

- **Henry Morgenthau was an eminent American lawyer, businessman and later on diplomat and public figure, friend of world-renown personalities of his time, such as the American President Woodrow Wilson, the British Prime Minister Lloyd George, Winston Churchill and many others.**
- **He was born in Germany in 1858 to a Jewish family and died in New York in 1946. He and his family immigrated to the USA in 1858, where he became a US citizen, studied and worked.**
- **He was appointed and served 1913-16 in Constantinople as US Ambassador to the then Ottoman Empire. In 1918 published his book “Ambassador Morgenthau’s Story”, in which he relates his personal experiences from the bloody systematic persecutions and genocides of the Christian subjects of the Ottoman Empire during that period, organized and directed by the Ottoman Administration.**
- **He served as Vice President of the Relief Committee for the Middle East 1919-21.**
- **He was appointed by the League of Nations and served as President of the Greek Refugee Settlement Committee 1923-28. In 1929 he published his book “I was sent to Athens”, in which he devotes a number of chapters to present his personal experiences from the persecutions and genocides of the Greeks of Asia Minor, perpetrated and directed relentlessly by the Turkish Administration. These chapters are copied below.**
- **He was US Representative at the Geneva Conference in 1933.**

# I WAS SENT TO ATHENS

BY HENRY MORGENTHAU

*In Collaboration with* FRENCH STROTHER



*ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS*

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Books by HENRY MORGENTHAU

AMBASSADOR MORGENTHAU's STORY ALL IN A LIFE-TIME

I WAS SENT TO ATHENS

*(In collaboration with French Strother)*

**TO**  
**THE CREATORS OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS WHO ORIGINATED THE FIRST SERIOUS**  
**EFFORTS TOWARD A BETTER UNDERSTANDING AMONGST NATIONS**

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# CONTENTS

<b>Chapter</b>	
<b>I</b>	<a href="#">The Epic of the Modern Greeks</a>
<b>II</b>	<a href="#">Ten Paragraphs of Recent Greek History</a>
<b>III</b>	<a href="#">Rumblings of the Approaching Storm</a>
<b>IV</b>	<a href="#">Britain Saves Us from Another World War</a>
<b>V</b>	<a href="#">The Storm Breaks at Smyrna</a>
<b>VI</b>	<a href="#">The Tragic Flood Inundates Greece</a>
<b>VII</b>	I Was Sent to Athens
<b>VIII</b>	My First Days in Greece
<b>IX</b>	Exit Monarchy—Enter Republic
<b>X</b>	Bright Promise for the Future
<b>XI</b>	Negotiations With the Bank of England
<b>XII</b>	Trips to Geneva and London
<b>XIII</b>	The Big Loan
<b>XIV</b>	The Urban Refugees Absorbed
<b>XV</b>	The Rural Refugees Take Root
<b>XVI</b>	American and British Relief
<b>XVII</b>	<a href="#">The Greatness of the Greeks</a>
<b>XVIII</b>	Looking Ahead
	Index

## CHAPTER I

### The Epic of the Modern Greeks

I propose in this book to tell the story of an epic enterprise. Heroic figures crowd the busy scene: Venizelos, a modern Pericles in his nation-building genius; Karamanos, just such a flashing figure as Achilles, born leader of men; Delta, benevolent, energetic, wise; Charilaos, bold as Hector and more successful in a better cause; Diomedes, man of money, man of courage, man of heart; and many another, whose names and deeds will appear as the story unfolds.

The scenes of this drama are as old as history, and as new as the newest suburb of Los Angeles: romantic Smyrna, which six years ago was a great commercial seaport, and which to-day is again decaying under Turkish rule; immortal Athens, now more populous than ever before in history, as teeming and alive as in her Golden Age; cosmopolitan Salonica, that has known the armies of every great soldier from Philip of Macedon to Haig and Foch; picturesque Cavalla, old when St. Paul landed there from Asia Minor on his way to answer "the Macedonian cry," and thriving to-day upon a huge

tobacco industry, whose principal managers are Americans and whose principal market is the United States; and those "isles of Greece" that so thrilled Lord Byron, and still so thrill all visitors from distant lands.

These present-day Greeks, in this illustrious arena, have just performed one of the most epochal and inspiring achievements of modern times—a veritable modern labor of Hercules, in which any race or nation might take a glorious pride. Just how great is this achievement can perhaps best be pictured by drawing an analogy:

Suppose that something like this had recently occurred: that twenty-six million men, women, and children had suddenly and unexpectedly arrived by steamer at the ports of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. Suppose, further, that this mighty host was well-nigh starved, was penniless, was without any worldly possessions beyond the clothes they stood in, their bodies covered with vermin and filth and ravaged by typhoid and smallpox. Imagine these twenty-six million human beings (chiefly women, children, and old men) to be absolutely dependent upon American charity for immediate food, for shelter, and for medical attention. Imagine that they must depend entirely upon America for an opportunity to make their homes and their livelihoods for the rest of their days.

Now imagine that America had magnificently met this challenge to its humanity and resourcefulness, had fed these starving, sheltered these homeless, healed these sick, found work for the less capable among them, financed a new start in life for them, built modern group houses for most, found land for the farmers, sold them seed and implements and animals at cost—in brief, had rehabilitated twenty-six million wrecked human lives, and had done all this within six years from the date they landed on her shores. Would not the world resound with praise of American humanitarianism American bounty, American energy and resourcefulness?

Exactly such an achievement, not in absolute numbers but in percentages, has been accomplished by Greece in the last six years—and yet the world at large has heard almost nothing about it!

Nothing in Homer is more exciting than this modern epic of the Greek people, which I have made my theme. These present-day Greeks have exhibited the qualities that made their ancestors illustrious: the courage of Achilles, the wisdom of Agamemnon, the ingenuity of Ulysses, the pity of the High Gods themselves. **The frightful catastrophe at Smyrna in 1922, when the victorious Turks killed Greeks by the uncounted tens of thousands, and forced the surviving hundreds of thousands to proceed at once to Old Greece, created in that tiny nation of five million people just such an emergency as we have imagined for America—the sudden influx of a 25 per cent, addition to its native population, requiring instant relief and eventual permanent rehabilitation.**

This challenge to Greece's "humanity and resourcefulness" it met most magnificently. It fed and sheltered this great army of brothers from Asia Minor, granted them immediate citizenship, and promptly evolved a plan to

absorb them into the life of the nation. Six years ago I was sent to Athens to become the first chairman of the Refugee Settlement Commission, the international agency set up by the League of Nations to plan and supervise the staggering work of repatriating the million-odd destitute refugees from Asia Minor. What I saw six years ago, when the first chaos of a great calamity seemed to have caused a hopeless disorganization of a nation's life, and what I saw last year, when I again visited Greece accompanied by my collaborator, French Strother, and found the Greeks of their Great Exodus established in orderly urban and rural settlements, busy at the normal tasks of daily life, affords such a striking contrast, and is so wonderful a demonstration of the force of human character, that I feel the story will be read with eager interest wherever men take pride in glorious achievement.

## CHAPTER II

### Ten Paragraphs of Recent Greek History

Ever since Moses led the children of Israel out - of bondage in Egypt the story of the Exodus has thrilled the human heart. It was the birth of freedom to a race, the beginning of the history of a nation.

Only six years ago there occurred another exodus, not far from the scene of the first. This time the fleeing multitude were Greeks and the pursuers were Turks. The sea to be crossed was the Aegean. No Providence intervened to protect the innocent and destroy the guilty. The righteous were slaughtered by the tens of thousands, whilst the guilty remained unharmed at the scene of their crimes. Yet much the same final result has issued from the second exodus as issued from the first. The flight of the Greeks from Asia Minor was the birth pangs of the Greek Republic. Out of their bitter tribulations has arisen a new nation, welded by suffering into a closer bond of union, and destined, I believe, to revive in great measure the ancient glories of that rocky land where Western civilization was born.

I would not presume to write upon so great a theme were it not that I was an eye witness of some of its most significant events, and was, moreover, privileged to have a guiding hand in several of them. This book is written in part to add to the data available to those later historians who will describe this crucial epoch in the life of a great people. I shall hope it will find present acceptance with the general public by reason of the intrinsic interest of the subject.

First, let me crowd eleven years of recent Greek history into ten short paragraphs.

In 1913 the Turks, having determined to drive the Greeks out of Asia Minor, began a systematic deportation of whole Greek settlements there. Resistance at Phocaea, northwest of Smyrna, led to the massacre of fifty Greeks. To



facilitate these deportations, the Turkish Government bought a warship from Brazil for the purpose of destroying the Greek Navy, so as to have a free hand in the Aegean Sea. The Greeks then bought from the United States the battleships *Idaho*, and *Mississippi*, thus checkmating the Turkish scheme.

In 1915 King Constantine of Greece, who was the Kaiser's brother-in-law, dismissed the Prime Minister, Venizelos, who was pro-Ally.

In 1916 Venizelos set up a secessionist government at Salonica, and soon had a considerable Greek army fighting with the Allies against Bulgaria and Turkey.

In 1917 Constantine abdicated, under Allied pressure, and his son Alexander became King, with Venizelos as Prime Minister.

In 1918 Greece had 250,000 soldiers in the Allied offensive in Macedonia that led to the capitulation of Bulgaria and Turkey.

In 1919 the Treaty of Versailles was signed, leaving the question of Turkey to be settled by a separate treaty. Greek troops were landed at Smyrna, at the request of the Supreme Allied Council, to patrol western Asia Minor, while the Allies were deciding what should be the ultimate fate of Turkey.

In 1920, by the Treaty of Sevres, the Allies announced their decision regarding Turkish territory. By this treaty Smyrna and the Ionian hinterland were placed under Greek administration for nine years. Thereupon the Turkish Nationalists revolted as a protest against the treaty. They set up a government at Angora under Mustapha Kemal and organized an army to defend Asia Minor. In Greece, King Alexander died of a monkey bite, Venizelos was defeated in the general elections, and Constantine returned to Athens as King.

In 1921 the Allied powers agreed to reconsider the Treaty of Sevres, and held a conference at London for this purpose. The Greek representatives rejected the alternative treaty proposed by the conference, and the Greek Army started a military offensive against the Turkish Nationalist positions in Asia Minor. Constantine proceeded to Smyrna to direct this offensive in person, and the Greek Army penetrated Asia Minor to a point within sixty miles of Angora, where it was disastrously defeated by the Turks.

In 1922, after frightful mismanagement of the situation by Constantine and his government, the Turks entered Smyrna. They massacred a large proportion of the Greek population, burned the Greek quarter, and deported hundreds of thousands of Greek civilians -in the most barbarous manner. The Greek Army revolted and forced Constantine to abdicate again; whereupon his son, George II, became King. The League of Nations sent Dr. Fridtjof Nansen to study the problem of the Greek refugees from Smyrna and other parts of Asia Minor, who had been landed penniless in Greece, where they were now in danger of

starvation. Dr. Nansen reported that they could be effectually aided only by helping the Greek Government to raise a foreign loan for this purpose.

In 1923 the League of Nations created the Refugee Settlement Commission, to handle this whole problem on the scene in Greece. This Commission was to have four members—one American, one Britisher, and two Greeks, the American to be the chairman. I was offered the post, accepted it, and hence this book.

## CHAPTER III

### Rumblings of the Approaching Storm

The Commission's task was to deal with the Greek refugees from Asia Minor, a people totally unlike their conquerors, the nomadic Turks. These Greeks had a brilliant heritage of their own as direct descendants of the Ionian Greeks who settled the Aegean coast of Asia Minor. It was in their land that Homer, perhaps the greatest poet of all ages, sang their early history. The scene of the Iliad is the plains of Troy, on the Asia Minor coast, south of the Dardanelles. In Homeric times not only the Ionian coast, but also the southern shore of the Black Sea, were populated by Greeks, who engaged in agriculture and carried on a lively commerce by sea.

Soon after Athens had reached the height of its glory under Pericles in the Fifth Century, B. C., and had started on its decline, the rise of Macedon under Philip carried Greek influence into new regions. The glory of Athens had been based upon sea power, but the conquests of Macedon were the work of land armies— Philip invented the invincible phalanx. Upon Philip's death his son, Alexander the Great, set forth to conquer the whole of the then known world, and as that world in his day lay to the east, his marches were in that direction. In a few years he had overrun the fertile plains and opulent cities of Asia Minor, Syria, Mesopotamia, and Persia, and had carried his conquests to the gates of Delhi. In all the cities in the intervening countries he left large garrisons of Greek soldiers. In many of these countries he founded flourishing new cities. In every place his soldiers were followed by large colonies of Greek civilians. The result was that the whole of western Asia, and of what we call the Near East, including Asia Minor, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Babylonia, Mesopotamia, Persia, and northwestern India, was saturated with the Greek influence and with Greek colonies.

The imagination of these conquered peoples was dazzled by the introduction of Greek art, literature, philosophy, and public works. Though the successors of Alexander were unable to maintain the political control of the lands he conquered, and though successive waves of Roman, Arabian, and Tartar conquests swept over these lands in succeeding centuries, none of the later conquerors has been able wholly to eradicate the influence of Greek culture, nor to exterminate that element of population which was of Greek blood.

Thus it becomes clear that when, nearly seven hundred years

ago, the night of Turkish oppression began to settle down upon the Near East, the Greeks who were caught beneath the Turkish darkness were not merely the inhabitants of Greece itself, but were also those several million Greeks who had been settled for more than a thousand years in Asia Minor. This fact has played a decisive part in the recent history of both Turkey and Greece.

To understand the modern history of the Greeks, Western readers will have to get one idea clearly in mind—an idea that will probably astonish most of them. This is, that the modern Greek thinks no more about the Greece of the Classical Age than we do. The modern Greek shares our veneration of that golden epoch of the human intellect, but it is just as remote to him, and just as unrelated to the immediate interests of his life, as it is to us. Until six years ago no modern Greek ever dreamed, of reconstituting Athens as the permanent capital of the Greek world. On the contrary, every Greek in the world shared a passionate devotion to the ideal of re-erecting the ancient Byzantine Empire in its prime of glory as of, let us say, the Ninth Century, with Byzantium (Constantinople) as its capital. Not to the Parthenon at Athens, but to the Santa Sofia at Constantinople, did his mingled emotions of religion and political greatness yearn with a burning zeal. If this animating principle be kept firmly in mind the whole course of Greek political aspirations in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries becomes clear.

The Greek War of Independence, which came to a successful conclusion in 1832, affected less than one half of the Greeks in the Turkish Empire. It did not bring freedom to the Greeks of Macedonia and Thrace, of Crete and the Aegean Islands, nor to the more than two million Greeks in Asia Minor and Constantinople. For ninety-five years following the War of Independence, down to the destruction of Smyrna in 1922, the consuming ambition of the Kingdom of Greece, shared by the "unredeemed Greeks" of Asia Minor and the islands, was the liberation of this majority of the Greek race. Along with this ambition went the desire to control the territory over which all these Greeks were scattered.

When I arrived in Constantinople as American Ambassador in 1913 the second Balkan War had just come to a close. My two and one half years at the Embassy there not only gave me an intimate knowledge of Turkey and the Turks, but of the Greeks in Turkey as well. To my astonishment I then learned that the Greeks comprised a considerable percentage of the population of the Turkish Empire. In Constantinople alone there were between three hundred and four hundred thousand

permanent Greek residents. They were one of the strongest elements of the population. I learned that, not only in Constantinople, but also throughout Asia Minor, the Greeks largely controlled the banking, the shipping, and the general mercantile business. Some of the Greeks in Constantinople were among the most brilliant and cultivated people I have ever met anywhere in the world. Highly educated, fluent linguists, and very prosperous, they would have adorned any society. Some of them were the only non-diplomatic residents of Constantinople who were admitted into the diplomatic social circles.

I found that the Greeks, like various other non-Mohammedans, occupied a peculiar legal status in Turkey, for which there is no parallel in any European country. They constituted a separate legal community, and exercised all community rights for themselves. They organized and supported their own schools. This peculiar status arose from the theocratic nature of the Turkish Government. To the Turkish mind, civil government and religious government are inseparably intertwined, the civil government deriving its sanctions and its authority from the Mohammedan religion. Consequently, the Turk has always regarded the non-Mohammedan minorities as being simply other religious communities. The Turkish Government has dealt with them as such. Therefore, the Metropolitan, or chief bishop of the Orthodox Greek Church, was officially recognized by the Turkish Government as the head of the Greek community. He was held responsible for the orderly behavior of his co-religionists, and for their obedience to Turkish laws.

When I came to Constantinople the revolutionary Committee of Union and Progress—better known to the world as the Young Turks—was in control of the government. They had deposed the former Sultan, Abdul Hamidj and had placed upon his throne Abdul's brother, Mohammed. Utterly incompetent and hopelessly weak, Mohammed was ruler merely in name. The real power was exercised by the Young Turks, whose outstanding conspirators were Enver, Talaat, and Djemal. Their men had set up the machinery of a sham constitutional government, including a parliament of two houses, a senate, and an assembly. The Greek community had representatives in this body. It was of no advantage to them, however, as the parliament had no real authority.

As a result of the two Balkan Wars the relations between the Turks and the Greeks were considerably strained in 1913. The first Balkan War (in which an alliance of Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria had decisively defeated Turkey) had resulted in the lopping off from the Turkish Empire of Albania, Macedonia,

and Thrace, leaving Turkey only a few miles of European territory just north of Constantinople. This disaster had followed close upon the almost equally disastrous war between Italy and Turkey in 1911, wherein Italy wrested Tripolitania from Turkey. I could readily understand the bitter feelings harbored by the Turks. They were being pushed out of one after another of their possessions, and were beginning to be fearful of being crowded to complete extinction as a nation. The instinct of self-preservation was aroused within them. They hated with a deadly hatred all Italians, Bulgarians, "Serbs, and Greeks. They yearned for an opportunity to strike back and take vengeance for their losses and humiliations.

The Greeks were the only one of these hated races within striking distance of Turkish vengeance. The Greeks alone had a considerable body of their population living within the Turkish borders. It was deplorable, but by no means unnatural, that they should speedily become objects of petty persecution where-ever they happened to be living in Turkey.

They became also objects of official suspicion on the part of the Turkish Government. That government was concerned with more than mere revenge. It was fighting for the life of Turkey as an independent nation. Recently deprived of many of its richest territories, Turkey was menaced with other losses at the hands of ambitious neighbors. Its capital, Constantinople (now within sight of enemy guns), had been coveted by Russia since the time of Peter the Great, and by Greece for many centuries before that.

Thus, the Young Turk government had reason enough to be fearful of the future. But the Young Turks had friends who took pains to increase their fears. These friends were the German Ambassador at Constantinople and the German army officers who had been brought in to organize and train the Turkish Army. It developed later that the German Ambassador and the German officers were already feverishly engaged in paving the way for the World War that broke out in the following year. They were scheming for Turkish cooperation in that conflict.

I have explained the German plan at length elsewhere. Briefly, it was to use Turkey and Bulgaria during the impending war for the purpose of wholly segregating Russia from her Western allies. After the war Bulgaria and Turkey were to be made into tributary states, forming the opened corridor of German expansion through to Mesopotamia and India. In working out the details of this scheme Germany had foreseen that the presence of large bodies of recalcitrant Greeks and Armenians within the Turkish Empire would constitute a serious military difficulty. In

the excitement and confusion of war, these minorities would be strongly tempted to organize into hostile armies threatening the German-Turkish lines of communication. Even if they did not carry their hostilities so far as this, they would almost certainly use their knowledge of the country to act as spies for the benefit of Turkey's enemies. Especially could they be dangerous along the coasts of Asia Minor, both to the north on the Black Sea, and to the west on the Aegean, where the Germans had planned to establish submarine bases. The majority of the inhabitants in the cities and towns on these coasts were Greeks. For the foregoing reasons, the German agents in Constantinople did everything in their power to heighten the fears of the Turkish Government and to incite it to violence against the Greeks and Armenians.

Already in the early spring of 1914 the Young Turks were scheming and preparing to go to war with Greece. They were not going to submit calmly to the dissection of their nation. To defend themselves, they were determined to take the offensive. It soon became evident that they had been advised that, in anticipation of their entering the Great War, it was essential to remove the Greeks from the seashores. Consequently, they began a systematic petty persecution of the Greeks in the coast towns, with the purpose of so frightening and discommoding them as to induce them to move out. The results of their reign of terror were apparent, to those of us who lived in Constantinople. Whenever we passed the Greek Consulate we could see a throng of excited Greeks besieging its doors in an effort to get passports to leave the country. Our friends among the wealthy Greeks told me they were removing their valuables from the country; and they repeated to me endless stories of the persecutions and hardships of their less fortunate brethren. The Greek Metropolitan told us something of his difficulties. The poor man was in a truly tragic position. Appeals to him, as the head of the Greek community, poured in by the thousands from every part of Turkey. He had attempted to obtain redress from the Turkish Government, but had been met with rebuffs and insults. Only too plainly he perceived that the sufferings of his followers were more than the result of sporadic outbursts of local patriotism: they were the result of a systematic policy emanating from the government at Constantinople itself.

Intolerable as the government was making it for the Greeks in the coast towns, the Greeks were not leaving their homes fast enough to suit the Turks. More strenuous measures were therefore adopted, and the atrocious murder of fifty Greeks at

Phocaea followed. The Phocaea incident brought the designs of the Turks out into the open, and made it evident to all that a war between Turkey and Greece was practically inevitable. The Young Turks realized that in such a war they could not attack Greece by way of the traditional route through Thrace and Macedonia. Both Bulgaria and Serbia might join Greece to bar the way. To succeed, the attack would have to be launched by sea. The Turkish Navy and the Greek Navy were so evenly matched that the Turks had no assurance of victory on the water.

My office at the American Embassy now became the local scene of a strange and subterranean battle for the control of the Aegean Sea. I have once before told this incident in print, and I cannot do better than quote it here from my Ambassador Morgenthau's Story:

*... early in June, I received a most agitated visitor. This was Djemal Pasha, the Turkish Minister of Marine and one of the three men who then dominated the Turkish Empire. I have hardly ever seen a man who appeared more utterly worried than was Djemal on this occasion. As he began talking excitedly to my interpreter in French, his whiskers trembling with his emotions and his hands wildly gesticulating, he seemed to be almost beside himself. I knew enough French to understand what he was saying, and, the news which he brought—this was the first I had heard of it—sufficiently explained his agitation. The American Government, he said, was negotiating with Greece for the sale of two battleships, the Idaho and the Mississippi. He urged that I should immediately move to prevent any such sale. His attitude was that of a suppliant; he begged, he implored that I should intervene. All along, he said, the Turks regarded the United States as their best friend; I had frequently expressed my desire to help them; well, here was the chance to show our good feeling. The fact that Greece and Turkey were practically on the verge of war, said Djemal, really made the sale of the ships an un-neutral act. Still, if the transaction were purely a commercial one, Turkey would like a chance to bid. "We will pay more than Greece," he added. He ended with a powerful plea that I should at once cable my government about the matter, and this I promised to do.*

*Evidently the clever Greeks had turned the tables on their enemy. Turkey had rather too baldly advertised her intention of attacking Greece as soon as she had received her dreadnaughts. Both the ships for which Greece was now negotiating were immediately available for battle! The Idaho and Mississippi were not indispensable ships for the American Navy; they could not take their place in the first line of battle; they were powerful enough, however, to drive the whole Turkish Navy from the Aegian. Evidently the Greeks did not intend politely to postpone the*



*impending war until the Turkish dreadnaughts had been finished. Djemal's point, of course, had no legal validity. However great the threat of war might be, Turkey and Greece were still actually at peace. Clearly Greece had just as much right to purchase warships in the United States as Turkey had to purchase them in Brazil or England. . . .*

*To Djemal and the other Turkish officials who kept pressing me I suggested that their ambassador in Washington should take up the matter directly with the President. They acted on this advice, but the Greeks again got ahead of them. At two o'clock, June 2ad, the Greek charge d'affaires at Washington and Commander Tsouklas, of the Greek Navy, called upon the President and arranged the sale. As they left the President's office, the Turkish Ambassador entered—just fifteen minutes too late!*

Djemal treated his failure in the negotiations for the American battleships as a personal defeat and humiliation. His anger could not, of course, find any outlet upon me. It could, however, be turned upon the Greeks who lived in Turkey. Djemal was the most relentless of the group of desperate leaders of the Young Turks. Realizing that the Turkish Navy was now outmatched, and that Turkey would have to give up the idea of open war with the Greeks to recover the Aegean Islands, Djemal's implacable hatred took a new direction. At his insistence the Turkish Government began the deliberate effort to remove all Greeks from, the seashores of Asia Minor;—that I have mentioned above—and to molest them in other ways.

These Greeks were completely at the mercy of the Turks. The Greek Government was impotent to help them. Whole settlements of Greeks in Asia Minor were rounded up by the Turkish troops, were loaded like cattle on to ships and deported from the country. On shipboard these Greeks were treated with the greatest brutality. They were given neither food nor water—in some cases for such long periods of time that their tongues clove to the roofs of their mouths. En route to Greece the ships called at the Island of Prinkipo, in the Sea of Marmora. Notwithstanding the terrible sufferings of the refugees on board, the Greek residents of Prinkipo were not permitted to do anything to help their brethren on these ships, which were anchored within sight and sound of the shore.

I came into intimate contact with this whole problem through the Greek Metropolitan at Constantinople. Powerless to be of any assistance to his fellow countrymen, he appealed to me for help for them. I sent a boat to Prinkipo with barrels of water and boxes of crackers, with instructions to distribute them to the distressed refugees.

The Prinkipo incident was so flagrant and was so obviously approved by the Turkish authorities that it dispelled any lingering doubts I might have had that an organized effort was being made to frighten the Greeks out of Turkey. This incident had the same effect upon the minds of the Greeks themselves, and many of the leading Greek bankers and merchants of Constantinople left Turkey with their families, many of them removing to Athens and Paris.

The World War broke out shortly after the Prinkipo incident. The Greeks in Turkey were now more alarmed than ever. The Greek Government was a traditional friend of Great Britain's, and Great Britain was now at war with Turkey's military advisers, the Germans. The Greek inhabitants of the Turkish Empire were therefore more than ever under the suspicion of the Turkish rulers. The stream of Greeks besieging the consulate with applications for passports to leave the country now became a veritable deluge.

The Greek inhabitants of Turkey were, of course, citizens of the empire, and, as such, were liable to military duty. Not unnaturally, they were regarded by the Turks as unreliable soldiers in the Turkish Army. Consequently, they were not permitted to bear arms. Those who had the means to do so were coerced into buying exemption from military service at the rate of about forty English pounds per capita. The less affluent Greeks—who, of course, comprised the great majority—being unable to purchase exemption, were enrolled in so-called "labor battalions" and were put to work at menial tasks under the direction of Turkish officers. They built military roads, erected barracks, and performed other tasks of manual labor behind the lines. They were subjected to iron discipline, as the Turks regarded every Greek as a potential traitor, insurrectionist, and spy.

I would be the last person to condone the Turkish brutality toward the Greek labor battalions—for the Turks, undoubtedly with deliberate intention, so overworked and underfed these men as to cause the death of several hundred thousand of them. Nevertheless, it is only fair to the Turks to say that they were largely justified in their fears that the Greeks would have availed themselves of any opportunity to hamper Turkish military efficiency.

After the World War had been in progress for two years Venizelos took Greece into the war on the side of the Allies. From that moment onward the Turks no longer treated

their Greek citizens as merely potential traitors, but began to treat them as avowed enemies, and to make their lives miserable in every possible way. I was besought upon scores of occasions to use my influence with the Turkish Government to help Greek individuals and Greek communities out of critical difficulties with the Turks. Happily, I was able on a good many occasions to be of real service to these distressed people.

The ending of the World War, with the incidental complete defeat of the Turks, by no means ended the troubles of the Greeks. The Kingdom of Greece, to be sure, would inevitably gain great advantages when the terms of the peace settlement were finally written. The Greek inhabitants of Turkey, however, were left in little better state than they had been before. Indeed, as will appear shortly, the extraordinary success of Venizelos at the Paris Peace Conference, in securing for Greece exceptional advantages in the peace terms there, eventually operated indirectly to bring overwhelming disaster upon the Greeks in Turkey.

The conference at Paris did not include the Turkish problem in the peace settlement. The Allies, themselves, had too many conflicting interests involved in the Near East to permit an immediate agreement. Consequently, that whole subject was laid aside for separate treatment after the Versailles Treaty should be out of the way.

Even during the peace conference, however, the Turkish problem could not be kept submerged. The Italians were determined to gain special advantage from the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire, and Greece was only little less anxious to do so. Italy announced her claims and proceeded to overt acts. Italian troops seized the port of Adalia, the key to southwestern Asia Minor, which Italy coveted. The Greeks protested that this move was intended solely to anticipate their "own claim in Asia Minor. President Wilson attacked the Italian move so vigorously that Premier Orlando for a time withdrew from the conference. President Wilson now announced his support of the long-debated claim of Greece to the possession of Smyrna, Aidin, and the Ionian coast. Partly to block further the Italian aggression, and partly to protect the Greek inhabitants of Asia Minor from the fury of the vanquished Turks, President Wilson now consented that the Greeks be invited to send an army of occupation to police this region until the Powers could finally agree on its ultimate disposition,

Apparently, President Wilson's theory in proposing this move was that the nearest friendly troops were the Greek divisions in

Macedonia, and that prompt action was necessary to protect the Christians of the Smyrna district. Winston Churchill has only recently asserted that the American missionaries in Smyrna added their warnings against this move to the warnings of the British Foreign Office and British General Staff, declaring that it was fraught with the gravest dangers, not only to the Greek Army itself, but to the Christian population of Ionia as well. In any event, Lloyd George cordially approved President Wilson's proposal, Clemenceau offered no objections, and the occupation was ordered and quickly accomplished. Greek troops landed at Smyrna under the protecting fire of Greek battleships, killed a number of Turkish soldiers retreating from the city, and quickly occupied advanced positions in the hinterland.

Churchill has described vividly the bewilderment and alarm with which he heard the news of this action. He had made a special study of the Turkish problem in both its military and political aspects. He was convinced that the Greek Army would eventually meet with disaster in the exceedingly difficult mountainous interior of Asia Minor. But he was even more alarmed, he declares, at the political complications that would be engendered. The defeated Turks were growing restive. Constantinople was strongly held by the Allies with their fleets in the Bosphorus, but the dwindling Allied armies retained only a few precarious footholds in Asia Minor, where most of the Turks lived. This half-savage warrior race was already angry enough at its military defeat, but to have a part of its very homeland occupied by Greeks, whom it regarded with age-long hatred and contempt, fanned resentment to active fury.

The results that Churchill foresaw actually came to pass. The Turks felt that their very existence was now threatened, and they resorted to desperate measures. Mustapha Kemal, the ablest officer the Turks had had during the war, now emerged as the political and military leader of an organized movement to defy the whole world, if necessary, to preserve a Turkish nation in Asia Minor. Withdrawing from Constantinople, and setting up headquarters in the mountain fastnesses at Angora, a group of determined Turkish leaders issued a manifesto to the world, in which they declared that Turkey would fight to the death of her last man to preserve Turkish nationality.

This was the beginning of the Turkish Nationalist State, which has persisted to the present day. Kemal rapidly organized an efficient army and proceeded to recapture the ammunition "dumps" of arms laid down when Turkey had capitulated the year before. The Greek Army in Ionia was soon confronted with the menace of a well-equipped Turkish army waiting only for a favorable opportunity to join battle.

Meanwhile, in 1920, the Allies gathered at the Conference of Sevres to thresh out the peace settlement for Turkey.

Before discussing the Sevres Conference, however, I should go back a moment to the decision at the Paris Conference to have the Greek Army occupy Ionia. Quite independently of Churchill, I came to the same conclusion he had reached, for I, too, was intimately familiar with the Turkish problem from my residence in Constantinople in the first years of the war. I told Henry White, one of the American peace commissioners, my views on the subject. I once before described this incident and| quote what I then printed:

*“When discussing with Henry White the Greek invasion of Smyrna, I told him that the Greeks were making a mistake and that they would be drawn into a tedious struggle with the Turks. They would have to draw-heavily on their resources and on their people's patience, which would be severely strained if, as I feared, the war lasted for years. White was deeply impressed.*

*"I want you to tell that to Venizelos," he said.*

*He knew everybody, and his bringing people together was not the least of his services to our Commission. He invited the Greek Premier to his rooms in the Crillon, and there I repeated my opinion.*

*“I told him in great detail the changes that had taken place in Turkey since the beginning of the war, and described to him the characters of the men that were now in power. I also explained to him the great importance they put on retaining possession of the Port of Smyrna, now that they had lost most of their other ports on the Mediterranean, I felt certain that they would draw the Grecian Army back into their hinterland, and away from their base of supplies, and then would continue to fight them by legitimate, or even guerrilla, methods, until they exhausted them. I reminded him how the Turks not only forbade their own people to employ Greeks, but even insisted that the American firms could not use Grecian workmen to collect the licorice root, or the Singer Manufacturing Company continue to have Greeks in charge of their Turkish agencies. I also alluded to the difficulties of governing Smyrna from Athens, as Constantinople would divide their country, and the cost of administration would be beyond the present and prospective resources of Greece, and, finally, I reminded him that they would antagonize Italy and said: "You know better than I do what that means for Greece." Venizelos listened patiently to my elaboration of this theme.*

*"Perhaps we have acted too hastily," he said, "and if all you say is true, it may have been unwise for us to send an army into Smyrna, but now that the army is there, it would be more unwise to withdraw it—to do so would admit military and court political defeat. The Monarchists are plotting constantly against me in Athens, and they are backed by the merchants and shipping men who are over-ambitious and want new territory for their*

*operations."*

The conference at Sevres finally worked out a treaty of peace, which everybody signed. It satisfied nobody. Turkey was to be dismembered and left with no territory to call her own except the interior of Asia Minor and the city of Constantinople. The independent Republic of Armenia was erected to the east; Mesopotamia and Palestine were put under British mandate, Syria and Cilicia under French mandate, and to Italy was assigned Adalia and its hinterland. Smyrna and Ionia were held by the Greeks, pending further discussion of their eventual disposition.

The relations between Turkey and Greece now moved rapidly toward a tragic conclusion. The Turkish Nationalists announced they would never accept the Treaty of Sevres, and bent all their energies toward getting their army into condition to defend their country. They were also determined to seize the first opportunity to drive the Greeks out of Ionia.

At this juncture, when Greece had the greatest need of the genius of Venizelos, that far-sighted statesman was overwhelmingly defeated in the Greek general election in the fall of 1920. His Royalist enemies in Greece were almost as much astonished at the result of this election as Venizelos himself. Immediately, however, they hastened to take vengeance on his adherents. Their first act upon organizing their government was to repeal the decree of exile against Constantine, and to recall him to Athens to resume his throne.

Reinstated in power, Constantine pursued his advantage by removing from command all the officers of the Greek Army who owed their positions to Venizelos. It so happened that these officers were by far the most experienced commanders amongst the Greeks. They were replaced by favorites of Constantine. The most grotesque example of this favoritism was his appointment of General Hadjanestes to the supreme command of the army of occupation in Ionia. This was the most important command in the army at the moment. The Greek troops in Ionia were operating in a most difficult country in the presence of a skilful and implacable enemy. General Hadjanestes, upon whom was placed the terrific responsibility of guiding this army in its precarious situation, was notoriously a nervous wreck at the time Constantine appointed him.

Early in 1921 representatives of the British, French, and Italian governments met in London to reconsider and revise the impossible Treaty of Sevres. The London Conference worked out a set of tentative proposals for a revision of that treaty. These proposals were indignantly rejected by the

Greeks. Constantine now thought he saw an opportunity to eclipse the glory that Venizelos had gained by his acquisition of Ionia. He thought he saw an opportunity to drive the Turks out of Asia Minor and to assert Greek sovereignty over the whole of that country. He accordingly committed the supreme folly of ordering a general offensive against the Turkish Nationalist position. The Greeks were defeated in this attack, and Constantine left Athens and took personal command of the army in Asia Minor on June 19th. He left Greece hailed by the government-inspired press as Emperor-Designate of Constantinople, thus vaingloriously appealing to the traditional ambition of the Greek nation to reconstruct the Byzantine Empire.

The Turkish military commanders in Asia Minor now followed the strategy that I had foreseen in Paris three years before. The Turks retired before the Greek advance, permitting the Greek Army to capture difficult mountain passes with only feeble resistance. Thus the Turks lured the Greeks farther and farther into the difficult mountains just west of Angora. The Greek line of communications was thus extended until Greece's army was barely able to maintain its supplies from the coast. Then, one day in August, the Turkish Army, in accordance with its long-meditated plan of action, attacked the Greek Army on the banks of the Sakkaria River. The Greek Army was compelled to withdraw westward until it could reform its lines on a continuous front about four days' march east of Smyrna.

Then followed a year of international negotiation. The conflicting ambitions of the Allied Powers regarding the future of Asia Minor resulted in some of the most disgusting intrigues in modern history. Of these, two were especially disgraceful. The first was the so-called Franklin-Bouillon Agreement, arrived at between France and the Turkish Nationalist Government. This agreement was signed on October 20, 1921, at Angora, by Kemal for the Turks and by Franklin-Bouillon for the French. It was dictated by the greed of French capitalists seeking concessions from the Turks for railways and commercial privileges. In exchange, the French shamefully deserted their support of the Greeks, whom in 1919 they (along with Great Britain and the United States) had invited to take over the military occupation of Asia Minor. Not only did the French withdraw their moral support from the Greeks and transfer their friendship to the Turks, but they "abandoned" great quantities of French ammunition in Asia Minor—practically making a present to the Turks of munitions of war with which to destroy their former allies, the Greeks.

Italy, like France, deserted her Greek ally. During the Paris Conference the Italians had entered the southern coast of Asia Minor at Adalia, and were still in possession there whilst the Greeks were operating against the Turks from Smyrna as a base. While this Greek campaign was in progress it soon became notorious to military observers of all nations that the Turks were being continually supplied with ammunition "bootlegged" to them from the Italian base at Adalia. Italy's ambitions with regard to Asia Minor were stronger than her sense of duty to an ally. Italy already occupied the Dodecanese Islands off the coast of Asia Minor, and the peninsula itself has long been an object of Italy's scheme of colonial expansion. To have remained faithful to the Greek alliance would have been to help Greece eventually to become the owner of Asia Minor. On the other hand, to have helped Turkey to repel the Greeks was to weaken both of Italy's rivals. The temptation was too strong for Italy to withstand it.

Greece was almost hopelessly weakened, not only by the active betrayal of France and Italy, but as well by the inactivity and indifference of Great Britain, her third ally. The United States likewise shared in this disgrace. The request that Greece should occupy Smyrna and police the Ionian shore was initiated by President Wilson. It implied the assistance of all four of the Great Powers, including the United States. But in 1926, following the victory of the Republican Party in our national election, the United States rejected practically all the commitments of the Wilson Administration. They gave not the slightest regard to the fulfillment of our arrangement with Greece, which was part of the general scheme of ending the war. We precipitately retired from the scene, and so far as we were concerned left Greece to her fate.

This fate speedily descended upon the Greeks in the most terrible form. Following the year of futile negotiations among the European Powers, the Turks attacked the Greek Army in Asia Minor, defeated it decisively, and put it to ignominious rout. Two weeks later, on September 9, 1922, the Turks entered Smyrna. Then followed the orgy of looting, outrage, massacre, and burning, which desolated the city. The Turks segregated all the able-bodied Greek men of mature age and drove them into the interior of Asia Minor, where practically every one of them died of starvation, forced labor, or assassination. The old men, the women, and the children were herded upon any kind of craft that was available and without more ado were shipped (to the number of several hundred thousand) to the mainland of Greece and to the Aegean Islands under Greek sovereignty. The sudden



**enforced exodus of this vast number of people, all unexpectedly uprooted from their ties of home and occupation, all of them completely impoverished, and all of them thrown chaotically upon Greek soil without any regard to their future welfare, marks the beginning of the refugee problem in its most acute stage.**

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **Britain Saves Us From Another World War**

**In 1922, just as the Greek tragedy was drawing to its catastrophe and during the fateful two weeks preceding the destruction of Smyrna, I happened to be in London, on my way home from a tour of Europe. There I ran across my old friend, the father of the House of Commons, T. P. O'Connor, with whom I had often, exchanged hospitality, both in England and America. He invited me to have luncheon with him on September 2d. He turned the conversation to the situation in the Near East. This was natural, as the newspapers were filled with big headlines on the overwhelming defeat just suffered by the Greek Army, now in headlong flight back to the west coast of Asia Minor, closely pursued by the Turkish conquerors. "Tay Pay" was of course familiar with my experiences with the Turks while American Ambassador at Constantinople, and he was anxious to have my views regarding the effect of this unexpected Nationalist victory upon the situation in the Near East.**

**When I explained to him that I did not limit its possibilities to the Near East, but regarded it as a menace to the safety of the Balkans and quite possibly to the peace of all Europe, he was so impressed that he asked me for an interview for the London *Daily Telegraph*, with which he was associated. He felt that the country at large had no idea of the possible effect of this Turkish victory upon Europe, and that the British public should at once be informed of my views.**

**Consequently, on the Monday following, Mr. O'Connor called on me again, bringing with him Mr. Geroth-wohl, a writer on the *Daily Telegraph*. I repeated my opinion of the situation, in**

detail, and the interview was published in the paper next morning as follows:

*"I wonder," stated the Ambassador, "if 400,000,000 Christians in full control of all the governments of Europe and America are again going to condone these offences by the Turkish Government! Or will definite steps be promptly taken to rescue permanently the remnants of these fine old civilized Christian peoples from the fangs of the Turk?"*

*"Mr. Morgenthau agreed that there were only two methods by which the present emergency could be met. "We should help," he said, "to remove these refugees from Anatolia to Thrace, in view of our pledges to them. The Powers should also be absolutely adamant in refusing to allow the Kemalists to cross the Straits."*

*"If the European countries have control of Constantinople, they can eventually influence the Turks and keep them in check, because the possession or non-possession of Constantinople determines the status of Turkey. If she obtains Constantinople she becomes a world power again. If she does not, she becomes a succession state. There is the point. Now what sensible person wants Turkey to be a world power again, with increased powers for the making of international mischief? No matter how other countries may differ on other matters, they must unite and agree on this: To keep Constantinople out of the hands of the Turks."*

*"Constantinople is the sixth largest and sixth most important city in the world, after London, Paris, Berlin, New York, and, possibly, Vienna. To put it again into the hands of these people, who can neither govern themselves nor anyone else, would be the most terrible blunder of the age, because it would simply give them a chance to reestablish themselves in a place where for the last one hundred years we have heard of 'the dying Turk,' and where they could tyrannize again. There is no need to recapitulate the doings of the Turks— their incapacities, how they have been the parasites of those countries they have attempted to govern. They have never assimilated the people nor assimilated with them, and have always been merely the collectors of revenue, the farmers and the butchers. The Chauvinism of the Turks is so well known and so extreme that, unless restrained, they will not permit the minorities to exist. They will find some new device or resort to some of the old devices for exterminating the non-Moslem populations. The waterway through the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus should be internationalized."*

This interview in the *Daily Telegraph* created something of a sensation. An immediate result of it was that the *Sunday Times* (not to be confused with *The Times*, the daily of world-wide fame) promptly sent Captain Townroe to interview me for that paper, and this article appeared on the following Sunday—the morning after the Turkish Army, pursuing the Greeks, entered the doomed city of Smyrna. This interview was as follows:

*The events of the past week in Asia Minor have increased the magnitude of the task which lies before Great Britain. Turkey is again trying to establish herself as a world power. This new fact is spreading unrest throughout the Moslem world, and in the chancelleries of Europe the new situation is being considered in all its bearings. Still more significant to a war-wearied world is the rustle of the operation maps which naval and military officers are studying.*

*The immediate outcome of the Turkish threat will be further massacres of the Armenian, Greek, and Syrian Christians if Turkish power is allowed to pursue its course as a conqueror unchecked. The Christian governments of Europe and America must help to rescue the survivors of these unhappy races.*

*But the issues involved in the new crisis reach further than Smyrna or Athens. The prestige of the British Empire is far more seriously threatened by the success of the Turkish arms than is, I find, generally recognized in London, except in official circles. The conditions that have arisen are too tangled to be analyzed in one article. I can only hope here to touch briefly on certain points, and to give some reasons for my conviction that Great Britain, France, and Italy must suspend all personal jealousies and prejudices, and in mutual agreement refuse to allow the Turk under any pretext again to control Constantinople and the Dardanelles.*

*Mistakes occurred when in the peace negotiations the Allies favored Greece and allotted to her Smyrna and part of the hinterland. The negotiators apparently were ignorant of the fact that the Greeks of Athens are entirely different from the unredeemed Hellenes of Asia Minor. Further, the Allies seemingly failed to appreciate the threat to Turkey if the Greeks were allowed to be in occupation both in Thrace and in Asia Minor. When M. Venizelos was displaced by the brother-in-law of the late Kaiser, the Turkish leaders inevitably supposed that before long the Greeks would try to connect their two possessions in Europe and Asia by occupying Constantinople, a city which contains a Greek population of nearly three hundred and fifty thousand.*

*Faced with this supposed menace, Turkey tried again her old game—a game as old as Aesop's fables. She tried to divide her enemies and so to benefit herself as a result of their quarrels. She found all the Allies foolishly cherishing old mutual jealousies, ambitions, and suspicions. The hard lessons taught by disaster in war, and the value of unity in command, had all too quickly been forgotten in peace. Turkey received help from Italy, and now with French ammunition, guns, tanks, and possibly aided by the directing ideas of French officers—the most capable strategists in the world—Turkey has delivered a knock-down blow to Greece.*

*Many English people probably have not followed the kaleidoscope of Turkish affairs. Certain main facts must be recognized in order to appreciate the present crisis. The Turks have refused to sign the treaty of peace with Great Britain and so, technically, there is still a state of war between Turkey and this country. Italy has made a secret peace. France, after her troops were in danger of annihilation, signed the Treaty of Angora, which, when fully known, may be called the surrender of Angora. Thus have the Allies been divided by the wily Turk, and, owing to Entente mistakes, the Turks again hold the upper hand in Asia Minor, and will mercilessly use the same.*

*If only Great Britain and France will even now come to an agreement on the questions over which they have differed, there is time to prevent further mischief. The peace of the Balkans depends largely to-day on the Allies retaining command of the Dardanelles. The door must be kept open in the Mediterranean for the trade of all nations with Russia. Otherwise Russia will continue to be largely dependent on Germany for its supplies and its trade. A false step now, and the Allies may to-morrow find the German military party and the Russian Bolsheviks have again allied to threaten the world's peace. If Turkey, defeated primarily in 1918 by Lord Allenby's army coming through Palestine, and so compelling them to lay down their arms, has so revived in 1922 as to demand a place again as a world power, what may not Berlin and Moscow together accomplish?*

*I speak without reserve, as the exigencies of the case demand it. If there had been harmony between the Allies, and if the United States had agreed to take part in the League of Nations, I believe the peace of the Near East would have now been secured. During the week thousands of men have lost their lives, and thousands of women have suffered unprintable horrors, because there has been discord among the Entente Powers.*

*Those Americans who believe in, and have fought for, the League of Nations are convinced that American influence ought to have been at work to prevent this wrong. Instead of pursuing selfish aims, it would have been a wiser policy if the Turks had been definitely relegated to Asia Minor, and the Dardanelles permanently converted into a great international waterway. Constantinople should be under the protection of the League of Nations. The Turks cannot govern an empire, nor have they the revenue to maintain even Constantinople, the sixth most important city in the world. This city should be a storehouse and distributing centre between East and West, and governed, policed, and civilized under the combined control of Great Britain, France, and Italy, and possibly in due time the United States would join.*

*Those who have heard from French and British lips what a salutary and sane influence has been exercised by Major General H. T. Allen in the Rhineland believe that the time has come when other Americans might take their share in the international task of keeping the Turk in Asia, where he belongs, and assisting in making Constantinople a free city, and the Dardanelles a free waterway for the world. The majority of the residents of Constantinople are non-Turks, and it requires no plebiscite to establish the fact that they are determined not to come again under Turkish rule.*

*For the present, the chief burden of ensuring the freedom of the Dardanelles rests upon Great Britain. If all Americans understood the terrific task that the British race has on their hands to-day in order to preserve Western civilization in Europe, they would not long withhold their hearty cooperation.*

**On the day after the *Sunday Times* printed the foregoing interview I had luncheon with Winston Churchill and his wife at their home. Churchill was full of the Near Eastern question. We discussed not only the news of the day, but he carried the subject back to the World War. He had been chiefly responsible for the British expedition to force the Dardanelles in 1915, the expedition that had failed so miserably; and he had been savagely criticized for it by members of Parliament and the press. In my book about my experiences at Constantinople (published in England under the title of *Secrets of the Bosphorus*) I had told of the nervousness of the Turks at that time. It was common knowledge to them that if the British had pressed on instead of retiring they would have been able easily to force the Straits and capture Constantinople. Churchill recalled this part of the book, and expressed his gratitude that I had recorded these facts, which vindicated his plan.**

Churchill talked with the utmost freedom about the Near Eastern situation. Like myself, he believed the Turkish victory the prelude to a great debacle in the international situation, fearing that the world was in grave danger of a fresh outburst of war.

When I was leaving the Churchill's I told them that Mrs. Morgenthau would be deeply disappointed at having missed the interesting discussion we had just been having, and said that they must repair this loss by dining with us on Tuesday of the following week. Mrs. Churchill could not come, so he came alone.

Before Tuesday came, however, I had a long talk with Lloyd George, at breakfast at No. 10 Downing Street. Lloyd George had read my interviews in the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Sunday Times*, and he wished to get my ideas at first hand. I arrived at No. 10 Downing Street a few minutes after nine in the morning, and we sat down at once to breakfast. But what a repast, to bear such a humble name! For me, it was the equivalent of a five-course luncheon.

I remarked to Lloyd George on the fact that he spoke to the servant at the table in a foreign language. "There's a method in that madness," he rejoined with a chuckle. "Every servant in the place is Welsh, and not one of them speaks a word of English. There'll be no leaks of news about important political conversations in this place while I am here, on account of some servant's indiscretion!"

Lloyd George was a delightful host. He did not rush at once into the subject he wished most to discuss with me, but talked of many things, and with a most engaging frankness: about German reparations, his own continuance in office (he thought it would be a good idea to get out and let some of his critics see what they could do with the impossible situation they damned him for not settling), about his forthcoming book and his intention to show in it the mistakes made at the Dardanelles, about his solicitude concerning American politics and our attitude toward international affairs after our impending Congressional election, and even about the Underwood typewriter he used in his office. He evidently knew that I was a director of the company —I believe he had pursued the usual method of having me looked up in *Who's Who* before I called.

In discussing America's international policy, he frequently mentioned his contact with Woodrow Wilson, and several times he characterized one or another of Wilson's traits as "weaknesses." The last time he said this he realized that he had been rather critical of the President and that I was unsympathetic with his attitude, and so he added, with a twinkle in his eye, "But doubtless I have a lot of weaknesses of my own that I (overlook—they're much more obvious to us in the other fellow than they are in ourselves."

At length Lloyd George turned the conversation to the Turkish issue. At once there became evident one of the reasons for his phenomenal success as a politician. Here was a subject upon which he could not be intimately informed, but he speedily emptied my knowledge of it into his own head. I have often been on the witness stand, but no skilful lawyer ever subjected me to a more searching cross-examination than did Lloyd George on the Turkish problem. Question after question was fired at me, and when they were all answered he had secured a picture of the situation that was pretty complete, covering all its essentials. And he was thoroughly stirred by what I had told him. I said to him that the triumph of the Turks was fraught with the gravest possibilities of danger to the peace of the world.

Kemal's government and army, I continued, were a Turkish Nationalist protest against the terms of the peace settlement, which had been dictated by the Allied Powers and which had imposed upon the conquered Turks the most drastic limitations of territory, armament, and power. Kemal and his Nationalist government had rejected these terms and had defiantly retired, inland into Asia Minor, to pursue their own aims in their own way. Now they had suddenly achieved a dramatic military success over the Greeks, to whom the Allies had allotted the Ionian coast and the city of Smyrna. Intoxicated by this success, the Turks would doubtless take Smyrna, in defiance of the Allies, and would doubtless massacre the defenseless Greeks in that city.

But, I continued, even that would not be the most serious result, viewed from a world perspective. The Turk would not stop there. He would also cross the Dardanelles, invade Thrace and seek an alliance with the Bulgarians, who likewise were smarting under the sting of defeat and who would be only too glad of a chance to recapture ports like Cavalla and Dedeagatch, which the peace settlement had allotted to the Greeks. Worse yet, both Turks and Bulgarians would be glad of a chance to even old scores with the Greeks by an invasion of Greece itself,

which would be a perfectly feasible enterprise, once the Turks got into Thrace. In other words, I concluded, I foresaw a violent reopening of the whole Balkan question, with the possibility behind that of a renewal of the whole European war—unless the Turks were at once forcibly prevented from crossing the Dardanelles back into Europe.

At this point I became quite emphatic. "You must," I exclaimed, "prove to the Turk that you mean business! Words are not enough. The only language he understands is force. He must be told that if he attempts to pass the Dardanelles he will be met with the armed might of the British Empire and hurled back into Asia!"

"Mr. Morgenthau," rejoined Lloyd George, "I simply can't do it. The Labor crowd and the pacifists right now are trying to make me demobilize the entire army—even trying to make me withdraw the troops in Palestine. They wouldn't stand for a government's spending a shilling on anything that involved a military expedition for any purpose."

"But you don't need to spend much money," I retorted. "All that is needed is a threat. That threat will be no good if the Turk knows it is a bluff. But if he thinks you mean it nothing more than the threat will be needed. And if he is not stopped he will produce a situation in Europe that even the Laborites will have to admit will compel Britain to intervene. The real interest of Labor is to back you up in an effective threat, so that no expensive, forcible action may become necessary. Why not call in Ramsay Macdonald and explain the situation to him, and get his support in a stiff warning to the Turks?"

"That's a good suggestion," Lloyd George replied, and I'll follow it up."

Later, I learned that he did so. He sent for Ramsay Macdonald and explained to him my view of the possibilities of the Turks invading Europe again. Macdonald was deeply impressed. "But," he said, "this is too serious a question for me to undertake to commit the Labor Party on it. I will bring a group of Labor leaders here and have you explain the situation to them."

So seriously did his followers regard the matter that when Macdonald brought his delegation to Lloyd George they were so numerous that they filled to overflowing the big reception room at No. 10 Downing Street. Lloyd George laid the situation fully



before them and satisfied them that no force need be sent from England, as the local British troops quartered at the Dardanelles would be able to handle the Turks if prompt action were taken. The Laborites agreed to support the government, with the result that not a word of criticism of its subsequent action was later heard in Parliament. The British at once fortified Chanak, on the Straits, and notified the Turks that if they attempted to pass the Dardanelles or come within fifteen miles of Chanak the British guns would shell them. The Turks disregarded this warning to this extent: they approached to within *twelve* miles of Chanak—they had learned that this was the effective range of the British guns! But they did not approach nearer. And they did not pursue their intention to invade Greece. Thus, thanks to Great Britain's prompt action, another Balkan outburst was prevented.

That I had a good deal to do with this result was indicated to me that very evening. When Lloyd George and I had finished our breakfast and our conversation he accompanied me to the entrance hall. There, as I was leaving, I encountered Winston Churchill, who was just arriving, and we stopped long enough to exchange greetings.

That evening Churchill came and talked with delightful freedom for hours, and I enjoyed his conversation thoroughly. Soon after we got under way in our *tete-a-tete*, he said abruptly: "By the way, I want you to know that I agree perfectly with everything you said to Lloyd George about the present Turkish situation." I was astonished and asked him, "How do you know what I said to Lloyd George?"

He laughed and said: "When I ran into you in Downing Street this morning I was on my way to a Cabinet meeting, and Lloyd George took quite a bit of time at the meeting in giving us a synopsis of what you had just said to him. I wouldn't say that it determined our position as to what the British Government intends to do in that quarter, but it certainly had a strong influence upon it."

I soon received additional confirmation of what Churchill had said about my having influenced the British decision. A few days after our dinner Lord Lee of Fareham invited me to have luncheon with him at the Admiralty. Other guests were Sir James Grigg and two admirals, one of whom, Admiral Webb, had recently returned from Constantinople. They devoted a large share of the luncheon hour to quizzing me about the Turkish situation, and it was clear that Lord Lee, following the

discussion of my views in the Cabinet, had arranged the luncheon in order to get these views at first hand for the information of the Admiralty. Thus it came about that a social call from my old friend T. P. O' Connor led to newspaper interviews, that led to conversations with the Prime Minister and Cabinet officers, that somewhat influenced a decision of the British Government, that undoubtedly prevented a fresh Balkan outburst and a possible rekindling of the war in Europe.

## CHAPTER V

### The Storm Breaks at Smyrna

The Smyrna disaster of 1922 needs be only briefly mentioned here. It was the cause of the great exodus of all the Greeks of Asia Minor, but it happened so recently that many of the details are still fresh in the public memory. Let me itemize a few of these details:

The systematic burning of the Greek quarter of Smyrna by the Turkish troops under the very eye of Kemal;

The systematic slaughter of Greek men, women, and of children;

The organized looting of houses and churches; The unchecked, wholesale raping of women and young girls;

The segregation of all able-bodied Greek males from sixteen years of age to fifty, who were then driven inland, where practically all perished of forced labor, their destruction being hastened by starvation and assassination;

The deportation of the remaining women, children, and old men to Greece.

All these atrocities were clear evidence of the deliberate intention of the Turks to remove utterly all Greek population

from Asia Minor, in pursuance of the program of the Turkish Nationalists under Kemal, by which Asia Minor was to be completely "Turkeyfied."

This plan to deport or exterminate the Greek population, thus made plain by the horrors of Smyrna, caused the immediate flight of thousands of Greek families from the other ports of Asia Minor. In many cases they were pursued out of their houses by their Turkish neighbors, who seemed spontaneously to attack them, in imitation of the Smyrna example. These thousands likewise poured in upon the seaports of Greece proper, swelling the flood of destitute refugees that was overwhelming the ancestral land. Within a few weeks seven hundred and fifty thousand people were dumped like cattle at the ports of Salonica and Athens, and upon the larger Greek islands of the Aegean Sea, such as Crete, Mytilene, Chios, and Euboea.

The condition of these people upon their arrival in Greece was pitiable beyond description. They had been herded upon every kind of craft that could float, crowded so densely on board that in many cases they had only room to stand on deck. There they were exposed alternately to the blistering sun and cold rain of variable September and October. In one case, which I myself beheld, seven thousand people were packed into a vessel that would have been crowded with a load of two thousand. In this and many other cases there was neither food to eat nor water to drink, and in numerous instances the ships were buffeted about for several days at sea before their wretched human cargoes could be brought to land. Typhoid and smallpox swept through the ships. Lice infested everyone. Babes were born on board. Men and women went insane. Some leaped overboard to end their miseries in the sea. Those who survived were landed without shelter upon the open beach, loaded with filth, racked by fever, without blankets or even warm clothing, without food and without money.

Besides these horrors the refugees endured every form of sorrow—the loss of husbands by wives, loss of wives by husbands, loss of children through death or straying, all manner of illnesses.

**If ever the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse rode down upon a nation it was when this appalling host appeared upon the shores of Greece, that was trampled by the flying hoofs of their chargers and scourged by the spectral riders of War, Famine, Pestilence, and Death. But the little Greek nation, of only five**

million souls, met their brothers in distress with unshaken courage and with open arms. Every home in Greece threw wide its doors and took in some of the refugees. In Athens more than five thousand rooms in private houses were opened to them. Public schools were turned into hospitals, town halls were used as barracks, even the beautiful National Opera House in Athens was filled with refugees, each of its velvet-lined boxes becoming the home of a whole family, while scores more slept upon the floor of the auditorium and on the stairways. Relief work was organized on every side. In Athens, the famous Old Palace on Constitution Square was turned into a headquarters where bread was distributed daily to thousands of refugees, where lists of names were posted for the purpose of reuniting families that had been separated in the chaos at Smyrna, and where the general direction of all relief measures was centered.

The streets of Athens were transformed by the surging multitude that now invaded them. The city had been almost somnolent before this irruption. It had been living the staid life of an orderly small capital, where business had grown into established channels and where life had settled into an easy and familiar routine. Overnight all this was changed. Now the streets were thronged with new faces. Strange dialects of Greek assailed the ear. The eye was caught by outlandish peasant costumes from interior Asia Minor. Sidewalks were crowded. Avenues that had been pleasantly ample were now filled with peddlers' carts of refugees who were trying to make a living by selling a few strings of beads or bits of finery. Cobblers set up their stools and trays along the most fashionable thoroughfares. The great rock of the Acropolis, that rises with almost sheer sides in the very heart of Athens, looked down upon as strange a sight as it had seen since the days when Phidias was adorning the Parthenon at its summit. At its base sprung up a new Angora, a new marketplace, packed with tiny shops displaying all the varieties of small merchandise that refugees could scrape together for sale.

These petty merchants, however, were the fortunate aristocracy of the refugee horde. Upon the bare hills about Athens, now bleak and cold with approaching winter, were camped the less fortunate tens of thousands, huddled in tents pieced out of burlap bags, or in huts extemporized out of the ubiquitous five-gallon Standard Oil cans. Some, who could find not even these crude materials, dug desperately into the earth and found a damp refuge from the elements in caves. At the Piraeus, the port of Athens, eleven miles away, the beach was lined with the tatterdemalion encampment of other thousands of refugees.

Misery is always picturesque, the one sorry virtue of human sorrow. Shoes made of pieces of discarded automobile tires became almost the standard footwear of the refugees. Clothing made of flour sacks was a fashion born of necessity, and was hard-pressed for first place by garments improvised out of burlap or pieced together from mere rags. The simplest implements were hard to come by. Tin cans served for cooking utensils, rusty nails were substituted for pins, and a real needle was as valuable a curiosity as it is to an Esquimau.

Tennyson said that "sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things." These wretched myriads knew that heavy truth. Even the humblest had been happy peasants, in a familiar land, accustomed to the pleasures yielded by a few vines and fig trees, eating their pilaff at ease after the day's labor, comfortably clad and sheltered. Many had been used to every luxury. Women who now stood in line for hours to receive a half loaf of bread had once been able, only a few weeks before, to command every delicacy that the palate could crave. Many shivered in rags, who had lately been dressed in Paris fashions; and covered in mud huts, who had been mistresses of palatial mansions. Now they shared the great democracy of misery, mourning the loss of the men of their families, and shuddering at horrible memories of frightful scenes along the quay at Smyrna.

Everywhere in camps, markets, barracks, and streets you might see thousands of forlorn, grief-stricken, bedraggled people, many of them with histories as sad and appealing as Longfellow's "Evangeline," except that they told no stories of love.

They were no longer wandering about. Their journeys had ended, and now they were divisible into various groups. Thousands and thousands of them were most heroically facing this almost irremediable situation. They girded on their armor and entered this new fight for existence with a grim determination that foretold their eventual success. Many of them had acquired in their past independent positions amongst their people, and those were gathering their neighbors around them. They planned to recreate their old surroundings and make a joint effort to reproduce their past conditions. The spirit shown by these leaders was admirable. They seldom presented to us their individual claims. They always said "our people" should be placed here or there, and "our people" are especially fitted for such and such work. It showed what long usage had done. These leaders treated all their villagers as their families.

**Of the unattached, few asked for charity, but nearly all implored for work. They spurned permanent doles. They begged for opportunities which would make them self-supporting. The big camps that were thrown up in the vicinity of Athens soon became villages and early showed signs of being civilized. It just required a little guidance and the temporary support of the Greek Government, the Refugee Settlement Commission, and the other help-rendering activities to bring order out of chaos and render first aid to those injured people. Their injuries were not merely physical, affecting single individuals. Their injuries were the total disruption of a fine civilized people, the destruction of family life, the uprooting of villages and towns and casting the survivors pell mell into new surroundings. They were deprived of their accumulations of wealth, their government, their traditions, their families, and those fine interrelations which make up society.**

**The worst predicament that confronted them was that their breadwinners and their youths had nearly all been killed or imprisoned. Here was an unusual condition. A rearrangement had to be made for these people in spite of all these shortcomings. It required the acceptance by the survivors of additional burdens. Fortunately they were ready and almost anxious to assume them. The very extreme depression they were facing seemed to restore to them the energies of their youth. They did not sit down and mourn for their sons and their sons-in-law, but apparently threw off ten or twenty of their years and successfully replaced the lost members of their families.**

**Great credit should be given to the young women. Their heroism and devotion were simply amazing. It showed what stuff these people were made of. They did not succumb to the temptations of those miserable miscreants of society, the cadets, who hovered at the entrance of these camps and tried to beguile these fine girls into the pleasure haunts of Athens. Fortunately, with the assistance of the police we were able to make short work of these rascals. Many of these girls single-handed supported families of three and upward. They worked at anything they could find, in the shops of Athens, in rug and other factories, as domestic servants, and some of them on their sewing or knitting machines in their own homes.**

**Of course there were tremendous numbers of completely forsaken people and shiftless ones. Their dilemma was indescribable, and so was that of a number of victims of tuberculosis and malaria. In this big broad readjustment these latter people had to meet their fate. It could be softened a little,**

but there were no means at hand to remedy it completely. They were doomed.

Immediately after my arrival in Athens I was visited by a number of refugees whom I had known in Constantinople. They implored me to use their services in any capacity at all. One of them, Alexandra Joanides, reminded me how when we first met at the Constantinople College for Women she had been dressed as an American Indian, and how I had walked with her in the college grounds. She was now anxious for a position that would give her a living. She is a brilliant woman, full of life and mental resources. She had become a very active feminist and republican. As an adherent of Papanastasiou she was in constant touch with the activities of these progressives. She was sprightly, irrepressible, and full of hope for "her people," as she called the refugees. As secretary of the commission she reported to me all the activities of the various political factions, and her reports were very intelligent and instructive. Eventually she married a man who became Governor of Mytilene, and she helped him most gracefully and effectively to fill this post.

Another old acquaintance who called was our former steward at the Embassy in Constantinople, a man who had owned two houses and a vineyard in Therapia. He took the post of steward at the Embassy because it was the height of the ambition of all men in his profession to end their career in that way. He had a wife and four children, and was out at his elbows. His property had been confiscated, and he was walking the streets of Athens looking for work. He was a sad contrast to the gentleman who so meticulously functioned in our American Embassy. I appointed him custodian of the Refugee Settlement building and manager of the messengers. Now, in 1928, he is fully reestablished, owns a nice refugee home in one of the settlements, and two of his daughters are working and helping to support the family.

Rose Sartinsky, another graduate of the Constantinople College for Women, applied for work and became my private secretary. She did not possess the exuberance of spirit of Alexandra Joanides. She felt the grief of her people as though it were partly her responsibility to bear it. She was a most amiable and tireless worker, and used her evenings to teach stenography and typewriting to the girls at the Y. W. C. A. Little pleasure did she seek or have. Her greatest joy was to supervise a summer camp for these waifs of the Y. W. C. A. I took her with me on my tours of inspection, showing her how to make them, and then having her go by herself. I felt that only a Greek refugee could secure from these sufferers their real stories. Anyone who really

wants to secure an exact picture of these poor sufferers can do no better than to read her unedited account of these various visits. Miss Sartinsky's little personal comments add a charm to her statements, and rob them of some of their gruesomeness. I am going to give you her reports exactly as written by her:

**Report on Koundouriotis Camps. (Dated Athens, May 9, 1924.)**

*These camps are at Polygene, near the military school, on of the best situations in Athens. There are in all 463 houses giving shelter to more than 5,000 people, but in view of the fact that newcomers have arrived and there was no room for them, tents have been added and the refugees themselves have built some wooden barracks, which are more private than the other dwellings, where two, and in some cases three, families live together.*

*This is one of the first camps erected, and its inhabitants, some of them camped there over a year, have had sufficient time to make a sort of living and become more or less self-supporting.*

*They are not beggars, they do not ask for charity but for work. Work! Work! this is their cry, but alas! little or no work is to be found. They do not mind what work they have to do, or how hard they have to work, so long as they get a few drachmas a day. Women who in their country did nothing else than take care of their children and house are now working in factories, 8, 10 and even 12 hours a day. They go as washerwomen, char-women, use all their efforts, never grumbling, but pleased when they earn enough to bring some food to their hungry children, and even, whenever they can manage it, they help those who being old or sick cannot go out to work.*

*The streets of this Liliputian town are very clean and in some of them there are trees planted. In front of almost every house there is a tiny garden with two or three flowers in it, as there is no room for more. In the evening, after the day's work, the women and young girls take their chairs and sit in the open air, chatting, while their fingers are busily engaged in some needle work, the mothers mending the family's clothes while the girls make lace or some embroidery work, which they afterward sell at rather low prices. When they have a little piece of stuff and some minutes to spare, they make little curtains for their windows, and covers for the tables, which are made out of cases. Nothing is missing in this place. They have two large laundries with plenty of water, well ventilated and lighted, where twenty women can wash at a time.*



*They have their school, which unfortunately I could not visit, as it was too late, and the teacher who had the key was away, but I saw several little girls sitting on their doorstep with their books on their knees absorbed in study.*

*Farther off there is the market place. Some of the men who were fortunate enough to find people enough interested in them to lend them some money, built small barracks which they are using as shops. A few sacks of sugar, potatoes, beans, some boxes of cigarettes, not of the best quality of course, etc., represent the stock of the grocer, who, when I asked him if business was getting along well, said that he was doing fine work. He hoped he would soon be able to pay of his debt and afterward try and enlarge his enterprise. Next to him is the butcher and green-grocer. You can also see a coffee house and a pastry shop which, except on Sundays or some holidays, are not very active. The shoemaker and the carpenter also have their quarters. They seem less fortunate than the others, however, as shoes are rather a luxury and are worn only on great occasions; and as for furniture, the refugees make themselves their stools and tables out of cases. They cannot find any work outside of the camp, as there are many more shoemakers and carpenters in Athens than are needed.*

*There is not that look of despair which you see on the faces of the refugees in the National Theatre. These seem ready; for a new life. Perhaps this is due partly to the fact that the place is bright and sunny and not dark as the former.*

*I went to one of the tents which is large enough and in-habited by Erano Housatian, his wife, three daughters and, two sons. The place is spotless and the ground is covered by mats. All round the tent there are crude divans made of mattresses and covered with blankets. They also have some stools, a table and a set of shelves on which you can see a few cups, glasses and plates neatly placed and very clean. Some knits and knots give to the place a homelike atmosphere and there is an air, if not of cheerfulness at least of satisfaction. The father, the two sons and one of the daughters, are working, so that they are well fed and properly dressed. One of the daughters, a beautiful young girl of about 18, was making a dress for her younger sister. I asked her if she was pleased with her present life. "Yes," she said, "compared to others we are rather fortunate, as none of our family has been killed or kept prisoner, and we are also able to earn our living, but I can never forget our house with its big garden all around. It was so well furnished and we had plenty of dresses to wear. I had my trousseau ready; I have been working on it for years and years, and now everything is burnt." Tears filled her eyes at these last words. They lived in the*

*interior of Asia Minor, and some time before the catastrophe they took as many of their belongings as they could and went to Smyrna. As soon as they arrived the Turks came and they had to fly, leaving everything behind. In their country they also owned many shops which they used to lease. The father was working for the railway company and getting a substantial salary, which shows that they were amongst the wealthiest people of their country. The girl asked me if I thought there was any hope that they would be allowed to go back, to Asia Minor. "We love Greece"—they say—"but we cannot forget our birthplace, our homes, our lands, where we have been happy for so many years. The people here have done so much for us, but we are dependent more or less on others, while there we were our own masters."*

*Close to that tent there is another one where conditions are not so good. Indeed it is bare of all furniture and in it lives an old woman of about 65, Ekaterian Aslanoglou, with a little blind boy. You can at once see the hopeless look on the woman's face and understand the struggle for life. She also has a daughter of 30, who, far from being a help to her, is a burden as she is sick and most of the time is at the hospital. She was away and I could not understand from the mother what was the trouble with her. When I went there the woman was busy making bricks out of mud which she dried in the sun. She is doing this work when she has some spare time and hopes that before winter she will succeed in building a hut where she and her children shall find a better shelter against the rain and cold than under the tent. She is the only support of the family. She is doing some washing and gets about Drs. 20 a day, but the misfortune is that she cannot find work every day, and sometimes a whole week passes without her being able to earn a cent. You can see from her manners and talk that she was used to quite a different life. They are from Neni-Hissar (near Kessaria), where they owned a large house, besides another house in Constantinople which they leased. And now this woman, who had two houses of her own, is trying to build a hut out of dried mud and is looking forward to it just as if it were the nicest dwelling.*

*At some distance from the tent I saw a sort of hole in the rocks and to my great surprise a woman was standing at the opening. She greeted me with a smile and asked whether I would not like to go and have a little rest in her home. She seemed to be proud of being its owner, and indeed when I went in I saw that her pride was justified. When she and her husband first arrived at the camp it was late in the year, all the houses were occupied, the few tents were crowded and there was no room for them anywhere. At last they found a grot under which they went to get shelter. Some time*

*after they understood that there was no way of getting another house or anything better, so they decided to make the best of it and give to their grot a more comfortable look. The task was far from being an easy one but they did not lose hope. They started digging the rock and after much effort and many days' work that former hole was transformed into a rather large and suitable dwelling. Now the room was ready but bare, so they had to get to work and furnish it. No sooner said than done. They found some packing cases, from which they made a bed, some stools, and a table, as also the indispensable set of shelves for their cups, glasses, etc. The husband did his best to find some work. The only thing he was offered was to break stones. He would have to work eight and sometimes ten hours a day under the scorching sun- or in the sharp cold, but, although he is more than 60, and of course not very strong, he did not hesitate one minute to accept it, for he had to choose between this and starvation. His wife told me that this job is very trying for him. In the evening he comes back dead tired and she is afraid he will not be able to stand it much longer. All he gets for this is Drs. 3 a day [Note: the drachma was then worth about 1.75 cents; later it was stablized at 1.33 cents] and they manage with them to feed and dress themselves, and now and then buy some-thing for their little home. They bought some blankets with which they covered the walls and floor. There is a nice cover on their bed, as also on the table and shelves. The woman wished she could work and help her husband, but she is rheumatic and therefore unable to do so. I do not think the dampness of the grot will do her much good although she is pleased and says that she does not fear winter this year as she is safe from the rain and cold. The place does not seem to be very comfortable for winter, however, as it is impossible to have a window made and there is only a hole for a door. One of her brothers, a nice young boy, has been killed by the Turks. They are from Vourla, where they were the owners of a house and many vineyards. The husband was ' supervising the works and they were exporting wines and currants. They had to flee from their house in the middle of the night. She cannot forget the terrible scenes she saw in the streets. Amongst others she says that the place was full of heads of young girls whom the soldiers after maltreating had killed. They were placed in rows just as a sort of decoration of the roads. I wanted to get some more information about what she had seen but it was impossible because the remembrance of these sights made her weep and one of the neighbors told me I had better not make her speak any more as she is subject to fits of hysteria whenever she remembers those dreadful scenes.*

*Another woman confirmed the statement about the heads of the young girls. Some of them, those who could escape, fell into the*

*sea, preferring to be drowned rather than fall in the hands of the Turks. None of them from 10 to 30 and even 40 escaped. Vourla was the place where the most beautiful girls of Asia Minor were found. The inhabitants were proud of this, but the time came when this pride had to be paid by death. The Turks fell upon them as flies on the honey and killed, killed, killed, finding a fierce pleasure in exterminating those unbelievers, who, despite all the efforts of the Mohammedans, continued to rebel against them, and even those who could escape went so far as to prefer to be drowned than deny their faith, be taken in the harems and become the wives of the murderers of their fathers and brothers. Well so much the worse for them. Those who were caught had to pay for the whole lot.*

*After this I went to one of the big houses, composed of two rooms in which two families (6 people, relatives) live. One of the rooms serves for bedroom and sitting room, the as bedroom and kitchen. These people are amongst the most fortunate of refugees. The men were working at the railway company in Smyrna, as engineers, when the city was tured by the Turks. For five months after the catastrophe the Turks kept them without doing them any harm, because they needed engineers to mend the railway machines, etc, which had gone to pieces. As soon as the railways were in good shape again these men were discharged, and after paying tremendous sums of money they got permission to leave Smyrna, bringing with them one or two trunks, their clothes, mattresses and blankets. They were also able to save part of their money. Their rooms are furnished with luxury com-pared to others. They have real beds, chairs, a table and a petrol machine. They have one or two Turkish rugs on the walls too. Three days ago the husband of one and the brother of the other family found a good job and they are grateful and hopeful. Up to now the women were selling their jewels, one after the other, so as to live, and considering from the few rings and brooches that remained, they must have been rather valuable things. Two of their houses in the suburbs or Smyrna have not been burnt and they continue to hope that some day they will be allowed to go back and start their former life again. In one of the corners a watch light is burning before some ikons. It is burning there day and night. "We have to pray God for the return of our eldest son, who is still with the Turks," they said.*

*In fact, every family, even the poorest, has its ikon; those who can afford it have more, and the watch light is always burning. Those who are safe thank God for it and place some hope in the future; others, who have some members of their family still in the hands of the Turks," pray for their safe return; and those, the more numerous, whose many a beloved one has been killed, pray for*

*their souls. Their faith never fails them, and I have seen a woman whose husband and two sons were killed, who was living in a hut by herself, with not even a chair to sit on, but she never forgets to light her watch light before the ikon and never did she utter a word of protest. "God took from me everything I possessed, husband children, house. Such was His will and my only hope now is that I may soon be called to go and meet them."*

*The last house I visited did not bear such an air of desolation. On the contrary, it was one of the cases where there seemed to be some hope and relief, and this is because these people have been assisted in the beginning and were able to buy some yarn and start making carpets. The mother, Ourania Armoza, is too old to work, but her son and daughter fare working hard. The daughter is making carpets and her brother is selling them. She seems to be satisfied with her earnings. She showed me some nice little rugs for which she was asking 600-700 drs. each. It takes her from 15 to 20 days to finish one. They also have a little grocery shop in the same room and are selling sugar, coffee, rice, cigarettes and candy. They are from the interior of Asia Minor. Their room is clean and tidy and no effort is spared to make it look cozy. I was then conducted to one of the barracks occupied by P. Palassakis and his wife. It has the size of a rather large room. Two of his brothers went lately to the United States and as soon as they got a job they did not forget their brother here. They sent him some money with which he was able to buy boards and build his barrack and furnish it with a bed, two chairs, a table and a small cupboard. The wife made the curtains and the covers, and the room looks very smart. In Melemení, where they come from, they possessed several houses, one of which has not been burnt, and they too hope that some day they will go there and continue their former lives.*

*I picked up all this information from different points of the camp, going into the little houses and speaking with the Women in their own language. I showed that I understood their sorrows and felt for them. Some of the women thought that I went there to give them some news of the prisoners. They were depressed when I told them I was not in a position to give them any information. They ask me if I could help them to find out what had become of their beloved ones. Poor souls! A month ago the last prisoners arrived and it was announced that no more were left. But these people are still hoping against hope and watching for their husbands, sons, brothers, fiancées, until some day a friend comes carrying the sad news that those who are so anxiously awaited will never come back, they have been killed or have died from starvation or ill-treatment.*

*Seeing those little houses and grots one is reminded of the story of Robinson Crusoe, with the difference that instead of its being displayed in the wilderness it takes place in the midst of the busy and civilized world of the Twentieth Century. I left the camp full of admiration for these brave strugglers with life who, with but a little assistance, would accomplish wonders.*

*Report on the Refugees at the 7th Boys' School. (Dated Athens, May 31, 1924.)*

*This school, located near Athens, is composed of three large rooms, giving shelter to 22 families, or 91 individuals, amongst whom there are only 17 men, 7 of whom are too old to be of any help to their families. The others are women, quite a number of whom are above 60-70. Most of them have to support three, and even in several cases five, children. Nearly all the men who have been kept by the Turks have not and probably will not come back.*

*The clothes of the women and children, although worn-out, are clean and tidy. They were kind and ready to answer all my questions, although many a time their words were broken by tears when they wanted to describe to me how they used to live in their own country, and when they remembered those who were left behind and whom they would never see again.*

*All the men and nearly all the women were away at work. They leave their children to the care of the old women or others who for some reason or another cannot go out to work and must stay there all day long. Kallipoi Pantopoulou is the mother of six children and a two-months'-old baby. She showed me, with great pride, the three of them who were there (6-4-2 years old) and who really are beautiful little children, with fair, curly hair, and big, blue, bright eyes. They are like the mother, who probably was a nice woman before but now sorrow has broken her down. She keeps' her children as clean as can be. The others are working already, although the eldest is only 14 years of age. "I wish I could send them to school," she told me—"but we can't afford it, they must work because my husband only gets Drs. 35 a day and it is not enough." They come from Aivali where they had houses of their own and the husband was a flour dealer. It appears that they were living fairly well there.*

*Another woman of perhaps more than 65 is taking care of her two grandchildren, while the mother is working as a servant and supporting the whole family. The little girl is not more than 12 years old, she has a sad, melancholic look and one can see in her*

*eyes the whole drama of the family. There is none of that childish care freeness left in her. The answers she gave me were too serious, too sorrowful for her age, and I cannot forget her eyes full of tears when to my question where her father was, she pointed to the sky with her little finger and said "There," They had been expecting him but instead someone came and said that he was killed a few days after his captivity. This little girl is now working at a shirt-factory all day long. For the present she only gets Drs. 3 a day because she is just learning and her only hope is that she will soon learn to work sufficiently well and get a raise in her pay which will enable her to help her mother. Thus at the best period of life, when as a rule the children think of nothing but play, and those who are going to school consider it a hard job to study, hundreds of children like this little girl spend all their sunny days in the prison-like atmosphere of factories with the only expectation that some day they will be able to help their mammas.*

*Another old woman of about the same age, Eleni Lazarou, is also looking after her two grandchildren while the mother is out the whole day working at a carpet factory from eight o'clock in the morning to seven or even eight in the evening for the poor salary of Drs. 800 a month. Her husband was a prisoner, he came back four months ago but owing to the ill-treatment of the Turks he is suffering from consumption. He is at an hospital but his wife has to pay for his medicines, etc., which cost at least Drs. 100 a week. "We had no time to rejoice for his return"—said the mother-in-law—"ever since he came he has been in bed. At the beginning we thought that with proper care and solicitude we could bring him back to life, but it is too late, we soon found out that there is no hope, everything is useless and he will soon leave us." She told me she had another daughter with two children, who a week ago learned that her husband died in Smyrna. One of her sons, a former prisoner, came back in a pitiful condition it appears. He has a wife and children to support and tries to work, he is willing to do it, but he has not the power, he gets exhausted very quickly and of course the future is not at all promising for this family. "In Smyrna"—this woman told me—"I was so happy. All my children were married. They had their homes where nothing was missing. The men were working very well, all were cheerful, and now I can't send my grandchildren to school because they have no stockings and shoes to wear; every day there is some bad news, and one after the other our people are dying." She told me that sometimes she goes and does some washing so as to help her daughter, but as she is old and not at all strong she cannot do this very often.*

*Socrates Illiopoulos has his wife and five children, the eldest of whom is 11 years of age. He is a shoemaker and lately he has found a job where they give him 30 drs. a day. Two of the children are sent to school, the others are too young. In Kirkayats they had two houses, lands and vineyards and now they have not even a small room of their own. "After the free country life we were living, it is difficult, specially for the children, to live in this closed atmosphere" the women told me. They had to walk four days and nights from their country to Dikeli in order to get on board a ship. They took with them as many things as they could, clothes, silver, etc., but on their way they got tired and they had to drop one by one the bags containing the few things they had saved. Nevertheless they consider themselves happy because none of their family have fallen in the hands of the Turks and this really is a great privilege.*

*In a small little room there remains a family of four people, Fotini Pashalopoulou, with her son, an old mother and an old aunt of hers who has been left alone in the world. It appears that her son is suffering from consumption and this is the reason why they have the room to themselves. There is some sort of furniture, some pictures hanging on the wall and it is cosy and smart. You can at once see the difference from the other rooms where several families live together. Fotini is a nice woman of not more than 28 years of age and is a widow. She was neatly and nicely dressed. As a rule she does some washing and when she is at home she ' does some sewing work. "We can manage to live," she told me, "but I cannot stop working even a minute." She is so delicate and seems so much unused to this hard work that , one wonders if she will be able to go on with it for very long. Life was easy and cheerful for her when she was at Smyrna; now she is taught the other aspect of it too. The only thing she was able to bring is an ikon. "I could not leave it in the hands of the Turks," she told me—"it would have been a sacrilege."*

*Maria Pierno is living with her sister and her daughter, 25 years old. The latter has had pneumonia and was taken to the hospital. Now she is on her way to recovery and they want to send her back to the school. The hospital kept her more than four months and if now she is out of danger and on her way to recovery of course they cannot have her there any more, as there are many other people who are seriously sick, who need immediate care and who are anxiously waiting for a vacant bed in the hospital. The mother at the same| time is afraid to bring her to that place lest she have a relapse again, and I think she is not wrong. How can this girl rest and regain health in that noisy and unhealthy atmosphere of the room, where all the families are cooking, and without even a bed to lie on! "The main point," said the| mother, "is that I have not*



*the means to feed her properly." She is supported by her sister who only gets about Drs. 15 a day. She herself cannot work because she is suffering from rheumatism. Their situation is really fearful. In another room I saw the wife of Ioannis Herouvim with her baby who is only one month old. Her husband is working and gets 35 drs. a day but he has to support, apart from his wife, his old father and mother and a sister of his. He is the only man of the family left. One of his brothers was a prisoner but as no one has heard from him they believe he is dead. The grandmother had the little baby on her knees and was singing to him. "This is my only consolation now," she told me. In Smyrna they owned houses and vineyards and now their only belongings are two blankets.*

*Stillianos Kivopoulos was a prisoner and he just came back. I asked him to tell me how they were treated by the Turks. "I could talk for days and days and never be able to give you an idea of the horrors I saw," he said. He was a war-prisoner. When they were taken from Smyrna they were 3,000. They were told that they should walk to Magnissia (near Smyrna). They were only a few miles out of the town when they met Turkish soldiers armed with clubs, guns knives, swords, and everything they could find. As soon as the Greeks arrived the Turks started killing them, and as our soldiers of course tried to escape the Turks, who were in a hurry to finish their business and to destroy as many unbelievers as they could, found that the best method was to hit them and then throw them into dried wells that were around; thus even those who were not killed at once had not the least chance to escape death; and so corpses and wounded men were heaped up in those wells. These bodies were so many that the wells were filled up to the top and those who by chance were thrown in the last and were not very seriously wounded were able to get out later. Some of them turned mad at the time, and what was principally haunting them was the howlirig of those dying men who were buried alive in those graves. The most fortunate of course were those ' who were killed at once. Some of them, very few, succeeded in running away from the Turks while they were so busy. Later, however, the Turks caught them again. This man was one of them, and he told me that out of the 3,000 only 250 had not been killed. He told me that several times during his captivity he wished he were dead and only the thought of his young wife prevented him from committing suicide. They were left several days without any food or water, they had to work 14-16 hours a day, and were beaten like dogs. When the Turks did give them some food it was 100 grammes of bread, made out of barley and some currants. He said that later they were better treated but they had great difficulty in getting away.*

*Now although he does not look strong and healthy he is working and considers himself lucky to be back and with his family again. "I have worked For so many years," he says, " I had my house and some vineyards, I thought that I had not to worry any more about the future, but the Turk came. Everything has been destroyed and now I have to start all over again, but in spite of all this I thank God that I am alive and able to work."*

*Phili Balaban, a woman of more than 65 is supported by her granddaughter, a girl 16 years old. This child is the only member of the family left, her parents are dead as also one of her uncles. In Smyrna they had their houses, lands and vineyards. The girl was being brought up for quite a different life, which makes things more difficult for her now. When she comes home she makes the meal, tidies their little corner, etc.*

*Heleni Zahariou is supported by her son who is only 17\* years old and he gets 30 drs. a day. One of her sons has been! killed by the Turks and of course her house and all her longings have been burnt up.*

*I am of the opinion that if these people are moved from that school and have their own houses their conditions will improve considerably. They will feel at home and of course this will encourage them a great deal.*

**In hearing their stories and thinking over the whole thing, one is bewildered at the ruin which has been caused in so short a time. Some hours have been enough to destroy the work and efforts of so many years, to make hundreds of widows and orphans, to take away from old parents their children, their only hope and joy, and to plunge these once happy and merry people of Asia Minor, into everlasting grief and mourning!**

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **The Tragic Flood Inundates Greece**

**The Greeks themselves instantly undertook to solve the problem of their refugee brethren, unaided and alone. The Smyrna disaster began on September 9, 1922. In October the Greeks of Old Greece had perfected a non-governmental organization to**

deal with the rapidly arriving horde of refugees, and had raised a large sum of money for this purpose. This bold and humane enterprise was a daring thing for private individuals to undertake, but it was made necessary by the supineness—worse, by the hostility—of the King and his government, who feared that the newcomers would ascribe their sufferings (as they rightly did) to the blunders of the monarchy and were loath to strengthen the hands of the refugees even with bread and shelter.

The success of the unofficial national relief work was due primarily to Mr. Epaminondas Charilaos, a leading industrialist of Greece, who was a self-made man of great energy and courage. He had the very able cooperation of Mr. Etienne Delta, president of the Greek Red Cross, and many other patriotic citizens. At the instance of Mr. Charilaos, and under his leadership, these men organized the Refugee Treasury Fund.

The origin and the noteworthy achievements of the Refugee Treasury Fund, in relieving the refugees, cannot be better described than in Mr. Charilaos's own words, which he used to recount his stewardship as its president. On October 31, 1923, the fund was disbanded, to make way for the international Refugee Settlement Commission, set up by the League of Nations to carry on the whole work of relief under my chairmanship, beginning early in the following month. On that occasion Mr. Charilaos delivered a memorable address, which I have caused to be translated and which I here print in part because it gives a very striking account of a most remarkable achievement:

*The Refugee Treasury Fund was formed in October, 1922. The discussions of the Great Committee for the study of all refugee matters brought out clearly that only through an independent, non-political organization could something be done. It was therefore decided to entrust the settlement of the refugees dictatorially to one person, as was done in France for the reconstruction and settlement of the devastated provinces after the Great War.*

*This proposal being partially accepted on behalf of Mr. Doxiades, the Minister of Providence and Security, we ended the interminable discussions of the Great Committee by the formation of the Refugee Treasury Fund.*

*The funds were administered by a council, in which all social parties were represented and also various government services.*

*The Refugee Treasury Fund was established by a decree of law, and was headed by a board of fifteen members. Some of these were higher clerks of the various ministries, whilst others were representatives of the commercial and Industrial Chamber of Commerce of Athens and Piraeus, and of the Professionals' on federation. Five other members were appointed by the Minister of Providence and Security.*

*The income of the Fund included all private contributions for the refugees, and all amounts which the government placed to its disposal for certain defined purposes.*

*The Fund organized over twenty sub-committees, at Piraeus, Volo, Salonica, Larissa, Patras, Edessa, etc.*

*The General Board elected an Executive Board of three members, which, without any further formalities, could order the execution of any work, fix the method of executing the work, and determine the amount of expenditure.*

*In actual practice, the carrying out of the plans of the Fund, and also the executive direction of the work, was managed by the president personally and on his sole responsibility. This confidence that was invested in me by the board, and the consequent authority that I had to take any decision promptly in urgent cases, account for the greater part of the success of the Fund.*

*The Fund not only continued the work of helping the refugees with emergency relief, but also undertook their permanent settlement. At its first meeting, therefore, the General Board decided to use all private contributions to pay for the purchase and distribution of medicines, blankets, clothing, and other articles of first necessity; and to use all governmental allowances for the permanent civic settlement of the refugees.*

*In execution of the first of these intentions, the Refugee Treasury Board distributed to the refugees (through the Patriotic Establishment and Ladies' Committee at Athens, and also through their annexes and committees in the provinces) 200,000 blankets, 2,000 beds, thousands of mattresses, about 2,000 bundles of clothing (forwarded mostly from America), as well as many other things, such as medicines to be sent to the various hospitals and also to the various provincial committees. They distributed to refugee hospitals and to children, through the same committees, many thousands of cases of milk, either purchased or coming as*

*contributions from America. In relation with these contributions, we must specially mention the Pan-Ionian Corporation in America, which forwarded thousands of cases of milk, flour, and clothing.*

*The Fund granted to foreign relief organizations the money required to transport flour that had been supplied gratis. The Fund also paid for the fuel used in common by the refugees for cooking the common meals.*

*All refugees under trans-shipment were promptly supplied with the flour that was forwarded from America. On account of the Fund's excellent organization, and because no formalities stood in the way, these things were done quickly, and thus, without any exaggeration, the death of thousands of refugees was prevented.*

*Where no foreign organizations were installed, or where they were not sufficient, or where the government was unable to give any assistance, the Refugee Treasury Fund itself did what was needed, at any time of the day or night.*

*At the Lazarette of St. George the first crowded lot of refugees landed. They were cleaned, dressed, and fed until they could be transported to their settlement sites.*

*The Fund undertook afterward at Athens and Pirseus the sanitary service of the refugee settlements, until the Ministry of Providence and Security instructed this work in part to special government services. The Refugee Treasury Fund undertook also the evacuation of the night-soil pits of the settlements, a very needful, but also difficult, service. It distributed approximately 300,000 okes of soap (equal to 400 tons), thereby helping to prevent epidemic diseases. When, notwithstanding, epidemics of smallpox and typhus broke out, the Fund undertook the supply and the carrying out of all measures necessary to check these diseases.*

*The Fund provided the technical personnel for the formation and repair of numerous hospitals. They also supplied medicaments, clothing, tools, furniture, kitchen utensils, restaurant utensils, and very often also foodstuffs. They supplied beds, blankets, and tents for the above hospitals, and also for many provincial ones. They constructed wooden houses for over two hundred beds at various hospitals. They supplied motor transportation for the ill the fuel for the ovens at 30 per cent, less cost than current estimates; repaired hygienic instruments; supplied disinfectants; and constructed over one thousand de-lousing machines at one third of the*

*cost that had been indicated as necessary by a competition carried out. by the Department of Health.*

*The success of the Fund in rendering this prompt and efficient aid was due largely to our accuracy in forecasting the necessities to be met in proportion to the funds available; and to our early analysis of the various indispensable requirements of the refugees. The utmost economy and judgment were exercised, though it must be remembered that on many occasions the urgency of the necessities did not allow time for full investigation, or for free operation and choice.*

*Parallel with these emergency operations of relief, the Treasury Fund had to execute also the very difficult work of urban settlement of the refugees. (The part of this work that concerned settlement of refugees on the land was undertaken by the Ministry of Agriculture.) The government decided to begin the erection of the first permanent urban settlement at Pangrati, utilizing at that site an area of approximately one hundred stremmas. [Note: A stremma is equivalent to about one fourth of an acre.]*

*The reason for the immediate erection of this settlement was the desire of the Ministry of Public Instruction that the refugees should evacuate at least some of the school buildings. After a long investigation of the matter by the engineers and myself, final plans were drawn up and carried into execution.*

*Everything necessary for the settlement, including schools, baths, workshops, parks, gardens, squares, suitable tracing of roads, and even future extensions, were foreseen in the plan. An up-to-date, scientific system of sanitary dry pits was made. A water tank overlooking the settlement was built, a complete system of piping was installed, and an elevation pump with a complete machine house and independent power plant was constructed.*

*A machine and carpenter shop was also erected, which was utilized to do much of the wood working of the settlement.*

*In order quickly to finish the houses it was decided to distribute the execution of the work to numerous contractors, allowing them to utilize various systems of construction. The awarding of contracts was by competitive bids. Over two hundred well-known and honest contractors submitted sealed tenders. Thus we managed this operation of the Fund as efficiently as if it had been our own private work.*

*The contract for the construction of the first 800 houses was awarded to four contractors, who commenced the work during the end of December. I must emphasize the zeal and energy that were demonstrated by all of them, particularly as it must be considered that it was the first time such construction work was ever undertaken on such a scale in Greece, so that there was absolutely no previous experience to guide them. Likewise, essential materials were missing, organization was lacking, and trained help was scarce.*

*The unit prices of the successful bidders were judged by everybody to be satisfactory. The facilities made available to the contractors, and the prompt payment of weekly accounts due to them, were the principal reasons why that Fund got such good prices.*

*The execution of the work was so satisfactory that during April the first refugees were settled in the houses.*

*The results achieved at Pangrati demonstrated what were the most suitable methods of construction and arrangement of the dwellings. The procedure followed there having been accepted by the government, it now decided to spend larger amounts for further urban settlements, and we therefore next studied the most suitable sites for the location of these settlements. Sites at Podarades and also in the valley of Kaisariani were approved at Athens, and Kokkinia at Piraeus, as being situated not far from the towns and as having the advantages of an easy local water supply. Settlements were also projected for Volo, Patras, Eleusis, Salonica, Edessa, etc.*

*We now organized a technical staff, employed engineers, established a control-office, and set up an inspection service, with the necessary supervisors, controllers, and warehouse keepers.*

*In awarding contracts for these later settlements, we tried always to prefer those giving the most efficient guarantees, wherever these offered equally satisfactory prices. Wherever possible we utilized the refugees themselves as contractors or sub-contractors, and required them to use, so far as possible, only refugee labor.*

*Thus, of a total of 77 contractors, 34 were refugees, and of a total of 5,900 laborers, 5,488 were refugees.*

*Supplies were generally purchased through public competitions, or through requested offers from various parties, or by an open adjudication. In special and urgent cases, they were obtained by special agreements after carefully studying the market. This*

*system of course adds greatly to the responsibilities of the administrator, but as long as he does not fear these responsibilities, and is familiar with the persons and matters, this system is the one that gives the best results. If the various markets should be attentively examined it will be proved that very special prices were obtained for governmental services. Taking also into consideration that in the present instance rapidity of execution was a capital object, and that any delay merely that certain formalities should be followed, would have brought great losses, we shall, I hope, be justified by all that we acted correctly.*

*A total of 12,000 rooms has been built or is under construction, besides 2,500 rooms at Eleusis, Volo, Salonica, Agrinion, Patras, /Egion, and Edessa.*

*The foregoing is a summary of work concerning which I asked to be allowed to report, and regarding which I considered that I was under obligation to do so I received the presidency of the Fund at a time when the refugee problem was spread all over the Greek coast, and I undertook it in order to elaborate a system and draw up a service and a plan to contribute to the security and the salvation of the refugees. We all worked for over a year in order to accomplish these things. Owing to the wise and noble cooperation of all the members of the board and the employees, and owing to the vast confidence of the Minister of Public Assistance, we succeeded in all the things I have mentioned.*

*I do not ignore the fact that the system of concentrated authority, which I followed, approached in a way to absolutism; nor that I very likely touched other men's ambitions, weaknesses, and perhaps their interests. By all those whose ambitions I may have thwarted, I beg to ask in a friendly way to be excused. The work has been common for all of us.*

*In conclusion, I would emphasize that the employees and collaborators who have been engaged in this work have all shown a wonderful self-denial.*

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## Chapter XVIII



## The Greatness of the Greeks

The greatness of any nation lies in its people, not in its possessions. Greece is a poor country but the Greeks are a valuable people. The wealth of Greece lies in their courage, their energy, their lively minds, and their physical virility. The amazing progress that has been made in six years toward absorbing a 25 per cent increase in population speaks volumes for the character of the absorbers and the absorbed. I think it worth while, therefore, to devote a chapter to a study of the Greeks themselves. It may help the Western world to understand and better appreciate these worthy descendants of a glorious race. When the Greeks are mentioned in Europe and America it is too much the habit to dismiss them mentally as only to another of "those hopeless Balkan peoples." The Greeks are, however, very different from the other peoples of the Balkans, and it is a grievous injustice to misunderstand these differences.

First of all, the Greek has a passion for excellence and progress unique in that part of the world. Whenever he is poor or ignorant or backward he is so against his will. Education is a passion universal among the Greeks, and parents there, as in America, will make every sacrifice to provide schooling for their children. I recently saw a most touching illustration of this fact. Making a rapid tour of Macedonia, I arrived at Edessa, the ancient capital, late in the evening and spent the night and following morning there. Even before my early breakfast I was informed that a delegation from a distant village was on hand awaiting my convenience to pay their respects and offer a petition. When I saw the delegation I found the local priest, the schoolmaster, and three head men leading it. They had come to see me because they thought that I had the ear of the central government and could get what they wanted from headquarters in Athens. Of course, I could not do this; but the point of the story is their errand. They explained that they represented a group of refugees from the Black Sea region of Asia Minor, who had finally been got together again after their dispersion, and were now settled in the mountains of western Macedonia. They had an exceedingly hard time getting started in their new surroundings, and at times their sufferings had been severe. They were so poor that they had not been able to build even a church, but for five years had been holding their church services in a barn. The priest himself then explained what they wanted. It was not relief from taxes, nor an extension of time on their land payments, nor any of the selfish advantages one might have

expected; it was not even a church they wanted. Said the priest: "We are willing to go on worshiping in a stable until better times come, but we implore you to help us build a school, so that our children shall not grow up in ignorance."

Democracy is ingrained in the Greek, From the most ancient historic times, ever since the decline of the tiny monarchies of the heroic age described by Homer, the Greek has resented, and has refused to accept whenever possible, any political system in which he did not share on an equality with every other Greek. So far did he carry this individualistic democracy "in ancient historic times that even his military organizations were built on this principle. Some historian has pointed out that the immortal Ten Thousand, whose successful retreat from the Indus River to the shores of the Black Sea is described by Xenophon in the Anabasis, was more like a debating society than an army. Surrounded as it was by enemies, harried by day and by night, in a strange and difficult country, it continued in its darkest hours the practice of taking common counsel, deciding its strategy and changing its commanders by popular vote. Nevertheless it won its way back to Greece.

Exactly this quality and very largely these methods characterized the refugee mass when it arrived in Greece in 1922—seven years ago. The refugees welcomed the organized help of the Greek Government and of the international Refugee Settlement Commission, but they did not wait for these outside agencies to help them. Every Greek instantly set about helping himself. Instinctively he sought his old acquaintances and tried to reorganize his old social groups. Once gathered together again, these groups at once set up their familiar processes of local self-government.

Like the American, nearly every Greek is intensely ambitious to succeed in business. When he succeeds he gains honor (again as in America) by the lavishness of his gifts of money to the public welfare. From immemorial times preeminence in Greek communities has been given chiefly to the poet, the artist, the teacher, and the public benefactor. This is as true to-day in Greece as it was in the days of Sappho. The arts have declined in modern Greece (probably due to the centuries of foreign oppression), but the instinct for learning and for commerce is as strong as ever. In both fields the Modern Greek excels.

The disruption of normal political life among the Greeks during the many centuries of foreign rule was followed by the century (just past) of self-government in Greece proper; but self-

government based upon a fallacious theory. The monarchical form of government, imposed a century ago upon the Greeks by the European powers after they achieved their independence, was not adapted to their political genius. The Greek instinct is for local self-government. The monarchical idea implies the centralization of government. Under the monarchy an inevitable bureaucracy grew up at Athens, undertaking to direct from the capital the local developments of education, agriculture, and even local political and judicial administration. This system has worked after a fashion, because it had to work. But it runs counter to the nature of the Greeks, and has never been better than a poor makeshift.

For example: In most Greek cities there is an intense and healthy rivalry among the best citizens to secure the honor of election to office. So greatly is the honor prized, of being preferred above one's fellows for public office, that the ablest citizens have used every effort to secure election. The man chosen has been driven, by the same aspiration for honor, to try to excel his predecessor's record. Not only could he do this by a wiser administration, but also by a more lavish giving of his personal means. Thus it has been by no means uncommon for a man of wealth to give practically his whole fortune for the erection of a new school building. Similarly, the holders of other local offices have been known to bankrupt themselves to build a new water system for their town, or to create some other tangible and enduring evidence of their local patriotism.

The centralization of government at Athens obviously dampens or destroys this generous competition. Thus when a new school is needed, the village, however re-mote, must now look to Athens for a subsidy, instead of to the munificence of its own citizens. Log-rolling at the distant capital is more effective than appeals to local pride. This situation is not merely demoralizing. More serious than that, it dries up the very fountainhead of the Greek political nature. Greece will not demonstrate its full capacity for self-government until its constitutional system is rearranged to recognize and capitalize the distinctive political qualities of the people.

Such reorganization has hitherto been impossible. At the instance of the European powers, a foreign dynasty has sat on the Greek throne. The Greek parliamentary system has been an imitation of the French parliamentary system, which itself in turn is a none too successful imitative adaptation of the British Parliament. Ill adapted as it is to Greek conditions, the Greeks have had to put up with it because they have been under the

tutelage of France and Great Britain. Now, however, since they have expelled the dynasty and have become a republic, it may well be that a natural evolution will bring about a political organization more securely based on the Greek character.

The Greek has suffered in Western eyes also by his enforced association with inferior peoples. His destiny has been warped up for centuries, against his will, with those of the backward Turks, and with the relatively backward Serbs and Bulgarians. To a marvelous degree the sturdy Greek has resisted the superstitions and vices of the Orientals and barbarians about him. With anything like a fair chance in the world, he will again demonstrate the possibilities of his virtues.

Endless stories could be told of the courage of the Greeks, as illustrated in the lives of the refugees. One of the pleasantest comes from a little fishing village, built by the Refugee Settlement Commission near Volo, at the foot of Mount Pelion. The inhabitants of Epivato are like all the other refugees, in that they arrived in Greece destitute and suffering the loss of most of the breadwinners. In many of their little homes beside the water only a mother and her three or four young children form the whole family. They live in two rooms and eke out a bare living by endless industry and vigilant thrift. Poor as the village is, however, it supports the best educated woman in the settlement as a teacher. Freed from other gainful labors, she gives her time to educating the children—of course, she still has her domestic duties and the care of her own children to manage. She is a widow, and life is hard; nevertheless, in her characteristically neat living room there hangs on the wall an embroidered motto which, translated into English, reads:

*Wherever there is Faith there is Love,  
Wherever there is Love there is Peace,  
Wherever there is Peace there is Benediction,  
Wherever there is Benediction there is God,  
Where God is there is no want.*

A faith equally genuine and sublime has been characteristic of tens of thousands of the refugees. I have visited hundreds of them in their little homes, and never has courage been found lacking in the inmates. One family in the Kaisariana Settlement just outside of Athens comprises an aged widow mother, a son incapacitated by tuberculosis, and a widowed daughter with three small children, besides an unmarried daughter. The younger women manage to find a certain amount casual employment but no steady work. The average total income of

the family is barely enough to provide food so meager that one wonders how they can survive. Tragic memories of the violent death of husbands and sons are still fresh. These bring their moments of passioned sorrow. But these people do not yield to des-pair or lassitude. They face life with resolution and with many a touch of grim humor. Questioned as to how they could possibly carry on in the face of their difficulties, the young widow flashed back a brilliant smile shrugged her shoulders, in the characteristic Greek fashion: "God gives us strength to go about" was her laconic reply. No oriental fatalism here!

Moodiness and melancholy, as well as despair, are alien to the Greek temperament. The air is too clear, the sunlight too intense, the colors of the landscape too vivid to breed that grayness of the mind which broods in duller climates. Everything in his natural surroundings tends to stimulate the Greek rather than depress him. Only two things run counter to this general statement. In summer the dry intensity of scorching sunlight, by its over stimulation, finally tends to depress the heart action, and makes one feel dispirited. The brilliancy of the scene, however, largely counteracts this emotional effect, and constant resort to small doses of coffee helps further.

Such a climate, in another setting, would tend strongly to produce a frivolous people. The Greek is saved from this result by the effect of the scenery in which he lives and which powerfully affects his psychology. A famous historian has said that when he was writing about Greece his readers must assume that any place he mentioned was mountainous unless a plain were specifically expressed. Mountains surround the Greek on every hand. They are bold and massive, impressing the beholder with a sense of the majesty and power of nature. A highly intelligent Greek has recently said: "The Greek is not morbid, but neither is he gay or light-hearted. He loves life but reflects emotionally the climate and the scenery. The latter is rugged, difficult, and unsmiling, its every harsh outline made clear and naked by the pitiless sunlight. It is not a joyous scene nor a joyous people. We accept life as it comes, and relieve its grimness with merrymaking."

The simplicity of Greek life impresses every stranger, and deceives many. It is not the simplicity of shiftlessness, but the simplicity of an inevitable poverty. The humble homes characteristic of the country are never the less clean and neat and orderly within. Industrious as he is, the Greek values some things above the material returns of industry. Above all else he is a social being, and he will pay almost any necessary price to

gain the few hours in the evening when he foregathers with his fellows for social purposes and the exercise of his mental powers by matching them against those of his neighbors. Politics is the favorite theme of conversation, and there is in Greece no day laborer too humble to be well in-formed upon the facts of the current "situation," and to have his own independent opinion upon it. The democracy of the Greeks, to which I have constantly alluded, is no mere phrase that is bandied about to conceal something quite different. If the word "democracy" did not exist in Greece it would have to be coined express the universal fact.

Out of this political equality and this perfect freedom, of expression comes afresh every day a consensus of opinion probably more complete than is arrived at in any other country in the world. It explains, too, the sudden and violent fluctuations in government that so perplex and irritate many foreign observers. As the Greek is an individualist, and as almost every individual Greek is a person of thought and ideas, the political results are bound to be very different from those arrived at in America. For example: in America, team-play is as instinctive as breathing, and politics occupies a very small part of anybody's time or thought. The American gives his loyalty to organizations and institutions. He tends strongly to think of himself as a member of a party, and to follow his party right or wrong. The Greek's loyalty, on the other hand, is to his ideas. He follows the leader who, at the moment, most nearly embodies those ideas. The moment the Greek's idea changes, he shifts to another leader. The practical result is an endless variety of leaders, factions, and coalitions. The political line-up shifts from day to day, almost from hour to hour. The American views with impatience what seems to him the resultant chaos. Nevertheless, it is not chaos. Kaleidoscopic as are the changes in the political instruments of government, the eventual aims of Greek policy are as clearly defined and as steadfastly pursued as are, for example, our Monroe Doctrine and our protective tariff. It is idle to criticize their system simply because it is different. Also it is a mistake to confuse the frequent "revolutions" in Greece with the frequent revolutions in Central America. In the first place, practically all Greek revolutions are bloodless. In the second, they are usually simply short cuts to constitutional changes in a nation highly intelligent and exceedingly conscious of what it is about, politically. It may be granted that some of these revolutions are comic affairs, but even these are harmless and transitory.

The position of woman among the Greeks is in striking contrast with that of most of their neighbors. Except among the remote mountain peasantry of Epirus, woman occupies a very high position. She has a full share in life, and by no means infrequently dominates the family, her husband included, by force of superior intelligence and character. It is very common in Greece for a widow to inherit the entire estate of her husband and to manage it with conspicuous success. In most parts of Greece women live in that kind of modest retirement which we in America would call old-fashioned.

But there, as formerly here, no one is deceived by the outward conventions. Inside her home the Greek woman shares equally in the family councils. Her position is one of dignity and respect. In Athens she is as fully emancipated as she is in New York or Paris. I know, for example, one highly educated Greek lady, who keeps up to date in the current literature of four languages, who after the World War, undertook to restore the family estate, which is situated near the Bulgarian boundary and consequently had been devastated by border raids. She went alone to the remote ranch home, traveling by horseback and taking a plentiful supply of arms and ammunition along with the food and blankets. She lived alone on the ranch for many months, bought the lumber to reconstruct the buildings, hired the mechanics and directed their labors, and supervised the restoration of the soil to cultivation. Neither the loneliness of the place nor the frequent proximity of brigands daunted her in the least, nor was her independence regarded as an unwarranted unconventionality.

Marriages are "arranged" in Greece, after the French system, by the parents of the contracting parties. Romance plays little or no part in them; nevertheless, conjugal affection is the rule rather than the exception, and family ties are perhaps the strongest single influence in the life of a Greek. Moral standards are exceedingly high and are enforced by the rigors of a peculiar code regarding the family honor. Custom provides that when a woman deviates from the path of virtue she shall be killed by a member of her family. The executioner in the case of a married woman is not her husband, but her brother. The theory is that her delinquency is a stain on the honor of the blood relatives and must be expiated with blood. The husband's attitude is merely that he was cheated in the bargain when his parents arranged the marriage contract. Not he is dishonored, but the wife's family. So rigorous is this custom, and so universally accepted, that in the rare cases where this situation arises, it usually follows that the brother that has killed the woman is tried for

murder, is convicted of second-degree manslaughter, is sentenced to two years in prison, and is released after serving a few weeks of the sentence. In other words, the community conscience approves the drastic action of the family to clear its name. The result, naturally, is that the practical certainty of the family penalty operates powerfully to prevent the occasion for its use.

Hospitality is a universal virtue among the Greeks. No home is so poor but that the welcome stranger is offered, at the least, a cup of Turkish coffee and cigarettes, or the sweetmeat accompanied by a glass of water, which are the characteristic between-meals refreshment. In the isolated settlements in Epirus the stranger is a welcomed contact with the outer world, and his entertainment has been worked out by custom into an elaborate and time-consuming ritual that is sometimes embarrassing to a hurried traveler. The guest must go through with the whole program of his reception, however, or his host will be so offended that he will set the wolf like dogs upon him as he leaves.

The Greek is warlike; he has to be. He has lived for five thousand years and longer in the presence of hostile tribes. Of his nearest neighbors, the one that requires the closest watching is the Turk, while the Serbs and Bulgarians are always potential, and frequently active, enemies. If the Greek's attitude toward war is different from an American's, it is only natural. To him, war is as inevitable as sunrise, and he looks forward to the next war with perfect calmness, with neither elation over its fictitious glory nor any morbid forebodings over its inevitable tragedies. To him, war is simply another of the facts of life.

Nothing has revealed the essential soundness of Greek character more vividly than his conduct in the last seven years, during the greatest emergency of his recent history. The tremendous migration of a million and quarter people to new surroundings under the most trying conditions has been accomplished with amazingly little disorder. The sufferings of his race have not unnerved him. Tragedy has been another familiar fact of life down through all the ages of his history. He has always been acutely conscious of it but has never yielded to despair.

It would be hard to overstate the emotional strain upon the refugees. What the Psalmist meant when he said "I cannot sing the Lord's song in a strange land", has afflicted every one of them. This almost unbearable homesickness is revealed in many touching forms. Natives of Macedonia were astonished to see



refugees, newly arrived from Pontus, wandering through the oak forests, almost distraught, wildly searching for walnuts, as they had done every year for centuries in their native land, and to see them smitten with a heartbreaking sense of loss when they discovered that walnuts do not grow in Greece. Some of the refugees from Asia Minor had lived for centuries in pleasant dry caves along the seashore. Their neighbors in Attica were dumbfounded to see them abandon the houses to which they had been assigned on their arrival in Greece, and, finding no caves available, proceed to dig them.

Such incidents reveal the strength and tenacity of these people's rootage in the old soil, and suggest the violence of the emotional break with the continuity of life involved in their dispersion. Examples could be multiplied. Imagine having to get your olive oil out of a single bottle when you had been used, all your life, to having it out of a barrel; or having to buy olives and wine at a store, when the idea had simply never occurred to you or your neighbors that these things should not come off your own lands, by your own hands, and endeared by the annual practice of an immemorial art. Even the everyday utensils were strange. The clothes were different. The local dialect was hard to understand. The church one attended was some new, raw structure, not the mellowed and hallowed little edifice, eight hundred years old, to which one and one's ancestors had beaten a timeless path.

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