

## English.

All articles and communications intended for this department should be addressed to the ENGLISH EDITOR, EDUCATIONAL JOURNAL, Room 20, 11½ Richmond Street West, Toronto.

## "THE ISLES OF GREECE."

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## I.—A FEW FACTS FROM GRECIAN HISTORY.

## A.

ION [I'-δ n], one of the sons of Japhet, is the common father of all the tribes that went under the name of Greeks. The early history of these tribes is intricate and obscure. The first national enterprise in which the honor of all Greece was concerned, is known as the Trojan War—of which Homer [Ho'-mēr] has sung in the Iliad [Il'-i-ād]. Troy was destroyed, but the war was very disastrous to the victorious Greeks. The year 1184, B.C., witnessed the downfall of Troy.

A spirit of jealousy and animosity during this turbulent period armed the Greek tribes against one another. For instance, the Heraclidae [Hēr-ā-klī-dē], or descendants of Hercules, tried to subdue Southern Greece, which was known as the Peloponnesus [Pēl-ōp-ōn-nē-sūs], thus called from Pelops [Pē'-lōps], one of its former settlers. They were unsuccessful; but, eighty years after the Trojan war, with the neighboring Dorians [Dō'-rī-āns] as their allies, they obtained entire and permanent possession of the country.

## B.

About the year 500, B. C., King Darius [Dā-rī-us] ruled over the great Persian dominion. For many reasons he wanted to bring Greece under his sway. He sent his messengers to ask for "land and water," as a sign of submission. Most of the Grecian governments complied; but Athens and Sparta killed the messengers sent to them, and defied Darius. The latter was provoked at the insult and, with 600 vessels and 110,000 men, landed at Marathon [Mār-ā-thōn], a small town not more than twenty miles from Athens. Athens had 10,000 men; Sparta did not send relief in time. Notwithstanding the great odds against Athens, under her famous leader Miltiades [Mil-tī-ā-dēs], she gained a decisive victory, B.C. 490.

King Xerxes succeeded Darius on the Persian throne, and at once made preparations to renew the war with Greece. He gathered together men of many nations, to the number of 5,000,000. That his land troops might pass over the narrow seas that separated Asia from Europe, he had a bridge of boats built. Shortly before his arrival a storm destroyed this bridge. So angry was the king, that he ordered 300 lashes of a whip to be inflicted on the sea, and chains to be thrown into it. Two other bridges were built, and it took seven days and seven nights for his army to cross. He had 12,000 ships.

All the Greek soldiers except those from Sparta and Athens were terrified and fled. Leonidas [Lē-ōn'-i-dās], the Spartan King, with 10,000 men, made a stand at the narrow pass called Thermopylæ [Thēr-mōp'-il-ē]—a pass that gave an entrance from Thessaly, a district north of Greece, into Greece. "Deliver your arms," said the messenger from the proud Xerxes. "Come and take them," sneered the Spartans. The hosts of Xerxes were useless in the narrow pass, but a Greek traitor opened a secret path for the Persians. Leonidas saw the move and sent all but 300 Spartans to oppose it. Of course, Xerxes hewed down the 300, but not till those 300 had caused much loss to him.

Then Xerxes pressed on to Athens; found it deserted by its inhabitants, who with their leader Themistocles [Thēm-īs-tō-clēs] had embarked on their fleet of 300 ships. They carried on a desultory warfare till they heard that Xerxes was advancing into the heart of the country. Then the naval forces of Greece drew together at Salamis [Sāl'-ā-mīs]—a small island, and were followed by the Persian fleet. The Per-

sians were defeated, and never after that year, 480 B.C., did a Persian fleet attempt an invasion of Greece.

## C.

About the middle of the fifteenth century Mahommed II. conquered Constantinople; and one by one the Greek islands passed under Turkish rule. Under this yoke, the Grecian people were allowed to become wealthy; for it is a Turkish principle that the subject race must provide for the ruling body. Wealth led the Greeks to seek for luxuries, and, true to their ancient grandeur, they chose education and refinement.

A tide of manliness seems to have flooded the world about the close of the eighteenth century. We need but mention the American War of Independence and the French Revolution. Men everywhere asserted their rights, and helped struggling mortals in foreign lands to be their brothers in liberty. In 1821 the Greeks made an effort to gain their independence. Civil War ensued. However, the cruelties of the Turks won the sympathy of Europe for the suffering Greeks. In 1827 the Turkish fleet was destroyed at Navarino by the combined fleets of England, France, and Russia. In 1828 the Greeks were free.

## II.—A GLIMPSE OF A GREAT MAN.

Do you need proof that sometimes truth is stranger than fiction, read Thomas Moore's *Life of Lord Byron*; or if that be not within your reach, there is a very good biography of the poet, in the Series known as *The English Men of Letters*.

'Tis a short life that began in London, England, on the 22nd of January, 1788, and terminated at Missoloughi [Mīs-sō-lou-'ghē], Greece, on the 19th of April, 1824—thirty-six fleet years, but a period teeming with events concerning George Gordon Lord Byron.

Lord Byron—let me call him Lord, for he loved his title and prided himself that his ancestry was old, noble, and patriotic; his father's lineage can be traced to the time of William the Conqueror, and his mother was Catherine Gordon, of Aberdeen, a descendant from James I., the greatest of the Stuarts,—Lord Byron, I say, wins our sympathy when we see him at the age of two years, left to the care of a mother whose nature had been soured by a profligate husband, and whose extensive property had been squandered by that same reckless father;—a mother that could not love her son, because he was born a "lame brat," as she termed it. Listen to the little fellow: "What a pretty boy Byron is!" said a friend of his nurse; "What a pity he has such a leg!" With a lash of a baby's whip, Byron cried, "Dinna speak of it." No love sweetened the childhood of the author of *Don Juan*.

The ambitious child received an ordinary education, and in 1805 entered Cambridge, where he spent two years, publishing from there, what, in comparison with his greatest efforts, may certainly be called boyish verse—"Hours of Idleness." It is well known with what disfavor the *Edinburgh Review* received these efforts of the young lord. Although Byron seemed to feel glad that his work was even noticed, he felt keenly the sarcastic criticism, and retaliated by publishing in 1809, "English Bards and Scottish Reviewers, an excellent piece of satiric poetry. Of it he said in 1816: "The greater part of this satire I most sincerely wish I had never written; not only on account of the injustice of much of the critical and personal part of it, but the tone and temper of it are such as I cannot approve."

Just before publishing his satire, Lord Byron took his place in the House of Lords—but was satisfied with a mere introduction. His entrance brings to mind an incident. "We shall have the pleasure some day of reading your speeches in the House of Commons," said a friend to the young man. "I hope not. If you read any speeches of mine, it will be in the House of Lords." And it was.

In 1809, Byron determined to travel. He

passed through Seville, Cadiz, Malta, and Albania, where he was introduced to the celebrated Albanian Turk Ali Pasha; then on through Greece, Turkey, and Asia Minor.

In 1811 he returned to England—to Newstead Abbey where his mother had just died. In 1812, he showed to the public the first two cantos of *Childe Harold*, which he had written while travelling. His own words best convey their reception: "I awoke one morning and found myself famous," he quoted. England adored him; but, methinks, adoration will spoil the best of men.

In 1815, Byron made perhaps the greatest mistake of his life—he married Aunabella Millbank, "without one spark of love on either side." His wife stole away from him, his friends deserted him, and, in 1816 he bade a final farewell to England, and plunged into Italian life. He still wrote, loved, and struggled.

It is well known that Byron was no friend of the established dynasties of Europe. He worshipped Napoleon, and scorned the "legitimate boobies of regular sovereigns." He cherished republican governments, forgetful of Goldsmith's lines:—

"How small of all that human hearts endure,  
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure.  
Still to ourselves in every place consigned,  
Our own felicity we make or find."

In 1823, he began to entertain serious thoughts of joining the Greeks to help them in their patriotic efforts to break the Mahomedan yoke. He embarked for Greece in the same year. In Greece he did all that a skilful warrior-statesman could do; he obtained for them money and sympathy; he drilled their troops; and for all was rewarded by mutiny and boorish ingratitude. One faction hinted that he should be their king! Fancy, Byron as King of Greece! "If they make me the offer I will perhaps not reject it." Another faction—the Suliotes—just as the Greek force was ready to attack Lepanto, by rising unexpectedly, threw Byron into a violent convulsion that endangered his life. Byron grew better but was soon attacked by a fever, which, through his own waywardness in getting drenched in a heavy shower, led to his death.

The morning of the 19th of April dawned gloomily, for the Angel of Death was waiting at the bedside of a brilliant and marvellous hero, yet a lonely and wretched mortal. The merry nut-brown curls fell in ripples over a snowy intelligent brow; the gray eyes flashed forth the enthusiasm of a bursting heart; the sweet lips trembled aspen-like; the little white hands pushed bravely upwards, as the dying soldier muttered: "Forwards! forwards! follow me!" He was dreaming of Lepanto.

There lies the author of *Childe Harold*, *The Prisoner of Chillon*, *Manfred*, *The Lament of Tasso*, and *Don Juan*.

(Concluded in next number).

## THIRD READER LITERATURE.

## EGYPT AND ITS RUINS.

MISS M. A. WATT.

THIS lesson may be taught with the usual object of the cultivation of perception, conception, comparison, logic, imagination and language, while it may also be the means of directly improving the faculties known by phrenologists as size and distance, and be the means, as well, of imparting a great deal of useful and broadening information to an intelligent class.

It is a lesson rather dreaded because of the large number of new and difficult words to be introduced. These words must be familiarized to the pupils before the real work of the lesson—thought can be taken up, and the plan of taking them up in the dictation time, with their meanings, is perhaps the best for all purposes.

When the regular work of studying this lesson is begun, no faint-heartedness must be allowed to interfere, the aim must be carried through of making every thought clear to the pupils, and, as it often happens with a dreaded