest, the men being scattered about among the cafés in the village. Greek dancing is never a joyous performance, and retains much of the solemnity of its religious and ritual origin. The finely dressed, slowly moving, weirdly accompanied circle of dancers might still have been enacting the rhythmic movements that rotated the seasons and fertilized the earth, so serious and tense was their mien.

The next afternoon we wandered up to the Pnyx, and found young peasant men from the country dancing the syrtos, their national dance, with the women as spectators in a circle on the ground. Again we were put in the front row. In this dance the leader is the important person, the others merely forming the tail; but the leader changes

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DANCERS AT ELEUSIS

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each time, chooses the tune and pays the piper; he alone wore the fustanella. A row of notes in payment were stuck in his hat, and we saw him receive as much as ten francs at a time, although I believe this is sometimes done for show and that the piper returns part of the money afterwards.

Lent began on the following day, and we settled down to our archæological studies, although sometimes, even in Athens, we had a foretaste of adventure. We wished to climb the Acropolis by the cleft through which the Persians forced their entrance after the Battle of Salamis. I had been wont to picture this as a daring feat of rock-climbing, and was much surprised to find that it entailed crawling flat through a long underground tunnel, so narrow that only one person could squeeze through it at a time. The exit is just below the walls, and one Greek could have blocked it and so saved the citadel; even one of those old doddering Greeks, who alone entrenched themselves on the Acropolis, and refused to abandon Athens at the advice of Themistocles. My opinion of both Greeks and Persians suffered a rebuff that day. I also had my pocket picked by the ragamuffins who haunt the north side of the Acropolis; but as it only contained two francs, it was a pleasure to buy deliverance from them at such a price, for they did not bother us again that day.

It is only by climbing mountains that one can get a just idea of the small scale of Greece. We went

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up Mount Hymettos, which took four hours only from the house to the summit, and could scan the whole sea-coast from half-way down the Peloponnese around to the Bay of Marathon. The red Attic plain against the purple mountains and sea was a magnificent sight. Eagles innumerable nest in the clefts of Hymettos, and we, looking down on them from above as they soared, were close enough to realize that their wings, all golden against the sun and tipped with black, were six feet across at least. They did not seem to move a muscle, and yet the speed of their flight was tremendous. I never watched anything finer, for there were literally dozens of them, swooping and soaring and circling, and, from the height above, the plain appeared to drop below their golden wings.

At the foot of Hymettos stands the small Byzantine Church and Monastery of Kæsariani. Ruined fragments of sculpture lie about the little courtyard, and are built into nondescript farm buildings. A Cretan cultivates a small garden outside on the hill, which was overshadowed by the largest almond-tree I have ever seen or imagined. Against the bluest of blue skies this was a solid bower of pink, one branch of which was enough to hide the Cretan entirely from view. He and E. had a long conversation about strangers and their passion for antiquities; she gave him some tea, and a biscuit, which he took gratefully "to keep for to-morrow."

The view from Pentelikon is as fine as from

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SPECTATORS AT ELEUSIS

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Hymettos. We clambered up one day by the old marble quarries, hoping to see the flawed drums of the Parthenon on the way; but of recent years the quarries have been so actively re-worked that the classical traces are harder to find. Higher up, the ground was covered with quantities of irises of all colours, and from the top there is a marvellous view of coast in an almost complete circle, and islands as far as eye can see. We lunched looking straight down upon the battlefield of Marathon, and felt as though all the maps and plans of our childhood's history books had come to life.

That night was spent at Kephissia, which would be a shady, cool, refreshing spot anywhere, but in treeless Attica it is a godsend. We intended the next day to walk to Tatoi, the ancient Dekeleia, a summer resort of the Athenians, to which there is a really good motor road. We started by a path, a short cut, but were misdirected, and had hours of misery crossing the Kephissos and two other ravines, and forcing our way through thick prickly undergrowth. One ravine could only be crossed by walking along the branch of a tree. We might have been in an impenetrable jungle for all the sign there was of a way out, and our throats were parched with thirst. Tortoises were the only living creatures. At last, when the sound of a motor was heard in the distance, we sank upon the ground and ate the one remaining orange, which we had not dared to touch before, in an ecstasy of delight. There was a high

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barbed-wire fence still to climb, before reaching the road; then, at the moment when we landed on hard ground once more, a sousta, the Greek form of cart, dashed by with a second outside trace horse, tied on by a piece of string. It stopped to give us a lift, and we entered Tatoi at a furious pace. We arranged for the sousta to return at five and drive us back to Athens, but, alas, when it came, our friend of the morning was dead drunk, and we had to give up the drive.

We spent the afternoon basking and sleeping in the shade of oak trees. Only those who have visited Athens will realize what a treat it is to lie on grass under a substantial tree, and it is sad to think that a forest fire has since destroyed these woods. We were to have many other fatiguing experiences during the course of our journey, but our walk from Kephissia to Tatoi stands out as the worst.

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ATHENS: MARIGO AND JOANNA

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CHAPTER II

CORINTH

E HAD a friend, an archæologist, who was taking part in the excavations at Corinth, and invited us to come to her for a week-end. In a foreign country, visiting is almost always interesting, but Corinth was to prove an initiation for me into the experiences I most valued in Greece. We crawled along the coast in a very slow train for three hours, past the scenes of the exploits of Theseus, on a strip of land jammed between the mountains and the sea. On arrival at New Corinth the inhabitants accosted us in such atrocious American English, that we bought our bread, figs and chalva with our heads in the air, refusing to talk their alien lingo. When we were well on the way toward Old Corinth, and safe from the massacre of sound, we lay down and ate our lunch overlooking the Corinthian Gulf, which was a bluer blue than any I ever imagined. The blue of the Bay of Salamis had seemed vivid enough, but this was incomparably bluer and the snowy summits of Cyllene and Parnassos on either side of the Gulf glittered in the sunshine. Walking

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across the flat plain to Old Corinth, we were overtaken by several peasant women, riding on the hindquarters of their mules, who fired a volley of questions at us. "Are you sisters? Where are your men? Are you not married? Do you have dowries in England?" At last we arrived at the tumbledown village of Old Corinth, and found our way to the excavations, where our friend had just dug up the oldest piece of pottery ever found in the Peloponnese. She dispatched us on ponies to go up the Acro-Corinth, and after having piloted our own fortunes since leaving England, it was delightful to be provided with mules and told what to do.

Masses of a golden flower, said to be the hemlock of the ancients, carpeted the approach. The triple enceinte of walls with their colossal gateways were a great surprise to me, for this was my first sight of those mighty Venetian strongholds, perched on what seem inaccessible crags, which give so extraordinarily vivid an impression of the power of that city-state of the seas. How did Venice, protected as she was by her lagoons, learn to build vast fortifications on mountains? Tier above tier they stretch, still in very fair preservation, with golden wallflowers growing in their chinks. From the top, the geography of another part of the country became perfectly clear, for the Acro with its command of the Isthmus, and the two Gulfs is the key to central Greece. Southward, a road wandered across the plain to the near mountains of the Argolid, which

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shut out Mycenæ and Argos. On the very summit the colossal foundation blocks of the Greek Temple of Aphrodite still lie in position. The walls have a circuit of one and a quarter miles, actually outlining the hill, and the comparatively flat area within is a confused mass of medieval and Turkish houses.

We had with us an Arcadian boy, with a head like the Hermes of Praxiteles, who was a relative of our friend's foreman, "George." That giant Arcadian mountaineer, servant, foreman and friend, proved the hero of the week-end. I never saw any one more dignified, grave and competent, and as he came from the heights of Arcadia, his physique was impressive, unlike that of the usual wiry little Greek. He brought us tea in the Museum, which we ate sitting among baskets of pottery and fragments of sculpture. Then the three of us rode the two ponies in turn back to New Corinth, where our friend lived in a little whitewashed cottage. There was nothing on the walls, and no furniture in the house but one bed and table and three chairs. A row of books, backs upward on the bare floor, ran around the sitting-room; it was all so fresh and white and clean, that with the vase of wallflowers on the table the room had an almost monastic attraction.

We sat down to a hot evening meal served by an old Greek peasant woman, and listened to an account of a tour in the Peloponnese which our friend had made during the war to distribute relief among the wives and children of soldiers. Dressed as a peasant

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herself, she and George obtained access to cottages, and in the course of talk heard of the needs of the poor people, without the purpose of their visit being suspected. She chose the poorest and most neglected districts, and must have been a godsend. Her knowledge of the peasants was profound, and we listened rapturously to an account of George's home in the highest inhabited village of Arcadia.

The great blot on Greek peasant life is the dowry system. The marriage of an undowered girl is an unheard-of event, and a sum of two hundred pounds and upwards is demanded from the father for each daughter. In the absence of a father, the brothers take on the burden, and George was saddled with the dowries of three sisters. By ceaseless toil and by mortgaging his best bit of land, he had recently succeeded in marrying one of them; the other two sit at home making the trousseaux they will probably never use, and lamenting that in the nature of things they must be such a burden on their brother. "You are happy, Kyria," they said. "You need not feel that you are hindering your brother from marriage." It was true that with so many sisters he was doomed to celibacy, and his fine presence took on a tragic aspect.

George escorted us back to our hotel on the front to sleep, and the next day we awoke to a radiant morning, and found we could drink our coffee on a balcony commanding a transcendent view of the snows beyond the Gulf. Then George came to

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fetch us, for in his opinion we should never go into the street alone, and another breakfast was spread out for us in our friend's house. All the bedding was hanging over the balcony to air. Every scrap of furniture in the house could have been carried into the garden in fifteen minutes and the whole thing scrubbed from top to bottom; it looked as though that were frequently done. A distaste for English sophisticated, over-furnitured houses would quickly have been fostered in such surroundings.

We were taken that day in a sousta to Sicyon, a drive of eighteen miles along the coast. How Sicyon ever rose to be so important a State puzzled us, for the site is not impressive nor even strong: placed on a table-land with a slope to the plain leading to the sea. The half-excavated theatre commands a gorgeous view of snowy Parnassos hanging in the blue of the sky. George spread out our lunch in a little church enclosure under cypresses, and sprinkled salt and lemon-juice on our lettuces. The universal lemon-flavouring in Greece, especially in soup, is delicious. Our long drive home in the evening met an exquisite moon-rise on the way. We persuaded George to sing to us, and drew up the sousta at intervals to lessen the shaking and listen to a succession of Greek traditional songs, mostly referring to the war of 1821. His grandfather had been in close attendance on Kolokotronis, and his pride in the songs was splendid to see. He was very anxious that we should understand all the

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words, and assured us over and over again that the circumstances were really historical. One song was about a pass in Arcadia that Kolokotronis crept into at night to hold against the Turks. The men lay on the ground to rest : " for their bed the earth ; for their pillow a stone ; for blankets the shadow of the trees." Another was the popular lament of the Souliots in Epirus who were surrounded and starved out, and threw themselves off the walls of their castle after singing a kind of blessing on the land and all the people, present and future. This Elenitza had sung to us in Athens. George had the remains of a fine voice, and to hear a patriot, full of pride in his songs, sing them in his own country, in the moonlight, was an experience worth having. The tunes were most elusive, with curious variations of rhythm, verse by verse, which are almost impossible to reproduce or even remember. One of the best was about a soldier who told his mother to watch a certain rose tree which would live while he lived, and wither if he died.

The next day being Monday, our friend went off at daybreak to excavate, leaving us an empty house for breakfast. Her old peasant woman waited on us hand and foot, and when we departed for good she embraced us warmly, and said it had been such a pleasure to make our acquaintance. She was a pathetic figure, for her only daughter was married to a man who had gone to America and had never communicated with her since.

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CORINTH : ROPE-MAKING

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We went out once more, at our leisure, to Old Corinth, and had lunch beneath the vast columns of the archaic temple. To tear ourselves away from the Acro and the exquisite view was difficult indeed, and we had to hurry to catch the afternoon train to Athens. On the way to the station in New Corinth two women were taking up the whole side-walk, submitting a bundle of raw wool to some carding process which we had no time to investigate, though I snapped the photograph in passing. I am told it is rope-making.

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CHAPTER III

CONSTANTINOPLE

WE left our delightful Athenian family one evening, sped by a crowd of mourning servants, who implied that life would hardly be worth living without us. Constantinople in anticipation was a gamble. For other travels we had toiled in preparation for months beforehand; but this time we were just ordinary globe-trotting ignoramuses, and that unpreparedness had the charm of a new experience.

We went by boat, touching at Smyrna; then through the Dardanelles. In the Sea of Marmora there was a report of a Turk overboard. We threw out a lifebelt at once, and the ship went back on her track, but it was half an hour before we even reached the lifebelt, and the man was never seen again.

Our entrance to the Bosphorus was enchanting. The sun had set by the time we got into port, but all the way coming up there was a glow on every minaret in the city, and it looked like fairyland. Constantinople is the Arabian Nights come true. The streets of wooden houses with balconies and

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CONSTANTINOPLE: HODJAS OUTSIDE THE MOSQUE OF MAHOMET II

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wooden shutters, all drawn up, are more like what one imagines India to be than anything I had expected in the Near East. The great white courts of the mosques, the fountains and the blue-tiled interiors were very striking at first sight, for in my ignorance I had never pictured anything there but Byzantine buildings. As for Santa Sophia, it was, if possible, even more impressive than I had imagined. The first moment of that vast unexpected space beneath the dome, so beautifully carpeted, took my breath away. It seemed a miracle of construction, and showed up the poorness of Roman St. Peter's and the waste for any internal effect of that gigantic dome.

Now that I have been to Constantinople I do not wish the Turk to leave. Santa Sophia must never have chairs in it instead of that beautiful carpeted ground, with its solemn worshippers kneeling in scattered units. There is not enough that is pre-Turkish in Constantinople to compensate for the picturesqueness of the Turk. I could stand for hours on the Galata Bridge watching the people and the shipping and the silhouette of the mosques in Stamboul. It is extraordinary that just fezes should make a street so bright in colour. One day, on the bridge, a shrouded figure leaned over the parapet, lifted up her veil, disclosed a charming face, and poured forth a torrent of Turkish. When she saw we understood nothing, she laughed gaily and disappeared into the crowd. In the Tunnel and

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on the trains we found it amusing to travel in the compartments reserved for women. The way in which they smoked in public surprised us, especially when an elderly woman, sitting in the women's part of the train, pulled aside the curtain dividing her from the men, got a light from a male cigarette and relapsed into veiled seclusion.

On the steamer going across the Sea of Marmora to Brussa, the fourteenth-century Turkish capital, we had more chance of watching the women, for we planted ourselves in their screened half of the deck. They tried to talk to us, and insisted that we should take portions of whatever they had to eat. It was a bitterly cold day, but we were watching them so intently that we had sat there for four hours before realizing that we were chilled to the bone and must go inside. By that time it was too late to get warm, and our teeth chattered all the way up in the mountain railway to Brussa. There we found ourselves under Mount Olympos, which had snow far down its sides, and it was colder than ever. A Turkish bath seemed the only thing that could save our lives. On arrival at the bath, to which we had been directed by the proprietress of the hotel, we were hurried into the cooling-room, where misty figures sat on a high dais, puffing hookahs, and drinking coffee. Three Turks rushed us through that to an inner apartment, where the steam was thicker and wraiths of men were moving about; there were eerier forms still in the third room to which they hurried us on, and I started to

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run back to the open air, terrified lest I should find myself in the bath too and unable to protest. However, it turned out that the attendants only wished us to admire the architecture, and had thought of nothing else. There was a smaller ladies' bath next door, to which an old, old hag in trousers admitted us. We could not communicate, but she poured forth volleys of Turkish, hoping against hope that we might understand something. Then she squatted on the floor, swaying slowly from side to side, watching our every movement. Occasionally something we did would move her to mirth and mutterings. The bath was a dream of paradise ; the water gushed hot out of the ground into innumerable marble basins of all sizes ; the marble floor was hot to the touch, and there was a hot swimming-bath. The bliss of it to our frozen frames ! To touch marble and find it hot ; to lie in a fifteenth-century marble bath-tub and swim in a fifteenth-century marble swimming-bath—what acuter joy can there be on earth ?

Brussa at this moment was abloom with cherry. The town lies, a mass of red roofs, on the slope of the mountain overlooking an exquisitely fertile plain and across it to more mountains beyond. The young green of poplars, willows and mulberries, the cherry and quince in full bloom, and the dark cypresses with a background of snowy Olympos, made an exquisite picture. After Attica, the fertility seemed amazing. But to me Brussa is

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synonymous with the Green Mosque, which I feel to be as culminating a work of art as Santa Sophia, the Parthenon or Amiens Cathedral, and more exquisitely lovely than any of these. In shape it is a domed rectangle, with marble steps leading to a large square tribune behind ; rooms open out of both, lined with superb blue tiles. In the domed rectangle is a beautiful marble fountain, and on each side of the entrance are recessed rooms of green tiles, speckled with gold, that take one's breath away. The blue-tiled Mihrab reaches to the ceiling ; otherwise tiles line the walls half-way up only, and, above, all is pure white. The lines, material and colour of the Mosque are absolutely perfect, only it does not look like a religious building so much as some exquisite portion of a palace. We went there again in the evening, when it was too dark to see the colour, and even so the form of it was satisfying.

At first we had been entranced with all the tiled buildings, but it did not take long to make us extremely critical, and we were already conscious at Brussa that the Green Mosque would spoil us for all those in Constantinople. And so it did. On our return, no mosque could stand the comparison, and only the tombs of Rustem Pasha and Roxalana held their own. Roxalana was the favourite wife of the Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, who gave her a far more beautiful tomb than he made for himself. But because she was a woman, we were

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BRUSSA: STREET OF THE COPPERSMITHS

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always allowed to go inside with our shoes on, which we felt to be an insult to the whole sex.

In our peregrinations to mosques we had amusing experiences. Twice we made determined efforts to get inside the courtyard of the great Mosque of Achmed, but always found the doors locked and the attendants refusing to understand Greek. At last, however, a guide came up and explained in broken English: "You cannot go there; it is closed; there are the dresses of the Government," and we looked through a crack, and saw bales and bales of rotting uniforms and tattered rags of the Turkish army. They had been heaved in there anyhow after the Balkan wars, and the stench was awful. In the neighbourhood of the Thousand and One Cisterns there was an open space filled with the same filth near which it was almost impossible to go. And yet Constantinople is now, on the whole, a clean city, and even the back alleys of Stamboul are pleasant to walk in.

We tackled the Bazaars by ourselves, without losing our way or returning penniless. They are a picturesque wilderness of arched-in streets, with fountains at the corners, where one can eat and drink and be merry without ever going outside. We did most of our bargaining in the quadrangle of the jewellers with the aid of a man who talked a little peculiar English. "We speak ver' well; we speak last price. Ver' all right business. Dese all silver. Albanese tinks." The "Albanese tinks"

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were a set of silver buttons from Trebizond, but all silver-work is indiscriminately labelled Albanian in the Balkans. The same man wished to fall on our necks when he discovered that we spoke Greek, and insisted on taking us to a shop just outside the Bazaar, which he said was the best in Constantinople. The things were exquisite and we wanted some of them badly, but were already Oriental enough to insist on bargaining, and the shopman would not come down a single franc in his price.

We wished to ride around the walls, and hired some old nags of horses belonging to two Greek boys at Yeni-Kapou. They were the only disagreeable Greeks we ever had dealings with, and their horses were vicious. Mine bit E. in the back; but she thought the ride worth it. The magnificent towers rose above orchards of fruit-trees in full bloom, and the road between them and the great cypresses of the cemetery, with a view of the sea beyond, was glorious. We came back by the Mosque of Eyub, where each Sultan is girded with the sword of Osman, and where till recent years no Christian could go.

Of course we saw the Selamlik, the Sultan's Friday visit of state to a mosque; it was said to be a poor show in comparison with that under Abdul Hamid, but nevertheless interesting to us. The Sultan's horses were magnificent coal-black thoroughbreds, the size of the finest English cart horse. His carriage drawn by these stupendous creatures

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was an extraordinary spectacle, and made the poor Sultan inside look all the more feeble and old. His bodyguard, dressed in blue, red and gold, were such fine upstanding creatures that one began to wonder how the Turk could have cut so sorry a figure in the Balkan wars. His physique, to anyone fresh from Greece, is most remarkable, the loads that he can carry and the boats that one man can propel being unthinkably heavy. We met with nothing but politeness from Turks, and the porter who took our luggage on to the steamer called down all the blessings of Allah upon us and shook hands. And so, having enjoyed every moment of my stay, I cannot agree with the remarks of the traveller Peter Mundy, abbreviating a previous Thomas Gainsford who visited Constantinople in 1607 :—

"Thus I confesse, if you beheld all at once, as one united body, it would equall, if not surpasse London, for spaciousnesse of ground, Some monuments divers pallaces and howses ; but yet come in no way neare my satisfaction, for here is Neither good lodging, proportionable fare, free recourse, gracious entertainment, true religion, secure abiding, allowable pleasure, Orderly government, Or any thing wherein a Noble citty is made glorious indeed. Thus much for Constantinople."

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CHAPTER IV

SALONICA

THE voyage to Salonica was a tedious one, for we were on a bad Italian steamer and it was foggy, so that we had no beautiful last view of Constantinople. Our Greek was never anything to be proud of, but by this time we could speak absolutely nothing else, and had great struggles with simple Italian words on the boat. It is curious that a comparatively unfamiliar language should ever be able to dislodge a more familiar one.

We aroused ourselves on a moonlight evening to watch Mount Athos rising pearly from the sea, with a soft cloud hiding its cone-top; then to bed once more; but before 7 a.m. the next day, we were landed in the harbour of Salonica, to the sound of bells ringing and guns firing, and to the sight of the whole length of houses on the quay-side shimmering blue and white in the sunshine with the Greek flags flying from their windows. Our first thought was that the Greeks were still celebrating its acquisition, but it turned out to be March 26, the day of the anniversary of Greek Independence. The festive atmosphere was delightful; processions were forming and marching through the Roman

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SALONICA: THE BYZANTINE WALLS

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Arch of Galerius to a service in Hagia Sophia, newly converted from a mosque into the Cathedral, and bands of Cretan mounted police in their cleverly cut blue baggy trousers lined the route. We went to a café high above the road, and surveyed the motley scene, before following the procession to the Cathedral. This, like all the other religious edifices in Salonica, was first a Byzantine church, then a mosque, and since the last Balkan war, a church once more. The new columns of its restored upper story were decorated in blue and white in 1913 to give a welcome to the King of Greece, and look as fresh as a newly erected bandstand, but the golden apse with its one fine Madonna is as impressive a Byzantine mosaic as any I know.

No wonder the Greeks are proud of Salonica! The harbour, full of shipping made fast to the long quay that skirts the main street, is fine enough. But the view across the Gulf, uninterrupted by even one island, to Mount Olympos straight opposite, is unsurpassed. The great filmy snowy mass looms out of the sea, while beyond it on the left rises the more phantom-like Ossa. "Pile Pelion on Ossa so that it will reach Olympos" was a saying understood by us then for the first time.

With a view like that, every hotel and every private house is bound to face it, so that we became familiar with the mountain at all hours of the day and night. The glass doors of our friends' drawing-room opened within three yards of the water, and

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there the whole panorama of the sunset, straight behind Olympos, was spread out for us. We had come back in a sailing-boat from the Little Cape, speeding over the reddening water as fast as the nervous boatman would let us, and drew up at the house-door. The tea-table commanded a superb extent of view, and we sat silenced before it.

Our English friends had always lived in Salonica, and told us much about the war. The daughters, brought up there under the Turkish régime, had never been able to walk outside the walls of the town. Their brother had been kidnapped by brigands, seven years before, out of his own garden, and kept two months. Then came the war, and the girls, from a life of enforced inactivity, worked like Trojans through a long hot summer, and arranged the commissariat of a whole hospital.

Throughout Greece this contact with real life during the last two years has knocked the superficialities away, and made people remarkably interesting. At that moment things were comparatively quiet, but on the site of King George's assassination stood a shrine covered with fresh flowers, and while we were there the soldier guarding it was shot, how or why we could not find out. The few Turkish refugees remaining were lodged in a monastery of dervishes outside the walls, and the enormous influx of Greek refugees from Thrace had not begun. The residents universally lamented that the Turkish peasants were leaving the country,

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although we were told that they had been offered every inducement to stay. Large numbers of them had been transported to Asia Minor, and at Brussa we had seen a cotton industry, started by an English nurse, for the Macedonian women refugees. It seemed a long way to transport Macedonian Turks, but they looked contented enough, working with their veils lifted, and in nine months the industry had become self-supporting. Several of the women were weaving for sale elaborate patterned cottons that they had made at home for their daughters' weddings in richer days. We bought beautiful cotton crêpes for fivepence a metre.

No Bulgarian, on the contrary, is allowed to land in Greek territory, and when we objected to the thoroughness with which our luggage was always searched on arrival, even when we had come from another Greek port, we were told that we might of course be Bulgarians in disguise, and that they must be very careful!

The higher-lying quarters of the town at the back were still uncontaminatedly Turkish, with their roughly paved narrow streets, jalousied windows, and veiled women. The Greeks are ashamed of this part of the town, and plan a newly erected well-laid-out city. They have been extremely active already, and are restoring the Eski-Djami for a Museum. We crept through the scaffolding, and it looked very fine inside, with its long nave of Theodosian wind-blown acanthus capitals.

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All the old mosques were in the hands of carpenters, and full of temporarily erected wooden screens and altars. Although they were only being converted to their original purpose, we felt sacrilegious for keeping our shoes on inside them, and I could not help a passing regret for the solemn Moslem worshipper, so reverent and silent.

We wished most that we could have seen the sixth-century church of St. Demetrios before its recent transformation. The new screen of yellow wood covered with brilliant paintings, standing between two panels of the best Justinian mosaics, is an eyesore. But the church is worth a journey to Salonica to see. So are the walls of Byzantine brick that slope steeply up the hill at the back, and surround the town. We enjoyed the privilege, which we should not have had the year before, of walking around them in perfect safety, and could even take photographs of the storks nesting on the battlements.

A great part of the population of Salonica has always consisted of Jews of Spanish origin, whose costume forms a brilliant note of colour in the streets. The married women wear a vivid green silk headdress that hangs down behind and is gathered together between the shoulders with pearls. Combined with the décolleté white bodice, worn beneath a black jacket edged with fur, in the style of an early Flemish portrait, the effect is sumptuous. The danger that the Jews may be driven away from the city by the decrease of trade since the war is a serious

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one, for only one ship came into port then for every eight under the old régime.

In preparation for our later journeying on mules, we had to send our larger luggage back to Athens by sea. The officials did not wish to have anything to do with it. First they implored us to send the things by parcel-post; then they refused to insure them against theft, and finally insisted that they must all be sewn up together in a sack, to look like any consignment of goods. The hotel porter shut himself up for a whole morning with sacking and twine, and when he had finished his work the enormous strangely shaped bundle satisfied the officials at last. We were left for the last night with rück-sacks and sleeping-bags only, and then of course received an invitation to dinner. We were always suffering the fate of carrying evening dresses about with us when they were not necessary, and having nothing to wear when the occasion came. This time we dined out in short waterproof coats and skirts and thick nailed boots, but our charming hosts made us feel that such clothes were entirely suitable. We thought Salonica the most hospitable town we had ever visited, for without using half our letters of introduction we were entertained for every meal, and passed on from friend to friend.

Our last act in the hotel was to leave the umbrellas behind, since we could not cumber ourselves with such things on mules. The hotel porter's face was a study as he opened and shut them many times, trying in vain to discover what could be the matter with them.

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CHAPTER V

TEMPE

IN Greece there are no time-tables, and information as to steamers and trains has to be taken verbally and on trust. This time the steamer office on the quay had informed us that a boat left at 6.30 a.m. for Tzagesi, a place three hours' ride south of the entrance to the Vale of Tempe. We knew of Tzagesi, and had prided ourselves on finding that way of approaching the Vale. However, on arrival at the quay, we heard that the boat went to Litochori. The ticket issuer had never heard of Tempe, and we had never heard of Litochori. When we tried to look it up, we found, to our dismay, that the Greek map had been left behind and that it was too late to go back for it. A frantic search among the passengers revealed no map of any kind. Nobody had heard of Tempe; it was time to start; the men screamed to us to get on board, and we jumped on at the last instant, thankful at any price to get away from the pandemonium on the quay. I was deeply ashamed of admitting that we could be travelling without a map; but we had to find out where Litochori was, and at last a young Italian engineer came to the rescue. Although he had

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SALONICA : CRETAN POLICE

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lived at Salonica all his life, his knowledge of Tempe was vague, too, but he assured us that Litochori could not be very far from it. He was on his way to Sta Katerina, to work at the new line which would eventually join up Salonica with the Larissa railway, and so shorten the land-route to Athens by several days. This has since been completed. Like so many of our acquaintances in Greece, he gave us his card, and expressed his readiness to fly to our assistance in any part of Thessaly should we require it.

The steamer crossed the Gulf and skirted the opposite coast of Macedonia, approaching ever nearer Mount Olympos. The view should have been divine, but the mountain was sulking behind clouds, and only occasionally peeped through. The country near the coast looked dismal and depopulated. The whole Balkan population at that time seemed on the move. Our boat was crammed with Greeks removing all their household goods to some new home in those parts which had not been devastated by the war. These people had babies and household utensils with them, and some of them possessed loaves of bread on which I soon began to cast a longing eye. Food had been overlooked in the scrimmage of starting, and I hardly dared offer mere money for anything so precious as bread. However, as I was on the point of doing so, there turned out to be bread and sardines on board. The steamer was the slowest imaginable, and when we landed anywhere, little boats went backwards and

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forwards and backwards and forwards again to remove the passengers.

At last, at 2 p.m., we anchored off Litochori, where the water was so shallow that we were half thrown on shore from a small boat; many people waded, and the rück-sacks and sleeping-bags arrived on the sand dry as by a miracle. There was nothing at the landing-stage except a refreshment shanty, kept by a Greek who talked good American, and told us that Papapouli at the mouth of the Vale of Tempe was eight hours' mule-ride away, and had a good hotel, because it was the terminus of the Larissa railway. He introduced Nicholas, a muleteer, who had been in America with him, and had just started a restaurant at the outbreak of the war. Both men had come back together to fight. Nicholas talked a little English, but understood much less, although he was quite unconscious of that. He said American and English were different. We "made our symphony," as they say in Greece, and then saw that our rück-sacks, lying on the ground, were surrounded by a crowd of people. A man remarked that the Customs official would "just like to see what you have in your luggage" (in case we might be Bulgarians, I suppose). He looked at each object as it came out of the bags, and the crowd gazed and gazed. I do not believe that any "lords," as foreign visitors are called in Greece, had ever landed at Litochori before. The restaurant-keeper said: "You tell your friends, if they ever come this way,

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to ask for Jack," and shook hands when we left.

We felt very happy starting forth on our mules, with Nicholas running behind. At first the country was open and stony; then the road wound round Platamona, a medieval castle, with perfectly preserved walls, on a high hill overlooking the sea, which Nicholas told us had been defended, in the Middle Ages, by a Greek bishop against the Turks, and when it had at last to fall, there was a terrible massacre. Up there, although it was getting dusk and cool, a long snake glided under my mule's feet and frightened him. We came down from the hill, and on through wet meadows full of yellow irises, an unexpected sight to us who only knew the arid soil round Athens. There were asphodels too, still partly in flower, although a month earlier they had been over in Attica. Then came woods, with enormous pollarded plane-trees; and all this varied interesting landscape was but a foreground to Olympos around whose base we were riding.

It was getting late, and we were still many hours from Papapouli, when suddenly as we turned a corner and came upon the sea, the full moon rose like a great yellow sun out of the water. The path followed the sea closely for a long, long time. There was nothing but sand to see and a brilliant silver pathway to the moon. For miles and miles there were no people and no signs of habitation. Then came lights from the fires of charcoal-burners inland, who were camping in round straw huts resembling

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the originals of beehive tombs. Nicholas called the people Vlachs, but it was not light enough to see what they looked like. At last we got to the new railway cuttings which had been dug from Papapouli, and felt that we must be approaching our destination. We never could have picked our way through the trenches without the full moon. Some were so deep that the mules could hardly pass them. They were desperately hungry by this time, and wanted so much to eat grass continuously that we could hardly get them along. Nicholas threw stones at them in Greek fashion, saying: "I am hungry too, but what can one do?" At last we saw lights in the distance, and asked whether that was the village. "There is no village, but that is Papapouli," said Nicholas. There was a wide piece of water still to cross. He made a leap on to my mule, which bore us both to dry land, and we were there. Jack's beautiful hotel had melted away, but there was a shop, in addition to the Custom-house of the old frontier and a station. It was 10 p.m., and we were all famished. E. and I and Nicholas sat down at a little table in the open air, outside the shop, and demolished cold mutton voraciously. Nicholas ordered ghaorti (the national dish of sour milk) to begin with, because "body not right—too hungry—ghaorti make well again." His came first, but he would not begin before we were helped. Then the owner of the old Custom-house, now turned into a post office, joined us at table, and invited us to

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spend the night with him, with profuse apologies for the poorness of the room and for the lack of everything he should like to provide for ladies. There was no woman in the place, and I do not believe that any women have ever slept at Papapouli. Our friend said a few soldiers had come there during the war, but no one else.

He treated us all to coffee while we were talking, and when a cup did not appear for Nicholas with ours, he asked for another for "that gentleman." Then we went to inspect the room. It was absolutely empty save for thick red sheep-skin rugs spread on the floor, two clean white pillows, and a little night-light. An old factotum and Nicholas came with the owner to show it off and point out that the door locked, that they slept downstairs, and that we need not be afraid of anything. Our anti-bug apparatus was quite unnecessary, for there was not even one mosquito, and I have never enjoyed a night more. Our charming host would not let us pay a penny, and sent us off at 6.30 the next morning after a breakfast of Turkish coffee and real biscuits. These are a treat in Greece, and we were touched by the simple man's true Greek hospitality.

The day was brilliantly fine, and we started out, through country as green as England, towards the river Peneios and the Vale. We were now too close to Mount Olympos to see its top, and the scenery was thoroughly domestic. We had to cross the wide river, mules and all, in a huge ferry-boat shaped

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like a mighty sugar-scoop, into the flat end of which the mules could easily walk. The little inn at the opposite side had frescoes on its outer walls, inspired by Minoan ladies' frills and fish-tailed ancient monsters. We were now really in the Vale. The full-flowing river fills the gorge almost completely, and into the narrow belt of land beside it are squeezed great trees with branches spreading over the water's edge. The steep sides of limestone are almost completely veiled in green, and high up on inaccessible ledges grow the judas and the cherry. It is extremely beautiful, but its great reputation must be due in some measure to the rarity of real rivers in Greece. Even to our eyes, with their not so very distant English background, the sight of a river full of water and filling its bed was a remarkable thing. We climbed the Pyrgos, a hill a thousand feet high or so, from which one can see the whole length of the Vale, and so get a just idea of its extraordinary narrowness. It is a ribbon's width between the mountains.

We thought we had left mosques behind for good, but at the farther end of the Vale the familiar minaret greeted us once more. The Turks ceded Thessaly to Greece in 1881, and there still remain abundant signs of their occupation.

The ride was all too short; Nicholas turned back with the mules at the farther end, and we picked up the daily train, reaching Volo and its excellent hotels in a blazing sunset.

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TEMPE : INN BY THE FERRY

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CHAPTER VI

THESSALY

WE thought the reputation of Volo exaggerated, no doubt because the only bad weather of the tour found us there. Pelion, which overshadows the town, was wrapped in clouds. We went to Pagasæ and thought it the dullest of all ancient sites; but on the way the foundations of a Temple of Aphrodite lie half-excavated, and there was found a good replica of the head of the Venus of Milo. But we were able to buy a map in Volo, an enormous one of New Greece as it aspires to be, with Northern Epirus coloured as yellow as the Peloponnese. We had to carry it as a long roll, and doubtless it made our equipment look stranger than ever.

One morning early we left Volo by train and spent a long day crawling the whole length of Thessaly to Kalabaka. Our route branched off at Philæ, which was wrapped in bowers of blooming wisteria. Train-travelling in Greece is very amusing. We always went third class and made tea with a spirit-lamp, to the intense delight of the people in the long corridor carriage, who clustered around us, watching

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our every movement. Tea-making was forced upon us because we found it impossible to preserve the Andros water, which we carried with us in a real Greek water-pouch, uncontaminated. At every station some Greek would run out and fill it up again at a poisonous station well. It was easier to make tea than to remonstrate perpetually, and the men were pathetically pleased to see the water made use of. On this day the ticket collector came in unnecessarily often and made a draught for the spirit-lamp. The third time he did it a fellow passenger shook him by the arm and shouted: "You *dare* come in here again. Can't you *see* that the ladies are making their tea?" They all bombarded us with questions and looked with breathless interest at the maps and pictures in Baedeker and Bury's *History of Greece*. One of them could read English letters, and pored over the book for a long time, spelling out some words. When he found a name he knew he was delighted. Most of the travellers that day were soldiers, and they told us the names of everything we passed, what Turkish battles there had been and whether Achilles had fought there or not. When we reached the ancient Pharsalos they knew there had been a battle, only it was not Cæsar and Pompey who had done the fighting but Achilles, and "there were no bullets in those days." One lithe young soldier, not more than eighteen, told how he had been wounded three times in the wars, and how his brother had been killed, but

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"*We* didn't commit any atrocities." He sang softly to himself the Salonica song, which has sixteen verses at least and is hummed in full by old and young throughout the country.

We got out at the modern Phersala in the broiling midday sun and drove along a shadeless road to the village. There to our astonishment storks had made their nests in hundreds; there were nests in the minarets and on the four corners of all the houses. Innumerable birds were standing on one leg against the sky-line, and others circled round and round the village. It was a Sunday, and we toiled, followed by a dozen children at least, up to the old acropolis, marvelling that anyone who had been there before should brave the heat of the climb. But the walls, Mycenæan, Roman and medieval, were well worth the trouble, and the view over the whole Thessalian plain was superb. It is as flat as Holland and as green, irrigated by narrow straight streams. But the fringe, rising black and sheer along its whole western side, is the splendid mountain range of Pindos, dividing Thessaly from Epirus. In April this was still a long, snow-capped line, melting on the north into another snowy distance behind the Meteora rocks which were our goal. On the north-east, Olympos, still large and ethereally white, brooded over the scene. We were well rewarded for our hot climb.

The train crawled on to Kalabaka, and passed a great golden eagle standing on the telegraph wires.

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We dropped into bed at the dingy hotel, thankful for our sleeping-bags. The next morning, there being no slop-pail in the room, E. threw the contents of the basin out of the window. Soon there came an angry knock at the door. It was the proprietor. "Kyria, did you know you emptied that water on my hat?" "There is no slop-pail. What was I to do?" "I will bring one." This he did, and we felt we had benefited future visitors, but the sounds of disturbed conversation outside continued to drift up to the window, and when E. went down for her morning cup of Turkish coffee, the little shoeblack, a scrap of a boy of twelve or so, who ministered to her shoes meanwhile, said: "Kyria, you made a great mistake to throw that water on the proprietor's hat. He was very angry. But I told him you were only a foreigner and could not be expected to know."

We employed the same child to guide us to the monasteries. These are perched on the top of black, smooth-faced rocks hundreds of feet high, that look as though they had been heaved from the bottom of the sea. Some of them have never been climbed, and seem unscalable. The whole place had a diabolical air. I never saw rocks so ugly, so wicked, and so weird. Once upon a time there were twenty-three monasteries there; now of the seven that remain five are inhabited, with thirty monks in them altogether, to only two of which ladies are admitted. Our infant guided us first to Hagia Triada; a path along a ledge of rock with a rickety-looking balus-

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PHERSALA: STORKS' NESTS

METEORA: HAGIA TRIADA

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trade to protect one from the precipice, leads halfway up. Then there is a choice between a basket, hauled up by the monks from an overhanging balcony, and a perpendicular ladder against the face of the cliff, ending in a trap-door. We chose the ladder, which was safe enough, and emerged on top in the tiny monastic garden. The view is superb. The river Peneios breaks through the mountains there into the Thessalian plain, and behind the big river bed, which winds as far as eye can see, are the great snow mountains of Thrace. The Abbot, hospitable, as all are, offered us pink jam, liqueurs and Turkish delight. A service was in progress in the tiny church with its diminutive dome covered with frescoes. The darkness and the incense made it impossible to see much of them. There were only five monks, enough for so tiny a monastery, but they said sorrowfully that in these days no young men embraced the monastic life. When they see the deserted monasteries on the other side of the valley they must feel that their fate, too, cannot be far off. St. Stephanos, a fourteenth-century building, resembling a fortress on the outside, to which we walked over a solid stone bridge, is a much larger, finer place. The church has a magnificent carved wooden screen with ikons let into the top, to match which all the rest of the church furniture was carved in 1835. The result is an extremely rich and harmonious interior, one of the best in Greece. We were kindly received there and given masticha and

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coffee to begin with; then fried eggs, cheese and resinated wine.

Architecturally more interesting than either of the monasteries is the parish church of Kalabaka. This has an enormous marble ambo placed longitudinally down the nave, which takes up nearly the whole of it, and is in my experience unique. The three tiers of seats in the circular apse are in perfect preservation, and the columns of the nave are ancient, with painted capitals. In front of the church outside is a square marble table-top with an ancient inscription.

We passed the children streaming out of school on the way down, and our small guide, who could only just have left there himself, pointed his finger at them disdainfully. He was absurdly competent for his age, but gave himself amazing airs.

We left Kalabaka at 5 p.m. and had an infinitely slow journey back through the plain to Karditza, never losing sight of the Meteora rocks at all. We did not discover the name of the hotel where we spent the night, for our companions in the train ordered the carriage, told the driver where to go, and put us into it. No doubt it was the best hotel there was, but again we were thankful for sleeping-bags. Thessaly is an exquisite country, but the less said about the inns the better.

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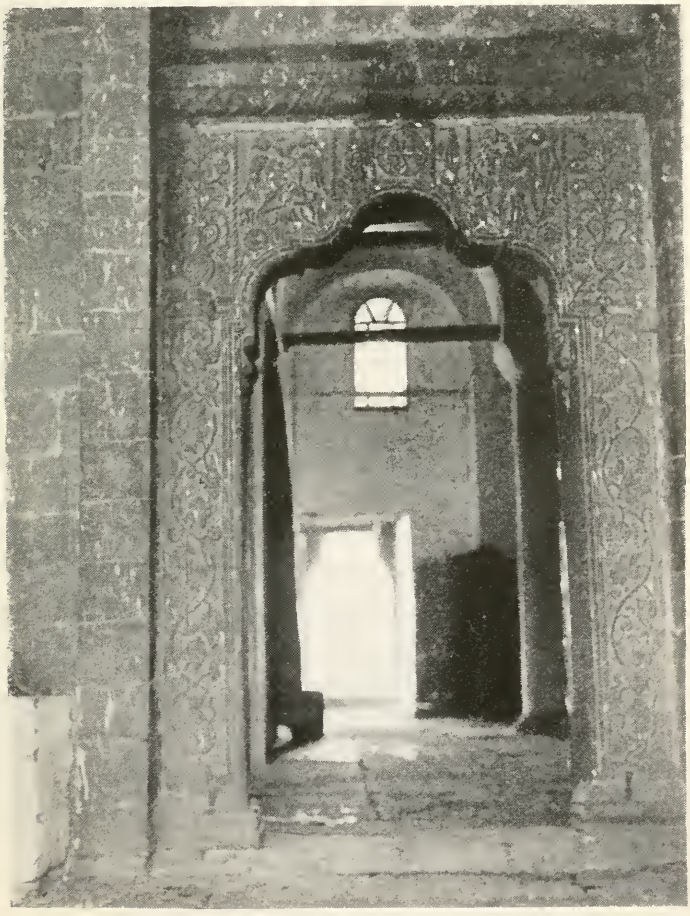
METEORA: ST. STEPHANOS



METEORA: DOORWAY, ST. STEPHANOS

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CHAPTER VII

ST. LUKE OF STIRIS

THE next day, after bidding farewell to the familiar view of Olympos, Ossa and the Thessalian plain, our train crossed the Lamian plain whence we could see Thermopylæ and the sea. We then crawled up and up and up, to the top of the pass which separates the Lamian and Bœotian plains. The wildest part, in the heart of mountain gorges, dashing torrents, and precipitous cliffs, is near the ancient Heraclea, which we longed at once to excavate for the sake of its astounding site. When the train at last emerged at the top we, who had had nothing to eat to speak of that day, laid in provisions of hard-boiled eggs and bread at the station bar. I was loudly lamenting the lack of chalva, the staple Greek compound of sesame seeds and honey, made freshly each day throughout Greece and Turkey and to me the most delightful of foods, when a soldier in the carriage who spoke English drew a large packet of it out of his pocket and presented it to me. Parnassos now came superbly into view, and we crawled around the base of it to Chæronea in the

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Bœotian plain. There we left the train and trudged through the battlefield to the Museum and the colossal Lion. Since 1903 he sits in the open once more, re-erected, serenely surveying the scene of Macedonian triumph with a set and semi-distorted smile upon his old face.

Looking north from the battlefield we could see the pass through the mountains by which Philip of Macedon brought his troops from Thermopylæ by Elatea, into the plain of Chæronea. Once having beaten the Greeks there, the way to Athens lay open before him, for the plain stretches uninterruptedly southward almost as far as Tatoi, the ancient Dekeleia, of which we hear so much in the Peloponnesian War. Philip should never have been permitted to fortify Elatea. Once through the mountains his superior generalship was bound to win in a pitched battle, and the Greece of the city-state was doomed.

We had telegraphed to Delphi for mules to fetch us away, and waited through the long afternoon, hoping for signs of them. Our tea had foolishly been left at the station with the luggage, so we sat on the grass sipping hot water and playing with the beautiful setter of the Ephor of Antiquities, the only nice dog we saw in Greece. We slept in the Museum on plank beds without any mattresses, after a fine supper of an omelette made by the custodian. The mules travelled all through the night from Delphi, arriving about 5 a.m., and we

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AT CHAERONEA

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started on a peerless morning to make the detour to Delphi by the monastery of St. Luke of Stiris. The path led through the mountains, with Parnassos towering above us on our right. A peasant ploughing, clad in pure white from top to toe, was the first man to be seen. How William Morris would have loved him! George, the muleteer, made us lunch under a plane tree, at about 11 a.m., near the only stream of pure running water, where two classical-looking shepherds with crooks in their hands had already taken up their posts. The elder might have come off a vase-painting by Brygos. The younger was a splendid young giant, returned from the war. Even there the land already belonged to the monastery where we meant to spend the night, and the shepherds paid the monks for grazing-rights; but a little later in the year they were to move their flocks up to Parnassos. They wore long white hose above the knee, wound around with straps, and short blue tunics. The fustanellas and tunic vary in shape and colour in different localities, but the long white stocking displaying the shape of the leg and knee is almost universal in Greece and most becoming to men.

We left them regretfully, and after hours of riding through desolate mountain country, suddenly turned a corner and came upon a clump of eleventh-century buildings nestling in a wood of almond trees, on the side of a hill fronting a wide valley, with bare mountains beyond. The almond trees were not in bloom,

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alas ! but as green as green could be. This was the monastery of St. Luke of Stiris. We were taken at once to the guest-house by a monk and put into the *salon* with a little balcony overlooking the main courtyard. Then guest-brother Joseph Skouzes brought us the ritual food—the large pot of pink jam with a jug of water (would that one could drink the latter !), the little glasses of liqueur, the Turkish coffee and dry bread. We then went into the church, where two orthodox Greek visitors were being blessed, and were allowed to go round with them afterwards. The larger church, with its mosaics, is one of the finest in Greece, disfigured though it has been by the Turks ; and the smaller church, whitewashed and undecorated, is a gem of architecture.

Later, we were sitting in the evening light among the almonds, revelling in the peace and quietness of it all, when sounds of English voices drifted across and a party of six Americans, three men and three girls, appeared. They had just arrived in Greece without knowing a word of the modern language, and we were soon called upon by the monks to interpret. When the pink jam appeared, the Americans, knowing it was death to touch the water accompanying it, asked to have it boiled. For hospitality's sake the monks quickly produced two little glasses of lukewarm water, but were deeply pained, and never got over the insult. We had retired to bed in a tiny room with one bed and one mattress on the floor, when the girls appeared and

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THE LION OF CHAERONEA, 338 B.C.

ON THE WAY TO ST. LUKE OF STIRIS

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said that the monks had asked whether they were all one family, and had then put all of them to sleep in the *salon*. We gave up our room to the men and joined the girls, where there was one bed, two sofas, and two mattresses on the floor. Brother Joseph said we need not be afraid, for there were no bugs. This was true, but there were 60,000 fleas at least, and no washing apparatus of any kind. The monk pressed a clean towel into my hand the last thing at night, and I wondered what I was supposed to do with it.

The next morning we awoke to a pandemonium. The monks and the muleteers kept coming in and out of the room while we were dressing to ask us to interpret for the Americans, who were leaving very early. They were far more strenuous and admirable than we were, having only two mules between six people and walking tremendous distances each day, in spite of bad blisters and sunburn. But the monks said it was impossible to make them understand anything, and talked all the faster to us when they had gone. At breakfast the Abbot kept wandering in and out, without a word, clearing away eggshells very solemnly, while other monks brought relays of food. We had hot sheep's milk with sugar in it; small cups of Turkish coffee; lukewarm eggs; black bread, honey, and jam; and almonds and raisins. Generally we were thankful for sheep's milk and dry bread in the country.

The pandemonium of that guest-house was, I am

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certain, thoroughly medieval. The kitchen was crammed with mulemen, monks, and peasants, all bustling about; extremely kind and obliging, but fearfully untidy. One was the image of the young Raphael. In the morning people from the country wandered in, kissed the Abbot's hand, and took away scraps of food, all in the *salon* in which we had slept.

It was in the *salon* that the monks kept their little stores of private possessions, Christmas cards, photographs, etc., which they showed us with great pride. Brother Joseph unfortunately produced a group of monks in which the present Abbot did not figure. The latter entered the room while we were looking at it and scrutinized it very carefully himself. "But I'm not there! How can it be? Where *am* I?" He went for his glasses and pored over it once more. "But where *am* I? Here's Joseph, George, Stephen, Demetrios, etc. Where can I be?" The old man looked so pathetically disappointed that we assured him that we would take his photograph at once. Whereupon they both implored us to stay another night. They said that their finest service of the year, heralding Good Friday, was to be at 2.30 a.m., and that it would be a thousand pities to miss it. We thought so too. Besides, I remembered the weeks I had once spent at Fountains Abbey trying to reconstruct medieval monastic life, and here was that same life going on before my very eyes. It seemed absurd to hurry

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away. The monastery is a rich one, owning all the surrounding country, and peasants and shepherds came in and out all day long. Just to sit in the courtyard and watch them come and go was a spectacle; and while the monks were all closeted in church in the morning, we crept down to the pump opposite the door and washed.

Much time was spent that day sitting on the high hill-top overlooking the monastery and the almond woods. It must have been an ancient acropolis, for there are considerable remains of walls, and southwards a gap in the nearer range of Helicon just reveals the farther side of the Corinthian Gulf and snowy Cyllene. I never saw a mountain more finely framed.

A message came: "Would we take our dinner with the Abbot?" We said, "Yes, of course," and wondered what it would be like. The dining-room appeared to be the Abbot's bedroom. Brother Joseph waited upon us and gave him nut soup and chalva, as it was Holy Week and he was fasting. We had the remains of our own chicken. Conversation was spasmodic, but the Abbot toasted us with each drink: "Yassas" ("Your health"), and we clicked our glasses. He said, had we come at any other time of year, we should have seen all the good things they had to eat. Now there was, unfortunately, nothing. The conversation kept returning to food. I said that London was a huge city, and that now there were very few horses there, only

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motors. He looked thoughtful for a moment and answered: "But you don't *eat* horses in London?" In culture he was far inferior to the other monks, and we wondered how he had ever come to be chosen Abbot. Brother Joseph's conversation ranged over every subject and at lightning speed. By the time we had caught on to one topic he had flown to another. He catechized us about Ulster and the Suffragettes; but the Abbot's horizon was bounded by food and photographs. At tea-time he was much interested in the spirit-lamp, the like of which he had apparently never seen before, and George, our muleteer, was called in to explain its workings to him. The Abbot only said that it couldn't be worth five francs, and kept mooning in and out of the *salon* muttering, "It's not worth it; it can't be worth it."

We retired to bed at dusk in preparation for the 2.30 a.m. service. Brother Joseph woke us, and for the first time offered us water to wash with. We tottered across the courtyard in the darkness, with candles in our hands, to the big church, and were placed in seats of honour next to the Abbot. The building was full, and everybody from miles around must have been there. The monks chanted interminable gospels, epistles, etc., to begin with, but after some time the great life-size crucifix was brought in procession from the choir and placed in the middle of the nave. A priest in a long pink vestment and a bright blue stole stood in front of it

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THE MONKS COMING OUT OF ST. LUKE

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facing the choir and invoked all the Martyrs, Fathers and Saints of the Church by name. At intervals the iconostasis opened in the middle and revealed another priest, in a black robe with a red stole, who called on Holy "Wisdom" and "Right" in a fine, impressive voice. At the end the Abbot and monks in order of seniority walked into the nave and kissed the crucifix; the orthodox visitors, shepherds, peasant-women, muleteers and children followed in their turn to kiss it; and at the last the two officiating priests, who had seemed like beings from another world, took off their vestments and kissed it too. We stole out from the candle-lighted church into the star-lit courtyard and up the outside staircase. The black monks melted away and we were alone again. The last quarter of the moon revealed the beautiful outline of the church. Were we really awake? I could not believe it.

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CHAPTER VIII

DELPHI

WE had ordered the mules for 6 a.m., but hardly had we gone to bed again before their hoofs began to clatter in the courtyard. George came up and knocked at the door. It was 4.45 a.m. E., with a scarf around her head, went to the door and said it was too early. George was quite disturbed. "Are you ill, Kyria? Have you a headache? Why is your head tied up?" We did get another hour's sleep, and it was light when we went downstairs with Brother Joseph and into the church to give a present "to the Saint" before leaving. Brother Joseph was in ecstasies over the night's service, and insisted that E. should take a photograph of the nave with the crucifix in it. He was sorry that we should miss the Easter services; so were we, but felt that we should stay there indefinitely unless we made a great effort and left at once. Poor Brother Joseph was somewhat of an invalid, with a touching faith that only an English doctor could do him any good; so he wrote out his symptoms for E., and made her promise to send him the opinion and advice of a man from home. The Abbot

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shook his finger at us and said: "We have your word that you will send us photographs." Brother Joseph walked some way to speed us on our journey, and it was very sadly that we turned the corner and saw the monastery disappear from view.

We retraced our steps for two hours, and branched into the main route to Delphi at the spot where Œdipus killed his father. The paths meet in the desolate shadow of the mountains, a fit spot for a tragedy, and if Œdipus were to go there to-day, he would find the place unchanged. The superb scenery was hallowed for us by the memory of all the Delphic pilgrims, who probably rode mules as we did and on the same path, for the land route from Bœotia to the Oracle was in antiquity the most frequented.

George took us for lunch to a peasant's cottage at the top of the pass. The one large room had an earthen floor, boards raised on stones for beds, and a large hooded fireplace; it seemed to us very comfortable indeed. The larder and bakehouse outside were tidily arranged and full of food. We sat inside, eating the remains of yesterday's cold chicken, and were well contented with that until the strapping young peasant proprietor brought a dish of hot snails, boiled in oil with dandelions, for the two muleteers. We watched them eating these with evident relish. George said: "It is Holy Saturday, and we are fasting. But the good God knows that we are travellers and tired, and will not mind our eating snails. You should try them, Kyria; they

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are excellent." I had always had a horror of snails; however, they were hot, and it was a cold day in the mountains. We tried one each, and did find them delicious. While we were eating a dishful, George regaled us with the whole history of Odysseus and Polyphemos, told in the true dramatic manner, and with every detail as it is in Homer. Of course it never occurred to him that it was not absolutely new to us. His enjoyment of it and his appreciation of the craft of Odysseus was delightful to see. The older muleman and the young peasant enjoyed it too, nodding their heads at intervals and saying: "That's right—that is quite right." No story could be more alive than it was to them all, although they evidently appreciated George's cleverness in reproducing it better than they could have done.

The young peasant was over six feet high, and had been to the wars. He said they were saving up their ammunition, and so had run down the hill-side and thrown stones at the Bulgarians. His gestures were vivid, and his appearance so stalwart that he would have been a formidable opponent anywhere.

We had a wonderful ride from the cottage to Arachova, which stands perched on a hill, looking more like an Italian village than any other I saw in Greece. There George said there was a shop where we could buy most beautiful things. He was an enthusiast by nature, with a narrow vocabulary, and antiquities, monks, flowers and mountains to him were all alike "beautiful things." However,

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we went to the shop, and did find some attractive post-impressionistic red embroideries, and E. bought a large black saddle-bag with a green monster on it to carry our lunches in for the future. The proprietor was so delighted that he treated us all round to Turkish delight.

Kastri, the modern village of Delphi, is in sight from Arachova, but the road winds deceptively by the side of magnificent olive groves, and the way seemed interminable, so anxious were we to reach Delphi itself. At last we turned the corner, and saw the precinct stretching up the steep hillside. We were in time to climb to the Stadium, for the sunset. Of all the sites in Ancient Greece this best transports me to the fifth century B.C. Practically unravaged by time, and with no view of ruins from it, one can imagine the races about to begin, and the lines of seats packed with tense spectators. We sat there till late in the evening before going to Vasili's Hotel, which seemed to us a palace, although our bedroom opened into the dining-room and that into the kitchen, and we had to go to bed at nine because there was only one candle. However, after the monastery, it might have been the Ritz. We were very happy there, and our bedroom looked straight down the valley to the Gulf of Corinth and the snowy summits beyond.

The days at Delphi were pure bliss. I had paid it a hurried visit once before, but this time we could linger in the olive groves by the Gymnasium, when

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it was too hot to climb the precinct-hill, whence the finest water in the world still flows from the spring Castalia into the ancient well-house. We could study every date and variety of polygonal masonry on the spot. The Museum with the finest masterpieces of sculpture, and not too many of them, was at our disposal all day long.

At Delphi Greek history becomes intensely alive. At the beginning of the Sacred Way leading to the Temple of Apollo, and on both sides of it, within a few feet of each other, stand the bases of votive offerings raised by different States to commemorate their victories. The trophy put up by the Athenians to Miltiades, in honour of his triumph over the Persians at Marathon, is the first on the left. Opposite stands the enormous basis of the thirty-eight statues of bronze raised in 404 B.C. by the Spartans to commemorate their annihilation of the Athenian fleet at the battle of Ægospotami. For thirty years or so the Spartans were foremost in Greece, and their monument represented the facts. But in 370 B.C., when the Thebans under Epaminondas dealt a death-blow to the Spartans, the Thebans and their allies the Argives raised a memorial to their victory over the Spartans, adjoining the earlier Spartan one and equally large. The Arcadians, also allies of Thebes, added a further insult to Sparta by putting an additional trophy of ten bronze statues in front of the older Lacedæmonian monument and touching it. Thus, within a few

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DELPHI: THE GYMNASIUM

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yards of each other, the bitterest internecine feuds of Ancient Greece stood commemorated in bronze. What was the attitude of mind of the Athenians, Spartans and Thebans towards each other when, in the religious truce, but with intense mutual hatred, they came together to the Delphic Games and saw these monuments? Such problems are insistent at Delphi; without any expenditure of imaginative effort, the past knocks at the door of one's mind and insists upon being understood.

On the Saturday night we went to the service of the Epitaphion, which the monks had been so anxious we should stop to see at St. Luke. An embroidery of Christ in the Tomb, covered with a canopy of flowers, stood in the middle of the little parish church, and grouped around it from 7 p.m. onwards the boys of the village were singing, in ghastly falsetto voices. The main population waited outside the church till 10 p.m., and then all sent up fireworks and let off guns, to make as much noise as possible. The sound was deafening, and might easily have been mistaken for rejoicing instead of mourning for Christ in Hades. The embroidery was then carried out of the church in procession, and the whole population followed it round the town with lanterns in their hands, chanting "Kyrie Eleison." The few people who remained in the houses ran out with pans of glowing charcoal from their fires, on which they scattered incense, and strewed the path for the procession to pass.

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On Easter Sunday at midday Kastri looked like a city of the dead. Every family was shut up inside its house with barred doors, eating the Easter Lamb. We wanted a guide to take us to the Korykian Cave, but only an orphan boy was forthcoming; every one with a family being shut up "eating lamb" and refusing to stir. Even devoted George, who had almost come to blows with our other muleteer for the privilege of taking us, would not go on Easter Sunday. So we started with the child, and after scrambling for hours up the mountains by a most fatiguing route, ending with a hill as steep as the side of a house, he could not find the Cave. He was miserable at the idea of facing Vasili's wrath in the evening, and insisted on taking us to a tiny church hidden in the mountains, only used in the Virgin's month of May, so that we should at least see something.

We were determined not to leave Delphi without climbing Parnassos, although it was the month of April and the villagers were horrified at the idea of going up before the snow had melted. They said June was the month for Parnassos, when all the sheep were grazing on its top. At last a hardy shepherd of sixty consented to go. We left at 5 a.m. and scrambled up 1,000 feet to the top of the ridge overlooking Delphi, from where the stadium on the steep mountain side looks like a tiny pocket in flat ground. A short climb brought us to a wide plateau covered with grass, studded with pine trees

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PARNASSOS

TOP OF PARNASSOS

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and entirely surrounded by mountains. There was nothing to show us how high we were except the sight of Parnassos rising unhidden by the lower peaks. The land there belongs to Arachova, and we passed two peasants ploughing, who wanted to know what we were going to do. They could not believe we really meant to climb Parnassos. At 9 a.m. we breakfasted, half-way up the next high wooded hill, and at the top of that came the snow level. Brilliant blue scyllas were flowering gaily wherever the snow had melted. The old man sat down and wailed. "What shall we do? Look at the snow. It is cold."

We were very firm and said he could stop there if he liked, but we should go on. Whereupon, choosing the rockiest route, he bounded up like a chamois. It was extremely steep; the sun was grilling, and the rocks, emerging from the snow, so slippery and loose that we had to pick every step. My heart thumped as it never did before, and I had to lie flat on the ground every few minutes. Nevertheless an hour and a half of that slow progress saw even me at the top, and the view would have rewarded a far harder climb. There are five peaks to Parnassos, and the highest of them just hid Mount Olympos from our view, but we could see Ossa and the Lamian plain, the Corinthian Gulf and white Cyllene and the magnificent chain of Kiona on the west. The other four great snowy peaks quite close to us were a splendid sight. We were

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thankful that it was not June, and preferred snow to sheep.

The way back was easy, for we found a long snow gully down which we slid in a quarter of an hour. Our old Demetrios went painfully and slowly around by the rocks. I never imagined anybody so silly on snow; he stood and swayed about with an agonized expression of countenance. On the way home, with the strain of the snow-climb behind him, he unbent slightly, and poured forth more than the usual volley of questions. "Why have you no men with you?" "Why are you not married?" "When you return home will you *at once* take a husband?" "Why not?" Our fruitless search for the Korykian Cave had at any rate put us in good training and, in spite of the strain of replying to all these questions, we arrived home fresh at 7.30 p.m.

Our dear George came to the hotel that evening to say good-bye. He was much distressed, because we could not see our way to engaging him on the spot for the whole of our Peloponnesian tour, and also because he had wanted to ask us to dinner in "his big house on the street" with his wife and little girl, and we had gone up Parnassos instead. He was a delightful person, but we comforted ourselves for the parting by saying to each other that after all we had lost our hearts to almost every Greek peasant, thus far, and George would probably not be the last. This was a sensible and true reflection.

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ATHENS: THE ACROPOLIS FROM THE ZAPPEION

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CHAPTER IX

ATHENS REGAINED

WE left the house at 4.45 a.m. the next day in a luxurious carriage from the big hotel and drove several miles to Itea, the port of Delphi, through the finest olive groves in Greece. Two fellow visitors shared the carriage and treated us as respectable members of society, though we looked rather like brigands, with our faces burnt black with wind, snow, and sun. The boat was three hours late, and cups of coffee, made with the brackish water of Itea, did not comfort us much for the unnecessarily early start. We went third class when it came, and lay curled up on the ropes in the stern, more comfortable by far than the first-class passengers on hard seats above us. We were conscious, however, of an atmosphere of disapproval. Only one of our acquaintances thought it good sport; the others, one and all, seemed shocked and unable to understand how it was possible to afford a carriage and yet go third class on a boat. The flavour of life, to my thinking, lies in variety and

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contrast. It is pleasant to be a " lord " sometimes, but certainly not always.

Fortunately for me, I was overcome with sleep after the early start and missed the regrets of a last view of Parnassos. To lie dozing, curled up on ropes in the sunshine, is a heavenly sensation at any time ; how much more so when one's waking eye catches the cobalt blue of the Corinthian Gulf ! That westward view of the bluest of blue seas, with the snow mountains on both sides, is really, to my thinking, the finest thing in Greece. What makes the water change in colour on opposite sides of the Canal is a mystery to me, but a fact nevertheless. The Corinthian side is invariably a deeper, more brilliant blue.

The ship *Averof* was lying off New Corinth. Being the one large cruiser of the Greek navy, she rendered inestimable service during the first Balkan war, by closing the Ægean mouth of the Dardanelles, and hemming in the Turks. The Greeks are inordinately grateful to her, and even the foreign traveller is not allowed to remain in ignorance of her whereabouts. We were continually asked whether we had seen her lately, and made to admire her fine points.

Again we landed at Peiræus, and this time received an ovation on arrival at our friends' house. It was like a real home-coming to find them so pleased to see us, and what with the bliss of a week's rest ahead, clean clothes, palatable food, room to spread our things, and a large English mail with

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three weeks' newspapers, life seemed full of joy. The huge acacia tree in the main courtyard had burst into flower since we left and was a bower of white. We ran out to the Temple of Olympian Zeus for the sunset, and felt that the crisscross streets were familiarly our own.

This exhilaration suffered a check the next morning when we tried to get our Salonica luggage out of the customs at Peiræus. It was Wednesday, yet still an Easter holiday, and the place was shut. On the following day a remarkable bill was presented containing the charges of the man who opened the boxes, of the man who unlocked the boxes, and of the man who picked up the boxes, all in compound words *à la* Liddell & Scott.

We had postponed our visit to Sunium till the end of our stay so that we might enjoy a bathe there in really hot weather. It was our last Sunday, and Tuesday at 5 a.m. was fixed for our final departure. Despite the heat we chose to walk from the station at Laurion to the promontory where the great Temple of Poseidon keeps watch over the sea, and on arrival at the base of the rock in the midday sun, we descended at once to the water's edge to bathe. White marble drums from the snowy pillars of the Temple have rolled down to the brink and on them we left our clothes. The water was the colour of the Green Mosque at Brussa, bluer and deeper than the Cornish greens, and against it one's arms looked more beautiful than the finest marble. We swam

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out a long way, far enough to see the white pillars of the Temple above stand out clear against the sky. The current was strong and for a time we seemed to make little headway in getting back, but finally the shore was reached and we clambered up the cliff to the Temple. It is the whitest and purest thing in the world, for the weather does not stain but whitens that particular kind of marble. So exquisite was the spot that we lingered unduly and had to hurry back on the long hot road to Laurion for the last train to Athens, only to discover that we had just missed it. As our next and last day in Athens had every moment from early morn till late at night mapped out, this was a blow. But we were at first too tired to investigate alternatives and sank down exhausted to tea at the station. Then we remembered the motors by the Temple and made inquiries of the inhabitants. Some said that five cars had passed in the morning and five had returned; others seemed to think there was still one left to come back. We thought the attempt to waylay that hypothetical car worth making, and planted ourselves with a pile of oranges—for it was still very hot—in the middle of the narrowest portion of the main road. The townsmen were much interested and kept a watchful eye upon us. At last we heard sounds in the distance, and my heart beat frantically as a motor came into sight; we waved our arms from our commanding position, and made it stop. Two distinguished American ladies with a dragoman were the occu-

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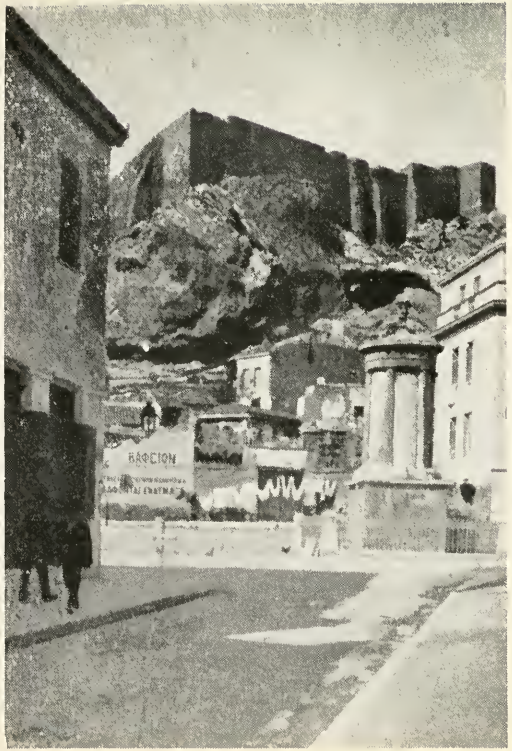

ATHENS : THE MONUMENT OF LYSICRATES

'SUNIUM

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pants, and took pity upon our plight. I had always thought that hailing private motors might be attended with good results, and this time it worked beautifully. They let us squeeze in on little stools lent for the occasion by the householder opposite, and we enjoyed a magnificent two-and-a-half-hour drive through the finest part of Attica at sunset. We were close under the mountains and they looked enormous. Missing the train had been for the best after all. The drive was in the nature of a triumphal progress, for all along the road the villagers came out from their cottages, shouting with delight, and hurled roses into the car. They did it for pure love of "lords," for there was never time to throw them any pennies. At last at twilight we came to a village where the people were dancing in a circle in front of the church; this time men and women danced together, the men in ordinary dress, and the women in the beautiful costumes of the Eleusinian dancers. The car drew up, and we watched, while the peasants produced resinated wine, which the Americans had not before tasted. Before leaving we were requested to move the car near the balcony of a large house, from which several ladies pelted us with flowers. The triumphal progress continued till darkness crept on. It was a marvellous drive, for which we shall never cease to be grateful to our unknown hostesses. Unfortunately they had conceived the idea that we were leaving Athens the very next day, and it happened that we all met again on

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the Acropolis the following evening when we were bidding a last farewell to the Parthenon. "Why, we thought you had gone this morning!" they said. We explained once more, but felt that our perfectly true explanation sounded hardly plausible.

There was a wonderful sunset that evening, and we watched it from the outside of the pediment, lying over the figure in the south angle. Our eyes followed and identified every mountain and bit of plain to which our feet had taken us. Each moment of our stay had been for us memorable and we hated leaving, even for the conquest of fresh woods and pastures new

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CHAPTER X

THE ARGOLID

WE packed from 11 p.m. to 2 a.m., after dining out, and got up again at five o'clock. It was a miserable night, for it did not seem as though the trunks ever would shut on the top of all our new purchases. Elene insisted on staggering to the station for Peiræus beneath the weight of most of our small luggage, laughing as usual. She was the gayest little girl I ever saw.

Again we went third class on the boat to Nauplia, a long day's journey for the sum of three francs, and the third-class deck was once more the best for the view. It had seats on which one could lie full length, and unfortunately the curtailed night had made me too sleepy to keep awake for all the fine scenery. E. was far better at that than I was, and too tender-hearted into the bargain to wake me up; so that she spent many weary times getting hungrier and hungrier till a wakeful moment on my part gave her an opportunity to draw out our everlasting bread, sardines and chalva. I never want to see sardines again, but chalva is incapable of becoming monotonous—we ate it on bread continually and it is so

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excellent that I should think it a cheap luxury at fifty times the price.

All day we hugged the coast and touched at various islands famous in the war of 1821. It was one of those calm blue days when everything glitters in the heat. Most impressive was the eastern coast of the Peloponnese, where a dialect differing but slightly from ancient Laconian is still being spoken. There the great blue mountains come straight down to the water's edge with no foreshore. At Leonidi, where we touched, a magnificent cleft in the mountains aroused our ambition to penetrate by that route to Sparta. From there to Nauplia the coast is incomparably fine, and the sun set and it grew dark before we landed. The stars were brilliant, and no first sight of Nauplia and its commanding citadel could have been more romantic. The only tragedy was that after we got into the landing-boat, our cherished Greek water-bottle, which we did not know how to replace, fell into the sea or was annexed by a party of Greek soldiers. We rated the boatman about it, but he only said: "Surely it was not an important object."

We awoke to a brilliantly fine morning and thought Nauplia an entrancing place with its splendid Venetian walls and beautiful bay, the little executioner's island with a fort on it composing perfectly in the foreground. The hillock of Tiryns was visible not so very far away, and we walked there in grilling sunshine through dust a foot thick.

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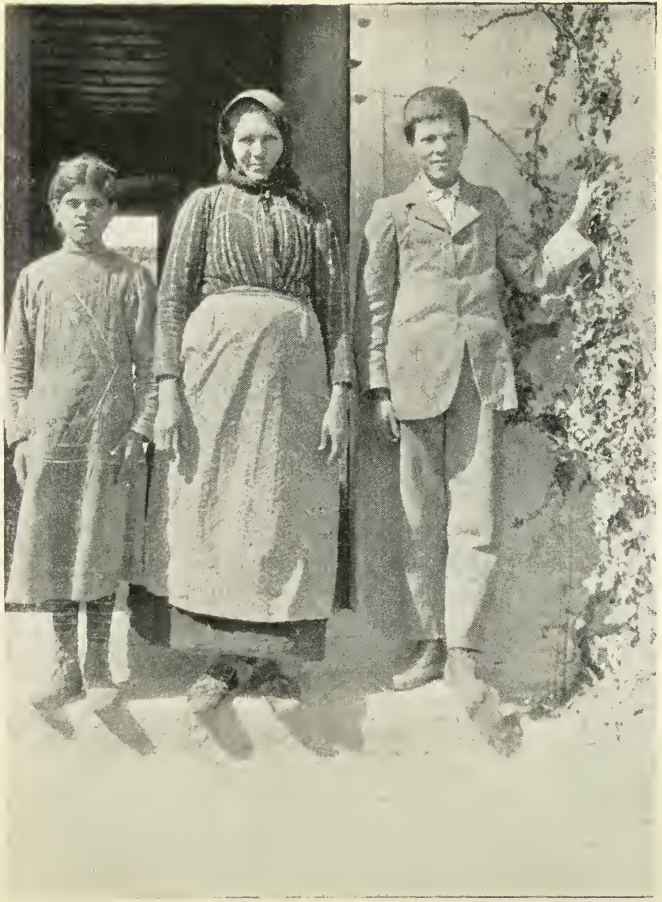

MYCENAE: "LA BELLE HELENE"

TIRYNS: MAIN GALLERY

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This is an insignificant little lump, rising only sixty feet above the plain and most disappointing from the outside. But within, the enormous Cyclopean masonry is unexpectedly impressive, and the view through the entrance to the main gateway, with its colossal door-frame still in position, gives the idea of a powerful civilization. We lunched in the narrow south-east gallery, where sheep rubbing against the Cyclopean stones for centuries have given them the polish of fine alabaster. Framed by the window was Nauplia, and in the foreground women, clad in brilliant blue, were working in the fields.

We spent that night in Mycenæ, at the exquisitely clean hotel, "La Belle Heléne," which we believe to be the best in Greece. The bedrooms are completely bare but for iron bedsteads, and the mother of Orestes, Agamemnon, and Helen furnishes them with bedding and washing apparatus after the arrival of her guests. The good looks of the family are concentrated in Costa, the eldest, who said regretfully that his mother had not thought of the ancient Kings when he was born. E. comforted him by saying that King Constantine was as good a namesake as any Mycenæan potentate, and he became her firm friend in consequence. They were all told to entertain us with music after dinner, and the whole family bawled the Salonica song at the top of their lungs. Some of them know the first half of the tune and some the last, but they were not to be deterred by such a trifle.

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At Mycenæ there is not even one bush, and I never saw stonier country out of Montenegro. The Treasury of Atreus, however, was a magnificent refuge from the sun. Photographs give no idea of its vastness and the perfection of the thirty-three narrowing, horizontal courses of dressed stone forming the dome. The lintel of the door consists of one gigantic rock weighing 113 tons. The whole thing was an immense surprise to me, all the more because it was in a way so familiar. The only other beehive tomb we saw which had a complete roof was one not far from Tiryns, discovered by the proprietor of "La Belle Heléne," and excavated a few weeks before by the German School at Athens. But that dome, although in perfect condition, is made of rough and small stones.

There is a splendid Cyclopean bridge at Mycenæ, and marked on the map at the farther side of it was the Chapel of St. John. We were looking in vain for this when a small urchin came up and said: "Won't you please take a photograph of my little horse?" We could not spare a film for that, but asked him about the Chapel of St. John. He started running across an open cornfield to a spot where a large Cyclopean stone was lying on the ground and crossed himself vigorously, muttering "Hagios Johannes."

When in Greece one cannot help building castles in the air and dreaming of excavations, and it had occurred to us that Nemea, the site of Pan-Hellenic

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games and near the railway, might prove a good spot and would at any rate be interesting to look at. So we went there from Mycenæ to prospect. From the station a public motor laden with tiles plied to and fro, and we squeezed ourselves in between the tiles and the hood, and rattled along at a furious pace. The Temple of Zeus is beautiful to look at, but from the point of view of excavation we drew a blank. Prosperous vineyards, too expensive to be bought out, surround it, and the stone is so worn that even the Temple would not be worth re-erecting. A peasant woman was seated on a fallen pillar spinning, surrounded by children who called us "lords" to our faces. Somebody had done some tentative digging there a few weeks before.

While we were waiting at the station for the train back to Nauplia we made tea and chatted with a nice young woman belonging to the place. We talked about the vineyards, and I, unfortunately, just to pass the time, asked a question about the quality of the wine. Immediately a huge tumbler of it was produced. Now I abhorred resinated wine, and E. was in the middle of her tea; but she felt steps must be taken, valiantly drank the whole tumblerful, and went on with the tea afterwards. It was heroic, but quite unappreciated by the young woman.

When we got back to Nauplia the town was seething with excitement on account of a big trial that was in progress, and ninety witnesses were straining the resources of the place to the utmost.

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So we decided to go to Epidauros the next day, and ordered a beautiful red and blue sousta. It was a four hours' drive through mountains which are not particularly beautiful; but we passed another fine Cyclopean bridge, and tumuli which it would be interesting to excavate. A fustanella, forty yards long, lay out drying on the grass; it was very hot and there were quantities of fat sea-green lizards. We arrived about 2 p.m. in a sudden fertile bit of plain, with the theatre cut out of the hillside opposite, surrounded by low scrub; an unexpected oasis after the bare mountains. Other visitors were there during the hot afternoon, but we were left alone with the theatre for the cool of the evening, and slept in the new guest-house by the Museum. That theatre, with its circular chorus and the complete tiers of seats cut in the hillside, spoils one for all other theatres whatsoever. It is as pre-eminent among these as the Delphic stadium among stadia. We sat an indefinite time at the top, while far below on the grass the custodian played with his two babies and a dog.

E. said that Epidauros would be a mass of red anemones, but we were too late for those. Apart from the theatre, however, it is a lovely place and has exceptionally interesting buildings. Was the beautiful circular Tholos, of unknown purport, intended to hold the sacred snakes of Æsculapois, and were the gentle inclined planes, whch lead up to every entrance, built to make the way easy for

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the patients? There are the foundations of a real Greek hotel with four courts and 180 rooms, which must have been extremely comfortable; and beyond that is a building of unknown purpose, which contains a long, narrow apartment that looks like a banqueting hall, the furniture being still in position. There are stone benches parallel with the long sides; a large stone seat with arms and a table in front of it stands on one short side, and a big table on the other. Unlike many excavations, these force one to realize something of the life of a place which was once the chief health resort of the Greek world.

The next day was my birthday, and we awoke very early from our straw-mattressed couches in the empty gate-house. By 6 a.m. I was wandering up to the custodian's house to fetch matches for boiling our tea. It was all fresh and lovely, and a shepherd was piping in the distance. We climbed to the top of the theatre for a last farewell, and admired even more than before the way it nestles into the hill with the woods at the back abloom with rock-roses. The drive to Nauplia was grilling in the hot sunshine, and a sousta, which has no back, is not the most comfortable form of vehicle. We ate our lunch of bread and sardines in it to save time, and drove to the entrancing little whitewashed twelfth-century nunnery of Nea Moni outside Nauplia. This has a tiny Byzantine church—were ever churches so small except in Greece?—whitewashed all over, with four good capitals on ancient columns inside. At

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the gate is a fountain with a back of Byzantine sculpture at which peasants were washing clothes. A sweet nun came at once with Turkish delight and pink roses, and took us up to her bedroom. We said how pretty it all was, to which she replied that we had far better stay there all our lives. She, too, had once been fond of the world, but now she cared for it no longer and preferred to live alone with Jesus Christ.

"You are fond of ancient Greek—do you know this?" she said, and pulled out from a cupboard by her bed a much worn and loved copy of Theocritus, pointing to her favourite idyll. We placed fifty centimes in the church money-box "for the Saint" when we left, and a little nun who saw us do it rushed with joy to the Mother Superior to tell her. It was a sweet spot, inhabited by dear people, and anyone might do far worse than live there.

The sun-heat was terrific; and on arrival at Nauplia I said it was my birthday, that Nauplia was one of the largest towns in Greece, and that I should go out and buy nice things for a real birthday feast. I might have known by that time that no money and no birthday can produce luxuries in Greece, but I was not prepared to find nothing in the whole town except dry bread. Even chalva, not to mention butter, was impossible to buy that afternoon. So I came sadly back with the bread, and we contented ourselves with gallons of tea, while the hotel boy went to get a permission for us to visit the prison.

The Palamidi, the great Venetian fortress on the

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citadel, is now used for this purpose, and the staircase of 999 steps starts steeply from the ground level. Fortified by tea, we went up it, resting at every hundredth step. The place looks absolutely impregnable, although Venetians and Turks kept taking it from each other. Perched on this high cliff, the castle commands a magnificent view of the bay of Nauplia on one side, and projects almost over the sea on the other. The prisoners, enclosed in three open courtyards, surrounded by high battlements, do not have this view, but live in the sun and air, sell wares to visitors, and keep shops for each other. The courtyards are crowded with booths of shoeblacks, blacksmiths, tobacco-vendors, lemonade-makers, etc. Soldiers with rifles parade the battlements, but shout down conversation to the prisoners, and seem on excellent terms with them. A forest of poles with wood-carvings, match-boxes, and bead-bags on the end of them were waved up in the air at us by a sea of friendly, eager figures. The soldiers helped to fix a just price, and the pennies went down again in boxes attached to the poles. The prisoners were even able to produce change. The courtyards were graduated according to the length of sentences, but most of the men were in for life or " to kill " as the soldier put it, and there were no women. The men on the whole had nice faces, but in the worst courtyard, where all were in for life, there was an astounding-looking brigand from Epirus, caught three months before. The prisoners

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keep their own clothes, and his were still fresh. He wore a blue fustanella trimmed with brilliant red, and had ample loose black accordion-pleated sleeves; his long white stockings to above the knees were spotlessly clean. His beard and hair were bushy, silky, and jet black, and he walked up and down the narrow space, regardless of everybody, like a caged lion. He was an accomplished story-book gentleman brigand, if ever there was one, a marvel of blackness and frenzied impotence. It was impossible to attract his attention or find out anything about him.

In another courtyard a prisoner shouted up to know whether I spoke German, and seemed delighted to hear his native tongue once more. He said he had killed a man when he was drunk, and had served eight out of his twelve years. Although the smells were pretty bad and the indoor quarters no doubt horribly insanitary, I think there is a good deal to be said for this comparatively free system of imprisonment. We were turned away hurriedly at the end, for it was time for the prisoners to come up on to the battlements and fetch water.

I had anticipated a hot bath as another birthday treat, but even our excellent hotel could not produce one at less than six hours' notice. The fates evidently did not intend me to celebrate my birthday at all, and I had to content myself with the hotel dinner which certainly was very good. And thus ended another year.

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CHAPTER XI

MESSENIA

AT Argos station the next morning we met our American acquaintances from St. Luke, and hurriedly exchanged tales of subsequent experiences. They had continued their tour with the same energy, driving all night in soustas and walking all day. We parted with mutual good wishes.

Our morning was spent at Argos climbing the Larisa, the acropolis behind the classical city, on the top of which Cyclopean, polygonal and classical walls stand built into a Venetian citadel. It was a strenuous and very steep climb, in grilling sunshine; however, when we had arrived panting at the top and sank down to rest in the shade of the wall, the view was well worth the exertion. The whole Argive plain lay stretched before us, bounded by mountains and the Bay of Argolis. But there was only a little snow to be seen north-westward, and the plain cannot compare in beauty with that of Thessaly. Mycenæ, Tiryns and the site of the Argive Heræum all seemed so close to one another that the ancient kings may well have been on the visiting terms of our county families! Nauplia and

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the Palamidi, with the circle of coast, looked lovelier than ever, and we were sorry to bid them farewell.

From Argos we had a nine hours' train journey, diagonally south-westward across the Peloponnese, to Kalamata on the shore of the Messenian Gulf. After emerging from the mountains, through which the railway is very prettily engineered, into the plain of Arcadia, we reached Tripolis, on the site of ancient Matinea. From this fertile spot we climbed again to a bare table-land, and descended by intricate windings to the plain of Megalopolis. Bracken and asphodel, oak and judas tree were all growing together on a ground of grass, green as in England. Bits of the oak-strewn country might have been an English park. Over yet another pass we went before reaching the upper Messenian plain, a veritable paradise of olives, grapes, mulberries and palms, screened by mountains. We still had the idea of Greek barrenness fixed firmly in our minds, and it seemed impossible that such vegetation should really be found in Greece.

It was a Sunday, in the late afternoon, and the train began to fill up with wedding parties. We had seen one wedding procession in the distance winding down the hill-side from a village. Then a crowd appeared at a little station, and the bride and bridegroom were cheered into the train. In the next carriage to ours we heard pistol shots fired out of the window, and were told that the bridegroom,

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returning from his wedding, was greeting his native village. It grew dark before we reached Kalamata at 9 p.m. On the way to the hotel to which we had been recommended an impudent little wretch from a rival one came up and said: "Kyria, there are bugs at the Panhellenion. You should come to my hotel. There the German Minister stays." We lent a deaf ear, but he pursued us persistently. Needless to say there were no such things at the hotel of our choice, and we were overwhelmed with kindness.

The next day we went up Mount Ithome, the second highest fortified mountain in Greece, famous in the first Messenian War. It was a lovely walk from Tsepheremini, a village in the Messenian plain, over swampy ground on which the purple-red gladiolus grew wild. Half-way up and hanging over the mountain-side was a monastery, rising from cypresses and pale blue irises. Built around a square, with the church in the middle, it was charming, and we were tempted to linger there unduly, listening to the nightingales. On the upward climb the cypresses and other trees were soon left behind, and we emerged on the scrubby surface of the mountain itself, with its remains of ancient walls leading to the top. Climbing up bare acropolises in the heat was by now a familiar process, and this one was as bare and stony as the rest, only much higher. Generally we had such high places to ourselves, but to-day two little goatherding girls appeared, and offered us coins and a ring, all picked up on the

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mountain. A deserted monastery crowns the summit, with a great bell in the gateway which the children tolled. It sounded weird. Ithome is an isolated peak, and we looked from it across the plain to the snow-covered Mount Taygetos that blocks the way to Sparta. On the other side was Kalamata and a wide sweep of coast. We plunged down the mountain, to Messene in the plain below, which is at present a cultivated area, surrounded by the almost complete walls and towers, $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles in circuit, built by Epaminondas in the fourth century B.C., when he desired the city to be the bulwark against Sparta of the Messenian League. It is a flat area of fields and fig trees now, as green as anything in England, and the circumvallating walls and square towers might well belong to some Frankish town of the Middle Ages. Most amazing of all are the smaller towers, which have windows shaped like arrow-shoots, looking so medieval that it is almost impossible to believe in Epaminondas. The great Aarcdian Gate, through which the public road to Megalopolis still leads, is a giant circular structure, most impressive still as the villagers ride over the old threshold on their mules.

We went back to Mavromati, below Ithome, for Turkish delight and black coffee, which a nice old man gave us on his balcony overlooking a grove of figs and mulberries. His spare fustanella, forty peechs long, was hanging in the passage, so heavy that we could hardly lift it. The little goatherds on

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GOATHERDS ON ITHOME

MESSENE: WINDOWS OF A TOWER. 4TH CENT. B.C.

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Ithome came from this village. We had photographed them, and they had asked for copies, expecting of course that these would appear instantaneously. When E. said she would send them by post, if they would give their names, they looked incredulous, but shouted down "Vanthea Nikolopoulos" and "Marigo Anastasiou Tsakapoulos." I laughed; the names struck me as so odd; but the children, who had not been over-confident before, were now certain we should prove faithless. They said: "You will not send them. You are laughing at us." E. asked them to spell their names, and as they did not know their letters, this did not make things any better.

We had to find our way over the shoulder of Ithome again, so as to strike our old path back by the monastery. We lost it once, and happened to ask three little girls of about six, five and four for the right way. They put us on it, and followed behind as fast as their little legs could carry them. We wondered at first whether they were going to be a nuisance, but they ran along quite quietly, making a little polite conversation meanwhile. Dusk was approaching, and we were getting a long way from their village; still they showed no signs of returning; so we stopped and said: "Don't you think it is time for you to go back?" The little spokesman answered: "Yes, it is; it is getting late, and we ought to go. But do you think you can find the way all *alone*?" We gave them an egg and they

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thanked us very prettily, and kissed our hands before leaving.

The view of the red-roofed square monastery in the twilight, as we went down, was very beautiful. On arrival at Tsepherimini, we filled in an hour before the train left at a café by the station. The proprietor gave us a rose, three sprays of sweet-smelling herbs, a nespole, and two pods of beans—bringing them in one by one, and all for love. A young boy with a mandoline played tunes, starting with "God save the King," for our benefit. Suddenly there was a stampede to the door, and they dragged a man triumphantly by both hands into the room. The first artist introduced him to us as a great virtuoso, who could play all the tunes. He began with "God save the King" once more, in an almost unrecognizable rhythm. "Carmen" followed, also hard to make out; but it was interesting to discover that our rhythm seems as extraordinary to the Greek as his does to us. A violin was produced, and they were in the middle of a duet when the train came in, and we had regretfully to leave the merry throng.

The Messenians are certainly a kindly people. Our hotel porter could not bear to end the conversation at night, and came back into our room four times, on various pretexts, for a long talk each time. At last he presented us with a bunch of flowers, and retired for good.

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CHAPTER XII

THE LANGADA PASS

WE woke up the next morning to a land enveloped in a thick blanket of cloud. A guide, with two mules, had been ordered early, and he assured us that the day would be a beautiful one, and implored us to start. There was a German "lord" in the hotel, the first we had seen since leaving Athens, who was also optimistic; so with many misgivings we departed on our way to Sparta by the Langada Pass. We rode past the Kalamata prison, on a side street, through the main gate of which two prisoners had stuck their heads to look like door-knockers, reminding me of a drawing I had once seen of Manchurian prisoners confined in chests, with their heads out at the sides like handles. The Frankish castle of Geoffrey de Villhardouin, on its hillock overlooking the town, was a picturesque feature in the view toward the sea. The mountains in the other direction, into which we penetrated, were still wrapped in cloud. But the enveloping blanket shortly began to turn into Scotch mist with rifts in it.

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The early part of the gorge is extremely narrow, and there seems but a stone's throw between the mule-path in the side of the limestone cliff and the black overhanging mountains across the open void. The clouds vanished and re-formed, enclosing and revealing exquisite glimpses. To such a bleak, barren spot the mists lent romance; at one moment scudding, fifty miles an hour, across the black surface of a peak; at another, melting into nothing; a blue sky above and the great crack of gorge below.

Costa Oikonomos, our guide, walked on ahead; his small boy of ten, with a huge umbrella and bare feet, brought up the rear. He had taken his shoes off for choice, in spite of the rough stones, and carried them in his hand. The path went up and down, sometimes very steeply. At one moment E.'s mule made an alarming glissade, and she jumped off as he slid. Costa was quite upset. "Why do you get off, Kyria? Wait until the road gets really bad. I will tell you." With the precipice towards the gorge on the left, one would often have felt safer on foot.

We had risen at 6 a.m., but when 11 o'clock came, Costa would not hear of stopping for lunch. He said there was a good place farther on. I was nearly ill with hunger, and thought we never should reach it; but at last, at 2 p.m., we crossed the gorge, and ascended the steep opposite side through a village clinging somehow to the mountain face, and almost hidden by thick vegetation. After the barrenness

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of the morning, Lada was unexpectedly luxuriant, and looked like a little Italian hill-town. A funeral procession was forming on the way up, and the bell tolled mournfully. We emerged at the top house of the village, where a man was throwing the disc on a small bit of flat ground in front of it. Too hungry to be surprised at anything, we climbed up the little outside staircase of the house, and entered a large bare room with fencing-foils and boxing-gloves hanging on the walls. A great brawny man appeared and began to talk American English at a tremendous rate. "What would you like for lunch? Omelette, meat, eggs, oranges, cheese? May I give you some American coffee?" He bustled about, collecting a plentiful meal, and then went away to make the "American coffee," which soon appeared in big tumblers. Having seen nothing but the mediocre Turkish article for a long time, we much appreciated this.

We asked about the fencing-foils, and he told us that he was the only fencer in Greece, and had won the championship at the Olympic Games—"Do, you fence?—come along." E. had had lessons, and they stood up together, and did the grand salute. Then he taught her sabre. I looked on, an entranced spectator of this unexpected scene. Papadakis, the fencer, was delighted. He said: "Six years ago some English ladies came through here, and one of them fenced with me." He mentioned her name and address, and she was a friend of

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mine. Then he got down the boxing-gloves, and had a spar with E. "Now, wouldn't you like to see me hurl the disc?" We went outside, and he did it four times; very well indeed, as he said, although owing to his comparatively small stature, he could never beat the best Scandinavians at the Olympic Games. At Lada he could get no practice in fencing, but kept himself in training by hurling the disc, and running up and down the mountain seven times a day. He was very proud of the breadth of his chest and his fit condition. At the wars he had been in command of sixty men, and showed us his photograph, taken on leaving the house. Of all the people with whom we spoke in Greece he was the only one who had a good word to say for the Bulgarians. Evidently he thought it wrong that the two Christian allies should have fought each other, and had no heart for the second war, although he said it was of course impossible to let the Bulgarians claim Salonica.

Every now and then he travels abroad to fence professionally, and promised to look us up in London in the autumn; but his heart is really in his little house at Lada. There was a gleam in his eye as he said: "I am going to spend three thousand francs on this house. It is a fine site, and the foundations are excellent. You couldn't find many such foundations as these; but the house is not comfortable, and I want to make it nice, so that all the visitors on their way to and from Sparta can stay

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here. Three thousand francs I am going to spend. It will be beautiful. You see how fine it will be ? " He kept recurring to his projects with delightful enthusiasm, and it won our hearts to see him so attached to his little bit of land, in spite of the obscurity to which the life condemned his remarkable athletic gifts. Perhaps his exuberant manner as a host outweighed these in commercial value, although he refused to charge us anything for our lunch. " You can pay 1½ francs for your men, if you like, but nothing for yourselves." He escorted us some distance on our way, and at the moment of turning back, deafening farewell salutes were fired from the balcony of the house by his nephew.

We soon left that little oasis of cultivated vegetation behind. There was now no sign of mist, and the sun shone brilliantly. After some time we reached an enormous green plateau studded with pine trees, a stream flowing through its midst, reminding me of the one below Parnassos. There were actually violets there, and masses of primroses, the only ones we saw in Greece, and our hearts leaped up with joy on beholding these. We had another stiff climb and a descent, on which the road was so bad that, to my intense relief, even Costa permitted us to walk. Then we entered the real Langada, the narrowest part of the gorge, between precipitous limestone cliffs, riddled with caves inaccessible from below, the true haunt of brigands.

We passed about a hundred black goats trotting

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in single file up the narrow path toward us, a weird black line with their tinkle of bells—the only living things in this scene of desolation. Brigands would have been so suited to the scenery that we almost wished they might spring out from the caves around. There was a little khan by the path, where black coffee and Turkish delight were unexpectedly produced. We paid fifteen centimes a cup, and Costa remonstrated in private with us afterwards, saying that "lords" must not demoralize the peasants. Ten centimes was quite enough.

Hardly had we emerged from the black gorge when Panagiotis, the child, was ordered by his father to put on his boots; we turned a corner, and suddenly, like a vision, there appeared the most fertile spot it has ever been my lot to see on earth. It was Trypi. There were giant laburnums, a hundred feet high, shading old fountains, and great groves of oleander just breaking into pink flower. Enormous fig trees, cherry trees the size of oaks, silver birches and pines, with wild grape running up their stems, smothered the little red-roofed village in green. Walnuts with sweet-smelling leaves eight inches long made the whole air heavy with their scent, and the sound of running water tinkled in our ears. We held our breath in surprise and rapture. To make paradise more perfect, our room in the little inn had glass windows, on three sides, looking up and down and across to the blue mountains in the distance. There were snowy beds with the whitest

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TRYPI

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linen on them, and boxes of sweet-smelling things in the windows. Our shy host wore a spotlessly clean fustanella, and came in and out of the room many times to see that we had everything we wanted. His wife made an excellent omelette for our supper, but we were keyed up to almost too high a pitch to eat it, a rare thing on this journey. The nightingales sang and sang and sang!

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CHAPTER XIII

MISTRA AND SPARTA

OUR awakening next morning in a perfect sun-bath, the sun streaming through all eight windows full upon our beds, was the most exquisite I have ever had. Breakfast was laid on the balcony outside overlooking the valley towards Sparta and Mount Taygetos, and Costa greeted us with fresh nosegays.

After breakfast there came a knock upon our bedroom door ; in walked the German " lord " from Kalamata, and silently handed E. a telegram. He waited while she read it, and then said : " I am glad it is not bad news ; it would not have been nice for me to bring you bad news with a good morning." The talkative porter from the Kalamata Hotel had handed it to him after we left, saying that he was sure to catch up the two ladies somewhere in the Peloponnese.

We went for a farewell walk through the village with Costa and the child, entranced by the groups of people washing at the fountains under the giant laburnum trees. Both of us registered a vow to come back there some day and settle down for

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months, for in our experience no more exquisite spot exists on this earth. Trypi is only two hours' ride from Sparta and one from Mistra, to which we now wended our way.

Mistra is a medieval Byzantine town, nestling on a spur of Mount Taygetos, deserted and in ruins, but with its churches well preserved, and two or three of them still attached to convents. From a distance, the ruined town spreading up the hillside is remarkably picturesque. The right thing to do would be to live at Trypi and study Mistra, for beautiful as the churches are with their every variety of ornamental brickwork, their remains of frescoes, their carved wooden screens and their capitals of strange forms, yet the deserted streets and houses of brick crumbling into decay are depressing. It is a city of the dead, but not dead long enough ago to stir the imagination comfortably, as Pompeii does. I felt as if some recent devastating army or pestilence had emptied it of all but a few nuns. The roofs have fallen off the houses, but the walls and streets are still there, and the Byzantine Palace of the Princess and the Princess's Walk.

In the bare, roofless church of Hagia Sophia we had an exciting snake-hunt. Our entrance disturbed a monster 4 feet long, who was sunning himself in the centre of the floor, and drove him to seek refuge under a great long stone. The custodian and Costa, filled with the passion of the chase, were determined that he should not escape them, and

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heaved up the stone till the snake came out and crawled like a lizard perpendicularly up the face of the wall several feet from the ground. There he fell an easy prey, and they gloated over his carcass.

Hagia Pantanassa, at the top of the town, is the loveliest church of all outside, with a divine view through its arcaded front across the Spartan plain. The glimpse down the length of the arcade to cypresses beyond might have been in Italy, and there was a French richness in the brickwork fleur-de-lis pattern outside the apse. This church was attached to a convent, but the German "lord" had preceded with princely offerings, so that the nuns did not consider us of much account.

Costa obtained coffee from the attendant at the Metropolis, and we departed for Sparta. Hitherto we had been too close beneath it to see Taygetos, but now the white mountain came into view for the first time, towering gigantic above the Spartan plain. Taygetos was a great surprise to us, and so, except for Trypi, would the luxuriant Spartan plain have been. Involuntarily one connects arid people with arid country; but nature never showered her gifts more bounteously upon any city than upon Sparta. It is just what Athens ought to be and is not; all flowery and moist, with water in the river and big trees; above, the giant, snowy Taygetos, so near that it looks enormous. From Sparta, the high citadel of Mistra, which we had considered quite a climb, sinks into insignificance.

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MISTRA : HAGIA PANTANASSA

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We wanted another muleteer for our next ride to Megalopolis, as Costa could not wait. Panagiotis had to be at school in Kalamata on the following day, and his father was counting the moments to be off again on their long ride home through the night. We passed a splendid-looking man in white fustanella and shirt, on our way into the town, and as fate had not hitherto provided our delightful guides with fustanellas, we bounded with joy when Costa entered into treaty with this one on our behalf. However, he demanded double the price we were paying, and although his clothes would have been worth several extra francs a day, we let him go. Costa Oikonomos shook his head rather sadly, and said that he himself was a guide "economicos," and that we should have to pay more in Sparta. It was a pathetic joke, for he looked so thin and underfed that when we heard that he had started home with Panagiotis without either of them having had a proper meal, we wished we had presented him with double his humble fee.

We, who had only sat on mules, ate an enormous luncheon at 4 p.m., and started off to explore the town. We found the remains of a barely recognizable theatre almost hidden in cornfields, and a bit of a Roman wall. As for the excavations of the precinct of Artemis Orthia, which have yielded the British archæologists objects of great importance in an unbroken succession from the tenth century B.C. downward, we could scarcely believe that the

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rubbishy foundation walls had not been built the other day by peasants. Had we come upon such things ourselves, we should have shamefacedly covered them up again and said nothing about them! A shepherd's hut on the edge of the enclosure was infinitely better built.

The next day it poured and poured with rain, and we had ample time to inspect the treasures of the Museum. The sculpture was as pitifully bad as the architecture, but the ivories and vases of the seventh and sixth century B.C. show a delicacy of design and workmanship of which the historical Spartans had lost every vestige. What induced the change? Why was every artistic impulse suffocated in so lovely a spot, and how could a people who built like children conquer the splendid Athenians? It is all very well to consider this problem dispassionately in England, but on the spot it assumes very different proportions.

Our German "lord" was staying in the same hotel as we were, and was extremely anxious that we should take on his two guides and mules. He had ridden for twelve days with them, and said that the elder knew every inch of the country and was quite a famous guide. They looked like the very old men on Greek vases, and were cramped in their movements. They did not wear fustanellas, and they talked in a slow and dreary way, one of them always echoing the words of the other. In fact, they were a reincarnation of the Elders of a Greek

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SPARTA AND MT. TAYGETOS

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Chorus. When we remembered our other paragons we were not enthusiastic about these, but there seemed nothing to do but to try and make a symphony. They came in to bargain when we were sitting at lunch in the hotel restaurant. Aristides was the spokesman, and proved unexpectedly shrewd, sticking out for a high price, and making feints to go out at the door when E. would not agree to it. Anastasios was his able seconder. The people in the restaurant listened spellbound to the proceedings. E. finally brought the negotiations to a close in our favour, all of us promising to start at 6 a.m. Two Greek gentlemen at another table talked pessimistically to us afterwards about the plan. The way to Megalopolis was long, and would take us fourteen hours at least. Even if the guides knew the way, which was doubtful, the mules would probably not get there; we should in any case collapse with fatigue after so long a ride. It would be far better if we took the motor to Tripolis, and gave up such a harebrained excursion. We had planned the tour with great care in order to avoid the public motor from Tripolis, and were not likely now to succumb to its attractions.

Taygetos began to show itself through rifts in the clouds after tea; so lovely was the view of it from our bedroom balcony that in spite of the drizzle we sat out there, writing letters blotted by the rain. During the storm the snow had fallen still lower down its sides, but the prospect for the morrow was hopeful.

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CHAPTER XIV

MEGALOPOLIS

WE awoke to a brilliant morning with Taygetos glittering in the sunshine. The German "lord" came down at 6 a.m. to say good-bye and give us bunches of roses. The Elders spoke of him as a "*mechanicos-archæologicos*," but what he really was we were never able to fathom. His additional baggage horse they had loaded up with 650 oranges, which could be bought for next to nothing in Sparta, and a little dog brought up the rear of our cavalcade. We started out by a great wide road, one of the best in Greece, but soon left it to follow a path along the edge of the river Eurotas. At one point we hopped off our horses to photograph a man ploughing, in a fustanella, and he took us enthusiastically to admire his special "archaia," an ancient oven, hidden in the bushes. The Eurotas bed was very green and fertile, and we rode along it for miles. My muleteer, Anastasios, always walked in front, but did not pretend to know the way. At every questionable point he stopped my horse, turned round to Aristides and

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said : " The road branches ; which way shall I go ? To the right or to the left ? " We wanted to halt for lunch several times before they would let us, as they said we must wait for a place where there were " vegetables for the horses," modern Greek not possessing a different word for vegetables and grass. It is good to lunch at 11 a.m. and feel one has already done a solid morning's journey.

In the afternoon we left the river, and climbed up and up to the top of the watershed where a huge spring gushes out of the hill-side. At one moment we were startled by a scream from Aristides, and ran back, only to find that the overladen horse with the oranges had fallen into a gully. It took all our combined efforts to unstrap the baskets, and the poor beast struggled up, miraculously none the worse. That incident, however, lost us some time, and his slow pace retarded us all day. The Elders were conceited, and said what excellent guides they were and how pleased we should be with them. E., to show how slowly we were going, got off and easily walked far ahead. A dashing young Arcadian, on a mule, caught us up at one point, and we rode some way under his guidance, he talking of the war. At a khan he treated us to wine all round. When he departed, the sun was getting low, and although we kept steadily on for some distance, we began to suspect that Aristides did not know the way. About 7.30 p.m. this became evident. He left us standing by a stream with high hills on three sides of it, and

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very slowly climbed the one in front. Anastasios shifted from foot to foot and groaned. Aristides came back, and climbed another hill. By this time it ought to have been pitch dark, but the full moon came to our aid, as in our time of trial at Papapouli, just a month before. We longed to get out our sleeping-bags and stay where we were. Aristides, however, led us along a grass track to our right, and did not admit his ignorance till we had lost much more time. Groans were the only contribution to the situation from Anastasios. Finally Aristides decided to go in the opposite direction entirely, and after a little while the track turned into a wider path and brought us at 10 p.m. to a small, sleeping village. The full moon brooded over it, but there was not a light in a house, nor a sound to be heard. Suddenly something woke up the dogs, and they started barking and barking and barking. The noise deafened us, but the village slept peacefully on. Aristides had to go and bang at a door. A little man, a wraith against the moon, in a white nightshirt and bare legs, ran out. He talked very fast, and said that Megalopolis was only two hours away, that there was nowhere for us to sleep in their village, and that we must go on; he would put us on the road. The description was very complicated: the second turning on the right, a small path to the left, then straight on across a field, over a hill, a detour to avoid a stream, and so on. We knew the Elders would lose us again; we and the horses had

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gone for fourteen hours already, and had had enough.

We made a firm stand and said we must spend the night there, and that as long as we had a floor to lie on, nothing else mattered. Our little man longed to ged rid of us altogether, but finally agreed to knock up the village shop. A sleepy-looking family came down and said we might have the floor of the shop, if we liked; they had nothing else to offer us. We breathed a sigh of relief, and began to unpack our things in the face of a scrutinizing audience. The Elders were very much subdued. We offered them a hard-boiled egg, but they said they were fasting and would wait for to-morrow. There was nothing whatever to buy in the shop, and only bare shelves around the room. The owners kindly brushed the dust off the floor, and in our sleeping-bags we lay upon the bare boards and passed an excellent night.

The spirit-lamp at breakfast-time excited much curiosity. The family were kindly, but rather stolid, lacking the charm of the general run of Greeks. Of course there were no means of washing, and I am sure no "lords" have ever slept at Rouzi before. It was a collection of tiny cottages, no one bigger than another. By daylight Megalopolis was clearly visible in the plain below. The Elders were much humbled by their experience, and no longer told us what excellent guides they were.

In two hours we reached the little town, and

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stopped our cavalcade in the great square market-place. We looked for oranges, as our relations with the Elders were still too strained for us to ask them for theirs, and bought two rather dry ones, the last we could find. Then we wandered off on foot to the theatre. Epidauros had, after all, not spoilt us for that, for the size of it is most impressive. It is the largest in Greece, and the great sweep of open hill-side covered with rich vegetation is very beautiful. We bought coins, which had been picked up there, from a little man; otherwise no human being came within sight

On returning to Megalopolis to join the Elders, we found them on a seat outside an eating-house, counting out huge piles of pennies and halfpennies. A paltry few of the 650 oranges were lying on the ground in front of them. So deeply were they absorbed in this business transaction, which no doubt taxed their mental faculties to the utmost, that they remained utterly oblivious of our presence. We knew from experience that Megalopolis had run short of oranges, and doubtless the population had rushed to avail themselves of the 650 brought to their doors. The Elders must have made an excellent profit, and were subsequently less sullen. We had lunch ourselves in the said eating-house, and found it provided an unexpectedly good rice soup. As this was our first hot meal for two days, we thoroughly enjoyed it, and while we were waiting, amused ourselves with the posters of the war which

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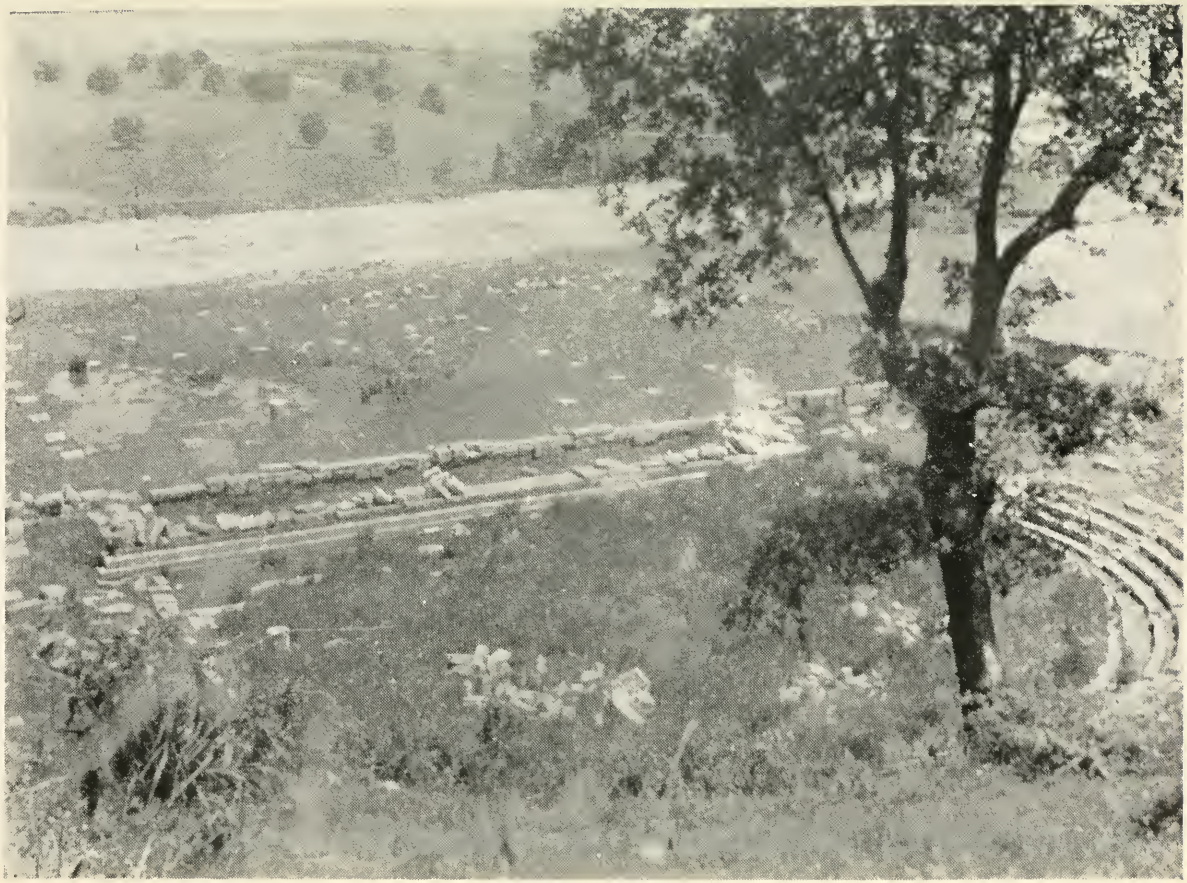

MEGALOPOLIS: THE THEATRE

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hung all over the walls. Constantine Bulgaroktonos was shown, receiving the subjugation of Yanina, in the style of Frith and with the colouring of the early forties.

We plodded on after lunch, our progress less impeded since the third horse's burden had been lightened. When we were well on our way, Aristides discovered that his dog had been left behind, and went back for it. We lay down in a field meantime, and enjoyed a beautiful siesta. This was Arcadia, and in fertility the country lives up to its reputation. The peasants were actually ploughing with iron ploughs instead of the wooden ones of a primitive type otherwise universal in Greece.

The way towards Karytæna, our destination, lay between hedges of dog-roses in full bloom and cornfields that were really worth calling such. Of course the bare mountain-sides were always in sight. Greece would not be Greece without them. From the flat plain of the Alpheios we rose slightly into the hills once more, and saw Karytæna, crowning a hill-top, barring the way in front. A medieval castle takes the place of an acropolis, and the village straggles up the hill-side to it. There is nothing ancient here, but in medieval interest the place abounds. We crossed a wonderful early six-arched bridge with a chapel built into its side, and crawled up the narrow streets. Karytæna boasts of no inn, but the Elders took us to a house where they said we should be most hospitably entertained. It belonged

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to a man of eighty-five, clad in a snow-white fustanella, and his wife of seventy-five, a good old body, did the honours nobly. We went up to the castle for our evening walk, through narrow streets with overhanging balconies on either side. The women of the town crowded on to these, and shouted greetings down. "Are you spending the night here? Won't you please come and stay with us?" They looked charming, and we would have stayed with them all had we been able.

The castle is a thirteenth-century Frankish structure, built by the same Geoffrey de Villehardouin, nephew of the chronicler, as the one at Kalamata; he built them when he was Prince of the Morea, in that romantic feudal age when the Peloponnese formed a fief of the Latin Empire at Constantinople established by the Fourth Crusade. Medieval Greece is overshadowed by the wealth of classical antiquities, and its castles, Frankish and Venetian, do not receive their due meed of admiring wonder.

From this castle the view westward into the heart of the Arcadian mountains is superb. The bare bleak mountain-sides almost meet across the narrow valley. On the left is Mount Lycaon, on which the Arcadians offered up mysterious human sacrifices. On the right, above the nearer mountains, the snowy top of Chelmos emerges. In the direction from which we had come every step of the way was visible, with the range of Taygetos on the

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KARYTAENA : OUR HOSTS

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distant horizon. That view was open and rich; the other barren and grand; Greece at its best.

The castle itself is a domestic sort of building, such as one might well restore and live in, with a banqueting-hall, and large rooms overlooking both views. A crowd of little boys had followed us up there, but instead of being a nuisance, they talked to us with infinite pride of Kolokotronis and his defence of it in the War of 1821. Several of the cannon were still in position. A tiny church nestling below the fortress, bare like a brick barn, had two excellent capitaled columns within.

The children led us down, and around to the Byzantine Church of St. Nicholas, built on a terrace, planted with noble cypresses, commanding the Arcadian mountain view. The sun was setting in flame behind them, and the composition of cypress and mountain combined Italian distinction with the austere and characteristic beauty of Greece.

Our hosts treated us charmingly that evening. The old lady prepared a beautiful hot supper, and served it in the big sitting-room. Then we sat on the balcony, overhanging the view towards Megalopolis, while they and their friends ate theirs at the same table. A brilliant full moon illuminated everything, and we felt poised in mid-air, the only spectators of the scene. Afterward, the friends, who had evidently been invited to inspect us, came out on the balcony, and the conversation as usual ran on the lines of marriage and the dowry system. An old

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lady talked with real sorrow of the difficulty of providing the sums demanded by the men. Indeed, how two hundred pounds can be paid by these poor people as "*dot*" for each daughter passes my comprehension. It must mean incessant toil, for families of eighteen children or so are common. In spite of this, however, an old maid is a rarity, there being a considerable excess of males over females in the population. She could not understand why we wore such light clothes. Even in this hot weather the natives dress in thick wool, and our crêpe blouses worn without a coat filled her with amazement.

We were very sleepy and longed for bed, but had to wait till the visitors departed. Our hostess then turned her own bedding out of a large cupboard in the wall, and put it on the floor of the sitting-room. We were left to enjoy her bed in the cupboard. There was just room to undress beside it, but not one breath of fresh air, as we had to shut the door into the sitting-room, on the other side of which the old couple were preparing to sleep. However, it was so pleasant to have a bed once more that we did not mind a little thing like that, and slept soundly.

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KARYTAENA : ARCADIA FROM ST. NICHOLAS

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CHAPTER XV

BASSÆ

OUR hosts arose very early and enabled us to quit our prison-cupboard. The balcony from which we had watched the moon had a large tub of rain-water on it, and I went out with sponge and soap to wash. The Elders were sitting in the road below, and my appearance was the signal for Aristides to walk upstairs, come out on the balcony, bid me a cheerful good morning and shake hands. When he had retired, the old man in fustanella did the same. A crowd collected in the street below, gazing with rapt attention when it came to the moment of teeth-brushing.

The morning view from the balcony was exquisite. In front a medieval church with brick campanile rose against the background of Mount Lycaon, and the great bridge below was a wonderful thing to wake up to in the heart of Arcadia. We walked down the hill to it, and crossed the lower spurs of Mount Lycaon. The Elders since leaving Megalopolis were in thoroughly familiar country, and met the day calm and unruffled. They had become very generous, too, with the remainder of the oranges, and we

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found it pleasant to travel with an orange shop in such hot weather. We were moving westward to Andritzæna, toward the mountains we had seen, bathed in sunset light, from the terrace of St. Nicholas. It was a wild mountain road, skirting the edge of the slope and overlooking the narrow river-bed below. Karytæna, castle-crowned, remained in view for hours and hours. We came to a little wine-shop by the side of the road, and the Elders asked whether they might stop there just five minutes. We said "Yes," and found that they considered themselves our hosts and treated us to resinated wine. Among the Greek peasantry there is no vestige of the "Dutch treat," and one person, whether "lord" or peasant, is always host of the whole party.

In view from our road we passed many circular threshing-floors cut in the side of the slope and beautifully paved. The Greek drama, some say, originated from the dancing of peasants upon the threshing-floors, and the circular floor is supposed to be embodied in the circular stage of the historical Greek theatre. The present round threshing-floor cut in the side of a hill looks uncommonly like a Greek theatre and makes the theory, so dry when read at home, live.

We stopped for lunch at a spot where a limpid stream gushed down the hill-side. Aristides said that the water was perfectly pure, and we drank freely of it, only to discover when we moved on that

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KARYTAENA AND MT. LYCAON

THRESHING FLOOR NEAR ANDRITZAENA

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a village was situated above. Generally, muleteers are to be depended upon for their information about water, but the Elders knew nothing. They continued to talk like a Greek Chorus. Aristides said to E. : " Why does the Kyria in front wear a red ribbon in her hat ? " " Because she likes to." " I see. I only ask so that I may be informed."

As we went on, the snowy tops of Chelmos and Cyllene came into view over the nearer mountain-sides, and shortly after lunch we entered the high Arcadian village of Andritzæna. This was the home of Aristides, and here he appeared at his best. He insisted that we should go to his house, a wooden structure containing a great big living-room. His advent was unexpected, and we found the wife entertaining a working-party of neighbouring women, who were making a sort of dough of milk and egg ; this they rolled out to the thinness of a wafer and cut into narrow strips. The floor was covered with their work at every stage. The women had brought their children with them, and the occasion seemed quite a festive one. The whitest of white linen covers were spread over all the furniture, and we subsided on to chairs and were given pink jam and coffee. The wife looked years younger than Aristides, and seemed, to us, much too good for him ; she asked whether we had heard him sing, and implied that that was his great gift. We should never have suspected it, but determined to ask him in the future.

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Andritzæna is the last village on the way to the Temple of Bassæ, which lies high up in the mountains, about 4,000 feet above sea-level. We had made up our minds to sleep there, and were having a continuous tussle about it with the Elders, who wished to persuade us that it would be too cold. Aristides wanted us to come back and sleep in his house, and the women entreated us to do so and refused to say a final good-bye. It was a Sunday, and the town was full of people in their cleanest white fustanellas. Seated at tables along both sides of the narrow street, smoking and drinking resinated wine, they were a white throng. Aristides and Anastasios, as they walked through, formed the centre of admiration, and made the horses go at a pace hitherto unattained.

That two and a half hours' ride up to the Temple was the finest we had in Greece. As we went up and up and up we seemed to look over the mountain-tops in a most extraordinary way. At one point we saw the whole range of mountains along the Corinthian Gulf, with their summits alternately snowy and blue, silhouetted sharply against the sky, with nothing between us and them. And yet we were far down in the south of the Peloponnese. It seemed as though we should never stop going uphill through bracken and oak trees. At last the way got steeper and more rugged, and suddenly we came out above everything at the grey Temple. Straight below was Ithome; on the east Taygetos, and far-

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ther east still the great blue mountains we had seen at Leonidi. We were so high that the sea west of Ithome looked almost immediately below us, although it was really seven hours' ride away. To be up there and see simultaneously the whole west and south coasts in one wide sweep was truly magnificent.

A poor temple would create a grand impression in such a situation, but as this one is in some ways finer than the Parthenon, the effect is indeed stupendous. The Temple is so remote that till 1811 it was known only to shepherds. It is in a better state of preservation than any other in Greece except the Theseum. But for the roof and pediments it is complete, and looks like a miniature Parthenon, for it was built by the same architect and has the same individuality. Even the frieze from it, now in the British Museum, is in a very perfect condition.

We reached the top at sunset, and determined more than ever to stay where we were. There is a guest-house there, and a telegram sent to the custodian the day before brings food and bedding, and a warm welcome. We had omitted to do this, but what are sleeping-bags and a summer night good for if not for camping? The Elders departed to sleep at Andritzæna, and promised to be back with us again at 6 a.m.

We were not entirely alone, for a girl and boy were spending the night on the mountain-side with their goats. They came to help us make our camp

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fire in the open, and we all sat in a circle feeding it with sticks and boiling hot lemonade. The moon rose, as it always did in Greece whenever we had need of it. The beds were prepared, and we were in a state of exaltation at the beauty of the scene. Suddenly there was a sound of hoofs in the distance: it was the custodian and his mule laden with bedding and food. Some peasant had carried word of our presence down to his village, and he had come up at once. The idea that we should be contented to sleep out had evidently never occurred to him, so we hastily rolled up the sleeping-bags and obliterated all signs of camping. At 4,000 feet it was none too warm, and we were not really sorry to have a roof over our heads after all.

Waking up to this beautiful lonely place at 5 a.m. in the grey-blue dawn was a wonderful experience. The Elders arrived long before six, and can have had but little time with their families. They were in the best of spirits, and we started off on our seven hours' ride to Bouzi, the station on the coast, where we intended to pick up the afternoon train for Olympia. The first part of the way was very steep, down the Gorge of the Neda, where the ancients used to worship the black horse-headed Demeter. The surroundings harmonized with the late continuance of a savage cult. When we reached the valley of the Neda it was pink with oleanders in full flower. The river was far from filling its great wide bed, and bits of it have been given over to the plough.

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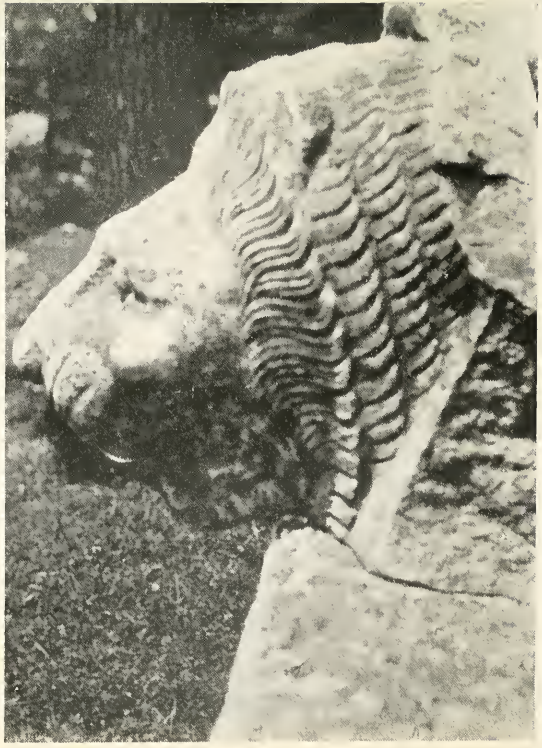
PLOUGHING BY THE RIVER EUROTAS



OLYMPIA, GARGOYLE: TEMPLE OF ZEUS

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We asked Aristides to sing, and groaned at the result. He put his head back and brayed in a high quavering voice, which was unbelievably ugly. The tunes were practically unrecognizable till he came to the Salonica song, and this was, as E. said, in the process of being converted into a folk-song. He had endowed it with all the characteristic turns and inflexions of that species; the rhythm was already quite different, and he ended each verse on any note except the tonic.

At the station we treated the Elders to drinks. They were polite, drank our healths, and made a few suitable remarks. Then they shook hands, and departed with the horses for Krestaina, a small town in the Olympia direction, where they intended to load up the beasts with wine. Evidently they were pedlars by profession, but picked up people as well as goods when opportunity arose. We had never expected to see a Greek Chorus in the flesh, and were sorry to watch them fade away into the distant landscape. The train which was to bear us to Olympia and civilization soon came in, and we left Arcadia with a pang of regret.

It seemed to us weeks since we had been in a train, but the intercourse with our fellow-passengers began as of old. We skirted the sea most of the way, and saw many lovely places in which we should have liked to stop. Nearing Olympia, a little man became exuberant in English about the beauties of his native place, Aspraspitia, which was only a long

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day's drive from Olympia. He invited us to go there with him next day, and stay the night. He said he had travelled all over the world, but no place was as beautiful as Aspraspitia; he could promise us that, and it would be such a pity to miss it. Why couldn't we go? We surely had time to see the loveliest place on earth, since we had already come so far?

We wished life were long enough to follow up such possibilities, but archæology at Olympia was our purpose just then, so we continued our refusals. The man magnanimously insisted on carrying our luggage up to the hotel, and gave us Turkish delight from a little shop on the way.

I believe that even the unbiased traveller would have considered that hotel moderately good, although it did not run to writing-paper; to us it was pure bliss. After our rough travels, a soft bed and plenty of hot water seemed gifts from the gods. We were very happy there, except for the fact that the mild air after the mountains of Arcadia seemed intolerably stuffy.

The little wooded hills, and the gentle undulating country, out of sight of bare mountains, are not what one is accustomed to in Greece. It is pretty country, and the great trees and thick grass that make the Temple precinct like a park are beautiful. How the Olympian Games were ever played in such a climate in the middle of the summer we could not imagine. The precinct is at river level, the Alpheios

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OLYMPIA : TEMPLE OF ZEUS FROM MT. KRONIOS

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having changed its course, overflowed its banks, and washed away the ancient stadium. Our favourite view was from the Kronios, the little hill above, from which all that remains of the great Temple of Zeus is seen between the trees, with the wide Alpheios flowing in the distance.

Between the Kronios and the row of bronze statues of Zeus, set up out of the fines inflicted for cheating at the Games, is a long line of twelve Treasure-Houses erected by the city-states of Sicyon, Syracuse, Epidamnos, Byzantium, Sybaris, Cyrene, Selinus, Metapontum, Megara and Gela. The remaining two are nameless. These treasuries were used as store-houses for the votive offerings of the states participating in the Games, and one would naturally suppose that every city of importance would have had its treasury. But in this list only two of the cities, Sicyon and Megara, were in Greece itself; five were in Magna Græcia, and of the remaining three, Epidamnos (the modern Durazzo) was of relatively small importance.

If we compare with these the list of Delphic treasuries, only two of the twelve named ones, Sicyon and Syracuse, correspond. The remainder belonged to Cnidus, Siphnos, Corinth, Bœotia, Athens, Potidæa, Agylla, Clazomenæ and Thebes. Marseilles and Rome shared one. We know from the Odes of Pindar that victors in the Olympian Games came from Agrigentum, Kamarina, Rhodes, Ægina and Orchomenos, and men of Ætna, Cyrene, Ægina

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and Agrigentum won in the Pythian. Besides, what did the Athenians and Corinthians do without a treasure-house when they went to Olympia ?

A little imp of a boy haunted the proximity of the treasuries, playing on pipes. He made a great deal of noise with these, and decorated the reeds with rune-like characters. In the beginning he asked for a franc for each, which we foolishly paid, for after that he never let us alone. We got even with him in the end by accepting his bogus offer of another for a halfpenny, and keeping the pipe.

After all, the glory of Olympia is its Museum. The great spacious hall with a pediment of the Temple of Zeus down each long side, the exquisite metopes on the short sides, and the Victory of Pæonios hovering over all is incomparable in its effect. How little we know about Greek sculpture, when to works as individual as these metopes we can assign no name or school ! The wonderful Hermes has a room to itself, and well as I thought I knew it beforehand, the extraordinary polish of the marble falsified all my anticipations. To my mind the brilliant reflections on the face blur it overmuch, so that only in profile, when the outline is sharply defined, did it quite come up to one's expectations. Although an original by Praxiteles, and the only one that has certainly come down to us, it was not in Pausanias's time thought worthy of special admiration. How this one fact brings home to us our inestimable losses !

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CHAPTER XVI

YANINA

WE were now prepared to leave Old Greece and enter upon the New. Yanina was our goal. For the third time we saw the Gulf of Corinth, a vivid ultramarine, with Missolonghi and the mountains opposite pale and filmy against the deep blue foreground. At Patras we went on board a small Greek boat that sailed to Prevesa on which I could scarcely stand upright. I banged my head in the cabin, in the saloon, and on going through all the doors. It was a bad boat, with bugs in it, but friendly, nevertheless, and we had an excellent breakfast next morning opposite the coast of Acarnania. There the great blue mountains fall sheer to the sea as they do at Leonidi. That wild fastness of ancient Greece looked wonderfully attractive, and we made up our minds some day to explore the rugged interior. At Leukas the boat stopped for hours, and we sat on deck among a number of soldiers, who had a map and were extremely anxious that we should miss nothing. It was a pleasant way

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of spending a beautiful morning, and at last, at mid-day, we landed in the Bay of Prevesa.

Prevesa itself, before the first Balkan War, had been Turkish, and once more we found ourselves among mosques and minarets. The picturesque town was freshly whitewashed, and glittered brilliantly in the sunshine. Since the war a service of military motors runs the sixty miles between Prevesa and Yanina. The German "lord" at Sparta had told us that the motor had twelve "rooms," but they were luckily not all taken, for half-way, an inferior machine, carrying soldiers, broke down, and we loaded them all into ours. Outside Prevesa are the finest old olive woods growing on real grass that I have ever seen. The excellent motor road went through them for miles, and came out in flat open green country that stretches unbroken to the shore of the Gulf of Arta, the old Ambracian Gulf, where Augustus conquered Mark Antony at the Battle of Actium. In this fine situation stand the red brick ruins of the Roman city of Nicopolis, founded by Augustus to commemorate his victory. The walls, in excellent preservation, with gates and towers, stretch for miles, and I have never seen brick so beautiful a red. Between the vivid green and blue of grass and sky the long line was wonderful, and from one point the great red walls stood out against a background of vivid ultramarine sea.

There followed a long stretch of fertile plain. On the left was the country of the Souliots, who sang so

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fine a song before hurling themselves down the precipice from their Castle. We all stopped for coffee at a wayside inn, and the swaggering officer opposite sent for a brush to remove the thick dust from off his clothes and boots. Then we entered mountainous country, which became ever wilder and wilder, until the motor emerged from the pass beneath the hill of St. Nicholas, whence King Constantine had directed the Greek attack on Yanina. On each side of the road at intervals stood roofless stone villages burnt out during the war. A Turk was one of the party in the motor, and as we drew nearer the town the Greeks eagerly asked him questions about the topography and the siege. He had a grave, immobile face, yet told them all they wished to know.

We came out at last into a wide mountain valley, with red-roofed Yanina in the distance running steeply down to the mountain lake. It is a romantically situated place. The lake, a deep round basin, was black with the shadow of the snow-capped overhanging mountains on the east. The town is built in two sections, the one upon comparatively flat ground sinking to the water's edge; the other leads to the citadel, which stands on a high projecting promontory jutting into the lake, with three precipitous sides that fall sheer into the water. Once more the graceful minaret broke the skyline, and the mosques seemed planted with an unerring eye for the composition of the whole.

We went to the large hotel, the Averof, which,

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although on the scale of barracks, possessed only two men, to act in all capacities of proprietor, porter and housemaid. They were extremely friendly, and gave us the best room for two francs a day. There was no restaurant, but we wandered down the main street till we found one, and had an excellent dinner for about a franc.

The next morning we sallied forth early to search for breakfast. On the opposite side of the great square in front of the Averof a high public garden overlooked the main street, where coffee was provided for the usual ten centimes. Below, hot rolls were being sold for a penny. While we sat breakfasting comfortably and surveying the scene below, a small boy blacked our shoes for another penny. Thus for the expenditure of threepence we felt ourselves monarchs of the field, and anyone wanting to economize might well live at Yanina.

On March 6 we had assisted in Athens at the anniversary celebration of the taking of the town. The King and all naval and military celebrities had attended a thanksgiving service in the cathedral. There had been great cheering and enthusiasm from the populace. Something of this joy of conquest seemed still to linger in the air of Yanina itself and was infectious. We walked the streets almost shouting for joy, we knew not why. It was a hilariously gay atmosphere. The streets were crammed with Greek soldiers and civilians in every variety of costume, besides Albanians in sheepskin cloaks

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VLACHS IN YANINA

A SHOP IN YANINA

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dyed black, and Turks. There were still a great many of these, and Turkish women, darkly shrouded as in Constantinople, walked up and down the streets, bearing who knows what sad faces behind their veils. It was not the sorrow of Turks but the joy of Greeks that was uppermost here. The place was still in military occupation, and swarmed with soldiers in their costume of khaki skirt, a modified form of fustanella. The national dress, thus converted into drab usefulness, is a strange sight. We seemed to be the only visitors there for pleasure, and the soldiers were all eagerness to show us everything and explain the six months' siege. On high ground in the centre of the town stand the barracks, with guns drawn up in front. Here the little khaki soldiers swarmed, delighted at being photographed. The walls of the great citadel, which was in two distinct parts, had been badly battered, and were not strongly built at any time. It might be a magnificent stronghold with the lake lapping the walls around, for as a site it would be hard to surpass. The views from it of the red-roofed town, framed through high gateways, were wonderfully beautiful. Soldiers guarded the shattered ramparts, and the great enclosure of the palace of Ali Pasha was closed to the public. But a Greek officer saw us standing outside, and delighted in doing the honours of it. At the farther corner stood the military hospital, with some wounded from the war still within. He was very anxious that we should go inside and talk

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to the men, but unfortunately we had coincided with the doctor's visiting-hour, and the soldier on guard was obdurate against all the officer's entreaties. "It is a pity these ladies should not see it. They are foreigners." Such was the perpetual Greek refrain.

Coming back through the thronged streets we saw a group of women unlike any we had ever seen before. They were short in stature, with savage, wild-looking faces, and clad in thick blue serge bestrewn with silver chains and buttons. Their head-dresses were cylindrical and very high. We longed to take photographs of so strange a crew, and tried to get near them for the purpose. Their accompanying man in a rough white sheepskin pulled them away, and glared at us. A Greek soldier was spectator of this scene, ran up to the man, tugged him by the sleeve, and said they must stand still if the foreign ladies wished to take a photograph. The man pulled himself away, and we feared a fight. It turned out that the strangers were Vlachs, a nomadic, independent people, who pitch their tents upon the mountain slopes of northern Greece, and resent any interference. We despaired of the photograph, when suddenly one of the women shyly came back into range, her natural vanity conquering her pride, and the photograph was taken.

The main street in which this scene took place was almost more picturesque than any in Constantinople

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or Brussa. The shops had open fronts from which embroidered second-hand clothes hung down, and the motley throng of human beings jostled each other as they surged along the narrow way, each more wonderfully dressed than the one before. It was our first sight of Epirot Greeks and Albanians, while the presence of the Turk always lends a touch of romance. The shops, too, were the most attractive we had found hitherto. Barbaric Balkan jewellery was plentiful, and at astonishingly low prices. I bought a pair of coral and silver earrings of Salonica make for five francs, and one of the silver knives in dagger form so common throughout the northern Balkans, and evidently a traditional shape of ancient origin. Great belts and buckles of silver and turquoise were being sold by weight.

We made an excursion in the afternoon to the island of Nisaki (i.e. "little island") opposite the citadel, where the people sat spinning around the village fountain shaded by big trees. There were several monasteries here and the remains of a considerable Turkish fort. Our boatman explained the military situation, and pointed out how the Greeks from St. Nicholas above the pass had bombarded the hill of Bisani, on which in turn guns were placed, commanding Yanina. The view of the citadel from the still waters at sunset was exquisitely lovely. For natural beauty of position the two chief cities of New Greece, Salonica and Yanina, equal if they do not surpass the celebrated sites of Old Greece.

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The boatman insisted on conducting us back from the quay to our restaurant, as it had grown dark, and we spent the evening at a cinema. One might imagine that a cinema at Yanina would be interesting, but the scene was laid in Rome, and ugly women got very slowly in and out of motor-cars. The happy pair finally became engaged on the Via Appia, with a chaperon hiding discreetly behind a tomb.

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CHAPTER XVII

THE REVOLUTION IN EPIRUS

OUR next objective was Corfu, and we had intended reaching Santi Quaranta, the port of embarkation fifty-nine miles away, by a public motor from Yanina corresponding to the one by which we had arrived. But it was midday, and the motor had just been taken off, owing to the revolt of Greeks against the new Albanian State then in progress in Northern Epirus. The road to Santi Quaranta in its later portion skirted the revolutionary area, and the owners of carriages in Yanina were afraid that their horses might be commandeered by the revolutionaries. Some drivers refused to go at all; the others asked a double price. We were extremely anxious not to retrace our steps to Prevesa so as to take a steamer from there to Corfu, the only alternative route. At the same time seven pounds for a two days' drive seemed a little excessive.

A Greek from Cairo, dressed in khaki, who had come up with us from Prevesa and was staying at the Averof, combated our indecision in a torrent of

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English. "Damn motor go yesterday, not go to-day. Dis damn people not know anything. You take damn carriage and go Agyrokastro; you see things you not seen before, never see again." He was on the way to the revolution himself to administer a relief fund, collected by the Greeks of Cairo, for the Greek refugees; and a medical motor, in the absence of the public one, came to his assistance. But it was largely owing to his zeal that we got up at 5 a.m., and made a last effort to find a carriage for ourselves. The ubiquitous hotel factotum escorted us to a stable at the farther end of the town where a driver and a crowd of other men were collected. E. started to bargain vigorously. The driver had a particularly attractive face, and began at a lower figure than the others, but he stuck to his price with great pertinacity. The crowd listened intently to the duel. E.'s Greek never appeared to better advantage, and the driver at last agreed to her offer of ninety francs. At the dramatic moment of concluding the bargain, he handed a ten-franc note with a flourish to the neutral hotel porter, as surety that we should get the carriage. We returned in triumph to buy food for the journey, and had another twopenny breakfast in the public garden.

In the crisp early morning air Yanina sparkled more than ever. The carriage arrived in due course with three large horses; we piled ourselves and our luggage into it, and rolled off along an excellent

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high road. Mountains skirted the wide valley on the east, and there was water in the river. On the west an undulating plain rolled away to the horizon.

Refugees from the revolution were not allowed inside Yanina itself, but some of them had got as far as the immediate outskirts of the town, and were living in tents by the wayside. We met carriages full of people and household goods coming towards the town, and were overtaken by Red Cross motors and doctors going out to the frontier. The refugees in carriages looked cheerful enough, but these were the ones who had started betimes, and were able to save their meagre possessions. Later on we were to hear a different tale.

As we progressed, the refugee camps became fewer and were pitched farther away from the road. Something persuaded us to jump out of the carriage at one point, and go off to investigate a camp at a little distance. We expected refugees, but, as we approached the tents, an army of dogs rushed out at us, barking horribly. A man in a shaggy white sheepskin called them off, but looked even more ferocious himself. We had disturbed an encampment of Vlachs.

In the words of Brailsford: "These seem to be the scattered remnant of ancient Roman colonies, which took refuge on the spine of Macedonia from the tide of barbarian conquest." Their native language is a Latin one, but they talk Greek as well, and belong to the Orthodox Church. In the non-mer-

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cantile villages they are semi-nomads, poor, wild and ignorant, following the migrations of their flocks. This encampment consisted of about ten tents; a large number of mules were tethered on the grass, but I saw no sheep or goats.

The shaggy spokesman, who came forward and kept the dogs off, did not like us at first. We asked politely whether we might take a photograph, but he squatted on the ground and firmly answered: "Δὲν ἐπιτρέπεται"—"It is not allowed." This is the form a printed inhibition takes in Greece, and seemed rather formal for the occasion. We looked very much disappointed, and said that we were English. This softened him a little; he told us to come nearer, and beckoned to another still shaggier old man who was proud of knowing a little of our language. The women collected in a bunch outside the tents, and the men signified that we might use our cameras. It was an extraordinary scene. The women wore the blue serge costumes heavily ornamented with silver jewellery that had surprised us so much at Yanina. Their high peaked hats were embroidered in black and white, and the whole effect was more elaborate than any other everyday Greek female costume. They spun as they stood, and the little children were diminutive replicas of their mothers. In contrast to the men, the women seemed clean and civilized. Their husbands were wild, dirty-looking ruffians, their bare chests being almost as black and hairy as their sheepskin coats.

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A VLACH ENCAMPMENT

VLACHS : S. EPIRUS

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Their lack of curiosity and unwillingness to be photographed were singularly un-Greek.

We danced back to the carriage delighted at our good luck, and drove on and on. At the village of Delvinakion, where we halted to rest the horses, a large contingent of Greek soldiers were encamped and idly kicking their heels. This was the army which had been compelled to evacuate Northern Epirus at the end of April, when, according to the Treaty of Bucharest, the country was formally handed over to the new kingdom of Albania. Whether the majority of the population were Greek or Albanian I will not attempt to judge. Suffice it to say that all the refugees we met were Philhellene, who agreed with one voice that it was impossible for them to live under Albanian rule. Their dislike of the Albanians, among whom they had always lived, was no new one; but now that the Greeks had conquered the country from the Turks by force of arms, they had hoped to belong to Greece. Instead they were to be handed over to their Albanian fellow-subjects, who stole their cattle, pillaged their farms, and were in a more backward state of civilization. Their one chance, they said, was to make a stand at the beginning and refuse to submit to the decision of the Powers who had made so grave a mistake in drawing the Albanian frontier. The Greek army was not allowed, by the Government, to take part in the fray, for an official violation of the treaty would have involved the restitution of the

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islands of Chios and Mitylene to Turkey. So the army withdrew a few miles across the frontier and looked bored to death, while the refugees streamed over in hundreds.

As the afternoon waned the camps of refugees became larger and larger. In one place there must have been fifteen hundred people, and the settlement already had the air of a permanent village. There were plenty of cattle and sheep and goats; a stream flowed through the middle, and improvised shops stood by the wayside. We met several women who spoke nothing but Albanian, and we communicated with them through their children as interpreters; they also agreed that it was impossible to live under Albanian rule. The alleged Greek propaganda by which peasants, against their wills, were bribed to speak and call themselves Greeks does not explain this case. It would be interesting to revisit the spot in a few years' time, and see into what the embryonic settlement has grown.

By this time it was dusk and we were approaching the Epirot-Albanian frontier. About two miles this side of it we reached a khan by the road, and there the driver told us we must spend the night. There were refugee encampments all around it, and an old tattered Greek refugee priest said we must come while it was still light and talk to the people he had brought from his village. He was a poor ignorant man, who thought that because we were English there was nothing we would not be able to

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VLACHS

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do for his people. There were about a hundred of them living in improvised shelters made of brushwood and leaves, and as yet the Red Cross had not come near them. They had no faith that it ever would, and were surprised to hear of the encampment of tents flying the Red Cross flag that we had passed upon the road. They had managed to rescue their sheep and goats, and so had plenty of milk, but none of them possessed any money with which to buy even a loaf of bread. Worse still, they were entirely cut off from all news, and the uncertainty as to whether they would ever be able to go back to their homes weighed upon them greatly. The chief man of the village had lost three hundred pounds and looked in the depths of woe himself, but walked about with us trying to console the others. The whole hundred people gathered in a circle, and put forward as spokesman a handsome youth of eighteen, who had arrived that very day from Nebraska, in the United States, to fight for his parents. He had come to spend the night with his mother in the encampment, and the next day was off to the front. "You see, I have my knife and my little rifle, and shall go—so—at the Albanians. That is all I want."

There was a disturbance in the crowd, and two large glasses of sheep's milk were brought up for us to drink. The peasants said they only wished they had more to give us and refused to accept any money. When we left to go back to the khan, all shouted "Ζήτω ἡ Ἀγγλία"—"Long live Eng-

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land." The priest said: "When you go back to England you will be able to lift up your voices for these poor people, and say that you have talked with them and know what they have suffered."

The khan was the rendezvous for the few soldiers of the district, and our driver, the rich refugee, the soldiers, and ourselves all took our evening meal together on a bare wooden table. The refugee wished us to come with him to a village on the mountain slope where there were better sleeping-quarters, but we wanted to start at 4 a.m. the next day, and were content to stay where we were. There were two cupboards leading out of the sitting-room, one with just room for two people to lie side by side on the floor. Luckily there was a window, and with our sleeping-bags we were quite comfortable. We shut ourselves in and listened to a tremendous shunting of furniture in the living-room outside before the soldiers shook themselves down on the floor to sleep.

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CHAPTER XVIII

REFUGEES AND CORFU

WE awoke at 4.30 a.m. feeling ashamed of being so late, for our driver had wanted us to start before that hour. It was an exquisite morning, and the refugees were already astir. Processions of women were walking along the road to their work in the fields. They wore shoes with pointed toes turned up very high, brightly coloured knitted stockings, a short white or blue skirt, and a white linen head-dress wound tightly round the head and half hiding the mouth, due no doubt to Turkish influence. If there had to be refugees, it was good that they should have so empty and fertile a stretch of land in which to settle, for the country is beautifully green, and might be made extremely prosperous.

At our breakfast of sheep's milk we discussed ways and means, and left all the money we could spare with the proprietor of the khan, who promised to provide the refugees with bread for one day at least. He asked us to recommend his "hotel," and we could hardly restrain a smile at the word.

In half an hour our carriage took us to the small frontier village, where a guard at the outgoing gate

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hailed us to stop. We thought there might be trouble, but were only asked what the European news had been at Yanina, and whether there was any fighting. After a look at our passports, an official with a dramatic gesture said: "You are free."

A number of Albanians in sheepskins were shut up in a great pen at the gate. They did not seem sufficiently strongly guarded to be prisoners, and we thought they might be hostages, as at that moment a truce was in progress between Greeks and Albanians, while negotiations with the Epirot provisional government were being carried on at Corfu.

Here the road divided, the right-hand fork going up the wide green valley to Agyrokastro, the centre of the revolution, where our Cairo friend had said we should see things we had "not seen before, never see again." We longed to drive down that road instead of the other, which skirted the new frontier to the sea at Santi Quaranta, but it could not be. There were no refugees in our new direction, and nobody else was travelling. The road went over the mountains, and we remembered the splendid Epirot brigand in the Palamidi, and wondered whether we were near his native haunts. At midday we reached the large village of Delvino, where we merely intended to stop for a few moments to water the horses. Instead we were acclaimed with glee by the multitude; our carriage was surrounded, and we were taken out and treated to coffee by the

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DELVINO: CAPTAIN OF VOLUNTEERS

DELVINO: VOLUNTEERS

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big man of the village, who was the local chemist in uniform. All were anxious to hear the news from Yanina, and to enlarge to us on the ignorance of the Powers who had drawn the Albanian-Epirot frontier in such a way as to make revolution unavoidable. Opposite us at the same café there sat a black-bearded man, whose clothes were almost as fine as those of the brigand. Fustanella and coat were of the same shade of brilliant blue, spotlessly fresh, and the finishings of chains and buttons glittered with gold. He made a deep impression upon me, and I asked the chemist whether it would be possible to take his photograph. They had a few words together, and then the vision disappeared, offended, as I thought, by the request. But not at all. It turned out that he was the captain of a little band of volunteers which he had raised to fight in the revolution, and that all wished to be photographed together. He collected them in an open courtyard, where a whole sheep was roasting on a spit, and they made a fine sight. The only pity was that the remaining half had already gone to the mountains and could not take their part.

We were indeed "lords" in that village; the chemist entreated us to stay longer and talk about the situation: our lunch was collected for us from the shops, and we were finally waved away by a crowd of people.

The Austrian Lloyd steamer for Corfu was said to be calling at Santi Quaranta that afternoon,

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but nobody knew when, so we hurried off to be in time for it. For the remainder of the drive the road wound downhill to the coast, and we left the magnificent snow-tipped mountains ever farther away. It seemed like bidding a final farewell to Greece.

When we at last rattled into Santi Quaranta, some fine-looking Greek officers were lined up in the street, saluting, and evidently expecting our arrival. When they saw our cameras, they came forward and asked in English whether we would take a photograph of them. "Then you will have it as a memento." They were officers in the Regular Army who had resigned their commissions in order to fight for the revolutionaries. The finest-looking said: "It is my duty; I cannot do otherwise; we took this country, and must keep it. I have gone over with my hundred men. When the revolution is finished, I shall return to the army." He seemed to anticipate no difficulty in doing that. In the two Balkan wars he had been wounded three times, and invalided to his home in Cairo, whence he had just returned. The officers had spent the days of the truce at Santi Quaranta, and were about to start back for the interior, so as to be ready for more fighting if the negotiations at Corfu fell through. They were still in uniform, but were about to discard it, and had been yearning all day for somebody to appear with a camera before it was too late. We all became very friendly, and made tea together in

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the hotel. Then they "symphonized" with our driver, and took the carriage back to the seat of war.

We sat on the quay waiting for the Austrian Lloyd boat, which was due at 4 p.m. Finally a steamer did pass without calling, but it was not till five o'clock that a boatman casually remarked that no other steamer was expected for two days and that that was the one we had meant to take. There was nothing to be done but continue our plutocratic career and hire a sailing boat. A crew of three came on board and two other passengers. One was an old man in a radiant white fustanella, who lived in Marathon village and talked with wonder of the crowd of Americans who motor out to the battle-field, but never stop at the village. There was a fine wind, and we flew across the great wide strait for two hours. The sea was smooth, and the big mountains that we were leaving behind loomed indigo out of the water. The channel between island and mainland is very beautiful, and it was an exquisite evening for the view. The great Monte S. Salvatore on the right roused all our climbing fervour. As darkness came on the wind dropped and two men had to row. The mystery of night shrouded the scene, but the stars came twinkling out, and at last we saw the lights of the town in the distance.

It was 10 p.m. when we reached the harbour. At the moment of landing another sailing-boat loomed up beside us carrying a load of Albanian prisoners

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in sheepskins. We were not surprised at having to wait for them to go on shore first, in these times of war. Not far away white shrouded figures were lying on the boards of another landing-stage ; these were doubtless the wounded. It was a curious arrival in so civilized a place as Corfu. After waiting an interminable time, the customs-official at length walked up and regarded us very suspiciously. " Why have you come from Epirus ? What were you doing there ? Are you journalists ? " He would have liked to keep us out of the island altogether, and put every difficulty in the way of landing our luggage. Passports, however, proved effective once more, and the luggage and our jaded selves arrived almost at midnight at the Pension Suisse. After so unexpectedly " lord-like " a career since leaving Yanina, we had exactly two francs left between us.

When we awoke the next morning in our clean beds, and had hot baths, and butter for breakfast, the whole Epirot trip seemed a dream. We realized for the first time how low our standards of food, cleanliness and comfort had become. To be lying on a spring mattress and not to have to get up at five o'clock—these were almost forgotten luxuries—so far away did Olympia seem ; and even Olympia was rough compared with this. We lounged the whole morning, enjoyed the sight of more money, and revelled in large bundles of letters and newspapers. Our lunch we took to the garden of the

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royal villa of Mon Repos, where for the first time since leaving Athens we saw cultivated flowers. We bathed in warm water not far from the cruisers of the British Fleet, which were anchored in the harbour pending the conclusion of the Corfu Agreement. It was all lazy and peaceful, and entirely delightful.

In the garden of Mon Repos we came across the recent excavations of a sixth-century B.C. temple foundation. Some column bases from there of unusual design are in the Museum. The colossal pediment from the Kaiser's excavations is of immense interest, and unlike any sculpture hitherto discovered. The great Gorgon with her girdle of snakes might have been enlarged from a sixth-century B.C. vase-painting.

There are splendid possibilities for excavation at Corfu, and we envied the Kaiser his facilities, although nothing would have induced us to live in his house. Of all the monstrosities of villas in which the potentates of Europe lodge themselves, the Achilleion seemed to us in the worst taste, and that in spite of its divine position and view. Little did we suspect that it would shortly become a hospital for the gallant Serbian army.

Corfu is a place in which to rest, dream and recuperate. Lovely as the island is, the scenery was less grand than we had been accustomed to recently, and we could afford at last to relax our tension. The finest view is toward the Albanian coast, but so calm and pearly blue did it all look that revolution

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seemed incompatible with such peace. The huge olive trees, prolific vines, rich cultivation, and good roads of the island made us feel that we were in Italy again, and much as I love Italy, our souls were still so wedded to Greece that we resented this a little. The women were of an Italian type, tall and broadly made, wearing low-necked white bodices, the line of the neck being finished off with a coloured chain of beads bearing two pendant gold circular medallions. I ransacked the shops for one of these, but in vain. Their plaits are done up on the crown of the head to afford support for the enormous weights they carry, and a great white head-dress falls down the back and at the sides. They looked beautifully clean and picturesque, but left me pining for my beloved Greeks.

The next day the Corfu Agreement was signed with the Provisional Government of Epirus, and the British cruisers disappeared from the harbour. We hired a carriage with a *bell' ombrello di sopra*, and drove right across the island to Palaiokastrizza on its western side. On the way the Epirot coast with its snow mountains looked superb, far finer than from Corfu itself. The coast at Palaiokastrizza reminded us of Amalfi, and the bathing from off the rocks in that blue sea was nearly as fine as at Sunium. We were respectable clean " lords " in Corfu, not the important, disreputable kind we had been in Epirus, and that day we felt we could face any of our English friends.

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MONTENEGRO: A TYPICAL GLIMPSE

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CHAPTER XIX

THE ROUTE TO MONTENEGRO

WE left Corfu in the *Baron Bruck*, a palace of a boat belonging to the Austrian Lloyd, but so high for its beam that, although the night was calm, it rolled uncomfortably. We were anxious to see as much of Albania as possible, but without spending too long at Corfu it was not practicable to time our arrival at Avlona and Durazzo by daylight. The boat reached Avlona at 10 p.m., and there the Albanian coast looked magnificent. For miles huge black mountains came sheer down to the coast with no foreshore at all, and villages were perched on seemingly inaccessible ledges of rock half-way up. We halted at Durazzo from 4 to 6 a.m., and I infinitely regret not having made a colossal effort to conquer the effects of the voyage and go on shore; for it was May 21, the day after the deportation of Essad Pasha by the Prince of Wied. Durazzo was in a panic, and we might have seen something of it, had we known. Of course it was too soon for anybody on board to have heard the news. We stopped at Medua, the port of Scu-

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tari, in the morning, and might have landed and gone to Scutari that way ; as it was, we went on to Cattaro.

We were blessed with the bluest of blue afternoons for the voyage through the world-renowned Bocche. From the narrow opening in the low limestone coast the fiord gets ever grander as the mountains loom higher and closer. After two hours of scenery which grew more beautiful moment by moment, the steamer gently ran alongside the quay of Cattaro itself at the mountain-locked end of the harbour. The depth of that narrow strip of water is so great that the largest vessel can lie close to the shore. There is only just room for the tiny town squeezed between the overshadowing mountains and the water. No wheeled vehicle is allowed inside, and the streets are the narrowest I have ever seen. The Austro-Montenegrin frontier ran along the top of the mountain at the back, and one was conscious every moment that the place was being held at the point of the bayonet against Montenegro, to whom geographically it ought to belong. The Austrian garrison seemed to outnumber the population. The only park was reserved for soldiers, and no photograph was allowed to be taken within five miles of the castle commanding the town. When we were there this prohibition was rigorously enforced. E. was prevented from photographing some peasants washing clothes in the little river, although no building came into range. The local photographer had

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recently had his premises searched, and every negative in which the Castle appeared had been destroyed. A foreigner was imprisoned not long before for photographing a church, and when E. took the apse of another from our hotel balcony, the waiter warned her to wait till she was out of the country before having it developed. This was on May 22, and in the light of recent events I have no doubt that Austria knew war to be imminent.

We could not adjust ourselves at all to this new attitude. Nobody thought us interesting or bothered to ask us any questions. After Greece, the atmosphere was decidedly chilly. The little town was picturesque enough with its heraldic doorways and echoes of Venetian building, but it has no real dignity or architectural beauty. The Castle seemed up in the clouds, so steep was the hill behind. Corfu life had made us lazy and we did not attempt the climb, but doubtless it would have been " verboten."

The drive from Cattaro to Cettigne is said to be the finest in Europe, and no praise could possibly be exaggerated. We picked up a carriage outside the gates in the morning, and found the market in full swing. There was a gay throng of peasants in costume, many of them Montenegrins, who had come down from the mountains, leaving their firearms at the frontier. The road winds up 3,000 feet in zigzags to the top of the ridge by Mt. Lovtchen, whence Cattaro has since been bombarded. From above,

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the Castle, which had seemed on an unattainable height viewed from Cattaro, looked just a speck by the edge of the lake. The day was sublime—the Bocche blue as blue, from that height appearing like two large lakes divided by mountains, with the great Adriatic beyond. The view combined the colouring of Amalfi with the grandeur of Switzerland and the luxuriance of the Italian lakes. In parts, the bare black mountains drop perpendicularly to the margin ; in others there is a band of rich vegetation by the water, with entrancing little villages nestling around Italian-looking campaniles. At the top of the ridge a diagonal row of stones in the road marked the frontier. On the Austrian side a large notice prohibited any taking of photographs ; in Montenegro, three yards away, action was unfettered.

The inland view afforded the greatest imaginable contrast. We had emerged on a stony, arid plateau, diversified by lowish limestone hills. There was scarcely a square foot of soil to be seen. For barrenness, not even the stoniest parts of Greece compare with it, yet every little patch of ground that could be cleared of stones seemed to be cultivated. Little pockets of earth, a few yards square and surrounded by stone walls, were ploughed ; but they were generally so steeply placed on the hill-sides that the ploughman had to jump over the rocks like a chamois, with a wooden plough of primitive type on his shoulder.

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CETTIGNE: PEASANT TYPES

CETTIGNE: ARISTOCRACY

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We showed our passports and were "legitimized" at Niegosh, a tiny village which boasts a "palace" in which King Nicola was born. The palace is a whitewashed cottage; the other cottages are not whitewashed; otherwise there is little difference. The smaller ones reminded me of cabins in the west of Ireland, built of rough stones, often without mortar, and thatched, with rocks tied on outside to prevent the ravages of the wind.

Beyond Niegosh we came out on the top of another ridge, from which the whole of limestone Montenegro was spread out before us, with the horizon a line of snow mountains. It was a superb view. In the foreground we looked upon a ploughed patch of ground which a peasant hoed while his wife scattered seed into the holes. We felt we were in contact with real primitive peasant life, in which the woman, as the sower of seed, brings fertility.

The road winds downhill from there to the capital, Cettigne, built in a dull little plain surrounded by low limestone hills, with no glimpse of a distant view. The place was a great surprise to us, for it looks like the tiny capital of a small German principality, with three wide parallel streets, lined with whitewashed cottages that resemble dolls-houses. The whole place reminded me of a toy village, so regular are the streets, so spotlessly clean and trim the houses, and so small and regularly placed the trees that line the main streets. Nothing here is more than twenty years old, and I suppose it is a triumphant

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achievement for a Balkan state to have produced anything so clean. But I like dirty Yanina better!

We deposited our things at the Grand Hotel at the top of the main avenue, and went out to leave our letters of introduction. By mistake we walked into the King's Palace while looking for that of the Crown Prince. A guard ticked at us like a clock, and we waited till a gigantic aide-de-camp who talked French came to our rescue. Till 1850 the King lived in the old Convent as its Bishop. Then he built a red brick toy palace called the "Bigliardo" because it was the first house in Cettigne to have a billiard-room. When we were there he lived in a whitewashed villa instead. The tall aide-de-camp directed us to the British Legation, which was temporarily housed in two small cottages opposite the Royal Palace; we left our last letter on a Count who lived over an antiquity shop.

It was all like a Gilbert and Sullivan opera! This miniature capital has been built to house a race of giants, and as the men in their brilliant red and blue clothes, with revolvers in their sashes, swung down the main street, they seemed to dwarf the houses. Never have I imagined a people so handsome. The men seemed to average about 6 feet 4 inches, and were broad in proportion, with the bearing of natural kings. They all had regular features, curling moustaches and black hair. The women, tall and erect, with oval faces and great solemn hazel eyes, their hair massed in a coronet

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of plaits on the top of their heads, were so beautiful that one fell in love with them at first sight.

We climbed a little hill by a trim gravel path to a view-point overlooking the town, like any German *Aussichtspunkt,* and watched some Montenegrins amusing themselves hurling stones. To see any Balkan people take exercise because they liked it seemed curious to us. But these giants must work off their steam somehow, when they are not fighting or rushing up the mountains with their ploughs. There was even a football field by the barracks which dominate one end of the town, and here on Sunday the male population turned out and played valiantly.

There seemed to be no poor people in Cettigne. Most men wore the same well-cut blue cloth knickerbockers, red jacket and waistcoat, and high, brightly polished top-boots. The universal red pork-pie cap, with a black border around it, and the initials of the King on top, commemorates the Slav defeat at Kossovo in 1389, when the Montenegrins shed their blood in vain against the Turks. All married women wear a black lace mantilla as national mourning, and this over their egg-shell blue three-quarter coats makes a distinguished costume. The people are the embodiment of romance; the town the essence of commonplace.

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CHAPTER XX

A SUNDAY IN CETTIGNE

BRILLIANT sunshine welcomed us the next morning, and all the Montenegrins turned out in their finest Sunday clothes and paraded the toy streets, as it seemed, for the special benefit of our cameras. We first took up a position outside the church by the Royal Palace where we had been told that the King often went, and wasted an hour waiting for him. A little open carriage drove round to his front door, and King Nicola and the Queen got into it—he in the long blue three-quarter coat of the richer men, she in the national married woman's costume. But they drove off in the opposite direction from the church, and returned again after ten minutes. We tried all the languages we could muster on the Palace guards to find out what was happening, but none of them seemed comprehensible. So we returned to the main street, and saw a gaily dressed crowd thronging the road outside one of the little two-storied cottages. On approaching, we heard a curious sound of chanting issuing from the house. A man in European dress, seeing our curiosity, came out and said in excellent French that

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CETTIGNE : WOMEN WAITING FOR THE FUNERAL

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it was his uncle's funeral. He had been an important personage, and we were strangers, so wouldn't we like to come inside? We could not refuse an offer so kindly meant. The corpse was lying on a high bier in the ground-floor room, and beside it stood a woman, like one of Michaelangelo's Sibyls, chanting a threnody on four notes, with a big sob between each recurrent phrase. The small chamber was crowded with weeping women mourners, in their long blue coats. The great man was a royal relative, and the father of a general who had been killed in the Balkan War; the King and Queen had been to pay their respects at the bier.

The Sibyl was a professional mourner, who improvised the life history of the dead man and intertwined it with the glorious deeds of Montenegro. It took her two hours at least, and at intervals she stopped to rest before improvising anew. Our host said that although he was *civilisé*, this custom of his country moved him deeply, and that her chanting was very impressive to one who understood.

The men were all waiting in a group outside, dressed in their very smartest. A relative of the dead man, in a long blue coat like the King's, and a brightly coloured sash, must have been nearly 7 feet high. Some wore long green coats, the sign that they were landowners on a somewhat large scale. One boy was carrying liqueurs and nuts on a tray, which he offered to us also; another had candles, and Orthodox priests stood about in groups.

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After a long while the chanting ceased; the women streamed out into the street and waited at the door. In a close group, with their beautiful solemn faces and wonderful hair, they were a lovely sight. The Greek priests formed up in procession, the coffin was carried out with the lid off, and the great crowd marched up the main street, the men first and all the women following. It seemed as though the whole population of Cettigne were honouring the dead. The procession halted for a few moments outside the Orthodox Church while the coffin was taken in, and then continued to the cemetery. There a soup of nuts was handed around for everybody to eat. In the opposite corner of the churchyard a woman, resembling the Sibyl, was chanting by a grave among the relatives gathered together. This was a commemoration service for the dead.

On the way home we passed the market-place, where an old blind minstrel sat on a step singing some ancient piece of heroic poetry to the drones of his single-stringed gusle or monochord. His chant was on the same four notes as that of the woman, and the verses followed on and on and on interminably. A spectator touched him on the sleeve and asked for some particular national song for our benefit, which he sang. No other institution has survived so completely from the Heroic Age. As in the time of Homer, among a people still in arms, only the blind can give themselves to music.

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CETTIGNE : ON THE FOOTBALL FIELD

A CETTIGNE GIANT

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Our host of the morning had asked whether he might come in the afternoon and show us the sights of the town. We gladly accepted, but there were no sights to be seen. The afternoon was spent in the new tidily-laid-out park, sitting on a bench and talking about LIFE. Our friend was an extraordinary product of Montenegro. Educated for the law in Constantinople, Germany and Switzerland, and now a member of the Government, he pined because he had not become a poet and an actor. Short, physically feeble and over-sensitive, he was a fish out of water in warlike Montenegro. We spent five hours together discussing everything in heaven and earth, and we liked him very much, although we could not help a tinge of regret that the only Montenegrin with whom we were on intimate terms should not wear native costume and be 7 feet high! He took us up again to the viewpoint whence we had watched the Montenegrins throwing stones (are these the "national games" mentioned in the guide-books?), and said that as we were alone we might not have thought it safe to go there. It was *such* a little walk, and we did not tell him of all the acropolises, thousands of feet high, that we had climbed by ourselves in Greece.

Our letters of introduction produced delightful entertainment for the evenings. Since leaving Athens we had had no intercourse with our fellow-countrymen, and to sit among books and pictures at the British Legation was a treat. When we were

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there on the second evening, sounds of music were wafted across from the distance; they came from a café, and we soon joined the merry throng of Montenegrins seated round tables in the café garden. The string band consisted of five Serbians, and the leader played the fiddle and sang at the same time. I have never heard such enchanting rhythm in my life. It would have been intoxicating at any time, but to us who had heard no music which had any distinguishable rhythm for months, it was quite rapturous. When we entered, the audience looked meaningly at the band, and we surmised that they wished it to play "God save the King" for our benefit. However, that was not in their repertoire. We cared little what they played, but drank in tune after tune with avidity. An enormous Montenegrin with a superb profile made way for us at his table; in another day or two I should have left my heart irrevocably behind with dozens of them!

As the hour grew later, the tables were moved aside, and these giants, in enormous top-boots, put their hands on each other's shoulders and began to dance, with the same enchanting rhythm. One great big creature was as light as a feather on his huge feet. It was all intensely exciting for us, and we stayed till the lights were put out long past midnight.

We groped our way back to the hotel, and found it dark and locked. Our room was on the ground-floor at the back, and we thought we might get in

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CETTIGNE : BLIND MINSTREL PLAYING THE MONOCHORD.

A MONTENEGRIN GIRL

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by the window. But when we came to investigate the long line of these, all partially open, we were doubtful as to which was our own. A large bag of cherries had been left on the sill; I softly pushed the window we thought was ours further open, and there was no cherry bag. In a country in which every man carries a revolver we decided to investigate no further, and finally aroused a sleepy waiter at the front door.

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CHAPTER XXI

THE JOURNEY TO SCUTARI

WE were up very early, and sallied forth for a final prowl. As it was Monday the people were all walking about with a purpose, and the market was thronged. The bard with the gusle had gone, and a line of fruit and vegetable booths by the steps took his place. Girls with beautifully embroidered vests, wearing pork-pie caps, sold the goods and knitted at the same time.

At 8 o'clock our rickety chaise appeared, and drove us over the limestone hills to Rjeka, the first stage on our journey to Scutari. It was a cloudy morning, so that the snow ranges were hidden, but Rjeka itself is a nice little cluster of cottages on a river full of water-lilies. The heavy cloudy atmosphere, the quiet full river and the flowers were not un-English. We drifted in a small river steamer to Vir Pazar, at the western end of the Lake of Scutari, listening to the talk of a giant Montenegrin, who had become a naturalized Canadian, but was deeply imbued with the legends and history of his native land; as we passed he pointed out all the famous sites of her exploits. It made us feel

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ignorant enough of Slav history, but the great castle rising out of the mist, the big man's enthusiasm, and the unusual atmosphere of it all was romantic.

Proud as our friend was of Montenegro, he did not want to fight for her. His father had been killed on the heights of Tarabosh during the siege of Scutari, and he said that in Montenegro there was too much misery; always war, war, war. He got into conversation with another Montenegrin, who produced some flat circular discs, the size of pills, out of his pocket, made of a hard yellowish substance. They turned these over together, and talked and talked and talked. The man had picked them up whilst making a railway cutting near Mt. Roumia, and had carried them about with him ever since, hoping to get some light upon their date and value. Here was a possibility of archæology for us again, after our recent backsliding, but we could contribute nothing to their elucidation. The two men, who were merely peasants, surprised us by their real interest in the subject. The Canadian citizen bought one to set in a ring, and we took two, promising to make every possible search in Museums, and forward the information to the finder. (So far our search has been in vain.) He seemed deeply grateful, and shook hands with us warmly on leaving the steamer.

At Vir Pazar there was time for lunch on shore, and the Montenegrin ordered what he thought suitable for us at a small shop. This was an ome-

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lette, a box of sardines and liqueur brandy. He would not sit at our table, but the liqueurs were his present, and we felt obliged to drink them.

This was our last intercourse with the Slav. On board the next steamer, which went down the Lake to Scutari itself, the whole atmosphere changed, and in a moment we were transported to the East. There were veiled Moslem women in trousers on board, more veiled and more betrousered than the women of Constantinople, and on landing, the pandemonium was more Oriental and more deafening than anything we had hitherto heard. Caiques, thirty feet long, with a row of chairs down the middle, were waiting for us to step into, and the quay was crammed with ragged-looking Albanians, all shouting at once. One of these, with an immense grin on his face, took us in hand very efficiently, and without speaking a word but Albanian, got us safely into a carriage and off to the Hotel Europe.

The town is some distance from the quay, and, as we approached, its minaretted outline made us feel that we had gone eastward from Greece again, instead of being on our homeward way. The hotel was full, but we were planted out in a private house that was entered through a high solid wooden gateway, such as are common in Scutari, heavy enough to keep a strong attack at bay. There was a big walled garden and a comfortable house inside.

We were now in the heart of Albania, only two days' journey from Venice, but really more in the

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MOHAMMEDAN ALBANIANS

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wilds than we had ever been before. The Montenegrins had told us that Scutari, from its geographical position and ancient history, ought to belong to them, and, knowing nothing about Albania, we had been ignorant enough to believe it.

In truth the Albanians are the oldest race in Europe, and speak a language that is pre-Greek. They are probably the descendants of the ancient Illyrians, who gave to Philip of Macedon his wife Olympias, who became the mother of Alexander the Great. Subjugated nominally by the Turk, they were never really conquered, but in the north have lived according to their own primitive code of law ever since, which is scarcely as developed as our Anglo-Saxon one. They have preserved their race and language, in spite of never being a nation or having a written alphabet. That is an astonishing feat, and after such a history they surely deserve to be recognized at last as an independent people.

The Montenegrins, after a prolonged siege, did capture Scutari from the Turks in April 1913; but to prevent a general massacre the town was at once occupied by international forces under the command of an English governor, pending the settlement of the new Albanian state. There was a garrison of two thousand troops when we were there, made up of Austrians, Italians, English, French and Germans, and we walked from our house past the sentry boxes of these diverse nations. We chose German as the language in which to address a sentry in order to

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ask for the house of Colonel Phillips, the Governor, and were answered in pure Cockney. When we tried to leave our letter of introduction and go away, three Tommies pursued us down the stairs and brought us back into the Colonel's office. He gave us the first news of the very serious situation in Albania that had followed the ejection of Essad Pasha a few days before. The bombardment of his house had roused Moslem feeling to a high pitch; the insurgents were rising thirty miles away; and at that moment Scutari was cut off from telegraphic communication with the new capital of Durazzo. The situation was extremely critical. We had naturally heard nothing of all this, and Colonel Phillips told us to come back the next morning for the very latest news. This was all more thrilling than we had bargained for, and we danced home with excitement.

The spectacle of the streets by daylight was most extraordinary. As in the case of Yanina and Cettigne, where there are also no guide-book sights, the interest of the street-life surpasses description. After spending a minimum of time over meals in the hotel, we put our chairs on the threshold of the front door, and with piles of cherries to consume, kept our eyes fixed on the passing panorama.

The costumes were unbelievable. The rich Catholic Albanian women wear trousers with from sixteen to forty yards of material round each leg, with two pairs more inside; what with their high-

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heeled kid boots, the way they have to waddle, in order to get over the ground, is most extraordinary. The men are excessively tall and thin, with keen, peering faces, armed always with rifle, revolver and knife. The blood-feud is still the backbone of the social fabric. Some trifling insult causes the first murder, and till that has been sufficiently avenged or money compensation has been accepted, the two families are at war. A relation returning from foreign parts, and ignorant of the family feud, is equal prey. Under such circumstances no wonder the Albanian hugs his rifle and lets his wife drive his beasts, while he peers with eagle eye into the landscape, for women are exempt from blood-feud law, and hence do all the work.

There were still some Turks in Scutari. We wandered once off the road into a deserted-looking mosque, its cemetery overgrown with weeds. Inside, a hodja, his green scarf wound around his head, was expounding the Koran to one faithful Turk. Then with a noiseless cat-like tread, a tall Albanian, in black and white striped trousers, strode through the cemetery into the mosque, and crouched beside the Turk.

While our minds were intent on these unwonted impressions, a regiment of Tommies swung down the street behind a brass band. The strangeness of native life was only intensified by the spectacle of the international troops, of whom the Albanians, moreover, seemed completely oblivious.

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With our usual luck we were in Scutari on market-day. From early morn men from the mountains streamed into the town, some dressed in savage-looking yellow skins, others in the narrow black and white trousers that begin way below the waist, and keep up as by a miracle. The men were bedecked with silver buttons and chains ; wonderfully wrought silver ramrods stuck out of their swathed belts. The Christian Mallissor women dressed not unlike the women of Epirus, in rough coloured stockings and very short narrow skirts, but each was burdened with a metal belt six inches wide which it made one tired to look at.

A long straight road led from the town to the Bazaar near the quay, and the picturesque groups, driving donkeys and carrying objects to dispose of in the market, streamed steadily on. The Bazaar itself was crammed. In the shops with their open fronts white-fezed Albanians squatted on the ground, drinking coffee. Occasionally the rich Latin merchant, with his long tasselled fez and baggy trousers, or the Mohammedan Agha, in his white fustanella, longer than the Greek, put in an appearance ; but market-day was principally the rendezvous for Mallissors from the mountains.

They were all absolutely unconscious of us, although we were the only foreigners in the Bazaar. No Albanian seems to have the slightest curiosity or the least desire to be photographed, neither did they appear to notice our proximity. The Moslems,

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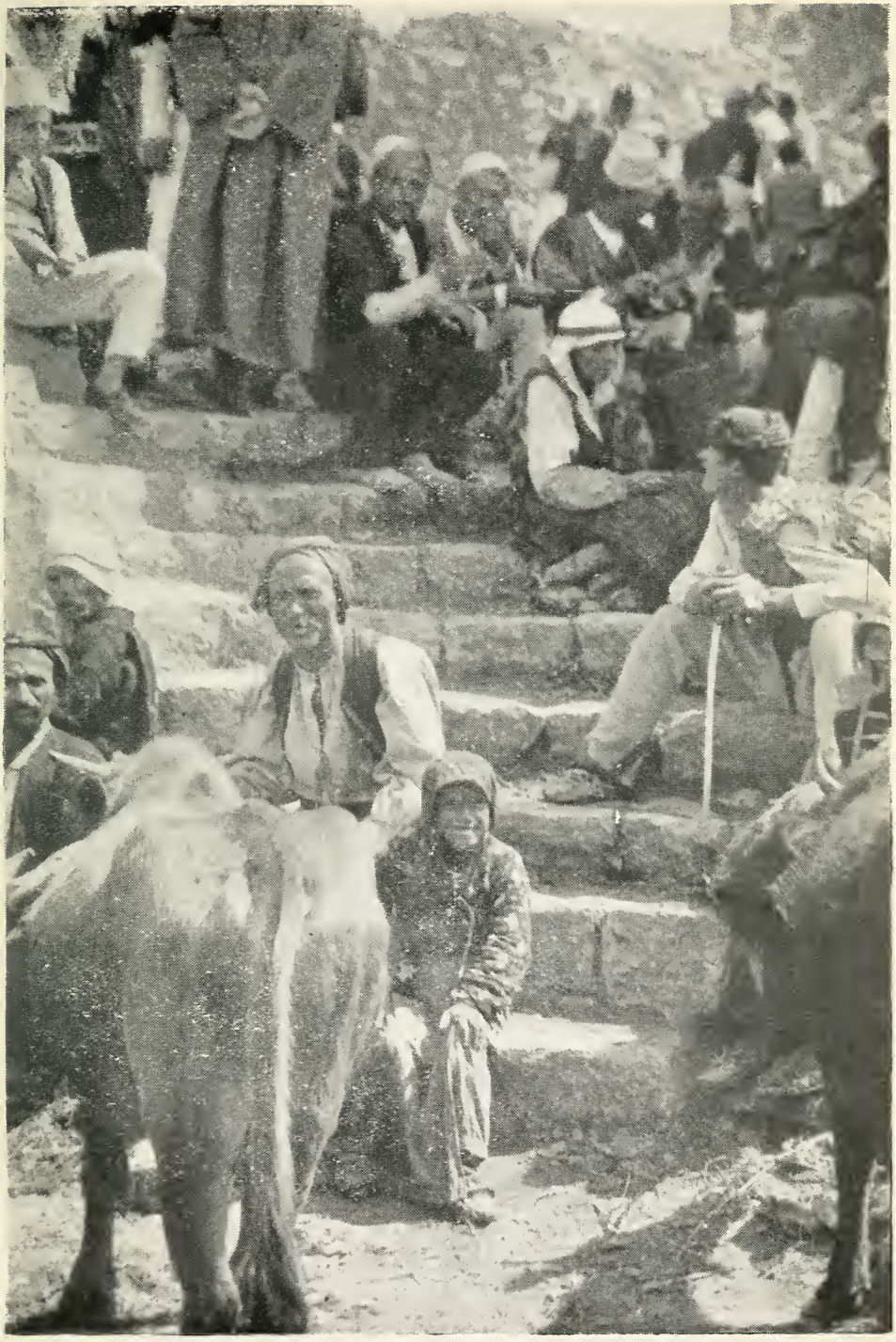

SCUTARI : THE CATTLE MARKET

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who form about a third of the population, left their veiled women in rows in the side streets, while they did the family shopping. Some of these squatted on the ground, or sold vegetables behind their veils. Instead of wearing black, like the Turkish women, Albanian Moslems dress in brilliant coloured chintzes, and show their eyes as a slit between two white face-coverings.

The cattle market was the most picturesque spot of all. A curved flight of steps led upwards from it, on which the boys from the mountains sat in their yellow skins, while the grave elders below prodded the cattle and drove their bargains home. Before long the procession of people, who had concluded their purchases, began to stream the other way. We could have stayed in the Bazaar indefinitely, watching the extraordinary show, but luncheon and Colonel Phillips were awaiting us in the town.

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CHAPTER XXII

THE INTERNATIONAL OCCUPATION OF SCUTARI

THE outbreak of European war put an end to the international occupation of Scutari early in August, 1914. The state of things I am describing is, therefore, a chapter in the past, and may on that account be of a certain permanent interest.

When we arrived for luncheon with Colonel Phillips, to hear the latest political news, he was still interviewing Albanians. During the first months of his year of governorship, Albanians with grievances put them before him for seven hours of every day, and as these dealt, for the most part, with the intricacies of blood-feud procedure, and developed ramifications month by month, the stories must have been a strain upon any memory. The reduction of blood-feuds by peaceful pressure was his policy. "You are foolish to try and kill that man. You know he is a better shot than you are, and that it is no good." In this particular case the man paid no heed, slightly wounded his enemy, was shot in return, and prepared the way for

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SCUTARI MARKET

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the sacrifice of five more lives. Near Scutari a woman is rarely the cause of a blood-feud, but when the unusual once did occur, the men of the family were very much embarrassed and would tell the Colonel little about it. "That is quite enough for you to know. It isn't a thing that would happen in your country."

When the Governor emerged from his interviews, we were introduced to his household. The ménage consisted of the Austrian and Italian Staff officers, with whom he governed the town, and an English lieutenant in charge of the relief of refugees. Austrian and Italian interests in Albania conflicted, and as neither could accept the leadership of the other, they compromised on an English Governor, with whom they lived on terms of perfect amity. That luncheon was the most vivid display I have ever had of an Englishman's natural genius in dealing with men. In a position in which one might imagine that jealousies would be intolerable, he had no difficulty with the foreigners. He treated them all exactly like Englishmen, called them by nicknames, chaffed them in a genial way, and said to the Austrian: "That's what your infernal Government does, Charlie," when he criticized the banishment of Essad Pasha. "Charlie" (I never discovered his real name) remained peacefully placid throughout.

The situation in the new Albanian state at that moment (May 26, 1914) was becoming increasingly

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grave. Twenty thousand armed Mohammedans, outside the control of the Prince of Wied, were stationed near Durazzo, ready to attack the town. In the south the Greek revolution was in full progress. Only in the north, where the influence of Colonel Phillips was supreme, was there still peace. Legally he governed only Scutari and the immediately surrounding country, but in practice tribe after tribe had asked to be allowed to come in. An amusing story is told of a mountain tribe who demanded a personal interview previous to possible inclusion. Colonel Phillips rode out to meet them, and said there would have to be fewer blood-feuds in the future.

" But what would you do," replied the Albanian chief, " if your enemy were always lurking behind a rock, and creeping and creeping towards you, and suddenly jumping out at you and killing you ? "

" Why, I should shoot him, of course," said the Colonel. Whereupon the whole Albanian tribe discharged their rifles into the air and yelled : " We will be your men ; you are the man we want to follow."

In addition to the internal complications in Albania, the Montenegrin inclusion of the Albanian tribes of Hoti and Gruda had produced a festering sore on the northern frontier. Nineteen thousand refugees had streamed into Scutari from the north, and with no money to feed them, Colonel Phillips had been obliged to drive all but two thousand back

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into the mountains. The Montenegrins were perpetually raiding Albanian cattle across the frontier, but had announced that if any Albanians undertook reprisals, they would invade the country. The new state seemed about to fall around the ears of the Prince of Wied like a pack of cards, and in the process, the Colonel feared a European war.

At this time of anxiety and strain he, nevertheless, showed us the most delightful hospitality. That afternoon we drove in the only carriage Scutari possessed to the Castle, which is a superb Venetian stronghold crowning the hill above the Bazaar. It has the finest entrance arch, six bays deep, I ever saw, and on the summit, beside the Albanian flag, flew those of England, Austria, Italy, France and Germany. The Colonel said that seven thousand Mallissors thronged on to the top when the Albanian flag was first hoisted, and shouted as with one voice. The view from there is sublime. On one side the hill drops perpendicularly to the wide river Drin that sweeps around it in a bend. Beyond are the heights of Tarabosh, from which the Montenegrins attacked Scutari. The green land sloping to the lake, studded with minarets and red-roofed houses, with the mountains in the distance, made an unforgettable picture. The river only needs to be restrained from flood to make the country rich.

The curious stone-roofed, fortress-like medieval church within the Castle was stored with sufficient provisions for a month's siege. As we stood by it,

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peering down to the road below, a cavalcade of horsemen in single file appeared upon it. "There is my interpreter," said the Colonel. "Oh, but he hasn't brought me any prisoners. I *sent* him to get prisoners. What a pity!"

We had already been to see the prison, one of the buildings put up since the siege. It had a large courtyard like a Zoo, in which birds built nests and a pet stork walked about on the end of a string. When the international forces took possession of the town, much of it was a wreck, and as the Albanians have hitherto always murdered any Governor who presumed to tax them, all the rebuilding had to be done out of Customs Dues. The road-making was an even more serious item of expenditure, and the Colonel pointed out their well-made smooth surfaces to us with pride. A large hotel was in the act of building to house the Prince of Wied, who, but for the troubles consequent on Essad's banishment, should have arrived at Scutari on his maiden visit the very day we did. The people, ignorant of the critical condition of affairs farther south, daily expected him to arrive, and his colour photographs were being touted about the streets for sale. Needless to say, they will never see him now. The Prince of Wied has accomplished the feat of being King of Albania for six months without ever visiting its most important town.

The Colonel took us for another drive to the magnificent Venetian bridge of Mesi over the river Tiri,

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A GROUP OF REFUGEES AT ANTIVARI

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a few miles north of the town. It has five great arches on each side of the huge central one, and being the only work of man in sight, has some of the impressiveness of that glorious Etruscan bridge at Vulci, which still carries its hundred foot span all alone, the one sign of civilization on a desolate spot. The bridge was the centre of a battle during the Montenegrin siege of Scutari, and the Colonel took us into the trenches between it and Scutari. Scutari under its Turkish Governor made a brave resistance, and was finally only starved out.

In the country we met several Albanians striding along with the usual panoply of arms, their great rifles slung over their shoulders. The Colonel shook hands with them all, and they in their turn offered us cigarettes all round.

To succeed in authority over these brave and medievally minded men, it is necessary to approach them from a medieval point of view and win their sympathy. The Colonel said they had a delicious sense of humour, but this manifested itself sometimes in peculiar ways. It is the custom of the Northern Albanians to report a blood-feud murder instantly to Scutari, so that the machinery of money compensation may be set moving and prevent, if possible, the taking of any more lives. Some men, fresh from the feud, were interviewing the Colonel, when he suddenly noticed a dripping of blood upon the floor. "You dirty brute, what are you doing, messing my carpet like that?" The Albanian went

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off into peals of laughter. "Did you think that was *me*? Why, it is my brother's blood. He was killed this morning."

Once the Governor was rating a very obstreperous tribe:—"You are altogether impossible, and I won't govern you any longer. I won't give you any money, and I won't have anything to do with you at all." Whereupon the chief answered: "You are our Father and our Mother. We love you very, very much. Please accept *this*," and drew out from beneath his jacket an enormous white hare.

Another chief walked a great white ram down the mountains as a present for the Colonel. When it arrived, it had two red apples painted on its horns; these had unfortunately worn off when we saw the ram, but it was the one pet of the international establishment, and in great demand.

On returning from one of our drives, we were sitting in our favourite street café, eating the cherries so opportunely in season, our eyes concentrated on the extraordinary costumes in the streets, which never became familiar. Suddenly there was a sound of savage music, and a martial procession of Mallissors, walking behind gaudy banners, came into view amid the wild acclamations of the public. These were the 120 summoned by the Prince of Wied as an extra bodyguard, at the beginning of his troubles. They went down to Durazzo in all their finest embroidered clothes, and on arrival refused to take the initiative against the Mussulman Albanian insur-

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gents. This was their return, but had they been victorious survivors from Marathon, their entry could not have been more triumphant. The weird music, the line of banners, the magnificent costumes, and the air with which they walked and wore them, made them seem a survival from the heroic age.

The last event of our stay in Scutari was an evening party at the English mess, to which all the foreign officers came. Our hotel was opposite the Austrian officers' mess, and these men gave us a recital of our doings from the moment of arrival including my pursuit, with a camera, of two ladies in enormous trousers, and our purchase of a fine silver-handled Albanian ramrod. "Europeans," as we were called in the East, were rare in Scutari, and we never again expect to be of so much importance. All the hundred or so foreign officers clicked their heels, shook hands and saluted twice when introduced, and the whole process had to be gone through again when we went. They were equally punctilious with each other whenever they met, which, in a small place like Scutari, must have been very trying for Englishmen.

Never had we so much wished for anything as the opportunity to turn into journalists and remain there for a few months. As it was, we felt our presence in the troubled state of affairs to be somewhat of a burden to the authorities, and tactfully took our departure the next morning. Between the drive and the evening party, all the Colonel's

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reconnoiterers had come back from the south with bad news. He was to have a secret meeting with the Prince the next day, and all was so thrilling that we could hardly bear to tear ourselves away from the centre of information. Little did we think that ten weeks from that day every foreign soldier would have left Scutari, and that "Charlie" and all the other charming Austrians would be our enemies.

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LAKE OF SCUTARI: TURKISH REFUGEES

ANTIVARI: TURKISH REFUGEES

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CHAPTER XXIII

DALMATIA

AS if to console us for leaving the place where we wished to be, the rain came down in torrents as we got on board the steamer once more for Vir Pazar, on the way to the Montenegrin port of Antivari. Thus for the second time the snowy peaks which should have been in view were swathed in mist, as we glided slowly down the lake. At the landing-places swarms of Turkish refugees came on board, natives of the Sanjak of Novi Bazar, which had become Montenegrin after the second Balkan war. These Turks had tried for a year to live on under the new régime, but now preferred to go back to Turkey. Whole families, with cradles, carpets, and sacks of clothes, came on board and crowded together in the bows. They all had sufficient money for their fares, but looked anxious, in face of the great step in life that they were about to take.

The railway over the mountains from Vir Pazar to Antivari is a fine piece of engineering. We went up and up and up, and came out at last on a level

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with the mountain-tops, overlooking much of Albania and Montenegro. The train descended as steeply on the other side, till we reached sea-level at Antivari, a tiny place on the foreshore, with black mountains rising sheer behind it.

The whole of the flat ground was one mass of refugee huts, covered with gaily coloured rugs and carpets, which were evidently the possessions most prized by the poor people. Each hut had its little camp-fire, where the women were cooking supper with their meagre utensils. There must have been a thousand of them at least, as for weeks they had assembled, waiting for the Turkish steamer which was to convey them free to Constantinople. It was then lying in port, and rumour said that it would start in two days. The refugees who had come by train with us joined this crowd. We walked about among them in the evening light, watching the smoking fires and the chased coffee-pots, some of lovely design. The people looked cheerful enough, and all would have liked to talk with us, but we were not able even to wish them a happy journey.

It is difficult to believe that Antivari should since have been bombarded, and that only the outrageously expensive Hotel Marina, which charged us 3.75 francs for a bath, should still stand untouched. We left it at daybreak in an Austrian Lloyd steamer, and once more had the bluest of blue days for our voyage through the Bocche di Cattaro. We lunched at our old hotel, and cast longing eyes up the zigzag

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road to Cettigne. Although we went on shore for two hours only, the Austrian officials examined our luggage, and during the following week we had it looked at ten times, although we never went out of Dalmatia.

Our next stopping-place was Ragusa. Should that be injured in the war, it would be an irrevocable loss. The fortification walls are so perfect that no carriage can get inside them, and the great Stradone, a road running round two sides of a square, and paved the whole way across, was one thronging mass of people in fine costumes, taking their evening promenade, as we arrived. It is a thoroughly medieval town, but with no squalid picturesqueness. Laid out on a grand scale, with its vistas finely planned, it reminded me of Rome, in spite of its small size. The individual buildings are very beautiful, some of them built by Albanian architects in the thirteenth century. The back streets between the Stradone and the sea, narrow, steep, and picturesque, are nevertheless of an Austrian cleanliness. The local stone is very fine, and each house has a courtyard containing a Venetian-looking well-head.

It was extremely hot there, and at night the whole population, gaily dressed, walked round and round the Stradone in pairs listening to the band, which, before going to bed itself, did the circuit, playing as it marched. We were there for Whit-Sunday, and the peasant women looked very pretty

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in their best Herzegovinian costumes, with dark accordian-pleated skirts, and head-kerchiefs tied in a bow at the back, the ends hanging down the neck. The children were being confirmed in the cathedral, and we watched each godparent tie up its child's forehead with a white fillet to keep the oil and blessing in place.

On the Austrian Lloyd steamer to Spalato we made the acquaintance of a Serbian-Croatian solicitor from Sarajevo, who kept up a ceaseless flow of invective against the Austrian Government. It was no mere ordinary criticism, but a fiery passion that possessed him, which, if typical of his race, made us marvel that revolution had not long since broken out. He said that his people dissipated their energies talking for ever instead of taking action, but that some day it would come. "Charlie" had told us at Scutari that in the Austrian Army every command is given in six languages, and that then there will always be men who have not understood. This was not a cheerful prospect for Austria in a war! While talking with the Serbian-Croatian, we passed an extraordinary storm-centre, and saw a cloud-burst over the sea a mile or so from the coast. The black sky and the livid limestone hills looked Satanic. The thunder was terrific. We emerged from it safely, however, and landed at midnight at Spalato.

Even at that hour we could see a flicker of light from lamps on the formidable and austere sea-front,

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REFUGEES AT ANTIVARI

TURKISH REFUGEES COMING ON BOARD. LAKE OF SCUTARI

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which was once the outside wall of Diocletian's Palace. The whole town is built within this enceinte, and embodies the chief features of the Palace. The houses in the central street are numbered "No X Peristyle," and to the east and west stand the Baptistery and Duomo, formerly respectively the Temple of Jupiter and the Mausoleum of Diocletian himself. We watched a great service in the latter from the lunette window on the Campanile level, and extraordinarily picturesque it looked through the mist of incense. The fine medieval decorative work within the town deprives it of any classical atmosphere, although the scheme and plan and upstanding buildings are, for the greater part, of the time of Diocletian.

After one of our all too early starts from Spalato, we arrived at Traü at 9 a.m. without having touched a morsel of food. It was the hottest day of our whole journey, so we hired a boat, and let it drift towards the open sea while we took a long siesta. The picturesque island town, with its cathedral spire in the distance, shimmered in the heat, and we felt, on awaking, all alone on that wide sheet of water, far, far away from our world. There were no visitors at Traü, and we were almost as happy there as in Greece. Dalmatia seemed to us, on the whole, over-sophisticated, and the scenery dull compared with what we had seen. In fact, we were thoroughly bored with the little dumpy limestone coast hills, which only shows how fatally

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easy it is to get spoilt. We resented, too, our enormous hotel bills, and having to pay the porters three francs every time they touched our many small handbags. For these reasons we decided to go to a poor hotel at Zara, instead of to the one good one, and were thoroughly uncomfortable. There was no butter for breakfast, and in the town the restaurants and cafés were bad without any compensating picturesqueness of street life. Zara cannot compare with Ragusa, and is not as sympathetic as Traü. Individual buildings of course are fine, but the cathedral was being restored and had a stoneyard inside it. The restoration fervour on the Dalmatian coast and the thoroughness with which it is done is spoiling the cities. We were excessively lazy in those days; got up late; slept in the afternoon, and did not recognize ourselves. But it was far hotter than in Greece.

Zara brought us one piece of luck, however, for our visit coincided with market-day, and our attention happened to be attracted by an old, old man in a corner surrounded by enormous baskets of pots. He wore a dark red turban and was a Morlach. That was interesting enough, for Morlach means Mavro-Vlach (black-Vlach), and these people wore turbans in Europe before the coming of the Turks. There are sculptured Morlachs in turbans on the base of the magnificent west door of the Cathedral of Traü, which dates from 1240. The pots thrilled us most, however, for they had inherited

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ZARA : MORLACH WITH POTS

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the tradition of early geometric ware of 1,000 or so B.C. One vase, which I carried home in my hand, had its almost exact prototype in ancient Cyprus. We called the old man the Last of the Morlachs, for he was very, very aged, and fell asleep while he was selling us his goods.

Fiume was the last spot at which we touched on that coast, and there it rained all day long and we went to see Quo Vadis on the cinema! Fiume will always stand out in my mind beatified by the magnificence of its cherries, on which no rain and no absence of interesting sights can cast a blight.

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EPILOGUE

WE left Fiume by an evening boat for Ravenna in a terrific storm. We could hear the sailors slip and fall full length on the deck above us, as the ship nearly turned somersaults in the night. Thanks to Mothersill, neither of us turned a hair, and we were ready in the early morning to dilate with the unusual emotion of arriving in Italy by a narrow sluggish canal, with flat land on each side of it, that might have belonged to the east coast of England. The red sails of the fishing-boats were gorgeous, but so narrow was the canal that we nearly swamped each successive one as we passed it. There were five miles of this; the country dead, dead flat, but broken on the distant left by the curious outline of the mountain in San Marino; on the right by what remains of the Pineta forest, famous in the time of Dante. The long straight line of trees sharply bounding it was very impressive, and our canal intersected its westernmost end. Then came the brick towers of Ravenna.

I would not have believed that an Italian town could be as ugly and dull without as Ravenna.

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Not one street has any individuality, and each building is uglier outside than the last. But to round off our study of mosaics a sojourn there was invaluable. A general strike, following a riot at Ancona, was declared during our stay, and every hotel café was barricaded to hide all signs of life within. Our number was now augmented to three, and we had formed the delightful plan of arriving at Venice at midnight by the light of the full moon, so that the finest aspect of the city should dazzle our new friend's first vision. Alas, for the well-laid schemes of mice and men ! When we stepped out of the train, the full moon had done her share, but *all* the gondolas were on strike, and we had to walk to the hotel, shouldering our luggage. This was the first piece of bad luck we had had on our journey, but we had left Ravenna by the last train that ran for two days.

The strike continued nearly a week in unabated fury. One night the Piazza of San Marco was filled with a tense crowd of men ; marines, three deep, with fixed bayonets, were lined up at the end opposite the church. So familiar had our Scutari experiences made us with the sight of armed men that we paid very little attention to these, and walked away to our hotel. Ten minutes later deafening shouts arose, for the marines had charged the crowd the full length of the Piazza. We only regretted that we had missed the show through sheer and needless apathy.

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That year we seemed fated to be in the vicinity of wars, past or present, little as we suspected that each place as we left it would become more deeply embroiled. The Dardanelles are blocked to navigation; Salonica, the base of an allied army; Constantinople, Montenegro and Albania in enemy possession. What the Slavs of Spalato and Ragusa are suffering one hardly dares to think. The fate of Albania and the wreck of Colonel Phillips' work will never be remembered in the general wreck.

Sunt lacrimæ rerum.

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SKETCH MAP
OF
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SHOWING AUTHORS ROUTE

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