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***With the Greek Soldiers***

THE strategic position of the Greek and Turkish armies in the late campaign was but little more complicated than the strategic position of two football teams when they are lined up for a scrimmage. When the game began, the Greeks had possession of the ball, and they rushed it into Turkish territory, where they lost it almost immediately on a fumble, and after that the Turks drove them rapidly down the field, going around their ends and breaking through their centre very much as they pleased.

The Greeks were outnumbered three to one, but there are many people who think that they would have run away even had the number of men on both sides been equal. There is, however, no way of proving that they would have done this, while it can be proved that they were outnumbered, and were nearly always for that reason attacked as strongly on the flank as in the front. This fact should be placed to their credit side in summing up their strange conduct. If an eleven from Princeton played three elevens from Yale at the same time, one can see that the game would hardly be interesting; and to carry out the simile still further, and then to drop it, it was as though this Princeton eleven was untrained, and had no knowledge of tricks nor of team play, and absolutely no regard for its captain as a captain.

It is a question whether the chief trouble with the Greeks is not that they are too democratic to make good soldiers, and too independent to submit to being led by any one from either the council-chamber or the field. Perhaps the most perfect example of pure democracy that exists anywhere in the world is found among the Greeks today—a state of equality the like of which is not to be found with us nor in the republic of France. Each Greek thinks and acts independently, and respects his neighbor's opinion just as long as his neighbor agrees with him. The King sits in cafes and chats with his subjects, and they buy the wine he sells and the asparagus he grows, and in return he purchases their mutton. My courier, who was a hotel runner, used to shake hands with the Minister of War and the Minister of the Interior, and they called him by his first name, and seemed very glad to meet him; newsboys in Athens argued together as to what the concert of the powers might do next; and private soldiers travelled first class and discussed the war with their officers during the journey in the most affable and friendly manner. The country was like a huge debating society. When these men were called out to act as soldiers, almost every private had his own idea as to how the war should be conducted; he had a map of the country in his canvas bag; and as his idea not infrequently clashed with the ideas of his superiors, there were occasional moments of confusion. The fact that his officers wore a few more stars on their collars than he did, and were called colonel or major, did not impress him in the least. He regarded such distinctions as mere descriptive phrases intended to designate one man from another, just as streets are named differently in order to distinguish them, and he continued to act and to think for himself, as had been his habit. On the march to Domokos three privates argued with a major, who was old enough to have been the father of all of them, as to

whether or not they should leave the camp to fill their canteens. The major stamped his feet and threw his hands above his head and expostulated frantically, and they soothed him and tried to persuade him by various arguments that he was unreasonable. They treated him respectfully, probably on account of his years, but they showed him clearly that they considered his premises erroneous and his position illogical.

It may be argued that discipline is not the most essential quality in a soldier, and that sometimes natural-born fighting-men, with the advantage of greater numbers, can defeat trained veterans. But the Greeks were neither born fighters nor trained soldiers. The Sudanese, and the head-hunters of Borneo, and Irishmen, are good examples of born fighting-men; they follow it as a form of excitement, and enjoy it as a pastime. Irish Americans who go up the Hudson in barges to a political picnic always mix fighting with the other diversions of the day. A German, on the contrary, is not instinctively a fighting-man, but, owing to geographical and political reasons, it has been found necessary to train him to be a soldier; and so, while he prefers, when he goes on a picnic, to listen to music and to drink beer to pounding his best friend, he is, when in the field, probably the most perfect fighting-machine of; our time. His brain works as part of a company, and his legs move as part of a regiment. He does not control the machine, the machine moves him. In Greece every soldier was a little machine by himself, and when he decided that it was time to turn and run, there was no familiar elbow-touch to remind him that he was not alone. He was sure he was just as intelligent as any one else, and quite as able to tell when the critical moment had arrived, and so naturally it arrived very often.

This does not mean that all the Greeks were cowards. That would be an exceedingly absurd thing to suggest. Some of them, officers and men alike, showed admirable calmness and courage, and an excellent knowledge of what they had to do. But a great many of them knew little of campaigning and nothing of fighting. A boy in the States who has camped out for one summer in the Adirondacks would know better how to care for the Greek soldiers in the field than did half of their officers, who had learned what they knew of war around the cafes in Athens. I was with one regiment in which almost every man started for the field in perfectly new shoes. The result was that within five hours or sooner half of them were walking barefoot, and when we came to the first water-tank, these men ran ahead and stuck their bleeding feet into the cool water, and stamped it full of mud, and made it quite impossible for any of their comrades to fill their thirsty canteens. Whenever we came to water, instead of holding the men back and sending a detail on ahead to guard the well, and then calling up a few men from each company to fill the canteens for the majority, there was always a stampede of this sort, and the water was wasted and much time lost. These are little things, but they illustrate as well as more important blunders how ignorantly the men were handled.

Too many of the Greeks, also, went forth to war with a most exaggerated idea of the ease with which a Turkish regiment can be slaughtered or made to run away, and when they found that very few Turks were killed, and that none of them ran away, the surprise at the discovery quite upset them, and they became panic-stricken, and there was the rout to Larissa in consequence. The rout to Larissa was as actual a disaster for the Greeks as bad ammunition would have been, or an epidemic of fever among the troops. We can remember how the fire in the Charity Bazar in Paris affected the Parisians for weeks after it had occurred, and made them fearful of entering public places of amusement, and that the size of audiences on account of it suffered all over the world. A similar terror lay back in the mind of each Greek soldier. He felt that what one Greek had done he might do. He remembered how his comrades had hurled their arms away from them, how they rode each other down, and how their own artillery left a line of

dead and wounded Greeks behind it in its flight. Instead of assuring himself, in lack of any evidence to the contrary, that he was going to stand and fall in his own footprints, he was haunted with doubts of his courage. "Am I going to run, as they did at Larissa?" he asked himself repeatedly, and he was considering to what point he could retreat, instead of observing the spot in the landscape to which he would advance. He kept his finger feeling and probing at the pulse of his courage, instead of pressing them on the hammer of his rifle. If it be possible to inspire men to deeds of bravery by calling upon them to remember Marathon or Waterloo or the Alamo, it is easy to understand that the word Larissa, even though it were whispered by a campfire at midnight, might produce an opposite result.

Many people believe that a true understanding of the Greek campaign depends upon an acquaintance with the letters which passed between the King and his royal relatives in the courts of Europe. Without them no one can guess how much the secret orders he may or may not have received from the Powers served to influence the conduct of the war. The Greek soldiers, at one time at least, were undoubtedly of the opinion that they had been deceived and betrayed by the King at the demands of the Powers, and that their commander-in-chief, the Crown-Prince, had received orders not to give battle, but to retreat continually. This feeling was as strong among the people in the towns and cities as it was among the soldiers in the fields, and portraits and photographs of the royal family were defaced and thrown out into the street, and in Athens a mob led by a Deputy marched upon the palace to assassinate the King, after having helped itself to arms and ammunition in the different gun-shops. The mob would probably have done nothing to the King except to frighten him a little, and only desired to make a demonstration, and, as a matter of history, they did not even see him. For when the Deputy at the threshold of the palace demanded to be led at once into the presence of his Majesty, a nervous aide-de-camp replied through the half-open door that his Majesty did not receive on that day. And the Deputy, recognizing the fact that it is impossible to kill a man if he is not at home, postponed the idea of assassination, and explained to the bloodthirsty mob that for purposes of regicide they had chosen an inconvenient time. His Majesty's days for being killed were probably Tuesdays and Thursdays, between four and seven.

King George was unfortunate in having been carried beyond his depths by a people who seem as easily moved as those of a Spanish-American republic, and the worst they say of him is that he is a weak man and one who plays the part of king badly. Had he told the people stoutly that they were utterly unprepared for war—a fact which no one knew better than himself—they could not, when they received the thrashing which he knew must come, have blamed him for not having warned them like a true friend. But he did not do that. He said, from the balcony of the palace, that if war should come he himself would lead them into Thessaly; and then, by delaying the declaration of war, he allowed the Turkish forces sufficient time in which to take up excellent positions. Even after the war began he made no use whatsoever of the navy. As the Turks had no navy worth considering, the Greek war ships in comparison formed the most important part of their war equipment. And had their government or the Powers allowed them to do so, the Greek vessels might have seized any number of little Turkish islands and garrisoned them until peace was declared. These would have been of great value to Greece later, when the terms of peace were being drawn up and indemnities were being discussed and demanded. But as it was, except for the siege of Prevesa, no one heard of the Greek navy from the beginning of the war to its end.

It is difficult to arouse much sympathy for the royal family. People of unimaginative minds already suggest that kings and princes are but relics of the Middle Ages, and if the kings and princes who still survive wish to give a reason for their place in the twentieth century, they

should at least show themselves to be men. A prince enjoys a very comfortable existence; he is well paid to be ornamental and tactful and not to interfere in affairs of state; but occasionally there comes the time when he has to pay for what has gone before by showing that he is something apart from his subjects—that he is a prince among men. In the old days the Crown-Prince was not exempt from exposing himself in the fighting line. It is true he disguised a half-dozen other men in armor like his own so that he had a seventh of a chance of escaping recognition. But there was that one chance out of seven that he would be the one set upon by the enemy, and that he would lose his kingdom by an arrow or a blow from a battle-axe. They led their subjects in those days; they did not, at the first sign of a rebuff, desert them on a special train.

That unfortunately was what the Crown-Prince Constantine did at Larissa. It was only right that, both as the heir-apparent and as commander-in-chief, he should have taken care to preserve his life. But he was too careful; or, to be quite fair to him, it may have been that he was ill-advised by the young men on his staff. Still, his staff was of his own choosing. His chief-of-staff was a young man known as a leader of cotillions in Athens, and who, so I was repeatedly informed, has refused to fight nine duels in a country where that relic of barbarism is still recognized as an affair touching a man's honor. It was this youth who turned the Greek ladies out of a railroad carriage to make room for the Prince, and who helped to fill it with his Highness's linen and dressing-cases. It is pleasant to remember that one of the democratic porters at the railroad station was so indignant at this that he knocked the aide-de-camp full length on the platform. One of the Greek papers, in describing the flight of the Crown-Prince, said, in an editorial, "We are happy to state that on the arrival of the train it was found that not one pocket-handkerchief belonging to the Prince was lost—and so the honor of Greece is saved." Another paper said. "Loues the peasant won the race from Marathon; Constantine the prince won the race from Larissa."

"It is given to very few men to carry a line to a sinking ship, or to place a flag upon the walls of Lucknow," and even less frequently than to other men is such a chance given to a crown-prince; and when he fails to take the chance the conspicuousness of his position makes his failure just so much the more terrible. When other men make mistakes they can begin a new life under a new flag and a new name, at Buenos Aires or Callao. But a crown-prince cannot change his name nor his flag. Other men who had no more lives to spare than has his Royal Highness remained in the trenches; indeed, many of them went there out of mere idle curiosity, to see a fight, to take photographs, or to pick up souvenirs from the field. And women, too, with little scissors and lancets dangling like trinkets from their chatelaines, and red crosses on their arms, stood where he did not stand. If he had only walked out and shown himself for a moment, and spoken, to the men and questioned the officers, and then ridden away again, he would have made himself the most popular man in Greece, and would have established his dynasty forever in that country. He did this at Pharsala, but then it was too late; every one knew that when the whole country was calling him a coward he would have to be brave the second time. And so Constantine must spend the rest of his life explaining his conduct, when he might have let one brave act speak for him. Nicholas, the other prince, who is a lieutenant in the artillery, was not seen near his battery during the fight before the rout to Larissa and as for that big, bluff, rollicking sea-dog George, who is always being photographed in naval togs, with his cap cocked recklessly over one ear, he was never heard of from one end of the campaign to the other. It was generally reported that he had taken the navy on a voyage of exploration to the north pole.

One night, on our way to Volo, an Australian correspondent, who was very much of a democrat, and anything but a snob, was trying to explain and to justify the conduct of the Crown-Prince at Larissa. But he found his audience either unsympathetic or skeptical, for at last he laughed, and shrugged his shoulders. "After all," he said, "it should mean something even today to be a prince."

I first came up with the Greek soldiers at Actium, on the Gulf of Arta, where the artillery and the warships were shelling Prevesa.

The Gulf of Arta has Greece on its one bank and Turkey on the other, and where it empties into the Adriatic there is Prevesa on the Turkish side, and on the Greek side a solitary stone hut. Below it is the island of Santa Maura, and a town of toy houses as old and black as Dutch ovens, and with overhanging red tiled roofs. Santa Maura lies below Corfu and above Cephalonia, and close to neither, but those are the places nearest on the map that are displayed in type large enough to serve as an address. From the Greek bank Prevesa was only a wall of white ramparts, shimmering in the sun, with tall poplars and pencil-like minarets pointing against the blue sky; as seen from the other bank, it was, so they said, a town filled with hungry people and wounded soldiers and shattered cannon. The siege of Prevesa began on the 18th of April, and the Greek officers on the war-ships continued the siege until the armistice.

It was hard to believe that war existed in that part of Greece; it was difficult to see how, with such a background, men could act a part so tragic. For the scene was set for a pastoral play--perhaps for a comic opera. If Ireland is like an emerald, this part of Greece is like an opal; for its colors are as fierce and brilliant as are those of the opal, and are hidden as they are with misty white clouds that soften and beautify them. Against the glaring blue sky are the snow-topped mountains, and below the snow-line green pasture-lands glowing with great blocks of purple furze and yellow buttercups, and waving wheat that changes when the wind blows, and is swayed about like waves of smoke. In the high grass are the light blue flowers of the flax on tall bending stalks, and white flowers with hearts of yellow, and miles of scarlet poppies, and above them tall dark poplars and the grayish-green olive-trees. The wind from the Adriatic and the Gulf of Arta sweeps over this burning landscape in great generous waves, cooling the hot air, and stirring the green leaves and the high grass and the bending flowers with the strong fresh breath of the sea.

White clouds throw shadows over the whole as they sweep past or rest on the hills of gray stones, where the yellow sheep look, from the path below, like fat grains of corn spilled on a green billiard cloth. You may ride for miles through this fair country and see no moving thing but the herds of silken-haired goats and yellow sheep, and the shepherds leaning on their long rifles, and looking, in their tights and sleeveless cloaks and embroidered jackets, like young princes of the soil.

It is hard to imagine men fighting fiercely and with bloodshot eyes in such a place; and, as a matter of fact, no men were fighting there, except in a measured, leisurely, and well-bred way. Over in Thessaly, for all we knew here, there was war and all that war entails; but by the Arta the world went on much as it had before—the sheep-bells tinkled from every hill side, the soldiers picnicked under the shade of the trees, and the bombardment of Prevesa continued, with interruptions of a day at a time, and the answering guns of the Turks returned the compliment in an apologetic and desultory fashion. Sometimes it almost seemed—so bad was the aim of the Turkish soldiers—that they were uncertain as to whether or not they had loaded their pieces, and were pulling the lanyards in order to find out, being too lazy to open the breech and look.

I rode out one day into the camp at Actium, where the solitary stone hut looked across on Prevesa, and Prevesa on the sea, and found a regiment of artillery camping out in the bushes, and two officers and a cable operator bivouacked in the hut. A merry sergeant explained that a correspondent had come all the way from America to describe their victories, and the regiment gathered outside the stone hut and made comments and interrupted their officers and contradicted them, and the officers regarded the men kindly and with the most perfect good feeling. It was not the sort of discipline that obtains in other Continental armies; but it was probably attributable to the scenery: no colonel could be a martinet under such a sky. The cable operator played for us on a guitar, and the major sang second in a rich bass voice, and the colonel opened tinned cans of caviar and Danish butter, and the army watched us eat with serious and hospitable satisfaction. One man brought water, and another made chocolate, and a stern corporal ordered the soldiers away; but they knew he was only jesting, and after turning around came back again, and bowed as one man and removed their caps whenever we drank anybody's health. It reminded one of a camp of volunteers off for a week of sham battles in the country. When I started on my way again the colonel detailed an escort; and when I assured him there was no danger, he assured me in return that he was well aware of that, but that this was a "guard for honor." No man can resist a "guard for honor," and so part of the army detached itself and tramped off, picking berries as it marched, and stopping to help a shepherd lad round up a stray goat, or to watch two kids fighting for the supremacy of a ledge of rock. It is impossible to harbor evil thoughts, even of a Turk who is shelling your camp, after you have stood for a quarter of an hour watching two kids roll each other off a rock. The state of mind that follows the one destroys the possibility of your entertaining the state of mind that is necessary for the other.

On the next day a company of the Tenth Regiment of Infantry left Salagora for the Five Wells, where there was to be a great battle that afternoon. We were on Turkish soil now, but the soldiers still carried themselves like boys off on a holiday, and like boys enjoyed it all the more because they were trespassing on forbidden ground. We all may have our own ideas as to how an armed force invades the territory of the enemy—the alertness with which the men watch for an ambush, the pickets thrown out in front, and the scowling faces of the inhabitants as the victors and invaders pass. Perhaps to a vivid imagination the situation suggests poisoned wells left behind as mementos, and spiked cannon abandoned by the road-side, and burning fields that mark the wake of the flying enemy. But we saw none of these things on that part of the frontier. It is true the inhabitants of Salagora had abandoned a few cannon, and (which seemed to cause more delight to the Greek soldiers) a post-office full of postal cards, upon which they wrote messages to their friends at home, with the idea of posting them while on Turkish soil, and so making the Turkish government unwittingly forward these evidences of its own humiliation. The men sang as they marched, and marched as they pleased, and the country people that we met saluted them gravely by touching the forehead and breast. No one scowled at them, and they feared no ambush, but jogged along, strung out over a distance of a quarter of a mile, and only stopping when the Turkish guns, which were now behind us, fired across the gulf at a round fort on a hill in Greece, and a white puff of smoke drifted lazily after the ball to see where it had gone. The field birds and the myriad of insect life and the low chimes of the sheep-bells so filled the hot air with the sounds of peace that it was an effort to believe that the heavy rumble and thick upheaval of the air behind us came from hot-throated cannon. One suspected rather that some workmen were blasting in a neighboring quarry, and one looked ahead for the man with the red flag who should warn us of descending stones. The soldiers halted near midday at a Greek church, for almost all of those Turks who live on the shores of the Arta are Christians; and the

old priest came out and kissed each of them on the cheek, and the conquering heroes knelt and kissed his hand. Then there was more picnicking, and the men scattered over the church-yard, and some plucked and cooked the chickens they had brought with them, and others slept stretched out on the tombstones, and others chatted amicably and volubly with the Turkish peasants, who had come, full of curiosity, from the fields to greet them. And after an hour we moved on again; but before we left the village a Turk ran ahead and lifted the glass from the front of the picture of the Saviour that hung under a great tree, and his friends the enemy broke ranks, and, with their caps in their hands and crossing themselves, knelt and kissed the picture that the Turk held out to them, and prayed that his brother Turks might not kill them a few hours later at the Five Wells.

But we never saw the Five Wells; for, within an hour's ride from it we met peasants fleeing down the road, bent under their household goods, and with wild tales that the battle had already gone to the Turks, and that all the Greek troops were retreating on the city of Arta. And soon we came in sight of long lines of men crawling into the valley from all sides, and looking no larger than tin soldiers against the high walls of the mountain. It was a leisurely withdrawal, and no one seemed to know the reason for it. A colonel, with his staff about him, shrugged his shoulders when I rode up and asked why the battle we had marched, so far to see had been postponed. The commander-in-chief had ordered him to return, he said, for what reason he knew not. "But I am coming back again," he added, cheerfully.

The road to Arta was not wider than a two-wheeled ox cart, and down it for many hours, and until long after the stars began to show, poured and pressed an unbroken column of artillery and cavalry and infantry, which latter carried their guns as they chose and walked in no order. Men sat by the road-side panting in the heat, or stretched sleeping in the wheat-fields, or splashed in the mud around some stone well, where a village maiden dipped the iron bucket again and again, and filled their canteens, and smiled upon them all with equal favor. Now and then a courier would break through the cloud of dust, taking outline gradually like an impression on a negative, his brass buttons showing first in the sunlight, and then the head of the horse, and then the rider, red-faced and powdered white, who would scatter the column into the hedges, and then disappear with a rattle and scurry of hoofs into the curtain of dust. Commissariat wagons stuck in the ruts, and the commissariat mule, that acts in Albania apparently just as he does on the alkali plains of Texas, blocked the narrow way, and blows and abuse failed to move him. To add to the confusion, over a thousand Christian peasants chose that inopportune time to come into Arta for safety, and brought their flocks with them. So that in the last miles of the road sheep and goats jostled the soldiers for the right of way, which they shared with little donkeys carrying rolls of tents and bedding, and women, who in this country come next after the four-legged beasts of burden, staggering under great iron pots and iron-bound boxes. Little children carried children nearly as big as themselves, and others lay tossed on the packs of bedding, and others slept lashed to their mothers' shoulders in queer three-cornered toughlike cradles. The men and boys, costumed like grand-opera brigands, dashed shrieking in and out of the mob, chasing back the goats and sheep that had made a break for liberty, and the soldiers helped them, charging the sheep with their bayonets, and laughing and shouting as though it were some kind of game. Over all, the dust rose and hung in choking clouds, through which the sun cast a yellow glare; and so for many hours the two armies of peasants and of soldiers panted and pushed and struggled towards the high narrow bridge that guards the way to Arta.

It is such as bridge as Horatins with two others might have held against an army; it rises like a rainbow in the air, a great stone arch as steep as an inverted V. It is made of white stone,

with high parapets. Into this narrow gorge cannon and ammunition-wagons, goats and sheep, little girls carrying other little girls, mules loaded with muskets, mules hidden under packs of green fodder, officers struggling with terrified horses that threatened to leap with them over the parapet into the river below, peasants tugging at a long string of ponies, women bent to the earth under pans and kettles, and company after company of weary and sweating soldiers pushed and struggled for hours together, while far out on either side hordes of the weaker brothers, who, leaving it to others to demonstrate the survival of the fittest, had dropped by the way side, lay spread out like a great fan, but still from time to time feeding the bridge, until it stretched above the river like a human chain of men and beasts linked together in inextricable confusion.

Of course it was a feast-day when this happened. It always is a feast-day of the Greek church when such an event can be arranged to particularly inconvenience the greatest number of people. There were three in succession at Moscow when the Czar was crowned, and for that time no bank was opened, and every one borrowed from every one else, or went hungry. And no shop was opened in Arta that night when the army retreated upon it, and officers and men packed the streets until daylight, beating at the closed shutters and offering their last drachma for a lice of bread, while the shepherds camped out with their flocks on the sidewalks and in the public squares.

But the wine-shops were open, and in and out of them the soldiers and their officers tramped and pushed, hungry and foot-sore and thirty; and though no "lights out" sounded that night, or if it did no one heard it, there was not a drunken man, not a quarrelsome man, in that great mob that overwhelmed and swamped the city.

Late at night, when I turned in on a floor that I shared with three others, the men were still laughing and singing in the streets, and greeting old friends like lost brothers, and utterly unconscious of the shadow of war that hung over them, and of the fact that the Turks were already far advanced on Greek soil, and were threatening Pharsala, Velestinos, and Volo.

The Turks had made three attacks on Velestinos on three different days, and each time had been repulsed. A week later, on the 4th of May, they came back again, to the number of ten thousand, and brought four batteries with them, and the fighting continued for two more days. This was called the second battle of Velestinos. In the afternoon of the 5th the Crown Prince withdrew from Pharsala to take up a stronger position at Domokos, and the Greeks under General Smolenski, the military hero of the campaign, were forced to retreat, and the Turks came in, and, according to their quaint custom, burned the village and marched on to Volo. John Bass, the American correspondent, and myself were keeping house in the village, in the home of the mayor. He had fled from the town, as had nearly all the villagers; and as we liked the appearance of his house, I gave Bass a leg up over the wall around his garden, and Bass opened the gate, and we climbed in through his front window. It was like the invasion of the home of the Dusantes by Mrs. Lecks and Mrs. Aleshine, and, like them, we were constantly making discoveries of fresh treasure-trove. Sometimes it was in the form of a cake of soap or a tin of coffee, and once it was the mayor's fluted petticoats, which we tried on, and found very heavy. We could not discover what he did for pockets. All of these things, and the house itself, were burned to ashes, we were told, a few hours after we retreated, and we feel less troubled now at having made such free use of them.

On the morning of the 4th we were awakened by the firing of cannon from a hill just over our heads, and we met in the middle of the room and solemnly shook hands. There was to be a battle, and we were the only correspondents on the spot. As I represented the London Times,



Bass was the only representative of an American newspaper who saw this fight from its beginning to its end.

We found all the hills to the left of the town topped with long lines of men crouching in little trenches. There were four rows of hills. If you had measured the distance from one hilltop to the next, they would have been from one hundred to three hundred yards distant from one another. In between the hills were gullies, or little valleys, and the beds of streams that had dried up in the hot sun. These valleys were filled with high grass that waved about in the breeze and was occasionally torn up and tossed in the air by a shell. The position of the Greek forces was very simple. On the top of each hill was a trench two or three feet deep and some hundred yards long. The earth that had been scooped out to make the trench was packed on the edge facing the enemy, and on the top of that some of the men had piled stones, through which they poked their rifles. When a shell struck the ridge it would sometimes scatter these stones in among the men, and they did quite as much damage as the shells. Back of these trenches, and down that side of the hill which was farther from the enemy, were the reserves, who sprawled at length in the long grass, and smoked and talked and watched the shells dropping into the gully at their feet.

The battle, which lasted two days, opened in a sudden and terrific storm of hail. It was a phenomenon of nature so unusual at that season that for several months later its coming kept the wise men in London busily engaged in trying to explain it away; but at the time the Greek soldiers, who still are, in some things, as superstitious as their forefathers at Mars Hill, accepted the great overture of thunder and its accompanying volleys of frozen bullets as a good omen, and as sent direct from the gods on Mount Olympus, which reared its head from just the other side of the Turkish borders.

The storm passed as quickly as it came, leaving the trenches running with water, like the gutters of a city street after a spring shower; and the men soon sopped them up with their overcoats and blankets, and in half an hour the sun had dried the wet uniforms, and the field-birds had begun to chirp again, and the grass was warm and fragrant. The sun was terribly hot. There was no other day during that entire brief campaign when its glare was so intense or the heat so suffocating. The men curled up in the trenches, with their heads pressed against the damp earth, panting and breathing heavily, and the heat-waves danced and quivered about them, making the plain below flicker like a picture in a cinematograph.

From time to time an officer would rise and peer down into the great plain, shading his eyes with his hands, and shout something at them, and they would turn quickly in the trench and rise on one knee. And at the shout that followed they would fire four or five rounds rapidly and evenly, and then, at a sound from the officer's whistle, would drop back again and pick up the cigarettes they had placed in the grass and begin leisurely to swab out their rifles with a piece of dirty rag on a cleaning rod. Down in the plain below there was apparently nothing at which they could shoot except the great shadows of the clouds drifting across the vast checkerboard of green and yellow fields, and disappearing finally between the mountain passes beyond. In some places there were square dark patches that might have been bushes, and nearer to us than these were long lines of fresh earth, from which steam seemed to be escaping in little wisps. What impressed us most of what we could see of the battle then was the remarkable number of cartridges the Greek soldiers wasted in firing into space, and the fact that they had begun to fire at such long range that, in order to get the elevation, they had placed the rifle butt under the armpit instead of against the shoulder. Their sights were at the top notch. The cartridges reminded one of corn-cobs jumping out of a corn-sheller, and it was interesting when the bolts were shot back to see a hundred of them pop up into the air at the same time, flashing in the sun

as though they were glad to have done their work and to get out again. They rolled by the dozens underfoot, and twinkled in the grass, and when one shifted his position in the narrow trench, or stretched his cramped legs, they tinkled musically. It was like wading in a gutter filled with thimbles.

Then there began a concert which came from just overhead—a concert of jarring sounds and little whispers. The whispers were the more disturbing; they had the sound of torn silk, and at times they came from far above, and moved slowly, like a hummingbird buzzing about on a warm day; and again they came so close that a man would duck his head instinctively, or throw up his elbow as he would ward off a blow in boxing. It sounded as though some invisible person had whispered a warning and passed swiftly on, or as though some one had suddenly ripped a silk handkerchief close to your ear. When this concert opened, the officers shouted out new orders, and each of the men shoved his sight nearer to the barrel, and when he fired again, rubbed the butt of his gun snugly against his shoulder. The huge green blotches on the plain had turned blue, and now we could distinguish that they moved, and that they were moving steadily forward. Then they would cease to move, and a little later would be hidden behind great puffs of white smoke, which were followed by a flash of flame; and still later there would come a dull report, and at the same instant something would hurl itself jarring through the air above our heads, and the men would fling themselves against the few feet of loose earth, and look across at the hill back of them to mark where the shell had struck.

From where we sat on the edge of the trench, with our feet among the cartridges, we could, by leaning forward, look over the piled-up earth into the plain below, and soon, without any aid from field-glasses, we saw the blocks of blue break up into groups of men. These men came across the ploughed fields in long, widely opened lines, walking easily and leisurely, as though they were playing golf or sowing seed in the furrows. The Greek rifles crackled and flashed at the lines, but the men below came on quite steadily, picking their way over the furrows and appearing utterly unconscious of the seven thousand rifles that were calling on them to halt. They were advancing directly toward a little sugar-loaf hill, on the top of which was a mountain battery perched like a tiara on a woman's head. It was throwing one shell after another in the very path of the men below, but the Turks still continued to pick their way across the field, without showing any regard for the mountain battery. It was worse than threatening; it seemed almost as though they meant to insult us. If they had come up on a run they would not have appeared so contemptuous, for it would have looked then as though they were trying to escape the Greek fire, or that they were at least interested in what was going forward. But the steady advance of so many men, each plodding along by himself, with his head bowed and his gun on his shoulder, was aggravating.

There was a little village at the foot of the hill. It was so small that no one had considered it. It was more like a collection of stables gathered round a residence than a town, and there was a wall completely encircling it, with a gate in the wall that faced us. Suddenly the doors of this gate were burst open from the inside, and a man in a fez ran through them, followed by many more. The first man was waving a sword, and a peasant in petticoats ran at his side and pointed up with his hand at our trench. Until that moment the battle had lacked all human interest; we might have been watching a fight against the stars or the man in the moon, and, in spite of the noise and clatter of the Greek rifles, and the ghostlike whispers and the rushing sounds in the air, there was nothing to remind us of any other battle of which we had heard or read. But we had seen pictures of officers waving swords, and we knew that the fez was the sign of the Turk—of the enemy—of the men who were invading Thessaly, who were at that moment planning to come

up a steep hill on which we happened to be sitting and attack the people on top of it. And the spectacle at once became comprehensible, and took on the human interest it had lacked. The men seemed to feel this, for they sprang up and began cheering and shouting, and fired in an upright position, and by so doing exposed themselves at full length to the fire from the men below. The Turks in front of the village ran back into it again, and those in the fields beyond turned and began to move away, but in that same plodding, aggravating fashion. They moved so leisurely that there was a pause in the noise along the line, while the men watched them to make sure that they were really retreating. And then there was a long cheer, after which they all sat down, breathing deeply, and wiping the sweat and dust across their faces, and took long pulls at their canteens.

The different trenches were not all engaged at the same time. They acted according to the individual judgment of their commanding officer, but always for the general good. Sometimes the fire of the enemy would be directed on one particular trench, and it would be impossible for the men in that trench to rise and reply without having their heads carried away; so they would lie hidden, and the men in the trenches flanking them would act in their behalf, and rake the enemy from the front and from every side, until the fire on that trench was silenced, or turned upon some other point. The trenches stretched for over half a mile in a semicircle, and the little hills over which they ran lay at so many different angles, and rose to such different heights, that sometimes the men in one trench fired directly over the heads of their own men. From many trenches in the first line it was impossible to see any of the Greek soldiers except those immediately beside you. If you looked back or beyond on either hand there was nothing to be seen but high hills topped with fresh earth, and the waving yellow grass, and the glaring blue sky.

General Smolenski directed the Greeks from the plain to the far right of the town; and his presence there, although none of the men saw nor heard of him directly throughout the entire day, was more potent for good than would have been the presence of five thousand other men held in reserve. He was a mile or two miles away from the trenches, but the fact that he was there, and that it was Smolenski who was giving the orders, was enough. Few had ever seen Smolenski, but his name was sufficient; it was as effective as is Mr. Bowen's name on a Bank of England note. It gave one a pleasant feeling to know that he was somewhere within call; you felt there would be no "roust" nor stampedes while he was there. And so for two days those seven thousand men lay in the trenches, repulsing attack after attack of the Turkish troops, suffocated with the heat and chilled with sudden showers, and swept unceasingly by shells and bullets—partly because they happened to be good men and brave men, but largely because they knew that somewhere behind them a stout, bull-necked soldier was sitting on a camp-stool, watching them through a pair of field-glasses.

Towards midday you would see a man leave the trench with a comrade's arm around him, and start on the long walk to the town where the hospital corps were waiting for him. These men did not wear their wounds with either pride or braggadocio, but regarded the wet sleeves and shapeless arms in a sort of wondering surprise. There was much more of surprise than of pain in their faces, and they seemed to be puzzling as to what they had done in the past to deserve such a punishment.

Other men were carried out of the trench and laid on their backs on the high grass, staring up drunkenly at the glaring sun, and with their limbs fallen into unfamiliar poses. They lay so still, and they were so utterly oblivious of the roar and rattle and the anxious energy around them that one grew rather afraid of them and of their superiority to their surroundings. The sun beat on

them, and the insects in the grass waving above them buzzed and hummed, or burrowed in the warm moist earth upon which they lay; over their heads the invisible carriers of death jarred the air with shrill crescendoes, and near them a comrade sat hacking with his bayonet at a lump of hard bread. He sprawled contentedly in the hot sun, with humped shoulders and legs far apart, and with his cap tipped far over his eyes. Every now and again he would pause, with a piece of cheese balanced on the end of his knife-blade, and look at the twisted figures by him on the grass, or he would dodge involuntarily as a shell swung low above his head, and smile nervously at the still forms on either side of him that had not moved. Then he brushed the crumbs from his jacket and took a drink out of his hot canteen, and looking again at the sleeping figures pressing down the long grass beside him, crawled back on his hands and knees to the trench and picked up his waiting rifle.

The dead gave dignity to what the other men were doing, and made it noble, and, from another point of view, quite senseless. For their dying had proved nothing. Men who could have been much better spared than they, were still alive in the trenches, and for no reason but through mere dumb chance. There was no selection of the unfittest; it seemed to be ruled by unreasoning luck. A certain number of shells and bullets passed through a certain area of space, and men of different bulks blocked that space in different places. If a man happened to be standing in the line of a bullet he was killed and passed into eternity, leaving a wife and children, perhaps, to mourn him. "Father died," these children will say, "doing his duty." As a matter of fact, father died because he happened to stand up at the wrong moment, or because he turned to ask the man on his right for a match, instead of leaning toward the left, and he projected his bulk of two hundred pounds where a bullet, fired by a man who did not know him and who had not aimed at him, happened to want the right of way. One of the two had to give it, and as the bullet would not, the soldier had his heart torn out. The man who sat next to me happened to stoop to fill his cartridge-box just as the bullet that wanted the space he had occupied passed over his bent shoulder; and so he was not killed, but will live for sixty years, perhaps, and will do much good or much evil. Another man in the same trench sat up to clean his rifle, and had his arm in the air driving the cleaning rod down the barrel, when a bullet passed through his lungs, and the gun fell across his face, with the rod sticking in it, and he pitched forward on his shoulder quite dead. If he had not cleaned his gun at that moment he would probably be alive in Athens now, sitting in front of a café and fighting the war over again. Viewed from that point, and leaving out the fact that God ordered it all, the fortunes of the game of war seemed as capricious as matching pennies, and as impersonal as the wheel at Monte Carlo. In it the brave man did not win because he was brave, but because he was lucky. A fool and a philosopher are equal at a game of dice. And these men who threw dice with death were interesting to watch, because, though they gambled for so great a stake, they did so unconcernedly and without flinching, and without apparently appreciating the seriousness of the game.

There was a red-headed, freckled peasant boy, in dirty petticoats, who guided Bass and myself to the trenches. He was one of the few peasants who had not run away, and as he had driven sheep over every foot of the hills, he was able to guide the soldiers through those places where they were best protected from the bullets of the enemy. He did this all day, and was always, whether coming or going, under a heavy fire; but he enjoyed that fact, and he seemed to regard the battle only as a delightful change in the quiet routine of his life, as one of our own country boys at home would regard the coming of the spring circus or the burning of a neighbor's barn. He ran dancing ahead of us, pointing to where a ledge of rock offered a natural shelter, or showing us a steep gully where the bullets could not fall. When they came very near

him he would jump high in the air, not because he was startled, but out of pure animal joy in the excitement of it, and he would frown importantly and shake his red curls at us, as though to say: "I told you to be careful. Now, you see. Don't let that happen again." We met him many times during the two days, escorting different companies of soldiers from one point to another, as though they were visitors to his estate. When a shell broke, he would pick up a piece and present it to the officer in charge, as though it were a flower he had plucked from his own garden, and which he wanted his guest to carry away with him as a souvenir of his visit. Some one asked the boy if his father and mother knew where he was, and he replied, with amusement, that they had run away and deserted him, and that he had remained because he wished to see what a Turkish army looked like. He was a much more plucky boy than the overrated Casabianca, who may have stood on the burning deck whence all but him had fled because he could not swim, and because it was with him a choice of being either burned or drowned. This boy stuck to the burning deck when it was possible for him at any time to have walked away and left it burning. But he stayed on because he was amused, and because he was able to help the soldiers from the city in safety across his native heath. He was much the best part of the show, and one of the bravest Greeks on the field. He will grow up to be something fine, no doubt, and his spirit will rebel against having to spend his life watching his father's sheep. He may even win the race from Marathon.

Another Greek who was a most interesting figure to us was a Lieutenant Ambroise Frantzis. He was in command of the mountain battery on the flat, round top of the high hill. On account of its height the place seemed much nearer to the sun than any other part of the world, and the heat there was three times as fierce as in the trenches below. When you had climbed to the top of this hill it was like standing on a roof-garden, or as though you were watching a naval battle from a fighting top of one of the battleships. The top of the hill was not unlike an immense circus ring in appearance. The piled-up earth around its circular edge gave that impression, and the glaring yellow wheat that was tramped into glaring yellow soil, and the blue ammunition-boxes scattered about, helped out the illusion. It was an exceedingly busy place, and the smoke drifted across it continually, hiding us from one another in a curtain of flying yellow dust, while over our heads the Turkish shells raced after each other so rapidly that they beat out the air like the branches of a tree in a storm. On account of its height, and the glaring heat, and the shells passing, and the Greek guns going off and then turning somersaults, it was not a place suited for meditation; but Ambroise Frantzis meditated there as though he were in his own study. He was a very young man and very shy, and he was too busy to consider his own safety, or to take time, as the others did, to show that he was not considering it. Some of the other officers stood up on the breastworks and called the attention of the men to what they were doing; but as they did not wish the men to follow their example in this, it was difficult to see what they expected to gain by their braggadocio. Frantzis was as unconcerned as an artist painting a big picture in his studio. The battle plain below him was his canvas, and his nine mountain guns were his paint brushes. And he painted out Turks and Turkish cannon with the same concentrated, serious expression of countenance that you see on the face of an artist when he bites one brush between his lips and with another wipes out a false line or a touch of the wrong color. You have seen an artist cock his head on one side, and shut one eye and frown at his canvas, and then select several brushes and mix different colors and hit the canvas a bold stroke, and then lean back to note the effect. Frantzis acted in just that way. He would stand with his legs apart and his head on one side, pulling meditatively at his pointed beard, and then taking a closer look through his field-glasses, would select the three guns he had decided would give him the effect he wanted to produce, and

he would produce that effect. When the shot struck plump in the Turkish lines, and we could see the earth leap up into the air like geysers of muddy water, and each gunner would wave his cap and cheer, Frantzis would only smile uncertainly, and begin again, with the aid of his field-glasses, to puzzle out fresh combinations.

The battle that had begun in a storm of hail ended on the first day in a storm of bullets that had been held in reserve by the Turks, and which let off just after sundown. They came from a natural trench, formed by the dried-up bed of a stream which lay just below the hill on which the first Greek trench was situated. There were bushes growing on the bank of the stream nearest to the Greek lines, and these hid the men who occupied it. Throughout the day there had been an irritating fire from this trench from what appeared to be not more than a dozen rifles, but we could see that it was fed from time to time with many boxes of ammunition, which were carried to it on the backs of mules from the Turkish position a half mile farther to the rear. Bass and a corporal took a great aversion to this little group of Turks, not because there were too many of them to be disregarded, but because they were so near; and Bass kept the corporal's services engaged in firing into it, and in discouraging the ammunition mules when they were being driven in that direction. Our corporal was a sharp-shooter, and, accordingly, felt his superiority to his comrades; and he had that cheerful contempt for his officers that all true Greek soldiers enjoy; and so he never joined in the volley-firing, but kept his ammunition exclusively for the dozen men behind the bushes and for the mules. He waged, as it were, a little battle on his own account. The other men rose as commanded and fired regular volleys, and sank back again, but he fixed his sights to suit his own idea of the range, and he rose when he was ready to do so, and fired whenever he thought best. When his officer, who kept curled up in the hollow of the trench, commanded him to lie down, he would frown and shake his head at the interruption, and paid no further attention to the order. He was as much alone as a hunter on a mountain peak stalking deer, and whenever he fired at the men in the bushes he would swear softly, and when he fired at the mules he would chuckle and laugh with delight and content. The mules had to cross a ploughed field in order to reach the bushes, and so we were able to mark where his bullets struck, and we could see them skip across the field, kicking up the dirt as they advanced, until they stopped the mule altogether, or frightened the man who was leading it into a disorderly retreat.

It appeared later that instead of there being but twelve men in these bushes there were six hundred, and that they were hiding there until the sun set in order to make a final attack on the first trench. They had probably argued that at sunset the strain of the day's work would have told on the Greek morale, that the men's nerves would be jerking and their stomachs aching for food, and that they would be ready for darkness and sleep, and in no condition to repulse a fresh and vigorous attack. So, just as the sun sank, and the officers were counting the cost in dead and wounded, and the men were gathering up blankets and overcoats, and the firing from the Greek lines had almost ceased, there came a fierce rattle from the trench to the right of us, like a watch-dog barking the alarm, and the others took it up from all over the hill, and when we looked down into the plain below to learn what it meant, we saw it blue with men, who seemed to have sprung from the earth. They were clambering from the bed of the stream, breaking through the bushes, and forming into a long line, which, as soon as formed, was at once hidden at regular intervals by flashes of flame that seemed to leap from one gun-barrel to the next, as you have seen a current of electricity run along a line of gas-jets. In the dim twilight these flashes were much more blinding than they had been in the glare of the sun, and the crash of the artillery coming on top of the silence was the more fierce and terrible by the contrast. The Turks were so close on us that the first trench could do little to help itself, and the men huddled against it while their comrades

on the surrounding hills fought for them, their volleys passing close above our heads, and meeting the rush of the Turkish bullets on the way, so that there was now one continuous whistling shriek, like the roar of the wind through the rigging of a ship in a storm. If a man had raised his arm above his head his hand would have been torn off. It had come up so suddenly that it was like two dogs, each springing at the throat of the other, and in a greater degree it had something of the sound of two wild animals struggling for life. Volley answered volley as though with personal hate—one crashing in upon the roll of the other, or beating it out of recognition with the bursting roar of heavy cannon. At the same instant all of the Turkish batteries opened with great, ponderous, booming explosions, and the little mountain guns barked and snarled and shrieked back at them, and the rifle volleys crackled and shot out blistering flames, while the air was filled with invisible express trains that shook and jarred it and crashed into one another, bursting and shrieking and groaning. It seemed as though you were lying in a burning forest, with giant tree trunks that had withstood the storms of centuries crashing and falling around your ears, and sending up great showers of sparks and flame. This lasted for five minutes or less, and then the death-grip seemed to relax, the volleys came brokenly, like a man panting for breath, the bullets ceased to sound with the hiss of escaping steam, and rustled aimlessly by, and from hill-top to hill-top the officers' whistles sounded as though a sportsman were calling off his dogs. The Turks withdrew into the coming night, and the Greeks lay back, panting and sweating, and stared open-eyed at one another, like men who had looked for a moment into hell, and had come back to the world again.

The next day was like the first, except that by five o'clock in the afternoon the Turks appeared on our left flank, crawling across the hills like an invasion of great ants, and the Greek army that at Velestinos had made the two best and most dignified stands of the war withdrew upon Halmyros, and the Turks poured into the village and burned it, leaving nothing standing save two tall Turkish minarets that they had built many years before, when Thessaly belonged to the Sultan.

There have been many Turkish minarets within the last two years standing above burning villages and deserted homes all over Asia Minor and Armenia. They have looked down upon the massacre of twenty thousand people within these last two years, and upon the destruction of no one knows how many villages. If the five Powers did not support these minarets they would crumble away and fall to pieces. Greece tried to upset them, but she was not brave enough nor wise enough nor strong enough, and so they still stand, as these two stand at Velestinos, pointing to the sky above the ruins of the pretty village. Some people think that all of them have been standing quite long enough--that it is time they came down forever.