

Through A Monocle

THE GREEKS

WE have been reminded twice within the year that Canada has attracted to her growing cities of opportunity—which are quite as remarkable in their way as her wheat lands—a large Greek colony. When the Balkan War broke out, we saw with admiring but mildly astonished eyes regiments of young men from our prosaic city stores arise and go deliberately into this welter of death, fighting for a land that they had left—a land on the other side of the world—yet a land that they loved passionately—the Fatherland alike of Pericles, of Agamemnon and of themselves. And now again, when the King of the Hellenes is stricken down while performing for his country exactly the duty which a king should—that is, planting his court in a conquered city, and so making good the Greek title—we find that the blow brings sudden and deep mourning to people who live next-door to us—to fellow-citizens of ours—to these same Greeks in temporary exile who join daily in the traffic and barter of our cities.

NO other people in Eastern Europe is so largely represented in Canada. And this is typical of the Greeks. They are the enterprising, the exploratory, the expansive race of the Eastern Mediterranean. It is seen to be so near their own country; and we in far Canada can now bear abundant testimony that it is so here. Wherever you go in the neighbourhood of Greece you find Greeks, settled and in business, and doing remarkably well. Egypt is populated with Arabs and permeated with French and English, hotel-ed by Germans and financed by half Europe; and yet, in spite of this competition, the Greeks have worked their way into Egypt, captured a fair share of its trade, and many of them have made fortunes there, which they spend in lavishly restoring the ancient glories of Athens. The Aegean is full of islands, some lying very near to the Turkish shores; but they are not peopled by Turks—they are peopled by Greeks. Crete—well to the south—is a Greek island, now happily to be soon restored to its proper political affiliations. Over on the coast of Asia Minor is the city of

Smyrna—the port of that part of Asiatic Turkey. But much of its trade is in Greek hands. When the Greek army marched into Salonika, they entered a Greek city, though over it has flown for centuries the flag of Islam.

PEOPLE had got the foolish and unfair idea from the last Turkish war, when Greece fought without preparation and under hopeless conditions against overwhelming odds, that the modern Greek was not a good soldier. The conduct of this same modern Greek during the War of Independence in his own land, ought to have taught them better. There was a struggle for you, full of desperate heroism and magnificent daring; and much of it took place on the sacred soil which bears aloft the hill of Argos and carries in the bosom of its hills the hoary city of Mycenae. But, despite of this, the impression grew that the Greek could not fight. I fancy that it came somewhat from the pictures of the uniform of Albanian origin, which our illustrated papers printed, and which makes the soldier look very like a ballet-dancer. But now, today, we know that these "ballet-dancing" soldiers can fight like demons, and drive their hereditary enemies before them. We know—what is more revealing—that they have carried, during this war, a large number of strongly entrenched positions literally at the point of the bayonet—as, for instance, at Janina the other day. And the modern soldier who carries the modern fortification with the bayonet, has no need to give other proofs of his courage.

OF course, I personally did not need these proofs. I have felt, ever since I visited Greece, that the Greeks are a great, a very great, people. They are just beginning now to enter into their own. It is only a few years since they emerged from under the pulverizing heel of the Turk. You cannot say that, wherever the Turkish foot treads, nothing in the way of national feeling ever grows again; for the Greeks themselves, and the Bulgars and the Serbs and the Roumanians, have splendidly proven the contrary. But even the most deathless and re-

silient people must be expected to show the wounds and the emaciation of Turkish occupation for some considerable time after their escape from it. Every year during which the Greeks have been free, they have made progress. The re-building of Athens was itself a miracle. Some of the old parts still remain—I mean, the parts which existed under Turkish rule—and, even in their renovated and greatly cleaned-up condition, give you some idea of what enslaved Athens was like. Free Athens—the modern Greek Athens—is one of the most beautiful cities in the world for its size, and is entirely worthy of the splendid achievements of its glorious past, when you remember the short time in which it has had to prove its powers—and the terrible handicap of poverty which it has carried.

THEY had, when I was there, an exhibition of modern Greek art in the Zappeion—a building erected by two patriotic Greek brothers for exhibition purposes. I wish you could have seen it. It was not only that it was exceedingly good; but it was individual. It was neither Paris nor Munich art. It was Athenian. One statue I recall—I could never pass it without emotion. It was simply the bowed form of a slave girl with manacles on her wrists and ankles. On the base was cut the single word—"Krete." And now Crete is to be set free. Physically, the Greeks have the loveliest land in Europe. Some of the views are incredibly beautiful—you feel like the American who saw the display of fireworks at the old Chicago World's Fair for the first time, and exclaimed—"G—!" I don't believe it." As you stand on some of the high places in Greece and look along precipitous shores and over deep blue arms of the sea, you cannot accept it as reality—you suspect that Alma-Tadema must have been commissioned to prepare this "bit" as a model for one of his wonderful canvases.

THE great obstacle to Greek development so far has been lack of native industries. The Greek had to leave home to make a living. That is why he came to Canada—not because he prefers our monotonous winter fields to the flashing Gulf of Corinth. But now that the whole Greek population will come together again, they will constitute a numerous as well as a talented people; and we may look to see opportunities enough in Hellas to once more keep her sons at home. I hope, however, that our own Greeks will not return. They are an element in our population that we need—we need more art, more Southern fire, more appreciation of the beautiful. But Greece itself will revive, and will become again one of the great nations of the East.

THE MONOCLE MAN.



THE LAST GROUP PICTURE OF THE ROYAL PARTY TAKEN BEFORE THEIR DEPARTURE FOR ENGLAND.

Reading from left to right (top row)—Capt. H. C. Bullen, A.D.C.; Miss Adams; Major E. Scott Worthington, M.D.; Capt. the Hon. G. Boscawen, A.D.C.; Capt. W. Long, A.D.C.; Miss Pelly; Capt. T. H. Rivers, Bulkeley. (Bottom row)—Mr. A. F. Sladen, Private Secretary; H. R. H. Princess Patricia; H. R. H. The Duke of Connaught; H. R. H. The Duchess of Connaught; Lt.-Col. H. C. Lowther.

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