

BELGIUM AND GREECE

representations, and that, in the case that the refusal was persisted in, they should declare war upon Greece, reduce the country to subjection, and treat the territory as that of an occupied and conquered adversary. Against this not a word could be said on the ground of convention or of law or of morality.

It would perhaps have been better had they acted thus. What they did was something infinitely milder, and it showed their desire in every way to spare Greece the horrors of warfare. There are cases, and this perhaps is one, in which consideration becomes a blunder and leniency becomes a crime. All that they asked was that, while Greece herself might remain neutral, the armies of the Allies should be allowed to use the port of Salonika and the railway for the conveyance of troops to the assistance of the Serbians, who were now engaged in a hopeless struggle against overwhelming forces attacking them on three sides.

This they asked, and in this Greece tacitly acquiesced. More than this they have never asked. They have not required from Greece that active co-operation to which they were entitled. The situation which arose was indeed an unusual and an awkward one. A portion of Greek soil was used as a base by foreign Powers in a war against States with which Greece herself was at peace. But this situation arose entirely from the first refusal of Greece to fulfil her obligations. And, given the existence of this situation, with what extraordinary consideration have the Allies handled it! For many months they left the full civil administration of Salonika in the hands of the Greek Government; they did not