

GREECE.

Five ~~thirty~~ years ago Greece was a happy country. She used, at least, to give this impression to the travellers who, especially about spring time, streamed into her from all parts of the world. Greece is a small country, but it seems that happiness prefers small places to live in than large ones. I do not know why, it is easier to imagine happiness in a small cottage than in a big London house. When a Londoner gets a holiday, he often is anxious to go and spend it in a very small cottage. In the same way when travelling abroad was possible, many English people who got a holiday were anxious to go and spend it in Greece. And they were not disappointed. Somebody who goes abroad for a holiday is looking for happiness - and Greece could give plenty of happiness to her visitors. She has plenty of sun and plenty of sea, - these two beautiful symbols of happiness. We shall speak of her sun later on. Let us first say a few words about the sea that has as much importance for the Greeks as for the British. Greece is almost an island like this country - and the Greek loves the sea as much as an Englishman. The Greek Merchant Navy, that is now ^{so helpful in} ~~helping in~~ the common effort, is numerous and famous today, - and more than twenty centuries ago it was through her ships that Greece had become the centre of the ancient world for a long time. Greece had been compared to Britain because of that. A famous geographer said that the Greeks held the same position in reference to the world of the ancients, which is occupied at the present time by the English, with reference to the entire earth. There exists indeed a remarkable analogy between Greece and her Archipelago

and the British islands at the other extremity of the continent. Similar geographical advantages have brought about similar geographical results as far as commerce is concerned, and between the Aegean and the British seas time and space have effected a sort of harmony."

This harmony between the British and the Greeks has proved much deeper during this war than one might have expected. Today we are fighting side by side, because our attitude towards a free life is the same. It is perhaps the free perspective of the sea that made both of us real lovers of freedom.

We said above that besides the sea Greece can give us plenty of sun. Plenty of light is what makes Greek landscape so incomparable. If you have not been to Greece, you must have heard at least about the beauty of her landscape - that is very different from the beauty of the English or other continental landscapes. One must not expect from Greece, landscapes of a romantic, fertile character, full of shadows and rich in ~~water~~^{river}. Of course there are such landscapes in Greece, but they are not characteristic of the Greek nature - of that of Attica and the Islands. Greece is not a fertile country. Almost all Aegean Islands are barren, naked rocks, burning under a strong sun. But they are not less beautiful for that. Their simple lines, the unsullied, bright, transparent colours, the miracle of light and the moderation in size make ~~of~~ these islands one of the most beautiful parts of the world.

The rocky, mountainous, barren character of Greece makes her a scantily populated country. Although she has an area as large as that of England, before the war she had little more than one fifth of the population of England. Greece is mainly an agricultural country. According to the

latest statistics before the war 60% of the occupied population were engaged in agriculture. It was also from agriculture and stock-farming that 45% of the national income was derived. In a total area of 55 square miles, 15% was arable 3% gardens, 8% pastures, 18% forests and 55% waste. The culture of cereals came first in importance. It occupied more than half of the cultivated area. Bread is the main food of the Greek. But although there was no place in Greece where cereals were not cultivated - often with incredible pains under the most unfavourable conditions, the production was far from covering even a small part of the needs of the country, and foreign cereals had to be imported. - After cereals we must mention tobacco, whose importance was due not so much to the area occupied by it as to the value of the produce. Two other famous products of Greek soil, because of their important place in Greek poetry, Greek landscape and Greek life in general, as well as for their excellent quality, were grapes and olives. The silvery foliage of the olive tree and the black and silver of its trunk are one of the most irresistible charms of Greek landscape. The olive oil used by the Greeks to illuminate their churches and the corner of their homes where the icons are hung, is considered by them as something sacred. For their table it is a necessity - more than butter, *for the poor just as olives are a luxury* in this country, form an important part of the food of the peasant, and of the working-class people of the towns. The analogue of the English expression "bread and butter" is to be found in Greece as "bread and olive". Another famous Greek product, which you must know, was dry currants. Fig trees, also can be found everywhere in Greece, even in the most barren and rocky parts. The sight of them is very welcome. They are like friends telling us that even the seemingly most unproductive earth can be given

a giver of life. Of something similar we are reminded by other friends we meet on the abrupt mountains - the shepherds. Animal husbandry is not easy in Greece. Grass is thinly scattered and the herdsmen often have to lead a nomadic life - on the mountains during the summer, in the plains during the winter.

Pastoral life in Greece is not as sweet as depicted in pastoral poetry. As you have seen from what I have told you, life in general was not very easy in Greece, but in spite of that it gave the impression of happiness - and it was a happy life. It was a simple and free life - The Greeks love their country, because it is a beautiful country, and they also love Freedom, because the nature of their country full of light, has taught them to believe in some Ideas. Among these Ideas, Freedom has the first place. That is why when the Italians attacked in the well-known dastardly way in October 1940, the Greeks put up a fight that ~~roused~~ ^{elicited} the admiration of the whole world. The material forces were very small in comparison to the Italian forces. But there is something much more important than material forces - the spiritual ones. And it is with these that the Greeks not only chased the invader out of their country, but also pursued him far into Albania and humiliated him in the way he deserved. But in a way that frightened ^{our} Germany. The Albanian war had been the first serious blow against the prestige of the Axis. Besides, Germany was anxious to finish with Greece in order to ^{carry out} her plans against Russia. On April 6th Germany struck at Greece. The German forces sent against the small heroic country were so overwhelming that there could be no hope. In spite of that the Greeks, helped by the British, resisted as long as they could, but they had to capitulate at last. The country was partitioned between the Germans, the Italians and the Bulgarians. The Greeks who love their country and freedom so much, had to lose both of them to the enemy of both. You can imagine/

what this means, because you, British, love your country and freedom as deeply as the Greeks. But the worst enemy of all that Greece had to face during this war is famine. When at the first part of my talk I described to you Greece in her happiness, you saw that Greece had ^{never} been a country fertile enough to cover even a part of her needs. Today when our fertile territories on the north of Greece were taken by the Bulgarians, when all communications had been dislocated, ~~when much of the little food that Greece can produce is being sent out of the country,~~ ^{in spite of all the help that has been sent to here} and in the small part left have to live not only the normal population of the various places, but also refugees and often the occupation troops, Greece is literally starving.

But in spite of that Greece is still fighting on. Our forces ~~in 1941~~ ^{fighting} are being trained and ~~part of them is already fighting,~~ our navy is fighting, also, and our merchant ships help much in the common effort. Besides, even the people of Greece are fighting the conquerors of their country with ^{both} the ^{and material} spiritual forces left to them.

^{The Greeks full of faith} In their deep misery they have prophetic visions of the coming victory, and of a better, freer, juster world after that. And these visions ^{are not} cannot be deceitful. ^{We all} It is in ^{know that we are going towards victory and the creation} the moments of our greatest unhappiness that God and His Will ^{of a new and more beautiful life.} are revealed to us.

~~If we read ^{stories} ~~everyday~~ in the papers about the activities of the Greek guerrillas, of the blowing-up of bridges and other acts of sabotage. The liberation is approaching.~~

Death is first making at my door
 Open to him upon the door.
 Because I still have a end in my breast
 This morning as I was passing by the
 presented arms
 and the wet earth longed for
 the handful of my dirt.
 Let us open and receive Death
 Because I still have a end in my breast
 as a stanching turn that I might
 this year also expect my end

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