TALES OF ÆGEAN INTRIGUE

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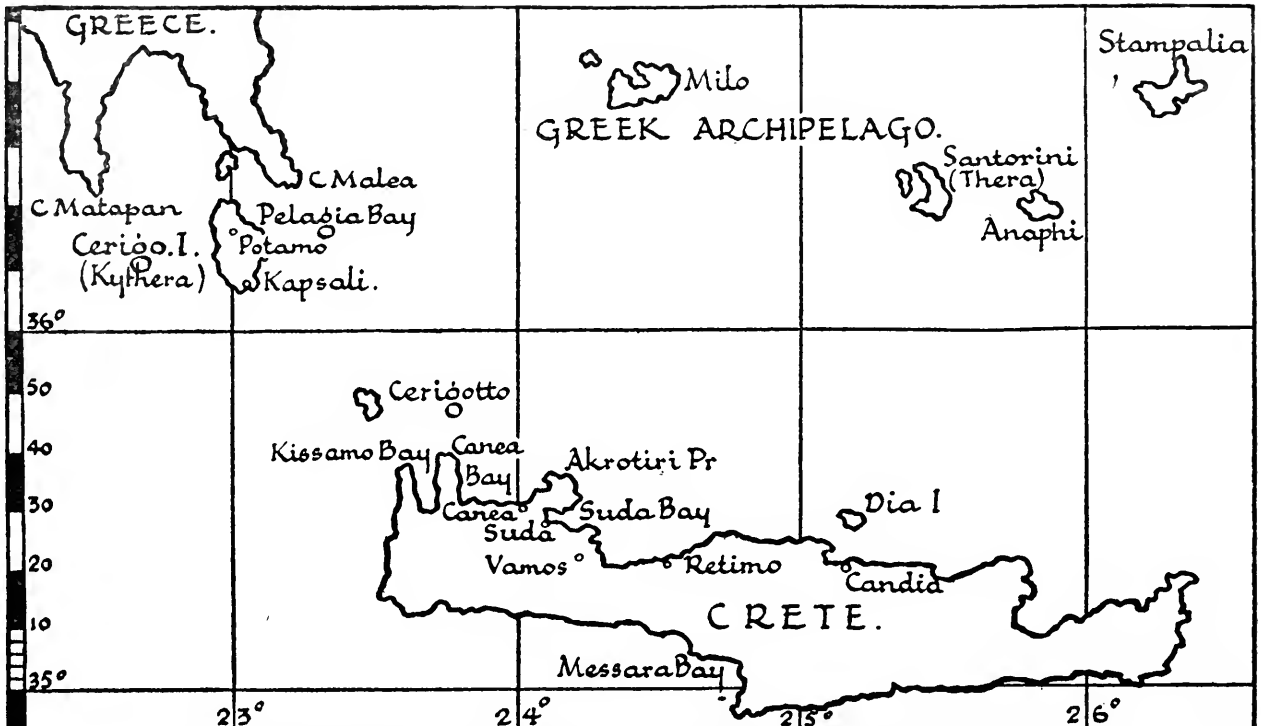

SCALE IN GEOGRAPHICAL MILES: 6 GEOGRAPHICAL MILES = APPROXIMATELY 7 ENGLISH MILES.

TALES OF ÆGEAN INTRIGUE

BY

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TO
MY WIFE
I DEDICATE
THESE STORIES ADDRESSED TO OUR CHILDREN
JOHN, MARY, JANE, & ARNOLD

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TALES OF ÆGEAN INTRIGUE

INTRODUCTION

IN THE BYWAYS

If these stories should serve as an incitement to every *pater-familias* actual or potential to address to his children an *Apologia pro Vitâ Suâ* 1914-1918, otherwise called *An Account of what Daddy did in the Great War,* they would set, I confess, a pernicious example: the world itself could not contain the books that should be written, or, what is worse, the public would not stomach them. And so, if I venture upon a narrative of some of my doings, my justification is that my experiences have been largely peculiar to myself and not a replica of those which tens of thousands of others can recount, and my work that of a comparatively free agent rather than of one unit in a controlled and disciplined mass. For, let me avow it at once, my part in the war cannot be deemed, in the common acceptance, warlike: I have not been under fire; I have not encountered submarine or mine; I have not so much as seen an enemy in uniform and at large. My path in fact has lain not on the crowded highways of the war where men endured the burden and heat of the day, or equally often the boredom and the cold, but rather in its solitary and shady—yes, sometimes distinctly shady—byways.

Yet byways too, no less than highways, may issue anon in some busy centre where the fortune of a nation is made or marred: and thus it fell to my lot too to play a conscious part in the fashioning of Greek history, and to instigate and control in some measure the first march of events which had as their logical sequel the evacuation of a throne, the victory of Doiran, and the deliverance of Asiatic Greece from the dominion of the Turk. And therein lies my second justification for this narrative. The public may remember dimly, as one small item amid the enormous happenings of these past five years, that in the late summer of 1916 the island of Crete emerged for a space into the limelight, that Venizelos was reported to have headed a revolt there against the Kaiser's dear ally, Tino, and that a Provisional Government was declared. But the public knew little more than that even at the time: there were but two accredited correspondents who accompanied Venizelos from Athens, and their accounts of the movement, whether dispatched by wire or by mail, were so mauled and mutilated by the censor, that they furnished little but material for a missing-word competition. I was the censor in question, so I know.

But why this secrecy at the time, if the story may now be told? For fear that, if the newspapers gave the story to the public, it would ultimately reach the ears of the Foreign Office also; and Foreign Office policy, or lack of policy, as regards the Near East consisted, so far as I could gauge it within the small area of my own purview, in waiting to see which way the cat jumped. It certainly was a matter of weeks

on that occasion before the Allied Powers sent, through their respective Foreign Offices, to their Consuls in Canea, permission to enter into semi-official relations with the Governor of Crete as representing Mr. Venizelos' Provisional Government, with the intimation that the formal recognition of it as a *gouvernement de fait* might be promulgated at an early date—or verbiage to that effect. I will not vouch for the exact wording of it; but I remember well that an urgent meeting of the consular corps was held to decide what costume, mode of conveyance, and time of day were appropriate to a first call paid by them as a courtesy antecedent to the opening of semi-official relations with the representative of a Provisional Government not yet formally recognised; and if the *procès-verbal* of that delicate discussion is duly deposited in our consular archives, it will form a precedent, should a problem of such nicety ever recur, in favour of claw-hammer coat, silk hat, one-horse cab with cavass in undress uniform on the box, and (so that the visit may be neither a morning nor an afternoon call) the very stroke of noon. For myself I had little time for the due balancing of these proprieties, and, if I had obtruded my existence upon the notice of the Foreign Office, there was a danger that a suspicion of hustling would attach to me, and that a signal might arrive saying with all due circumlocution, caution, and reserve, "Whatever you are doing, don't."

But how came I *dans cette galère*? you ask. Because a certain scrap of paper, to wit a commission in His Majesty's Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, transformed me one morning from a Cambridge don

into a Naval Intelligence Officer; and that in turn, because being competent to discourse in Modern Greek and French, and possessing withal some insight into the Greek mind and character, acquired in travel some twenty years ago, I had placed these assets at the disposal of the Admiralty, War Office, or other unnamed department; and then after some months of silence there arose between them a sudden competition for my services, which the Admiralty won by a neck.

And what does a Naval Intelligence Officer do? Why, most things that need no naval training. He is the link or the buffer, as occasion demands, between the squadron to which he belongs and the population of the area assigned to that squadron; and this for the good reason that, apart from a few dago interpreters carried by the ships for routine purposes, he is the only person who can read the natives' writing and speak their tongue. Hence he must act as boarding officer and examine manifests and cargo, passengers and passports, crew and articles, of every ship brought in for examination; and in so doing he must learn to discriminate between, let us say, candles really made of paraffin wax, which will be contraband, and candles intended only to be sold as such, which will not; or to decide impromptu whether a supercargo is a passenger or a member of the crew. He must regulate the traffic of bumboatmen and fishermen in the neighbourhood of the squadron's anchorage, and administer rough justice by impounding for a while the boats of those who trespass or otherwise offend. He must secure native agents ashore along coastlines of many hundred miles to report sightings of sub-

marines, and movements of ships or persons suspected of communicating with or re-victualling them, and devise codes for the passing of such information. He must direct the tracking and procure the arrest of spies and enemy agents in general. He must keep in touch with the military, the police, and the administrative authorities of the district, and make himself acquainted with their sympathies, capabilities, and price. He must keep in touch too with the Allied Consuls and assume, as in courtesy bound, that their sympathies and honesty are alike unimpeachable, but must not on that account neglect to study them; for the best of allies may have private as well as common interests. And finally, for the reason that the day has only twenty-four hours, he must judge what to do and what to leave undone.

And these are only the bigger tasks, which endless little queries and details interrupt. "Message from the navigating officer, sir. Can you tell him where this place is,—not marked on the chart?"—and the Turkish appellation of some bay on the coast of Asia Minor is handed to you. The word "bay" you identify from a smattering of Turkish place-names; the rest depends on your geographical memory.

Or it is a signal: "Information wanted about Papadakis"—so it begins, and you consign Papadakis to perdition and reply, or would like to reply, "Will gladly exchange information about Papadakis for information about Smith, Jones, and Robinson. Have seventeen rogues of that name on black list in Canea alone."

Or it is just a submarine reported, and you stick a pin in the chart at the latitude and longitude given,

and compare the place and hour of sighting with any agent's report from the shore, to see if they tally and indicate the course the submarine has been steering.

Or the paymaster has a problem: "Look here, man of intelligence; the washerwoman who has the contract for the sick-quarters linen and blankets is weeping outside here in charge of the sentry; she says the price of soap has doubled, soda is up 75 centimes the oke, and starch is rationed so that she is not allowed enough unless she forgoes her sugar, and then her husband, who is particular about his coffee being sweet, beats her. I told the interpreter to explain that we did not want the blankets starched, but that did not comfort her a bit. You might find out the facts about prices and send me a chit about revising the contract, and what would be a reasonable rate per dozen pieces."

Or else the commander is bothered about the number of men returning aboard each day drunk and, as regards their legs, paralytic, because it is the legs much more than the head that are affected when *mastich,* the local spirit, is consumed by the mugful instead of beer: "Can't you put the fear of God into some of the swine who are selling this poison?" And you spend the best part of a day preparing a black list of the worst pubs ashore, to be put out of bounds and raided periodically by the picket, and making a corrupt, secret, and sensible bargain with a few selected houses, that they shall enjoy a monopoly of the bluejackets' custom so long as they keep no spirits on the premises, and the wine in their casks diluted to the extent of one-third with clean water, and exhibit also a price-list of liquor, adjusted pro-

portionately to the dilution, and approved by you. And all these odds and ends take time.

Such at least was my experience of an Intelligence Officer's duties, though others would tell a tale of less variety. One's whole orbit might be about a directional wireless centre where the positions of radiotelegraphically loquacious submarines were plotted. Another might be mail-officer at one of the larger bases, restricted to duties little above the capacity of an intelligent village-postmaster. And, monotony having been for so many naval officers the principal and most wearing aspect of this war, I may count myself fortunate that I rarely knew what would be the next day's task. In fact during the first year that I was out there, to which period all the stories I shall tell belong, so far as the nature and variety of my work were concerned, I would not willingly have exchanged my billet for any other.

And as regards pay—well, every officer and man had a grievance there, and I among them. There fell a time of stress when, though holding only the commission of a temporary lieutenant in the Navy, I had to control ashore (without authority to command) a division of irregulars operating over some hundred miles of country and conducting the investment of three towns. On the success of the movement depended the accession of another Ally to the Entente; and the movement succeeded. Assuming that I did not work more than sixteen hours in the twenty-four during that period, the total remuneration of my services worked out at 8¼d. an hour less Income Tax. Picture the Bargees' Union at home discussing the same wage!

The Government knew well the injustices which it was perpetrating; it had nothing new to learn from the report of the Jerram Committee; and therefore to the Government first and foremost must be imputed the folly which risked the undermining of naval *morale* by a deliberate policy of sweating. Or should we rather credit our successive governments—Liberal or Coalition made no odds—with the cold cynical wisdom of seeing that they could trade on naval and military patriotism, the while they truckled to civil commercialism, until the war was won? Let them have it which way they will, but thank God withal and not themselves that there was no mutiny. Men went on strike for less cause at home.

And you too, Gentlemen of the House of Commons, the liberality of your provision for the Navy left something to be desired. You could exert pressure enough on the Government to get your own salaries exempted from Income Tax, but I can recall no concerted effort on your part to secure the same complete exemption for the fighting services, let alone any improvement in their pay. You were a party to the Government's policy of sweating.

Little wonder then if the political world enjoys but lov. esteem in naval circles. I had at one time a ship's interpreter—an illiterate youth, but quick of ear and intelligible in four or five languages—who summarised our feelings with innocent accuracy. "A gen'leman demands to see you, sir," he announced one day. "What sort of gentleman, Manóli?" I asked. "A dampol'tician, sir," he replied. "A what?" "*C'est un député, Monsieur, qui demande à vous voir.*" "Oh, I see; a dam' politician. Your English is getting on,

Manóli; where did you learn that word?" "I listen the officers how they speak, sir. They not say *député,* they say always 'dampol'tician.'" "And when the men are talking, Manóli, what do they say?" But Manóli blushed, and I made haste to proceed: "Well, never mind what the men say; go on studying the officers' good language; you can improve on 'dampol'-tician'; *c'est le mot juste.*" Whereon Manóli blushed again, but this time with pleasure at my commendation, and always thereafter enabled me to greet the least welcome visitor with a smile of delight, by his announcement of "a dampol'tician, sir."

Mais revenons à nos moutons. It is the adventures of a particular Intelligence Officer which I set out to relate, not the thoughts with which thousands of others too flavoured an insipid day, or coloured a *nuit blanche.*

CHAPTER I

CARRYING ON

PART I.—THE FIRST LESSON

THERE was a certain thrill in the sight of that official envelope, the first addressed to me as Lieutenant R.N.V.R. What would its contents reveal? They revealed primarily that the designation on the envelope was correct, save that if pedantic accuracy were desired the qualifying word "temporary" should be added; and there was a further intimation that I was appointed to H.M.S. *Europa,* and that I should report to the Naval Transport Officer, Liverpool, in the forenoon of a date some ten days later, with a view to taking passage by H.M. Transport *Cameronian* now lying in such and such a dock.

Voilà tout: no plethora of instructions, you observe, nor satisfaction of idle curiosity. I might wish to know my ultimate destination, or at least welcome some hint as to the best place to look for the *Europa* if she should happen to be roving the seas; I learnt however from privy inquiries here and there, that she had long been lying in Mudros harbour,—and maybe she lies there still; for, as our modern Pepys might have it, whether she was even then afloat or fast stranded, as some did aver, like the *Aragon* before her, on a reef of soda-water bottles, God knows. I

might wish too for some inkling of my prospective duties, and the official valuation of them in £. s. d.; but perhaps the one was not yet known (my appointment being in fact not for service in, but for disposal by, the *Europa*) and the other was better concealed. I might wish to be informed with what uniform and accessories I should provide myself within the space of ten days, and what allowance would be forthcoming in respect thereof; and this matter of uniform seemed urgent. But, if the contents of that official envelope were not immediately illuminating, their very silence was a naval parable; and the interpretation of the parable is this, that he who has no instructions to carry out must carry on.

So I carried on with my outfit, and learnt by the same privy inquiries that, by filling up a certain form which had not been sent to me, I should ultimately become entitled to a uniform allowance of twenty pounds sterling; that meantime I should judiciously expend this sum in the purchase of two suits of the monkey-jacket order, two caps, one heavy overcoat, all with their appropriate buttons, gold lace, and badges; also two pairs of boots without toe-caps, for the absence of toe-caps is a vital factor in the command of the sea. Sea-boots, oil-skins, and such-like I might perhaps omit, for my duties in general would not be on deck; but, as I was going to the Mediterranean, I should add half-a-dozen suits of white duck uniform, with a helmet and white buckskin foot-gear, likewise free from toe-caps, to match; and, say, one tin uniform-case at least, impervious to rats and perplexing to cockroaches, in which to stow what was not in use; and that no questions would be asked whether I had

invested the balance of my allowance in War Loan or squandered it in riotous living.

These preliminaries accomplished, by the night mail to Liverpool and ho! for the *Cameronian.* But it was heigh-ho! not ho! before I was through with it. The *Cameronian* was not in the dock indicated by the Admiralty, nor was the Naval Transport Office in the neighbourhood of the docks. In fact no one down there could say where it was, but if the Y.M.C.A. or the Home for Distressed Mariners would do as well—— No, it would not; I was hoping to deposit my gear in a ship called the *Cameronian* and to present myself at the Naval Transport Office. Oh, the *Cameronian;* wasn't that her what was coaling in No. 12 dock? Bill would know; and Bill being summoned misdirected me to the *Cameronia.* Now the *Cameronia* was certainly not ready for sea, and I mistrusted the loss of even one letter of her name; so I decided to concentrate on finding the Transport Officer. Through driving snow and oozing streets my taxi tracked him to his lair. Quite a comfortable lair and obliging people. Oh, yes, there was a *Cameronian* as well as a *Cameronia.* No, they had no instructions about me, but I could take passage by either if her destination seemed suitable. My orders said the *Cameronian?* Very good, they would 'phone and find out where she was. One moment. Yes, dock No. 5; the Admiralty was always giving these wrong numbers; and likely to sail next day.

One more trek through the slush, and—none inviting, observing, or gainsaying me, for there appeared to be only a steward acting as caretaker—I was aboard the good ship *Cameronian,* which had

started life as the bad ship *Cameroon* (or *Kamerun*) engaged in German trade with the west coast of Africa, and, though captured and converted into a British transport, still displayed her saloon and deck notices in the German tongue. It appeared that I was the first arrival apart from a few aliens stowed below for repatriation to the Levant; but in the course of the next twenty-four hours there strayed on board, as if tired of tramping the docks, twos and threes and small detachments naval and military, until we numbered a couple of hundred all told.

The hour to push off was approaching when a Naval Transport Officer appeared, and after making a few inquiries sent for me. Had I been to sea before, he wished to know. No, not in that garb, which in fact had left the tailor's hands only some days ago, nor in any position of authority. Well, that could not be helped; it appeared that the only other officers taking passage were a subaltern A.S.C. and three warrant-officers. I was the senior in rank and therefore O.C. troops. What were the duties and responsibilities of the O.C. troops? Oh, just discipline in general, and giving the captain some assistance in watch-keeping, and maintaining order while the boats were manned, if by any chance we were torpedoed; and by the way I could of course take the best cabin for my sole use. Were there any books or papers I could refer to for guidance in my duties? No, the routine was quite simple; I should soon pick it up. But there was a list at any rate, I supposed, of the various units on board and their destinations? Why, no; they had been expecting a lot more than seemed to have turned up: there ought to have been some twenty officers and two

or three hundred more troops, as well as some horses. Perhaps we should call at some port down south and embark them there. Meantime I must see what was wanted and carry on. Good-bye, and good luck!

It was all a trifle disillusioning as regards the perfection of naval organisation in which the British public had been encouraged to believe. We all know now of course, or those of us who have read the Commander-in-Chief's record of the first two years of the war, that our boasted naval organisation and efficiency had left us without protected bases, without docks for our capital ships, without armour-piercing projectiles that could be guaranteed to pierce armour before they burst. We all know now that politician after politician at the head of naval affairs had neglected the counsel of his competent naval advisers, and that they in turn, our Sea Lords, had failed to carry their insistence to the point of resigning in a body and forcing the Government's hand. So true is it that many men will risk their lives for their country, but few their careers. But those facts were not then common property, nor had experience yet forced upon my mind that paradox of psychology.

And yet in it perhaps is summed up the whole explanation not only of neglect before the war but of many opportunities missed in its course. The story of the *Goeben* alone would provide more than one example. It seems so much safer to many senior officers, whose career is already made or well assured, to report and to request instructions than to risk a decision and act; and wireless telegraphy affords such tempting facilities. And then too it is the same old

safe course by which they have reached their actual eminence. When the half-yearly promotions are announced, what is the criticism in any ward-room? "I wonder why So-and-so has been passed over. He has not got anything against him. Of course most of the others were pretty safe men too, and there is a bit of influence to help here, and plenty of money there. I wonder if he has made a mess of anything lately"; as if by common consent it were agreed that the sure path to promotion lay in the negative virtue of not making a mess and in playing for safety.

And here is a little-known anecdote *à propos*. When the *Goeben* was first heading for Constantinople, a very gallant admiral of a then neutral country made the spirited offer to join in pursuing her through the Dardanelles and bringing her to action, regardless of the fact that either he was committing his Government to war with Germany or in the alternative must himself be dismissed the service; he asked only that he might be granted the post of honour in leading through the perilous waters. How many of our own senior officers would have possessed the mental courage to make so compromising an offer, or even to accept it? They too, if the venture were to be made, would have sought the post of honour and of peril; but that other courage, the courage to act without reporting and requesting instructions which might, or must, arrive too late—how many would have displayed it? Perhaps I wrong them, but I think that the peace-time habit of playing for safety in the game of promotion had become in many a confirmed and unconscious habit not easily abandoned in war-time.

In junior officers the habit is naturally less rooted,

and the temptation to request instructions less strong. They get plenty of instructions unsolicited on matters of routine, and welcome a chance to play their own game without orders when routine yields to emergency. Their careers are not yet made, so that they should chiefly fear to mar them, but rather are in the making; and youth can see in war as many opportunities as perils. And so it is that no habit of caution, combined with the fatal facility of wireless communication, has paralysed in them that power which is no more naval than military or civil, but is rather of the essence of British character wherever circumstances may call for its exercise, the power to carry on.

Will that, I wonder, be the verdict of history? That not by statesmanship, not by strategy, not by foresight and organisation was this war won, but by the high average of our countrymen's power, in fair weather or in foul, in darkness or in light, to carry on?

These—need I say it?—were not the reflections in my mind as H.M. Transport *Cameronian* moved out of dock. There were more practical matters requiring attention. First there was the best cabin to be secured; and next there were the warrant-officers and the subaltern to be interviewed in the hope that out of some previous experience they might throw light on the routine of a transport and the duties of the O.C. troops. There I drew a blank, for none of them had been in a transport before; but the subaltern knew what the minimum of formal parades would be in camp, on a Sunday for instance, when there was no drill, route-march, or other special distraction ordered, and the warrant-officers of course knew the ordinary naval routine. A cross between the two should serve.

Apart from the hours to be fixed for feeding and for sleeping, which I could settle at once with the captain of the vessel, the most important matter was to divide the men up into watches and messes, with a petty officer or N.C.O. responsible for each, and to hold divisions each morning at which they could parade and answer to their names, be inspected as regards cleanliness and correct uniform, and be told off for various duties; for there was a gun's crew to be provided and watch to be kept on the gun-platform aft, a duty which I handed over to one of the warrant-officers who was fortunately an expert therein; there was assistance too to be given in watch-keeping in general, for the ship was short both of officers and men; and there were mess-decks to be scrubbed, and other miscellanea. But before any of this could be done, I must have a list of the men on board, a list which might as well include at once, name, rank, regiment or ship, and destination. So having appointed the signal-boatswain from among the warrant-officers as my adjutant, I took a tour of the ship under his guidance, to see how matters stood and the best way of setting to work.

That project was sound in principle, but unworkable for the time being in practice. Too many of the men were drunk, and mixed up with them was a good portion of the ship's company also drunk, including, as we learnt later, the officers' cook, whose *idée fixe* when in liquor was burnt porridge—served liquid at dinner as soup, thicker at breakfast without an *alias*, and solid at lunch as pudding. So having merely arranged that any drunken persons lying in the snow on deck should be stowed in shelter somewhere below, I

postponed the list-making till next day; whereby I looked not only to obtain an accurate list, but to avoid the necessity of spending an hour or two next morning in imposing haphazard and probably irregular penalties for drunkenness. Of course the problem had to be faced in a few cases later; and, confinement to barracks appearing an inadequate penalty when no one wished to make an exit overboard, while anything which involved entries on pay-sheets or other forms which we did not possess was obviously precluded, the solution which I adopted was that of shutting them up in what was apparently an old strong-room, forward of the mess-deck, used for stowing valuables when the ship was in the West African trade: the motion of the vessel was felt considerably there, and offenders mostly emerged sick and sorry as well as sober.

Next morning the nominal list was duly made out, with some gaps only as regards the destination of units; but as I expected to be in command not farther than Malta, and should hand them over to the authorities there for disposal, that mattered little. The holding of divisions was easily managed. The signal-boatswain as my executive officer had the men mustered aft and drawn up in the proper style, and did a preliminary inspection. He then reported to me, in my cabin of course, that they were ready, and told me a couple of details he had purposely left for me to find fault with as I made my own inspection. Upon these I duly passed a curt comment as I followed him round, then read prayers, and finally told the signal-boatswain to carry on; which meant that he should tell off various parties for their several duties and then dismiss the lot in the appropriate language which

I did not know. So with the aid of a warrant-officer who played the game, a Prayer Book, and the two words "carry on," the thing was done. Blessed words, that can cover a multitude of ignorances!

The other main feature of routine, I gathered, was going the rounds,—morning and evening rounds,—to satisfy myself concerning the cleanliness of the mess-decks, the sanitary arrangements, the means of darkening ship, the wearing of life-belts, the adequacy and provisioning of boats and rafts, the readiness of the gun for action, and the alertness of its crew—some of these things requiring regular inspection, others occasional only. And this duty was by no means merely formal, but productive of work that needed to be done. The gun-platform had only just been built, and the constructors had omitted to put so much as a handrail round it, so that one slip in heavy weather would have meant rolling sheer overboard—and that too though the ship was noted for her powers of rolling. Then such measures as had been taken for darkening ship were half-measures only: the skylights of the engine-room and the portholes of the ship's officers' cabins abaft the bridge were a pillar of fire by night for any submarine. Boat-stations too had to be arranged, and that moreover with the knowledge cheerfully imparted to me by that genial and fearless old fatalist, the captain, that, if we set aside our few odd rafts for repatriating the Levantines, our boats could not last half an hour, with the numbers authorised to be allotted to them, except in most unexpected weather. There was also medical attendance, for the O.C. troops is *ex officio* doctor, though I am glad to say he is not also steward.

Naturally there were one or two little *contretemps*. Enter one day Warrant-officer No. 3 to whom I had assigned not only the duty of doing the engine-room rounds on my behalf, the engine-room being his native province, but also a share of watch-keeping on the bridge. To this latter duty he objected, alleging that I had no right to order an engineer officer to undertake it, and proposing to write me a service-letter on the point. Now I was none too clear what a service-letter might be, or whether he was merely putting up a bluff, because it was too cold for his liking on the bridge. Moreover this was a point on which I could not seek the signal-boatswain's counsel, without asking him in effect to give away his fellow warrant-officer. I therefore pointed out to him that my order might or might not be irregular, but that it would be worse than irregular, to wit a serious breach of discipline, if he should fail to comply with it. As for the service-letter (which I assumed to be some kind of formal protest against my conduct, and therefore proper to be passed on to some superior authority) I would deal with it at Malta; meantime if he wished for my orders in writing (a vague memory of some yarn involving a question of naval discipline suggested this counter-bluff) he could have them; but as the ship was short of watch-keepers, I expected him, until we reached Malta, to "carry on." Which, being in fact a good enough fellow, he did, nor did we even exchange the suggested *billets-doux*.

Enter a few days later the signal-boatswain, with a face as long as your arm. We were just south of the Bay, and for twenty-four hours the *Cameronian's* capacities in rolling had been tested to the uttermost.

Probably none of us had slept that night: short of being lashed down in our bunks, there would have been no chance. I had spent the night in retrieving, and wedging into temporary immobility, the drawers under my bunk, which, being unprovided with keys to lock them fast, shot out at intervals and shed my belongings on the floor; and had finished up by paddling in paraffin and broken glass to give chase to a heavy brass lamp, which had been shaken out of its socket and taken charge, with the evident intention of battering for itself an exit. So the signal-boatswain's long face did not surprise me: I only hoped it was none of the men missing. "What is the trouble, signal-boatswain?" "The rum-cask broken adrift, sir, and stove in." "Any of the rum saved?" "Enough for two or three days, sir; I looked to the lashings last night, as I told you when you went the rounds, sir; but anything might go adrift with this sea running."

The signal-boatswain took a gloomy view of the matter; he would have reported our boats stove in far more cheerfully than our one rum-cask. We might have repaired them, or, if irreparable, might never have wanted them; but the men wanted their daily tot, and we had only two or three days' supply to last a full week or more. He clearly saw trouble ahead among the miscellaneous lot of ratings of whom we knew nothing, even if I were to promise them compensation in money, when we reached Malta, for the liquor they had missed; and I did not even know whether such a promise would be redeemed. "No good reducing the quantity we serve out, sir," quoth the signal-boatswain—but surely with an appreciable

emphasis on "quantity." "That is true," said I, "but the quality is sure to deteriorate gradually in any case now that the cask is stove in, and neither air-tight nor water-tight. Well, carry on as best you can, and report to me if there are any difficulties. But, look here, signal-boatswain, I will look up the lessons beforehand for church on Sunday, and see that there is no reference to the widow's cruse, or the miracle in Cana of Galilee: you know your Bible, I hope." "Aye, aye, sir." And he carried on without incident or complaint.

And so we reached Malta, and my last duty was to report on the efficiency of the captain of the transport and his attention to war-time regulations. I, forsooth, who had played the *rôle* of O.C. troops aboard a transport for the space of a fortnight and had never seen the war-time regulations, to report on the efficiency of a merchant captain who had occupied his business in great waters these thirty years and more, and upon his compliance with the said regulations unknown! Fortunately a formal *questionnaire* was provided, and I merely inserted favourable answers, and we had a laugh over it together, and a drink to our next meeting, and so good-bye. But that next meeting was not to be, for a year later he and his first officer with their ship lay at the bottom of the Mediterranean. God rest their gallant souls.

So here, at Malta, ended my first lesson in carrying on.

PART II.—THE SECOND LESSON, WITH COMMENTARY

The second lesson began at Mudros, where after being relegated for ten weary days to the casual ward of the naval camp to await disposal, I found myself appointed Intelligence Officer on the staff of the Senior Naval Officer (in briefer parlance hereinafter the S.N.O.) of the First Detached Squadron. This squadron, I was told, had just been formed to take charge of an area comprising Crete and the coast of Asia Minor from the south of Samos to Rhodes, together with any islands, roughly speaking, which would be passed in going from any point of the one to any point of the other. As for my duties, there had not been an Intelligence Officer down that way hitherto, so I must see what was wanted and carry on. I would not swear that the words were identical with those used by the Transport Officer at Liverpool, but the identity of their sense was not in doubt.

Two days later I had joined the S.N.O.'s ship, H.M.S. *Edgar,* at the small island of Stampalia, and we proceeded almost at once to occupy Suda Bay, the one spacious harbour of Crete, which was destined to be the scene of my activities for the next eighteen months; and there I learnt to sum up the general position, policy, and problems consequent thereupon somewhat thus. First, from the strictly naval point of view, Suda Bay was an excellent base from which to conduct the larger part of our work—patrolling and escorting on the triangle of main routes between Malta, Salonica, and Alexandria, which routes all touched our area; making any harbours in Crete or

the other islands allotted to us a risky resort for any enemy submarines which might be using them for purposes of rest, revictualling, or communications; and controlling neutral traffic with a view to the seizure of contraband or enemy agents. But, as regards maintaining the blockade of the Asia Minor coast, Suda Bay was too distant to be suitable. As a matter of fact it was necessary to use a secondary base in one of the adjacent islands almost from the first, and ultimately this part of the area was cut off and was combined more happily with the blockading area to the north of it. Personally I only visited it once or twice, and my stories relate to Crete and its neighbourhood.

Politically however our position was more ambiguous. We had installed ourselves in the harbour of a neutral power; whether with that power's express consent or as a necessary corollary to our occupation of Salonica, I never heard; but one instruction which we definitely and simultaneously received was to respect the three-mile limit; from which it resulted theoretically that, if we wished to exercise the right of search as regards any neutral ship bound for the very harbour we were occupying, we were enjoined to send out a vessel beyond the three-mile limit to board her and bring her into port for further investigation. This difficulty however could be, and ultimately was, adjusted by a friendly arrangement with the main shipping-companies, beneficial to both parties, under which all steamships bound for Crete should make Suda their first port of call, and all leaving Crete should make it their last port, and voluntarily submit themselves to examination. Very few of the coasting

vessels proved recalcitrant even at first; and after we had once exercised our right of detaining one ship, which had failed to conform, and discharging her whole cargo into lighters for more thorough inspection, none.

A far worse handicap imposed by the political situation was that we might not arrest any person on *terra firma*; and it was therefore open to the German and Austrian Consuls at Canea to employ an agent in Suda village to report to them by telephone the movements of all our shipping. It took nearly three months of negotiation with the Admiralty and the Foreign Office to secure what they ought to have effected of their own initiative before ever we were ordered to occupy Suda Bay, the removal of the enemy consuls from the neighbourhood of our base. Meanwhile I might know, as in fact I did, which official in the Suda post-office was paid to report to the German Consul any movements which he could see, or any information which he could glean; I might surmise that those consuls were well provided with agents at other points of the island, capable of passing to enemy submarines the information that a well-filled transport was raising steam; but nothing could be done locally; our instructions were to occupy the bay as our base, but on no account to arrest the spies who sat on the beach and watched our doings.

But the trouble did not end there. I soon made a perplexing discovery which would have caused no little consternation at home had it been made public. Enemy representatives and agents in neutral countries were using the cables of the Eastern Telegraph Company with no more let or hindrance than British

or Allied representatives. Now the Eastern Telegraph Company is a British concern, with international obligations corresponding to its privileges, and obviously could not of its own initiative exercise any discrimination in neutral countries between messages of allied or enemy origin; but I cannot doubt that the directors of the Company were keenly alive to the fact that their cables might be the vehicle of enemy intelligence, and consulted the Government as to the Company's legal and correct position. Would they, for example, be trading with the enemy by accepting the messages of enemy agents for transmission? Would they be aiding and abetting intelligence with the enemy by forwarding messages to an enemy destination? Could any check be imposed upon their acceptance of enemy telegrams in code or cypher? These were obvious questions which should have been debated and settled by the Imperial Defence Committee before ever war broke out, and not have been left to the Company to raise; and yet at the time of which I speak, nearly two years after the outbreak of war, here were the German and Austrian Consuls in Canea, some four miles only from a British naval base, enjoying all the facilities of a British-owned cable-system for the transmission of their cypher-messages to their legations in Athens or elsewhere.

Now this was no mere oversight. I know that in the Greek area concerned representations were made. At Athens the Company's manager discussed the position with the British Minister, and I am reasonably confident that their former manager in the important centre of Syra, who held a naval commis-

sion during the war for the express purpose of superintending the cables of the Eastern Mediterranean, discussed it equally with the Vice-Admiral to whose staff he was attached. I may infer then that both the Foreign Office and the Admiralty were cognisant of the situation as it had existed in Greece, and presumably in other neutral countries bordering the Mediterranean, from the beginning of the war.

Here then was a problem affecting both international relations and the conduct of naval operations from one end of the Mediterranean to the other, a problem demanding instant and vigorous treatment. Every day's delay, during which enemy agents were free to wire to Germany the movements of British shipping, was exposing to avoidable peril our vessels and their freights of men and munitions. What proportion of our losses in those waters should be attributed to that masterpiece of departmental incompetence and inertia, can never be computed; but even now, when in spite of that treasonable negligence the war has been won, the departments concerned should be called to account. To the Foreign Office, I suppose, must attach the greater obloquy; but surely, if the Foreign Office was too timid or lethargic to devise a remedy, the Admiralty might have stimulated it, by cutting one or two of the cables less necessary to ourselves.

I confess that I thought of solving our own local problem by some such means; but even if I had induced some sportsman in command of a trawler to locate and drop depth charges on our two cables at Canea and Candia, the relief would have been only temporary, and the coincidence of two similar mishaps would have aroused suspicion. So I set to work to

worry the British Minister in Athens instead, and I remember well how I scandalised certain of his *entourage* by my manner of doing so. Yet the manner of the naval officer is traditionally blunt, and it was but in keeping with my *rôle* of temporary naval officer to be blunt *pro tem.* So I submitted to the Minister three plain propositions: (1) that the system of the Eastern Telegraph Company had been in fact at the service of the German and Austrian Consuls in Canea, and presumably at that of enemy agents in neutral countries throughout the Mediterranean area, to the detriment of British shipping; (2) that inasmuch as a company of such standing so situated must have consulted the Foreign Office with regard to its obligations, it was the Foreign Office which must bear the whole responsibility and blame for giving to our enemies a form of aid which if given by a private individual would be treasonable; and (3) if the continuance of such aid over a space of two years was due to the difficulty of formulating a satisfactory diplomatic solution of the problem, the situation could be rectified, so far as Crete and probably certain other places were concerned, by the crude naval method of cutting the cables and relying on wireless only.

This last suggestion was a bluff only, which the Minister could have detected by communicating with my S.N.O. or with the Vice-Admiral; but I believe that it had some effect; at any rate I took some credit to myself, though I will warrant no one else gave me any, when about a month later a Note presented to the Greek Government demanded *inter alia* the establishment of a censorship of telegrams by the Allies at Piræus.

But this was in September, 1916, and we had taken five months to obtain even this measure of supervision, which, unless it were extended to Syra and Zante as well as Piræus, was miserably inadequate; and meanwhile, as I have said, our instructions were to respect the neutral territory whence spies watched us and enemy consuls or their agents telegraphed our movements.

Ah, those instructions! An officer charged with duties of *contre-espionnage* might well chafe under them. I had asked for instructions at Liverpool, and had been told to carry on; I had asked for them at Mudros and been told once more to carry on; I got them unasked at Suda, and wished heartily I had been left to carry on uninstructed. And now too, in looking back, I remember few instructions emanating from any higher authority than the S.N.O. on the spot which would not better have been labelled obstructions. I never lightly and unadvisedly sought them again; and perhaps I may add here that under successive S.N.O.'s I was given a very free hand in political and other non-naval matters, and that therefore such irregularities of procedure as may be revealed in the stories which I have to tell are chargeable against me rather than against my commanding officer, and in no degree whatsoever against that monument of cautious inactivity, the Foreign Office.

There was only one branch of my work in respect of which I should have welcomed general instructions, not so much because I should necessarily have followed them, but rather for comparison with the principles which I gradually evolved for myself. My position as Intelligence Officer involved a considerable amount

of secret-service work, particularly *contre-espionnage*. Crete, like the mainland of Greece, was in the hands of King Constantine and his gang, and no sooner had we occupied Suda Bay than the "neutral and friendly" government of Greece issued a confidential circular to the police authorities of Crete, ordering them to protect the Germans and their agents and to obstruct the British in every possible way. I saw the document. What principles of law, morality, or expediency govern the methods which may be adopted for combating such a situation?

Our politicians and journalists assure us from time to time that the British Secret Service is the best in the world. I do not know whether that is true any more than, I imagine, do they; but, if it is true, it must be the outcome of some natural genius in our people for such work, and not of training or organisation; for the secret-service work of the Ægean—a difficult enough area—was conducted by amateurs, and I for one never received one word of guidance.

Now it is hardly to be expected that international law should formulate the etiquette of *espionnage* or of the methods permissible for countering it, more especially in a case where the two warring powers are using for their arena a neutral country. But, though the law be not such an ass as to bray enactments which could have no sanction, there still remain the principles of morality and of expediency; and these two, though commonly contrasted as antitheses, are in the domain of international policy so closely correlated that, even when due allowance is made for all the relaxations of moral standards which the state of war in itself implies, a code of conduct based on apparent expedi-

ency alone will still be not only morally wrong but politically inexpedient.

The reason of this is simple. On that delicate moral quality which we call "honour" depends that solid political asset, *prestige*. *Prestige* may be buttressed by commerce and industry, by scientific invention and achievement, by naval and military might, but its foundation is character. If any one doubts it, let him ask any Greek, or any one who has lived among Greeks in these latter years, what fact or event in the history of the war has most enhanced British *prestige* in those parts, and the answer will be, not our command of the sea, not our training and equipment of so many million troops, not our output of munitions nor the feeding and financing of our allies, nor yet any signal victory or feat of arms by land or sea, but the great fire of Salonica. And why? Because among all that medley of nations the British soldier did not loot. Of this I am persuaded, that in all the course of the war no British statesman or diplomat, admiral or general, has done so much to raise British *prestige* in the eyes of the Greek world as was done in that one day by the rank and file of our Salonica forces, who, happening to be at hand, refrained from looting and threw themselves into the work of rescue and salvage as heartily as if it had been their favourite sport.

Now the secret-service agent in the byways of war represents his country no less than the soldier in the open field; but just because he is more isolated his individual character is more prominent; and in proportion as the possibilities of his work are more complex, his personal opportunities for raising or lowering the *prestige* of his country are more frequent

and varied. Of course his personal predilections in favour of keeping the ten commandments may be such that no act of his is likely to stain his country's good repute; but then an *intransigeant* attitude towards moral standards in war-time will also impair his efficiency as an agent. "Thou shalt not kill" does not veto the extermination of the enemy. "Thou shalt not steal" does not prohibit the seizure of contraband. And possibly "Thou shalt not bear false witness" has not interfered unduly with propaganda. The state of war automatically abrogates certain moral laws, or at least limits their application. The man who fails to recognise this fact, and makes a hobby of a rigid conscience to the detriment of his country, must prove a failure in secret-service work.

But the opposite type is worse than a failure: he constitutes a public danger. I have met more than one man engaged in intelligence duties who held that the state of war gave exemption from all moral restraints, and that secret-service work meant devilry unlimited, though of course, if possible, undetected. A man holding such views needs but sufficient foolhardiness to take the risk of detection, or sufficient self-conceit to think detection impossible, in order to commit the country which he represents to every form and degree of crime. He procures, let us say, the assassination of some eminent person in a neutral country whose political influence is tending to make that country privily or avowedly espouse the enemy's cause. The *coup* successfully effected promises to incline the scales in favour of his own country and her allies; and, if suspicion is aroused, he has funds enough to buy silence. It seems a small thing to

him, if he gives it a thought, that the assassin whom he employs, and any others whose silence must be bought, write him down as lacking only the pluck to be a murderer himself, and as a fit subject therefore for blackmail. It would seem smaller still perhaps that in the esteem of a corrupt handful of assassins and blackmailers the character of the country which he represents should be an enlargement, as it were, of his own. And yet as surely as night follows day he has blackened his country's fair name. A whispered story to divert some wench, a hint to some journalist of sensations to seek, a version (incriminating in no way the teller) sold in political circles, a spasm of veracity induced by liquor—and naked truth, or bedizened rumour, is winged and abroad.

"Pshaw!" you say, good reader, "a most sound homily, no doubt, but it is like sermons we have all heard, in which the preacher propounds some perversity of dogma or moral theory which no sane person ever entertained, and with complacent indignation turns his battery of texts upon it. The hypothesis is fantastic. No educated man, above all no Englishman, could be so mentally or morally depraved. We do not employ either fools or criminals in our public services." Good reader, in war-times, believe me, we employ all sorts: and, taking men haphazard, if they are to be sailors or soldiers, we give them a modicum of training and impose upon them known rules of conduct and of discipline; but, if they are to be secret-service agents, we leave them uninstructed to their own devices. Why so? In order that we may reap the benefit of their crimes until detection comes, and then save the honour of our country by

disowning them? Is that the cynical principle which guides certain guardians of our national honour? Why, then, our public services lack not for fools or criminals even at their head—criminals by complicity in the staining of our honour, or fools to risk the wrecking of our *prestige*. And if that is "unthinkable" (oh! blessed word of our politicians' vocabulary!) what alternative explanation do you offer, good reader, of the fact that no instructions and guidance are given? Will you urge that the majority of our secret-service agents, if chosen haphazard, will belong to neither of the extreme types I have depicted? That they will neither be of the conscientious-objector breed, maintaining that the state of war cannot modify the universal application of any commandment, nor yet act as professional devils for whom all moral restraints are abrogated? Very true; but it is just that majority composed of men who wish to steer a middle course, to whom some instructions in navigation, some chart of the rocks and shoals, some opportunity to correct the compass of their own judgment, would be most welcome.

Howbeit in fact the principles of morality and of expediency by which the secret-service agent is to be guided are left to himself to formulate. What then shall they be? What restrictions shall he impose upon himself in respect of life, liberty, and property, and what relaxations of moral obligation shall he accept? And must he distinguish between the declared enemy and the neutral who is working in the enemy's service? Pretty points of ethical theory for debate, are they not? but involving ugly issues in practice.

Shall we rule out wilful and unprovoked assassination without more ado? Very good; I agree, though I have met men who do not. But what about assassination by way of reprisal? Let me put a case. It came to my ears before I had been long in Crete that the German Consul in Canea had done me the honour to put a price of two thousand francs on my head. I do not know whether in fact he had done so, or had merely arranged that such a report should reach me in the hope of disturbing my equanimity. But, assuming for the moment that it was a firm offer, should I have been justified in retaliating, with insult added to injury, by pricing his head at two hundred? My own answer is "No." But carry it a stage farther: suppose that the German Consul had not only made that offer but had had to pay up: would my successor have been justified in reprisals? Probably yes, if with his own hand, on the principle that, as in a duel, he would be facing the same risk as his opponent; probably no, if by means of a hired agent. But say that he adopts neither of these courses and decides that he will endeavour to capture the German Consul for trial before a competent court. He gets in touch with a couple of trusty men from the mountains (it is no great difficulty in Crete), men who have taken a hand in cattle-lifting and have no scruples against consul-lifting. He tells them that he wants the consul delivered to him alive and not unnecessarily damaged. In due time they reappear. "Your Excellency," they say, "there was trouble; we meant to bring him alive as your Excellency desired, but he and his servants fired on us, and we more successfully on them; and when we saw that he was killed,

we thought your Excellency would no longer desire him." What judgment shall we pass on such a case?

Translated into the atmosphere of civil life, it would stand thus: A hired a couple of armed ruffians to kidnap an enemy B; B put up a fight, and they killed him; inasmuch as they were engaged in a felony and came armed to perpetrate it, the killing, even if not premeditated, ranks as murder, and A who incited them to the felony is some sort of accessory. But will the same reasoning hold in war-time? Decidedly no: the right verdict then is justifiable homicide, or, if you will, death by misadventure—some verdict in fact which imputes no blame.

So I at any rate should judge the case; and I may say that I have acted on my judgment to the extent of risking just such an occurrence without qualms. There was an important enemy agent whom I wanted. A brigand-like but pro-British stalwart called on me and offered to shoot him for eight hundred francs. "No," said I, "I don't buy corpses." Very good; he would kidnap him if I preferred, and, as that would mean less risk of trouble afterwards with the *gendarmerie,* he would take four hundred. I accepted the offer; but in fact there were no developments, either happy or untoward. My brigand failed of his enterprise, and I captured the said agent by other means. Yet obviously kidnapping, however stringent the terms of the bargain, is not a game which is usually played unarmed, or without risk to life; and, as I say, I authorised it without qualm.

What then is my conclusion? Roughly this,

that the ethics of secret service in war-time do not permit the furtherance of schemes whose object is homicide, but neither do they prohibit enterprises from which the risk of incidental homicide cannot be excluded. Otherwise indeed I must have refrained later on from inciting to revolution: revolutions mostly involve some casualties.

Nor on this principle have I ever felt able to share that indignation which our propaganda department, as a matter of business perhaps only, sought to arouse over certain doings of our enemies in the then neutral United States. Is it really dastardly work to destroy munition factories, no matter where situated, which are supplying your enemy with the means to kill your own countrymen? Considerations of humanity, let us suppose, weigh with you in devising the means to be adopted. You do not cause one overwhelming explosion in working hours when the factory is crowded, but you start a fire at night time under conditions which will give the small staff on duty a clear chance to escape. That there will be some risk to life is unquestionable; but those who engage in war-work have little moral claim to be immune from war-risks. Is there any real moral difference then between burning down the factory which produces munitions, sinking the ship which transports them, and bombing the dump where they lie ready for use? So far as the sanctity of human life is concerned, it is a matter of casuistry, I think, to discriminate.

But if it is merely urged that such action is a violation of the rights of property or of commerce, that argument leaves me cold. I know from experience that in actual fact there is more pother over

consigning a few cases of contraband goods to the prize-court than over consigning a few suspect persons to an internment-camp; but I am entirely unconvinced that this is right, and that property deserves more consideration than personal liberty. If on grounds of suspicion I may deprive one individual of his liberty, may I not on grounds of certainty deprive another of his munitions-plant or other property? Moreover in any question of property, if the government in whose service I work disapproves the damage or loss I have occasioned, my action is not irremediable: financial compensation can be assessed and given.

Just one problem more. An enemy agent, possessed of information which I want, falls into my hands. When I interrogate him, he gives me answers some of which I know to be false. To what treatment may I subject him in order to reduce his obstinacy, and make him confess? I presume that on the one hand thumb-screws and the like will not be advocated: on the other, he has no claim to champagne and oysters or a feather-bed. There are however many grades of discomfort which intervene between the use of torture and mere prison life. True, if he is a superior sort of spy, possessed of the pluck which that profession in war-time must require, no additional discomfort to which he is subjected will move him; but if he is some miserable creature, working for hire only, and with no heart in the cause in which he is employed, a measure of discomfort may give results. What measures then are permissible? May he be remanded to the cells, which are very hot in the Mediterranean summer, for the maximum period for which the captain of a ship can sentence one

of his crew to cells? May his food be reduced to the minimum disciplinary limit? If he shams ill, may the doctor administer the most nauseous and racking purge which he concocts for malingerers? Or, if he is a landsman with no stomach for the sea, may he be given a day or two's trip in a trawler—a trial which many a landsman on service has had to endure in the ordinary course of duty?

There is a hidden authority to whose tardy attention I commend these and the other questions which I have asked. They may perhaps trench on international law; they must involve the principles of both morality and expediency; and, since honour is not a bauble nor *prestige* a plaything, these principles and their modification by the state of war should not have been left to the guesswork, and at the mercy, of amateurs chosen haphazard and instructed only to carry on.

I am speaking of that which I know. It has fallen to my lot to thwart a scheme of political assassination by arresting the scoundrel hired to perpetrate it, and by a strange chance to cope with attempted blackmail at a later date in respect of that very scheme. You at home who conferred the power and furnished the moneys wherewith a misguided agent might procure such crimes, what judgment did you exercise in your choice of men, what guidance and control did you offer or impose? You, masked even in each sanctum of your secret labours by an *alias* and sheltered alike from the journalist's pen and the politician's tongue, you alone among our defensive powers receive and must receive the nation's blind trust. Not only some share in England's defence,

but also in a very special manner the honour of England, is entrusted to you, and you render no account of your trusteeship. How did you acquit yourselves in this war? Did you scrutinise the character, or even test the brains, of those who should administer each portion of your trust in foreign lands? Did you show them what expediency, which is transient, justifies, and what honour, which is permanent, disallows? If not, you proved in part unworthy of the trust reposed in you.

Indeed I think you stand in part self-condemned. What defect of your system were you seeking to remedy or to conceal, when you set up that absurd board of examiners at home, to read and to mark, like a schoolboy's exercises, the reports sent home by your agents abroad? What possible defect, I ask, other than your own ignorance of your appointed agents? Had you known them through and through, their ability, their industry, their judgment, their character and fitness for their posts, then their reports should have been valued accordingly. As it was, in order to remedy that ignorance, which is the first count against you, you instituted a bureaucratic travesty of supervision and hired some dozens of examiners to assess in marks the *prima facie* value of reports written by agents who, whatever their merits or failings, could not but possess one advantage over their examiners—some rudimentary knowledge of their local subject.

Will you not, now that peace has come, sweep away these foolish artifices? Mask your identity as you must, but not your ignorance. Profit by the lesson of your past shortcomings. Summon to you the men now

freed from your service, and revise your paper records of them in the light of personal knowledge. Never has England been so full of men fitted by foreign experience to feel for you the pulse of this or that nation. Choose from among them those who add to experience the temperament, the ability, and the character which your service needs. Secure, if you will, the appointment of some of them to official stations, as ambassadors, ministers, counsellors, in countries which they know. Use others, in the guise of tourists, students, scientific explorers, commercial agents, to keep touch with classes who pass no legation's portal, maintaining friendships formed in the comradeship of war, sensitive to each country's *amour-propre,* awake to her needs and ambitions, and striving only, now that the haven of peace has been so hardly won, to moor the nations fast in mutual understanding. You need but a handful of chosen men, renewing from year to year their ties with each country, to work a greater miracle perchance than all the machinery of the League of Nations may ever compass.

CHAPTER II

THE HUNTING OF GATCHIEFF

PART I.—AT CROSS PURPOSES

"BULGARIAN spy named Gatchieff passing as Greek monk under name Hieronymus left Piræus by s.s. *Peloponnesus* for Crete. Well educated and good linguist. Father attached to German General Staff. Medium height, frail appearance, blue eyes, hair and beard chestnut, has gold tooth on right side upper jaw conspicuous when he smiles. Was caught inside French lines Salonica. Escaped, believed with assistance Greek police. Said to be wearing Bulgarian military overcoat under priest's robe."

So in effect ran the signal from Athens; but, as was often the case with cable messages, it had been seriously delayed. The enemy messages which at this time were still transmitted as freely as our own contributed without doubt to the congestion. Quite possibly Gatchieff's own messages to some associates in Crete had on this occasion taken precedence of the signal to us: the German Consul in Canea would obviously have been warned to facilitate his landing and his departure to some place of safety. But, be that as it may, the signal was too late. The *Peloponnesus* was no longer at sea, where we might have held her up and boarded her, but had been anchored some two hours at Canea, whither she had proceeded direct;

for at this time the arrangements by which all steamships should call first at Suda for inspection had not been made. Gatchieff then had had two hours in which to land; it could not be hoped that he would take the risk of staying aboard in order to reach any other port in the island, whatever his ultimate destination might be; and, if he had already landed, our hands were tied by the order not to arrest persons ashore on the soil of a technically neutral and spuriously friendly power.

Of course I made sure of the actual position. Agents were instructed to go aboard and see if any person answering the description of Gatchieff were still there, and also to get in touch with passengers who had landed at Canea and find out about any Greek priest who had come ashore with them, and to trace his subsequent movements. I soon had the information. A man, who had indulged in *mal-de-mer* cheek-by-jowl with the reverend gentleman, had observed the priestly robe disordered by a spasm and a glimpse of uniform revealed; while from other gleanings of gossip it appeared that the same person had been met on landing and had set off to the monastery of the Holy Trinity up on the great plateau to the north of Suda Bay—at about three hours' distance cross country from Suda and somewhat less by road from Canea. As I had expected, our bird had flown before the notice of his coming had reached us, and had found a refuge which in view of our orders seemed to us only too safe.

Now a professional trained spy, such as I took Gatchieff to be, is a rare bird, and the trapping of him is a form of sport not lacking in zest. Most of the

persons whom I had to round up before his coming or after, were suspects or enemy informants of secondary importance, comparatively easy to catch though affording us certainly some measure of diversion in their captivity. There was a German governess, for example, whom I arrested aboard a ship which called at Suda, and handed over to the custody of an interpreter attached to the arsenal, who lived ashore with his family. She and her custodian provided us with much entertainment. First came a note in horrid German hieroglyphics to complain that certain articles of her underclothing had been crumpled by the master-at-arms when her baggage was overhauled, and that one (I hesitate to mention which, but I have no reason to suppose that my dictionary was at fault in the interpretation placed upon the word) one article, then, was missing. Next she called my attention to the distressing fact that her custodian had no piano, hoping perhaps that we should compensate her for the missing article (which the master-at-arms never found) by the loan of the ward-room piano, and almost hinting that when the day of settlement came the German indemnities-claim presented to the vanquished British would be swollen by a formidable item for professional damages in respect of her impaired efficiency in music. Note No. 3 set forth that her digestive organs were suffering by confinement to her jailer's house, and requested permission for a daily modicum of outdoor exercise. This being reasonable, orders were given to the said jailer to take her out for an hour's run each day. He himself had already sent me a note, primarily touching the cost of the lady's keep, but intimating also that "our prisoner has a very nasty

temper"; and I hoped that if her digestive organs were stimulated by a daily constitutional this menace to his domestic tranquillity might be reduced.

Unfortunately the lady, far from being grateful for this concession, attempted to abuse it, and taking advantage of the fact that her custodian was suffering from sciatica set off one day at a trot for Canea, and would have given him the slip but that she too was suffering from corns, or at any rate her shoes pinched; so that in the event neither of their tempers was improved; nor was a solution of the problem found until a call had been made for volunteers from among the petty officers to walk out with the lady. The response, I am glad to say, did credit to British pluck.

What became of her in the end, you ask? Why, being quite clear that I did not want Germans in Crete though I could not demonstrate that she had done anything worthy of bonds, I returned her to Piræus whence she had come; and on her liberation she wrote a final note, this time to the S.N.O. telling him that before falling into our hands she had been nurtured on unspeakable tales of British barbarity, but from the moment of her actual arrest had felt secure, having discerned at once beneath the immovable-as-iron mask of the devoted-to-stern-duty herr officer the clear blue eye of a respectful-for-the-weak-and-innocent chivalry. Perhaps I ought not to have pointed out to my superior officer that the said iron mask and other appurtenances were not his, as he had fondly fancied, but mine; but neither of us was in the running with her favourite petty officer for whom there was reserved a postscript genuinely tender.

Then again there were an ill-assorted pair of

miscreants who chanced to have been caged, for lack of other accommodations, in the same gun-turret. One was a peculiarly loathsome and degraded Italian almost certainly in Austrian pay; the other a humorous and unrepentant ruffian from the south of Crete who was known to have three murders to his account and had been recently kidnapped by one of our trawlers whose captain he had marked down for number four. These two were out for an airing one day, seated on the deck, under the eye of the quartermaster; and the commander with the aid of an interpreter was probing the Cretan ruffian's lurid past. He in willing response was narrating with his usual gusto his first exploit, namely how he had pushed the head of a lighthouse keeper through the glass and cut his throat on the broken edge, when a distraction occurred: there was his Italian stable-companion, sickly green in hue, edging away from him along the deck and finally rolling to the very rail in abject terror—a sight which tickled vastly our murderer's sense of humour. I suspect that the few more days they spent together in the turret before they were shipped off for internment at Malta were a severer punishment for the Italian than any which we had proof enough to inflict.

Gatchieff promised quite a different form of entertainment, which lay in the hunting of him; and the task was complicated by the fact that there were far too many hunters on his track, any one of whom might spoil the others' game. This trouble sprang in part from the hopeless lack of co-ordination between the three British Intelligence services,—naval, military, and unattached,—due to departmental jealousies at home and still unremedied when the war ended;

and in part from the no less petty mutual mistrust and suspicion between the secret services of the different Allies, due in some cases to the foolish and ill-tempered rivalry of particular agents, but fostered also in others, as I know, by direct orders from the British and other governments concerned.

In Crete, when we arrived, the situation was typical. The Allied Consuls, the only existing agents for intelligence purposes, were at loggerheads to such a degree that, in order to avoid open hostilities among themselves, they had divided the island into three geographical spheres of secret service—British, French, and Italian—concerning which they kept each other in the dark; while the activities of their Russian colleague, to whom no geographical area was assigned, remained an uncertain, but by no means negligible, quantity.

Happily our arrival brought about a redistribution of duties, and with it a gradual reconciliation. The S.N.O. became, by consent of the governments concerned, the titular head of a joint Allied Intelligence Service, in which I, as his representative, co-operated with the Consuls. The territorial spheres of influence were abolished, and departments of work substituted, —upkeep for black-list and *dossiers* for one, dealings in contraband for another, registration and movements of sailing-vessels for a third, and so forth,—all information obtained being at the disposal of all. Honest collaboration and pooling of results—it sounds, does it not, a simple and obvious course for the agents of powers engaged in the same great struggle; yet from what I have known and seen in Athens, and from what I have heard of Salonica, I reckon it no mean achievement that for the eighteen months I was in Crete

we worked together in mutual trust and goodwill. And indeed the thing is not really so simple. I was not so blind to the doings of my Italian and other colleagues as to be unaware that they were not always allowed to subordinate the *post-bellum* interests of their respective countries to the immediate and common interests of the whole Entente. And now when I can take into account that abominable secret pact by which our government, false to the very principle for which we entered the war, bought from another government as unprincipled as itself the assistance of the Italian armies, I am less surprised at the occasional digressions of my Italian colleague from the Allies' common path of policy than at the large measure of loyalty with which he followed it.

But at the time of Gatchieff's coming our local *entente cordiale* was barely yet inaugurated, and in Athens none such was ever attained; whence it resulted that three several parties at least, unbeknown to each other, had set their sleuth-hounds on the trail. I knew of three separate pairs, one working for the British Consul and myself, a second believed to belong to one of the other Allied Consuls in Canea, and the third sent from some Intelligence centre in Athens; and besides these there were two or three shadowy figures haunting the neighbourhood of the monastery who may have been either in friendly or in enemy employ—the German Consul would no doubt keep a man or two as guards and messengers for Gatchieff.

Naturally at first these various sets of agents were as much occupied with each other's doings as with those of Gatchieff. On which side might their several competitors be? To whom did they report? And,

if on our side, was their mission limited strictly to watching and investigation, or did it comprise abduction? Meanwhile all the information I could expect came through to me. I knew when Gatchieff paid visits to Canea, and where he went in the town. I learnt that he did not play the *rôle* of a monk in the monastery where he lodged to the extent of attending chapel with regularity (whence I argued that the Prior at any rate was privy to the imposture), but preferred to smoke in the grounds. I was supplied with descriptions of the various persons circling about him on flimsy pretexts, and with surmises as to their real aims.

The first move in the game was made by one of my agents. He had cultivated successfully one or two of the monks and through them had made the acquaintance of Gatchieff, whom he reported to have a liking for his glass of wine. He proposed therefore to turn to good account a *fête* which was shortly to be held at the monastery,—it must have been Ascension Day or Whitsunday, I think,—when the wine would flow freely and some drunkenness on the part of the monks and their guests would not be unbecoming the occasion. If only Gatchieff would join in the merriment, my agent himself and his fellow-tracker, preserving a reasonable but not too conspicuous sobriety, would induce him if possible to accompany them for a ride or drive in the evening, which would by some means end at Suda. The plan was tried, but failed: for Gatchieff when well primed, so they reported afterwards, craved neither a country drive nor other entertainment, but only to sleep unmolested on the floor; but whether in fact Gatchieff upset the

scheme by somnolence, or they themselves by averting too thoroughly the suspicion which might have been aroused by a conspicuous sobriety, I cannot say. The Greeks are in general an abstemious people, but they make handsome amends on certain religious festivals.

A few days had passed when I was approached with another plan—this time by a man whom I identified as one of the pair of agents from Athens. Something then evidently had leaked; tongues perhaps had been unduly loosened that Whitsunday; for he was aware that it was I who was interested in Gatchieff, and that my purpose was to capture him. I did not like or trust the man. He pretended to be a native of the neighbourhood (wherein he was staking too rashly on a foreigner's ignorance, for his speech betrayed him to my ear as no Cretan), and represented himself as a devoted friend of the Entente and in particular of the British. He wished to warn me, he said, of a dangerous spy in the neighbourhood, a monk named Hieronymus (this was in fact Gatchieff's Greek *alias*), whom he would like to deliver into my hands. Any reward for his services and risks he would leave to British generosity. He hoped that one night before long he would be able to bring Hieronymus down to a small inlet, which he indicated to me, on the northern shore of Suda Bay some two or three miles from our anchorage; and when the *coup* was to come off, he would light a fire on a little promontory just beyond the inlet as a signal to us. All we need do was to keep a good look-out for the signal and send a boat promptly to take delivery of the prisoner.

As I said, I did not like or trust the man. He had lied about his origin, while his references to his love of the British and to their generosity were the ordinary stock-in-trade of the low-class Greek who prides himself on the quick-witted cunning of his race and believes any blarney good enough for the dull Westerner. However the lie might be designed merely to cover his intention of getting paid twice for the same piece of work—by me as well as by his employer in Athens. So I put to him only one pertinent question: How could he prevail on Hieronymus to accompany him to a lonely point of the shore at night? And his answer was distinctly quick and good: Would not a spy be interested in a British naval base and its defences? Yes, that was one possible reading of Gatchieff's residence in our neighbourhood. I had not credited him with any great concern about the actual ships in our anchorage or their movements; the German Consul possessed full facilities for observing and reporting these. But Gatchieff might have come on some more expert and technical mission connected with the defences at the entrance to the bay; and the point of the shore where we were invited to capture him lay fairly in the line between the monastery and that entrance, if by any chance he were making an excursion by night to inspect our defences.

The plan was plausible and feasible. I wanted Gatchieff, and did not much mind if the rogue who secured him for me were paid twice over. So I accepted, stipulating only that the friend who would go on ahead to light the signal, or such other persons as the situation required, should be at hand to assist

in putting Hieronymus aboard my boat as soon as I brought her inshore. My orders forbade me, as I have said, to arrest any one on land, or indeed, as far as might be, within the three-mile limit; but obviously the latter restriction would not apply to an enemy agent found aboard a British craft even within a three-yard limit. Strict attention to orders will often reveal a loophole.

The S.N.O. having approved my proposal, the necessary arrangements were made. The picket-boat was to keep steam and stand by all night with a dinghy ready astern; a sharp look-out was kept for the expected signal; four marines were warned to be ready to report on the quarter-deck at any hour; and an R.N.R. officer was told off to command the picket-boat and to comply with my requirements as far as he could.

For two or three nights it looked like lost labour, and my sleep was undisturbed; and one more night had come and I had just turned in, when the message came from the bridge: "Fire, sir, just lighted on the north side of the bay." Time was more important than appearances, so I slipped on a pair of bedroom shoes, and a raincoat over my pyjamas, and ran up on deck. The S.N.O., who had not turned in when the signal came, was already there, and was making things lively because the marines had not yet appeared. I reckoned that I had been right to sacrifice etiquette (though he was a stickler for it, as the whole ship's company well knew) to emergency; and so, being unable to salute for lack of head-gear, merely reported myself present—unclothed but in my right mind. His apparently inconsequent reply, "Damn those

marines, why aren't they here?" implicitly condoned my intention of conducting a raid in pyjamas.

Not much time was wasted really. We took the picket-boat down the middle of the bay and then round in a sweep towards the fire, which was now burning low, and stopped in a dark patch of shadow close under the promontory. Then the dinghy was brought alongside and with a couple of marines I took my place in her. Thus we waited, listening, and, as far as the dark allowed, watching, for any movement ashore. Presently a cigarette-end showed faintly, and we made out a man coming down to the little inlet—but one man only; it looked as if something had gone wrong. Telling the other two marines, who were left in the picket-boat, to keep him covered with their rifles, I took the dinghy quietly closer. Then he hailed us: if there was a British officer there, he said, he had a note for him. I told him to remain where he was and we would come in close and get it. In taking it I could see him clearly enough to be sure that he was not the agent who had approached me, and I decided not to strike a light and read the note at once—we should have presented too good a target for any possible accomplices ashore—but to return with it to the picket-boat and read it under cover in the cabin.

The note purported to be from the agent, and was written in French. Our scheme was working nicely, it said, until Hieronymus had twisted his ankle coming down the mountain-side. The man who had lighted the fire and was bringing this note was the writer's only assistant, and two of them could not carry a disabled man down the ravine to the shore. Could I

come up the path to the top of the ravine with one or two men to help? If so, would I write a line on the back and let the bearer return with it at once so that they might know whether to wait or what to do?

The story in itself had no obvious flaws, and it would certainly be annoying if a mishap of that sort was to baulk us of our chance. But I did not like the French: it was good French, and though my agent might possibly speak some, as many Greeks of the town do, it was unlikely that he would write it with grammatical accuracy. I doubted indeed whether he could even speak it, inasmuch as he had conducted his negotiations with me in his native tongue, and few Greeks who know a foreign language miss an opportunity of showing off to a foreigner. Moreover, another small point but perhaps significant, why did he ask for my reply in writing? His use of French in his own note might be attributed to a doubt whether I could read or write Greek although he knew I could speak it; for the uneducated are apt to rate reading and writing as a higher linguistic achievement than speech; but he knew quite well that I could send a verbal reply in Greek.

If I assumed then that he was playing me false, what was his game? A *ruse* apparently to decoy me ashore at a lonely spot on a dark night. He and his companion who had brought the note would have plenty of time to take their posts at point-blank range behind some rock commanding the ravine-path. Yes, and afterwards a piece of documentary evidence could be produced, as having been found near the spot, showing that I had come to grief in the course of some unlawful adventure. This interpretation fitted all the

facts of the situation without exception, whereas the other, the assumption that the agent was honest, involved those difficulties respecting his note and my answer. Probably then Gatchieff was not there at all; his name, and his name only, had been used as a bait; the note had been written in advance by the agent's real employer who might know French sufficiently well, —who certainly would, if *par exemple* he were the German Consul in Canea, who was reported to have set a price on my head; in fact I was not hunting Gatchieff that night, as I had supposed, but was being hunted by some person at whose identity I could only guess.

So I summed the position up, and, if I was right, that rocky climb up the ravine was not for me. My orders in any case forbade me to land, and there was not a good enough case for breaking them. Besides I was wearing bedroom slippers.

However I did not want to miss any reasonable chance of securing Gatchieff if my calculations happened to be wrong. So I gave the messenger a verbal answer to take back, that I had no men to spare from my boat for the work, but that if the writer and his companion could make shift to carry Hieronymus down, they should be well rewarded for their extra exertions, and they would find me waiting for them. This done, I remained with my two marines in the dinghy, and sent the picket-boat back with a report of the hitch in the proceedings and a request that she might return to me and remain at my disposal till dawn. And the upshot of it all? Just *nil.* I sat in the dinghy till the picket-boat returned, and was rather cold; I had an uncomfortable nap in the cabin of the

picket-boat, where it was at any rate warmer; and when dawn was breaking we returned to our ship and were glad of some cocoa. Only one thing of further bearing on this episode occurred, namely that Gatchieff was reported as having visited Canea next morning, and he was not limping. As for the agent, whose scheme I could not but admire, I saw him no more; but the evidence tended to show that he had been sent from Athens by either the British or the French Intelligence Service and had been bought either previously or on arrival at Canea by the enemy.

My next visitor interested in the affair was a genuine Cretan with a genuinely Cretan code of ethics. He came straight to the point: he would shoot Gatchieff for eight hundred francs. That proposal I turned down, explaining that I wanted him alive, and should not pay for him dead. The tariff for kidnapping only was at half rates, and that I accepted. But nothing came of this either.

Nothing, that is, came of it directly; but perhaps this and the previous affairs all contributed to the final event.

PART II.—THE DECEITFULNESS OF RICHES

Gatchieff was obviously well aware by now that, as the Psalmist has it, many dogs were come about him, and he appeared to be getting uneasy. The enemy consuls in Canea could not do much to reassure him, for they with less cause were equally uneasy: in fact they had for some time been lifting up their eyes unto the hills to the south of Canea, as I subsequently learnt from copies of the Austrian Consul's corre-

spondence with Athens and Vienna when I effected an entrance into his vacant premises,—(No, gentlemen of the Foreign Office, there was nothing politically irregular; there was nothing to mark the building as a consulate consigned to the custody of a neutral power,—no flag flying,—I had seen to that,—no escutcheon over the door,—I knew who possessed that trophy; so it was merely an ex-consulate),—and about this time those hills so attracted the consuls that they decided to flee even as a bird out of the snare of the fowler. In short they migrated in disguise and at dead of night to a mountain village round which they posted a chain of brigands who watched in vain for our coming. I can hardly wonder at their uneasiness, though it went to comic lengths. Had they been in our place and we in theirs, no self-denying ordinance would have handicapped them. But actually on land, whether in Canea or elsewhere, thanks to our orders, they were safe.

Fortunately they did not know this, neither did Gatchieff, and his uneasiness too, as I then read the situation, reached a point at which he resolved to seek a safer refuge. Reports had been received more than once that he was meditating a move to Tembéli monastery in the central mountains of Crete, full three days' journey from his present abode; and then one day I received information from Canea that he had drawn four thousand francs at one of the banks and had subsequently been closeted with the Chief of Police. If the two events were to be interpreted in conjunction, the Chief of Police was now a richer man and Gatchieff would receive a gendarmerie escort for his journey. The probable route therefore, and the

police-areas through which it would pass, required investigation.

The first stage of the route, which involved the now-or-never of any possible plan of seizure, presented two possibilities. Either he would take boat, cut across from the north to the south shore of Suda Bay, most probably at night, well to the eastward of our anchorage, and there strike the main road towards Retimo and Candia; or else he must make a circuit to the west by land round the head of the bay, and so pass through or near Suda village to gain that same road. The former course could be made very precarious by means of searchlights and vigilant patrolling; and I doubted whether he would risk so much merely to shorten his route. The circuitous land route was far more likely and presented the now familiar difficulty of arresting only at sea a person who would not leave the land.

As regards police-areas, I found that it was the superintendent at Suda who controlled practically the whole of the country covered by the first day's stage, and it might be presumed that he therefore would be ordered to furnish the escort. This was a point in our favour; for in a village like Suda it should be far easier to learn which gendarmes had been told off for a two days' absence on escort work than in a town of the size of Canea. And so it proved; for presently my Suda agent, by dint of much sitting in the *café* favoured by the local police, brought me the names of two who had orders to proceed to the monastery of the Holy Trinity on the morrow.

One of the two he knew personally, and could recommend as a shrewd and strenuous fellow, who

might be ready to do us a service and would carry his companion with him. Time being pressing, my agent had even approached him with a hypothetical case, asking whether he would be willing to assist a prisoner, in whom the British were interested, to escape from prison; and he had been quite open to consider such a project. I arranged therefore a time and place at which I could meet him unobserved, and he was punctual at our *rendez-vous*.

Judging by the man's bearing—and an Intelligence Officer frequently must act on a rapid judgment of the sort—I accepted my agent's estimate of him, and opened the subject at once. "I am told," I said, "that you are a good friend of the English. What about the man who is going with you on duty to-morrow? Is he on our side, too?" "Yes, so far as sympathies go, my companion would desire to serve your Excellency; but he is a poor man, the father of a large family, who scarce earns them a crust in the sweat of his brow; he cannot afford to undertake any service which might get him into trouble with his superiors. He will need fair compensation for any risk he may take. For myself I ask nothing; I have neither wife nor children, and am at your Excellency's disposal." This of course was a *façon de parler,* like that of a Jew who should have a friend on whom he might prevail to make an advance if the rate of interest would compensate for the lack of security—a recognised gambit in negotiations. "Suppose then," I said, "that in the course of escorting the man whom you two are being sent to-morrow to fetch, I should ask you to make some error as the result of which he fell into my hands, at what figure

do you think your friend would value that risk?" "He would need much money," he replied; "our orders are strict and given to us even in writing." "May I see them?" I said. He was not bluffing, he had them in his pocket, and very interesting they were. The two gendarmes were to cross by boat the next afternoon from Suda to the north shore of the bay, and then proceed to the monastery of the Holy Trinity, where they would sleep. On the following morning they were to escort a monk named Hieronymus by land, taking the mountain path, round the head of the bay and so into Suda village, where a carriage would be awaiting them, by which they were to proceed at once along the Retimo road, and to complete the first day's stage at Vamos, where a fresh escort would be provided.

"Very good," I said; "suppose that there were a delay in starting on this long day's journey, and that, to save time and reach Vamos according to orders, you were to cross the bay by boat instead of walking right round the end of it; or suppose, if you like, that the monk whom you are escorting is induced to express the intention of crossing by boat: if the boat happened to be held up by me for contravening the British harbour-regulations, and the party in it were taken aboard the Senior Officer's ship for inquiries, what sum would fairly compensate your friend for any trouble into which he might get?" His friend might get into serious trouble; he might even be dismissed the force; and he was a poor man, the father of a large family, who scarce earned them a crust in the sweat of his brow, poor devil. Two thousand francs would not be too much.

Now it may sound absurd, but I could not raise two thousand francs, or even the half of that sum. Two thousand was at this time precisely the monthly amount which our penny-wise and pound-foolish administrators allowed for the whole British Intelligence Service in Crete. An island over a hundred and fifty miles long; a coast-line, with plenty of bays and inlets open to enemy submarines, little short of five hundred miles at a guess; a population of some three hundred and fifty thousand, reputed on apostolic authority as "always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies"—the two first characteristics at any rate being likely to cause trouble to an Intelligence Officer no less than to a missionary bishop; two towns, Canea and Candia, of considerable size and of mixed inhabitants including several thousands of Mohammedans in sympathy with Turkey; and an allowance of, say, £80 a month out of which to pay agents' salaries and all the expenses of obtaining and transmitting information in a country devoid of railways, ill-supplied with telegraph or telephone lines, precarious in its postal system, and possessing a total mileage of carriage roads (outside the towns) which would barely reach three figures; so that to send a message twenty miles over mountain paths and get an answer might involve the expense of a two days' journey for a man and a mule. It would be quite equally feasible to run a complete Intelligence Service on £80 a month in Ulster or Munster, which at least possess some facilities of communication, and are no more turbulently disposed than Crete.

Add to this that no effective addition could be made to Intelligence funds out of the paymaster's

naval resources. The maximum sum which a post-captain is authorised to expend at his own discretion out of naval funds as a reward for information received or other similar service is ten pounds. He may be fit to command a ship worth two millions of money, and to be responsible for a ship's company numbering a thousand souls, but my Lords of the Treasury or Admiralty will not trust his judgment beyond a ten-pound note. Penny-wise indeed with a meagre penn'orth of wisdom!

So there was nothing to do but pooh-pooh my gendarme's demand,—albeit a dangerous spy would clearly be cheap at the price,—and to belittle the value which I set upon him. Of course I should have bargained in any case as a matter of principle, in compliance with the Greek mode of business; but the bargaining was now serious. I offered four hundred francs. He refused emphatically; his friend was a poor man, the father of a large family, who scarce earned them a crust in the sweat of his brow; he could not risk his livelihood for a paltry four hundred francs. Well, I would make it four hundred for the person of the monk with a bonus for any papers useful to me which he might be carrying; they could trust me like any other British officer to deal fairly with them. No, he would not look at it; two thousand was the figure.

Now by all the rules of the game it was his turn to drop a hundred or two by way of bridging the gap between our starting prices; and I did not like his persistence in a figure which I had not the funds to pay. But an idea struck me; perhaps it was my own mention of the papers Gatchieff might be carrying

which suggested it: what about the four thousand francs that Gatchieff had drawn at the bank before his interview with the Chief of Police? Say that that interview had cost him a thousand or even two; the balance in hand would still satisfy my gendarme, and, British funds being unavailable, why not employ those of the enemy? I determined to try this new tack.

"Look here," I said, "I am going to be quite frank with you, and make you at the same time a sporting offer. The man you are going to escort is not a Greek monk but a Bulgarian spy,"—the Greek, be it remembered, does not love the Bulgarian, so I could appeal to my man's patriotism as well as his cupidity. "Two days ago this Bulgarian drew four thousand francs out of the bank; he then saw your Chief of Police; and, as you know from your orders, measures have been taken to provide him with a safe escort. You know better than I how much he will have paid to your Chief for that; perhaps a quarter of the four thousand, certainly not more than half. He has a three days' journey to make, and the superintendents in each area will want a round sum, apart from the expenses of food, lodging, and conveyance, which also he must pay. What will you each get for a day's work escorting him? Ten francs apiece? Fifteen? Twenty? You would be well content with even ten, while your superintendents were pocketing hundreds. Now I don't want his money; I want him and any papers on him. I make over all money he is carrying to you. There is my offer then: four hundred francs for him; a bonus for any papers at my valuation; and the unknown but large sum which he will have with him."

Well, he thought that his poor friend might be led to accept that in the actual interest of his large family, and to provide bread for them with less sweat of his brow; and I assured him that I thought so too, if only he would use his persuasive powers over his poor friend. And so we passed to details. It would be well, I suggested, that they should be an hour or two late in leaving the monastery, and should take the wrong path as soon as they were out of sight—a path that would lead them down to a spot which I pointed out to him on the northern shore of the bay. They would then be full three miles out of their course, and to turn westward and tramp right round the head of the bay in the heat of a June forenoon would be a depressing prospect. At the spot indicated however a small sailing-boat would be lying, and the man in her would be open to an offer to take them across. If the Bulgarian himself should suggest it or accept the suggestion, there would be no need for violence; but, should force be necessary, they must see that he did not destroy any papers *en route*. The rest I would arrange.

As for clearing the gendarmes of any suspicion of complicity in the eyes of their superiors, I proposed that I should detain them and the boatman together with the Bulgarian as prisoners for a few days on board, as if they were implicated in some offence against us; and the gendarme agreed that he and his companion would have no objection to a few days' idleness as guests of the British Navy.

The next afternoon I saw them set forth on their outward journey in a boat from Suda village, passing quite near my ship. That gave me an idea. Our

harbour regulations defined the area of the British anchorage and forbade boats unlicensed by us to pass through it. Their boat was not so licensed. Why not write a formal letter to the Prefect of Canea, protesting against this infringement of our regulations, and intimating that it was only our unwillingness to interfere with the local police which had restrained us from detaining the boat and arresting its occupants? Apposite, and true too: nothing would have induced me to arrest those two gendarmes yet. And, just as a precaution against our protest putting the authorities on their guard in this particular affair, our letter could be sent *via* the British Consul, as if to enhance the formality, and he could be requested not to deliver it until he should receive a telephone message from us next morning.

The S.N.O. approving, I composed a courteous but firm protest, in French as more ceremonious, and dispatched it to the Consul with the necessary instructions; and all was thus in train for the next day's *coup*.

There were a good many pairs of glasses brought to bear that forenoon on the little bay from which the fateful sailing-craft was due to emerge, and more than one false alarm was given. But shortly after noon the right boat was sighted with a priest and two gendarmes as passengers in her. She was bearing down nicely towards Suda village, where the carriage would be waiting, and must pass fairly close to our anchorage: my gendarmes did not mean to be overlooked by steering too wide a course. As she came near, I ran alongside with a guard of marines in the picket-boat, and demanded the boatman's reason for

approaching us so nearly, in contravention of the harbour regulations, and, feigning dissatisfaction with his reply, expressed my regret to the occupants that I must take them all on board for further inquiries. They were transferred to the picket-boat under charge of the marines, and their boat taken in tow.

Gatchieff was admirable. I have no notion at what point in the proceedings he became certain that I knew his identity, or that the gendarmes had been in league with me. He gave his name as Hieronymus; bore himself as an ordinary Greek monk; submitted to being stripped and searched as an inconvenience only, to which any traveller in war-time might chance to be subjected; and awaited with excellently Oriental patience such interrogation as he might be asked to undergo. But he must have experienced some discomfiture of mind over the turn of events, well before I held up his boat. For in the first place he had no longer any money on him, not a *sou*; and the transference of it from his pockets into the possession of the gendarmes must have taken place ashore before they entered the boat. For the gendarmes were searched too—(they were supposed to be our prisoners and it is best to keep up appearances thoroughly so as to deceive all alike, whether friend, foe, or neutral, who are not actually in the secret, lest an indiscreet tongue drop unwittingly some hint)—and the search revealed only a few odd francs; but as they had in no way the look of disappointed men, I presumed that the speculation, or if you will peculation, which I had suggested to them had borne fruit, and that those fruits were safely garnered in some cranny of the rocks on the northern shore which they could revisit at

leisure. They reckoned of course, as indeed they told me *à propos* of the payment due from me, that they would be searched by their own authorities for any evidence of bribery as soon as I restored them to liberty, and doubtless they had preferred to adopt their own methods of safeguarding the booty derived from Gatchieff.

Gatchieff therefore, as he sat with them in the boat, must have had to make up his mind whether he had fallen into the hands of a couple of ordinary brigands who would dump him at some out-of-the-way spot whence they could escape into the mountains with their plunder, or if the plot were farther-reaching and involved the delivery of him into our hands. As he watched the course steered, he must have decided for the second alternative: for when he was searched no papers were found on him; but, when for thoroughness' sake rather than with much hope we searched the boat as well, a card and a letter were found beneath the bottom-boards. They were not of first-rate importance, though they proved his relations with the German Consul; but how he contrived to hide them there undetected by his two companions, who knew that I would pay for such papers, I cannot say. He must have possessed some sleight of hand as well as a good nerve.

Probably then he had summed up the situation correctly before ever he was brought aboard our ship; and certainly he had done so before he had been with us long; for when I remarked to him, in the course of an interrogation, *à propos* of his having no money on him, that Greek priests apparently embarked on long journeys without taking much thought for the

morrow, there was a distinct gleam of humour in his eyes as he replied that taking thought for the morrow sometimes proved a source of present embarrassment. But in fact, whether for to-morrow or for to-day, he was quick and shrewd in taking thought; the gold tooth by which we were to identify him was not there, but a perfect and natural row. He must have worn in Athens or at Salonica a gold sheath over one tooth as a purposely conspicuous and misleading identification-mark, and have discarded it, possibly in the boat when he guessed what was coming, in a last attempt to puzzle us.

As for his mission in Crete, the interrogation revealed nothing, nor did I anticipate that it would. He was a brave man, who carried his life in his hands, and would have died, if need be, with a lie on his lips and his honour clean. I regretted that he was not on our side, and was glad to hear later that he was not shot for whatever he had been caught doing at Salonica, but was merely interned. But in the course of a few months I was able to guess what his mission had been, in Athens perhaps first and then in Crete. He probably negotiated the surrender of Fort Roupel by the Greeks to the Bulgarians. The colonel who had been in command of the Greek troops in Canea during Gatchieff's sojourn in the neighbourhood was shortly afterwards transferred to the Greek army in the Salonica area and actually carried out that surrender. And when subsequently during the revolution in Crete we took temporary custody of the military headquarters in Canea, I found, among a mass of papers in the commanding officer's safe, two notes of the Bulgarian paper currency, which had probably slipped

out of some packet formerly deposited there. They certainly did not belong to Greek army funds. So I infer that Gatchieff had fulfilled his mission before I caught him; and possibly his interrupted journey to the monastery of Tembéli was only a first step towards leaving Crete quietly for some other scene of activity.

Anyhow the hunting of Gatchieff was finished, and it remained only to play out the comedy with the Prefect and the police. The telephone message to the British Consul had not been forgotten, and, at the hour that Gatchieff was being brought on board, the Prefect of Canea was reading our protest against the irregular conduct of his gendarmes. A second letter from me reached him that same evening, delivered with greater expedition. The S.N.O. had the honour to inform him that the incident against which he had entered a formal protest on the previous day had been repeated, and he had taken the measures which he had then foreshadowed. An unlicensed boat containing two gendarmes and a priest had been observed passing through the area of the British anchorage, and had by his orders been brought alongside for examination. In the course of this, papers had been found indicating that the priest, the *soi-disant* priest, was none other than a Bulgarian spy, whom we had believed to be in the neighbourhod; while the gendarmes, who said they belonged to the Suda force, professed that they had been detailed to escort him on a journey. As however they had been arrested in the company of the Bulgarian spy within the British anchorage, they lay under the grave suspicion of aiding and abetting *espionnage,* and must be detained by us until Monsieur the Prefect, as representing

a neutral and friendly government animated by sentiments which we reciprocated, should have caused inquiries to be made into so regrettable an incident and should have furnished us, as we were persuaded he would desire to do, either with a satisfactory explanation of the occurrence or with an assurance of the due severity with which he would punish the offenders. And so with a request that he would accept the expression of the S.N.O.'s most distinguished consideration the letter ended. I did not think fit to add yet that the written orders relating to the escort were now in my possession; but naturally I had taken custody of them: they would have been only an embarrassment to the gendarmes if they should wish to plead later that they had not realised the full importance of proceeding by land, and to me they were useful as documentary evidence in reserve. Meanwhile our silence on the subject would raise awkward doubts in our opponents' minds and confuse counsel.

The Prefect's first reply was a formal expression of regret at the infringement of the harbour regulations on both occasions; a perfectly accurate statement that he had not had time to issue instructions in the sense of our first letter before the second arrived; and a demand for the immediate release of the two gendarmes. Our reply was "nothing doing"—only more courteously and ceremoniously expressed. His next communication informed us that, as far as he could ascertain, the priest was a genuine monk belonging to Mount Athos (he had in fact been quartered there, in the Bulgarian monastery, before the French caught him within their lines at Salonica). He had

been stopping, said the Prefect, at the monastery of the Holy Trinity, and, being under the impression that Crete was a somewhat turbulent country, had asked for an escort to accompany him to the monastery of Tembéli. His intention had been to go all the way by land, and orders had been issued to his escort accordingly. It must be presumed that he had wished to shorten the first stage of his journey by sailing across the bay; and, if through ignorance he and his escort had passed too near to the British anchorage in so doing, the Prefect trusted that we would accept his reiterated expression of regret together with his assurance that there could have been no intention of *espionnage*. He therefore requested that the gendarmes might be allowed to return to duty without delay.

It was time now to show a more conciliatory spirit, especially as we did not want the gendarmes on board indefinitely; and I consulted them as to the terms on which I should consent to their release. Were they anxious, I asked them, to remain in Suda, and would they object to being transferred to some other station? No, they would both willingly move, —the poor man, the father of the large family, even gladly, since his wife found that the presence of the British ships made vegetables dear. Very well, then; I would inform the Prefect that, accepting his view that they had been guilty of an indiscretion only, we would not press for too severe a penalty, but in our own interests must ask from him an assurance that these two men should not continue to be employed in the neighbourhood of Suda.

So I composed my answer. The S.N.O. desired

to express his thanks to Monsieur the Prefect for the solicitude which he had evinced in inquiring into an unfortunate incident. As regards the *soi-disant* priest, he believed the Prefect was right in saying that he had previously been on Mount Athos, where however he begged to remind the Prefect there was a Bulgarian monastery as well as the more celebrated Greek institutions; and the grave suspicions against the priest were therefore by no means dissipated. With regard to the gendarmes, a copy of the orders given to them had been found upon them, and it confirmed the statement in the Prefect's letter, that they had been instructed to go by land. It was possible therefore to accept the Prefect's conclusion that they had erred through ignorance or carelessness only, and were guilty not of abetting a crime, but merely of an indiscretion. In our own interests however, no less than as an example to the gendarmerie and other inhabitants of Suda, we must insist that such an indiscretion should not go wholly unpunished, and we could consent to the Prefect's request for the release of the two men concerned only on the condition that they should be transferred at once to some police-area sufficiently distant from Suda *et qu'ils soient remplacés par des personnes douées d'une prudence moins douteuse.*

And so it came to pass that the more capable of the two gendarmes was happily transferred to a seaport where I had need of an agent, and the poor man, the father of a large family, who scarce earned them a crust in the sweat of his brow, to a village where vegetables were cheaper.

CHAPTER III

THE RED BROTHERHOOD

ANOTHER Bulgarian! Crete seemed to have an attraction for them. The French Vice-Consul at Candia as well as one of our agents there had reported the landing of an enemy agent, believed to be a Bulgarian, from a sailing-vessel at a small harbour some twenty miles east of Candia; and here was the British Intelligencè Service at Athens too making anxious inquiries whether we knew of the incident and had traced the man.

Now the hunting of Gatchieff had been all very well, and could be interlarded in the routine of daily duties such as boarding ships and the other dissipations of an Intelligence Officer which I have sketched. For Gatchieff had been considerate enough to camp out in the neighbourhood, and the agents who were watching him could come aboard or meet me ashore to report progress and receive instructions. But it was quite another matter to direct the operations of a spy-hunt sixty miles away from our base at Suda. Confidential information and orders could not be passed safely by telephone; and code telegrams were not accepted by the Greek offices for transmission inside Crete. I had indeed constructed a code which permitted the undetected transmission of certain limited information, chiefly about the sighting of sub-

marines, under the guise of a plain-language commercial message, in which the prices quoted, for example, indicated the position on a squared map, the commodities named represented submarines, mines, spies, and other such objects, and the phrasing, with a variety of qualification provided, had its equivalent interpretation in terms of their movements and doings. Thus, to take a simple case, "I can offer you—one ton of beef—delivered free—at 5 francs 75 the oke," might read when decoded, "There has been sighted—a submarine—proceeding east—in the section of the squared map where the vertical column 5 cuts the horizontal cross-column 75." But a code of this kind does not admit of indefinite extension, even if local agents possessed the intelligence to use it. And when an agent manages to code one word only out of an important message, and is capable of telegraphing, as one redoubtable lady-agent once did, "Piece of beef believed German sighted on surface at noon in Messára Bay, steering west," you realise that the mysteries of coding and decoding may baffle the agent more seriously than the result of his efforts will baffle the telegraph-clerk. Communications therefore being too hazardous for delicate negotiations, the Vice-Consuls at Candia were asked to undertake the investigation and to keep us informed of any developments.

The French Vice-Consul was the first on the track. A young Greek of his acquaintance, he told us, a native of Candia, by name Timothy Jannarákis (I give a wrong name for obvious reasons to this as to certain other persons in these stories), had made a statement to him of immense interest. While attending the

University at Athens, this young man had been in love with a woman who was now the confidential typist of Baron Schenk. (Baron Schenk, let me explain, was a completely unscrupulous Hun supplied with unlimited funds for directing the secret service of the enemy in Athens; and the lady, whose name was correctly given, enjoyed then and afterwards considerable notoriety in the political and diplomatic circles of Athens.) Though now promoted to the society of Baron Schenk, this lady, so Timothy averred, entertained tender recollections of himself, and was working secretly for his advancement. She had learnt from Schenk that a certain Bulgarian was being dispatched on a secret mission to Crete, had made the Bulgarian's acquaintance, and had advised him on his arrival in Crete to get in touch with a most capable young man, named Timothy Jannarákis, who knew Crete thoroughly and would be eager to help him. Meanwhile she had privately warned her young lover, whose devotion to the Entente she well knew, to turn his introduction to the Bulgarian, if the latter should take her advice and seek him out, to good account, as a step towards getting a confidential position worthy of his talents in the service of the Allies.

The young man had already met the Bulgarian and established friendly relations with him; and as a first proof of his goodwill towards us, for which in any case the Vice-Consul himself could vouch, had obtained a snapshot of our enemy visitor which was enclosed with the report. The photograph showed a venerable grey-bearded face; though not possessing clear enough detail to ensure recognition, it was of

definite value. A man well past fifty, apparently; but, since the report went on to add that his landing-place had been correctly given and that he had traversed on foot the twenty miles of mountain-paths to Candia in the course of the night, his age clearly had not impaired his vigour. It was hoped that there would be further news shortly as the intimacy of relations developed.

The next report was triumphant. Timothy had so insinuated himself into the Bulgarian's confidence as to be admitted a member of a band of twelve, known as the Red Brotherhood, an enemy company of vowed assassins. A vacancy had occurred through the death of one member, and Timothy had been selected to fill it. Members were being dispatched singly or in pairs to the chief countries of the Entente to assassinate leading statesmen and generals, among whom Joffre and Kitchener had been particularly mentioned. Timothy had taken the oath of admission —of which he had a copy in some code as a certificate of membership—and had been entrusted with the code itself. The names of members of the brotherhood were not divulged to each other, but known only to their chief. It appeared therefore that the Bulgarian who had approved and admitted Timothy was himself the chief, as indeed his relations with Schenk rendered probable. But this was not all. Timothy had already proved his resource and daring by abstracting from the Bulgarian's lodging one or two papers written in code. Here however perplexity began. Though they had the key, they could not work out the meaning. The writing of the coded documents was very rough and hasty. An expert was wanted.

Now we had no expert knowledge on tap, neither did we know into what language the contents of the coded documents would need to be decanted; but rumination over these problems was cut short by another report, which, true to the reputation of bad news, had travelled fast, and pressed close on the heels of its jubilant precursor. The triumph had been short-lived; disaster had befallen; deadly peril threatened.

The documents stolen by Timothy had been missed, and suspicion had fallen upon him. An attempt had been made to drug or poison him—probably to poison—but he had feigned to be overcome, and had seized a momentary chance, when the Bulgarian's vigilance was relaxed, to escape through a poultry-yard and to tickle his throat *en passant* with a stray feather. *Mais, bien sûr, ce type-là n'avait pas manqué de sang-froid!*

But this was not all. On the following evening Timothy had been stopped in the street by two men dressed as gendarmes. One had suddenly pinioned his arms from behind, while the other clapped a chloroform-soaked cloth over his mouth. As he swooned he had heard some guttural speech which was not Greek. He had recovered consciousness lying in a dark side-street, and his pocket-book containing the stolen documents was gone.

Well, the mischief was done. The documents had been in our hands for some forty-eight hours, and we had lost them again without having decoded them. It was no good to blame the Vice-Consul for neglecting to take charge of them, as he had of the code itself, and to lock them up in his safe. He must feel that negligence as much as we. Anyhow he was

trying to cope with the situation now. He was sheltering the young man at the Vice-Consulate against any further attempts on his life. It was reported indeed that the Bulgarian had left Candia for a village in the interior where he would probably be stopping at a well-known monastery; and the danger to the young man might therefore appear less instant. But the move of course might be only a blind, to put the young man off his guard and expose him to accomplices, like the two sham gendarmes, left behind for the purpose. Had those gendarmes found on him the code itself as well as the stolen papers when they chloroformed him and robbed him in the street, they would probably not have spared his life. Possibly they had meant to carry him into some house and extort from him, when he recovered consciousness, information as to the whereabouts of the code and terrorise him into fetching it. The fact that he was lying in a dark side-street, when he came to, and not at the spot where he had been attacked, suggested that they had had some such purpose, but had been interrupted in their nefarious schemes and, dropping their insensible victim, had taken to flight. Another attempt on his life therefore might well be made.

The loss was a nasty blow, and the precaution which would have safeguarded the documents was so obvious that I had never thought to suggest it. Well, we must work for another chance and make no mistake next time.

Then the astonishing thing happened. A young friend of Timothy, who was making an excursion to the very monastery where the Bulgarian was believed to be, picked up a pocket-book lying by the wayside.

He examined the contents and found some two or three hundred francs, some papers in a strange script which he could not read, and two medical prescriptions for Mr. Timothy Jannarákis. Knowing that Timothy was in some trouble and had left his lodgings, and that he was intimate with the French Vice-Consul who might know where to find him, he went to the Vice-Consulate on his return to Candia and handed the pocket-book to the Vice-Consul to give to Timothy. By a strange hazard which seemed little short of a miracle the missing documents had been retrieved, and this time were lodged in the Vice-Consul's safe.

The recovery of the papers decided the French Vice-Consul in Canea to report the whole affair to his Legation in Athens. He had delayed doing so hitherto partly, I think, out of consideration for his subordinate at Candia whose negligence had contributed to the loss of them. He now represented to me that expert assistance in reading them was clearly wanted, and that the French Legation might be able to send some one over. I pressed him to hold over his report until I had been to Candia. I could not understand why, given the actual code and a document like the certificate of membership written in that code, with Timothy to inform us too of the sense of that document—for he must have taken the oath in plain language—given all this, I could not see why even an amateur with patience could not decode the rest. Perhaps too I wanted to take a part in the last act or two of this amazing melodrama, which should end to my thinking not with the reading of these papers but with the capture of the Bulgarian or—if the documents

proved good stuff—who could say with what other *dénouement?*

I prevailed on the Vice-Consul for this brief delay, and on the S.N.O. for a destroyer to take me at once to Candia. It was evening when we arrived, a Sunday evening of summer-time, and the good folks of Candia had emerged from their siestas and were sitting outside the more shaded *cafés* or strolling round the quays and gathering in knots to watch the destroyer come to anchor outside the old Venetian harbour, and her boat put in to the steps. I made my way to the French Vice-Consulate. The door in the wall of the front garden was locked and was opened cautiously to my knocking. My uniform gained me admittance to the garden, and I found the house apparently in a state of siege. Windows were shuttered, doors bolted, and two or three armed men lurked behind bushes on guard round the house. Mystery and menace were in the air. The man-servant who led me in spoke in hushed tones. The Vice-Consul received me in a darkened room.

Then came the explanation. The life of the Vice-Consul too had been threatened. Hints had reached him before, and he had been followed in the streets. Now Timothy had learnt definitely of a plot against him. Timothy indeed had refused to remain in the house if his presence there was imperilling his good friend, the Vice-Consul, and had slipped away some hours ago. But the precious documents were still there, and therefore the risk might really be no less. Hence the barred windows, the armed guards, and a couple of loaded rifles in the room where we sat.

I reminded him that for the time being at least we were reasonably safe. The destroyer was lying at anchor within some half-mile of us, and the flagstaff of the Vice-Consulate was visible from her. I knew nothing about naval signals, but with a sheet off his bed and a bottle of ink I would engage to turn out a plain-letter S.O.S. signal which hoisted on his flagstaff would be the cynosure of every eye. Meantime I should like to have the mysterious papers and the code.

The code proved to be nothing but an alphabet of invented symbols, and the process of decoding therefore would be mere transliteration. The writing was certainly rough and hasty; but I reckoned that with time and patience I could unravel it. I worked out a word or two of what appeared to be an address, and then, to familiarise my eye with the symbols, made a start on the better-written oath of membership. But Timothy, I thought, could expedite matters there, and in any case I wanted to see him. An old woman-servant, it appeared, could be trusted to fetch him and bring him along in the dusk which was now falling.

Enter Timothy, a good-looking young fellow of a dark melancholic type but with singularly lustrous and brilliant dark eyes, and *à toilette soignée* to a surprising degree in the midst of all these dangers and anxieties. He told me the whole story dramatically as a Greek does, but with one or two outbursts of emotion almost exaggerated even in a Greek; on the stage he could have held an audience, though the soliloquy would have required nearly an act to itself. He answered questions readily as to his sources of

information on various details; but the informants, I noticed, were chiefly lady-friends, starting with the typist at Athens who had launched him on this adventure, and ending with a servant-girl who had overheard some talk about an attempt on the French Vice-Consul. An amorous young man then, as indeed his elegant toilet might argue.

"But why," I asked, "did you embark on this enterprise at all?" That question provoked the most violent of his outbursts. "Why? Why? Because I am destined for a great career; because my soul cries out in the night-watches for the hour when she shall cast her slough and prove her metal and take wing like a giant refreshed with wine. Now at last the trumpet-call has shattered her bonds and unsealed the flood-tide of opportunity whereon I may build a pinnacle of achievement whose fruit shall be blazoned with my name in letters of gold. Have I not proved my courage, my resource, my genius? Have I not braved the poisoner and the assassin and delivered into your hand the Red Brotherhood, who with fire and steel and nameless horrors are pledged to lay low the great captains of your armies? Body, soul, and spirit, I devote to the glorious cause of England and of France. Give me but a place of trust in your counsels, and I will be a destroying angel, a scorpion, a whirlwind, a panther—(in fact a quick-change artist in many guises)—to plumb the Red Brotherhood's devilish devices, to engulf their treacherous feet in a morass, and to embed the fangs of righteous vengeance in their damned throats."

Tut, tut! the young man was ambitious, it seemed, as well as amorous, and not hampered in his

ambition by false modesty. I wondered what salary a destroying angel would want; I had not employed one before; so I tentatively approached the topic of the expenses he had already incurred. No, he was indifferent to money,—wanted neither reimbursement of what he had spent nor future remuneration. He had some small income which he would devote along with body, soul, and spirit aforesaid to the cause in which his genius would shine forth and be acclaimed. The indifference to money, I felt sure, was genuine. Now genuine indifference to money argues in a Greek an abnormal mentality.

Amorous then, ambitious to the verge of megalomania, prone to emotional and histrionic outbursts: so I summed him up. But were these traits the symptoms of suppressed genius or of that mental malady to which genius is akin?

I turned to the contents of the pocket-book, and asked him to help me in the decoding. We continued with the oath, or certificate of membership, on which I had already made a start.

It was a strange document. At the top was depicted a snake, forming a scroll, with cabalistic signs for scales and marking; and beneath this was a heart with a red dagger pointed as if to pierce it. Crude work undoubtedly, but after all a small and select society of assassins may happen not to number an artist among its members. Then came the oath, which slowly we transliterated into Greek: "I swear by earth and sea, by heaven and hell, by the venomous serpent, and by the glowing poignard held to my heart, that I will in all things obey the Chief of the Red Brotherhood; that wheresoever he biddeth me

go, I will go; that whomsoever he biddeth me slay, I will slay——" Well, that was about as far as we got; the destroyer was waiting, and I could not stay all night; but I had little doubt that I could finish it at my leisure and could work out the worse-written papers as well. One thing struck me as noteworthy and, if the chief of the gang were really a Bulgarian, extremely significant, namely, that not only the copy of the oath taken by Timothy, but also the private papers stolen by him from the Bulgarian, were in Greek, and written in a code based upon the substitution of conventional symbols for the letters of the Greek alphabet. On the other hand, the code itself appeared to me almost too childish an invention to be the secret instrument of communication between members of a serious society.

My conclusion was that either we were up against a desperate gang of ruffians of little education but of fanatical purpose, the members being drawn mainly from the mixed Balkan population of Macedonia or Thrace and using Greek as their *lingua franca;* or else Timothy was suffering from advanced hysteria of the megalomaniac order. I wished I had a doctor with me to give a professional opinion on the looks and manner of Timothy. I had some notion that a victim of hysteria would go to considerable lengths in inventing wild stories of adventure, persecution, and sensational situations in general; but this story would have needed not only hysterical imagination but long and patient contrivance of the corroborating circumstances. The inquiries we had received from Athens for example about the Bulgarian's original landing, and the retrieving of the lost pocket-book

by a friend who had delivered it into the Vice-Consul's own hands,—how account for these?

Well, there was just one chance of deciding between these alternatives. The pocket-book had contained two medical prescriptions. I would take them back with me along with the other papers and the code, and ask our doctor on board to examine them without giving him any hint of the problem. If he should pronounce the prescribed remedies to be adapted to any nervous or mental disorders, the scale would be turned.

Accordingly I pointed out to Timothy that, as he would readily appreciate in a case of such importance, I must take with me for careful study every *pièce de conviction* connected with the affair, pocket-book, prescriptions, and all. Who could say but that a microscopic examination of them might reveal a thumb-mark or two by which some of the conspirators would be identified and brought to justice? He was all enthusiasm over this great thought, and, as the destroyer had already been kept waiting a long time, I made my *adieux* to him and the Vice-Consul, and left Timothy at any rate happy. The Vice-Consul remained anxious, and would have liked to lend me one or two of his armed guard to escort me and the precious papers I was carrying down to the harbour. But somehow I felt more like a spectator of a well-staged melodrama than an actor in a tragedy of real life. So I walked down alone,—untracked and unmolested.

It was well on in the middle watch before I was back at Suda, and I slept upon my meditations. Next morning I asked the doctor to examine the prescrip-

tions—they were in French, written by a physician in Athens some months previously; the doctor knew the symbols and I made out the words; and then I settled down to decoding the remaining papers. But I had not got far when the doctor looked in. Little doubt, he said, could exist about either prescription alone, and none about the two in conjunction. The patient had been suffering from extreme hysteria or actual paranoia, which I understand to be a mental state slightly beyond the rather indefinable borders of sanity. I gave him then my impressions of the patient,—amorous, ambitious to the point of megalomania, prone to emotional and histrionic outbursts. I as a layman had diagnosed advanced hysteria; would these symptoms justify the diagnosis? Yes, he said; and when I outlined the whole story, he saw nothing incompatible with hysterical extravagances in that patient contrivance of premeditated deceptions which had puzzled me.

So the Red Brotherhood then was only a phantom of Timothy's imagination; and here my story should end. But in fact it does not. I might know, and might half convince the French Vice-Consul at Canea (though not his colleague at Candia), that the author and sole actor of this exciting drama was Timothy; but Timothy himself continued to play his part with unabated zest.

Only a week or two had elapsed when I received a letter in a feminine handwriting from Candia. It was at once a glowing eulogy of Timothy's abilities, enterprise, and courage, and a solemn warning as to the peril in which his life stood. A third attempt had been made upon him, this time by the assassin's

dagger, and he had escaped as by a miracle with a mere scratch. A gang of murderers were bent on his destruction in order to seal his lips for ever. Timothy had spoken to her, the writer, of Lord Kitchener's death (this had just occurred) some weeks beforehand, and had known by what means this gang would compass it. And so, with an apology for the indifferent French of her missive, she commended Timothy to my care. At a later date I made some inquiries about this young lady, and, Timothy by that time having transferred his affections elsewhere, she confessed that she had written the letter at Timothy's own dictation.

Finally re-enter Timothy, aboard the S.N.O.'s ship at Suda. Having heard nothing from me, he had come to see me. After three attempts on his life, he was no longer prepared to face the dangers of Candia unless the post of peril were also the post of duty and high service. He had therefore slipped on board a coasting-steamer bound for Canea, meaning to come and settle his future with me. But even so he had been followed. On the steamer he had not been sure about it, but the night which he had passed at the *Hôtel de France* in Canea had convinced him that it was so. The hotel was full, but he had been lucky in securing the last available room to himself. (I may explain that in Greek hotels, other than the more up-to-date hotels of Athens and a few fashionable watering-places, it is quite customary to take a bed only and not the whole bedroom, which may be shared by any other traveller.) About midnight a stranger had roused the night porter, and had asked for a bed. The porter had replied that the hotel

was full. Was there not, persisted the stranger, any room taken by one man only who would perhaps allow him at least to have a blanket on the floor if there was no second bed there? And some gratuity, it was to be supposed, changed hands. Anyhow the porter had brought the stranger up to Timothy's room, and had ventured to knock and waken him. He had opened the door cautiously, and had recognised in the stranger the very person about whom he had felt uneasy on the steamer. One glance had sufficed, and he had re-locked the door, and returned a curt refusal to the stranger's request.

Now Timothy was beginning to bore me and as long as he was in Crete would continue to do so. I therefore took his new story seriously and told him that his dangers in Crete appeared disproportionate to any services which he, a marked man, could now render, and suggested that he would have a larger as well as a more secure field for his activities in Athens. If he would proceed there by the steamer which had brought him from Candia to Canea and was sailing again for Piræus that night, this would fit in with a scheme which occurred to me for laying hands on the mysterious stranger who was tracking him. Timothy must take two first-class tickets for Piræus, slip aboard the steamer in good time, and lock himself into his cabin where he would have a right to the two berths. He should watch through his porthole if possible for the coming of the stranger, but should on no account leave his cabin till the steamer called at Suda early in the morning for examination before proceeding to Piræus. I should come on board as boarding-officer with the usual guard of marines.

He would only have to point out the stranger, and an arrest could be made.

Everything worked out according to programme, save only that there was no stranger for him to point out to me next morning. I had half expected that I was committed to arresting some perfectly harmless individual on whom Timothy would have fixed to fill the *rôle*. But either he had been sea-sick all night and was not equal to that effort, or else he feared that the person arrested would not correspond sufficiently with the stranger whom the night-porter at the Canea hotel could describe to me. For the story of that stranger was not a mere figment of Timothy's brain; when I next lunched at the hotel in question, I learned on inquiry that the incident had happened exactly as Timothy said. Someone then had been persuaded or hired by him to play the part, in order that complete corroboration of his story might be forthcoming. The young man had a method in his madness.

He was a little upset at the failure of half my scheme, as he put it. If the capture of the stranger had coincided with his own departure for Athens, he would have gone happily; but, since the stranger had evidently lost track of him and not taken passage with him, he was more than half inclined to land at Suda forthwith and see the matter through. But there I was adamant. He should be exposed to no further perils in Crete. His career lay before him in Athens.

Was not that the end? Not quite. I saw him no more; but at a satisfactory distance I heard of his career. Several months later the British Intelligence Service at Athens sent me an urgent signal: "Information received from trustworthy source concerning

Bulgarian agent formerly at Candia. Apparently escaped to Salonica district where he recently died. Important documents believed to have been left with member of same gang in Candia"—or words to that effect. I replied, "Bulgarian agent and documents are hallucinations of your presumed informant, Timothy Jannarákis, who is not reckoned trustworthy here. See my Intelligence Circular No. so-and-so," in which I had summarised the results of my previous investigation. The S.N.O. might not have approved my signal if I had added, "Your leg is being pulled, and your own records should show it"; but they took my meaning and dropped Timothy like a hot brick.

But the hot brick fell on its paws and was soon in the swim again, eager as ever to win its spurs, as Timothy himself in his more exuberant moods might have said; and when I last heard of him he had found his true career, in the grand work of directing and forming public opinion, as assistant-editor of an Athenian newspaper which was neither shy of sensationalism and hyperbole nor prudish in its devotion to truth.

He may yet be a Deputy and a Minister.

CHAPTER IV

FRITZ & CO.

PART I.—THE RAID

FRITZ & CO. was a company floated with the object of securing a monopoly of the seas and thereafter the development of the choicest colonies beyond them. It could command almost unlimited capital, though it must be confessed that larger and more numerous items thereof than the shareholders knew were continually being sunk for good and all in sundry marine ventures, and had to be written off as irrecoverable. It enjoyed moreover the backing of most august personages: for the All-Highest, the Prince of this world, not content with bespeaking for the company the good offices of the Most High, his celestial *confrère,* had deigned to bestow on it his own gracious favour and exalted patronage. There was only one competing concern which was in any way a serious obstacle. This had certainly done well in the past; but it was thought, with some reason perhaps, to be now in the hands of an old-fashioned, drowsy, and dilatory board of directors, while its working *personnel* was reputed, though with less reason, to be idle and effete. A really up-to-date company like Fritz & Co., scientific in its organisation and equipment, scientific too in the education of a *personnel* capable of realising the modern principle that a business hampered by

mediæval conceptions of honour or the scruples of a Christian conscience cannot be a commercial success (though of course the foreign edition of the company's prospectus emphasised its humanitarian far more than its commercial aims)—such an up-to-date company ought to make short work of any antiquated competitor.

But, notwithstanding the importance and vast prospects of the company, its working managers, its travellers, and its foreign representatives were singularly modest men indisposed to any personal *réclame*. "Fritz" itself was a generic name to which every commander of a German submarine was expected to answer, just as a French sportsman's dog should answer to the name of "Fox," or an English policeman to that of "Robert"; and the little word "Co." covered a multitude of agents all equally anxious to conceal their identity. In fact a strong preference had been felt in all quarters for forming the company on the lines of a *société anonyme* or Limited Liability Company. Anonymity would be the surest safeguard against any unpleasant personal liability on the part of individual members and agents, if ever the company should suffer compulsory liquidation and its methods and accounts be scrutinised by possibly hostile auditors.

It was the Athens branch of this company with which I first came in contact. A certain person had approached the French Secret Service in Athens—(there is no need for reticence in this matter, for the whole correspondence which formed the kernel of the affair was subsequently published in the Athens newspapers and copied, I believe, into the French and English, and formed moreover the subject of some

questions in the House of Commons)—and had made an offer to bring them the press-copy-book from the private office of the leading Greek representative of Fritz & Co. The book was brought more than once as opportunity offered, its pages were photographed, and it was privily restored to its place, with the result that the so-called "Callimassiotis correspondence" was in French hands and no suspicion of the deal had been aroused. The French communicated their discovery to the British Intelligence Service, more, I think, through irrepressible elation over their *coup* than in the desire for sensible and systematic co-operation in following up the clues which the correspondence gave. Certainly in the result there was no co-operation, but rather a rivalry in independent exploitation of the secret, which led to mutual confusion.

Callimassiotis was a well-known Greek deputy, and it appeared from the correspondence that, in concert with Baron Schenk, he was directing an organisation for the supply of petrol, and of other commodities including useful information concerning the movements of British and Allied shipping, to German submarines. There were a large number of letters in all, some in French, others in Greek, all in the same handwriting and mostly signed with a somewhat illegible and curtailed "Callimassiotis" so far as could be made out. They were addressed to a variety of persons in many places, but those which interested me most directly were some half-dozen or more addressed to a certain Velisarios in Canea, and to other names in Retimo and elsewhere, and all dealing with what appeared to be the revictualling of submarines with petrol and such-like in Cretan waters. There

were references to certain agents denoted by a common Christian name or by initials only; to the number of cases of an unspecified commodity shipped by a particular coasting-vessel; to hitches and delays which had occurred and must not recur. They were most intriguing letters.

Copies of them had reached the British, the French, and also indirectly the Italian Consul, just before our arrival at Suda Bay; and I learnt later that the Consuls had all been working independently, supplemented by a number of independent agents from Athens, in the usual game of cross-purposes and queering each other's pitch. At first I knew only of the British Consul's activities and was working with him.

I went on more than one wild-goose chase. There was a certain Ianni for example who figured in the correspondence as an agent travelling between Piræus and Crete. Now Iannis, that is Johns, are as the sand upon the seashore, innumerable; but a Canea informant having watched the movements of a certain Ianni, who was not a native of the place and was sailing for Piræus next day, enveloped him in such a cloud of suspicion that it was decided to board his ship at sea,—this was before all steamships had to call at Suda for examination,—and to seize him and his baggage. The informant was to take passage by the same ship, and quietly point him out to me when I boarded her; but as the informant himself was wanted back in Canea at once, it was necessary that I should arrest him too on some pretext. I had no time to see him privately that evening, and knew him by sight for the first time when he was instructed to walk past me where I sat with the Consul at a *café*. The Consul

however told him to interpose insultingly and with a show of violence next day, when I arrested Ianni, and to give me thus an excuse for arresting him as well.

Next morning I left Suda in a sloop at a suitable hour, and we overhauled the steamer a few miles out from Canea and ordered her to heave to. I boarded her to conduct a formal search. The informant had taken his place near Ianni and easily showed me by a glance which was the man I wanted. I continued the ordinary procedure,—examination of ship's papers, manifests of cargo, and passengers' passports,—and my informant became nervous. He apparently thought that, because I did not arrest Ianni at once, I must have failed to see his signal. He began coughing, winking, and furtively pointing, and I was dreading even a stage-whisper before long. However Ianni's turn came to show his passport, and I pronounced it not in order, asked a number of questions, professed dissatisfaction with his answers, and put him under arrest. And now when I wanted the informant to pick up his cue and act a dramatic part, he stood mum. I had already accepted his passport as correct, so could not arrest him too on the same pretext. Meantime I went on with the final formalities, signing the log, and entering there the fact of Ianni's removal. Still no move on the informant's part. Well, I could not help it; I had promised the Consul to bring him back, but it looked as if he must complete his trip to Piræus. I was ready to leave with my one prisoner under his escort of marines. The informant was standing apart from the rest of the passengers at the head of the companion-way from the upper to the

main deck. As I led the way down, I just whispered "Follow." He could obey an order at any rate and followed me close, in front of the marines. As I turned into a narrow covered gangway, I swung round as if to see that the marines and their prisoner were following, and abused the informant loudly for stumbling against me, as indeed he had, and interfering with an officer in the execution of his duty. What the devil did he mean by butting in between me and the escort? Was he in league with the prisoner and trying to relieve him of some incriminating papers before he was taken to the sloop and searched? The ass stood and gaped; and meanwhile the other passengers from the upper deck, hearing the noise of an altercation, flocked round us. I put the man under arrest and told the marines to get him down into the boat at once, while I returned to the upper deck followed by the passengers. I sent for the captain again, said I must enter another arrest in the log, and explained the incident loudly enough for the passengers to hear. Did any of them know the man, I asked, and whether by any chance he was mad? That is a pleasantry which always takes with a Greek mob. They flocked to the side to have a look at him. He was grinning broadly, and the grin seemed to justify my surmise.

Aboard the sloop, I asked him why he had played the fool and not the game. He was apologetic and contrite; but he had not been able to bring himself to insult a British officer; he was too bashful. I made a note not to employ bashful agents, though indeed it is not a common Greek failing. The only thing not bashful about him had been his denunciation of Ianni; and Ianni was entirely innocent,—a courier by pro-

fession and a staunch friend of England by sympathy, who subsequently without remuneration gave me several items of interesting information concerning the officers and the passengers of ships in which he travelled.

Such were the side-shows arising out of vague hints in the Callimassiotis correspondence; but after two or three months the British Consul received solid information which promised surer developments. Velisarios of Canea had been discovered. It was, as we had presumed, a *nom de guerre*. A young agent named Sakir Tsourounakis, a Mohammedan and valuable on that account since the bulk of the Mohammedans were naturally in sympathy with Turkey, had shown great industry and initiative in trying to track out Velisarios and had now identified him. He was one of the brothers Zeki and Ali Sourourzadé, Mohammedans like our informant, in business as general merchants with offices on the quay at Canea. The proof of identity lay in the fact that two letters, one registered and the other express, addressed to Velisarios Sourouris and bearing the Athens postmark, had recently reached the Canea post-office. Some delay had occurred in the delivery of them, because no such real name was known in the place and no such *alias,* in the way of trading-name or *nom de plume,* was registered in the post-office books. Sakir however, the young agent, had learned from a friend formerly a clerk in the post-office, that letters similarly addressed had arrived more than once and had been called for by one of the brothers Sourourzadé. Sourouris, I may add, was a quite possible abbreviation of the name Sourourzadé, the termination -zadé,

like -oglou and -akis, being in Cretan usage more or less detachable.

The chance of acquiring these two letters had been too good to be missed; Sakir had forged for himself an authority from Velisarios Sourouris, dated as from a distant village, to receive the letters on Velisarios' behalf; and thus they passed into our hands.

One of these was a mere note hastily written with reference to some piece of business which might have been wholly innocent and legitimate; the other was a typewritten letter, addressed to Ali inside and not, as on the envelope, to Velisarios, and referring to the shipment of a number of cases of an unspecified commodity, and the need of making adequate arrangements for receiving the same. It appeared in short to belong to the series of letters known to us as the Callimassiotis correspondence. The signature to both our letters was illegible and might represent that name as well as any other.

It was quite obvious that action must be taken and that immediately. Should the brothers Sourourzadé call for their letters and find that someone else had forestalled them, they would inevitably destroy any other evidence in their office and possibly abscond as well. On the other hand our orders were to arrest no one ashore, and a raid upon the premises of two prominent merchants in the chief town would be a particularly open breach of orders. Accordingly I suggested to the S.N.O. that I should go over to Athens, taking with me the two letters, and impress upon our Legation the importance of waiving for the nonce the political veto on raids.

I had certain other business too with the British

Minister. Greek refugees from Thrace and Asia Minor had recently been exported in quantity from Piræus and dumped at Suda, to await there the arrival of French transports by which they would proceed to Marseilles to be utilised in the work of harvest and vintage in Southern France. There were fifteen hundred of them there when I left,—men, women, and children,—and they were destitute of lodging and short of both food and clothing. Camping out as they were in completely insanitary conditions, they were quite likely to start some serious epidemic at our naval base; and, inasmuch as they could have no proper papers of identity, any number of enemy agents too might be among them. I wanted our Minister to urge upon the French Legation, as I did personally on the French Naval Attaché, the necessity of providing a transport for the removal of the refugees already assembled at Suda, and the grave objections which would be taken by us, amounting perhaps to a veto on disembarkation, if any more batches were sent. I obtained satisfactory assurances on both points.

Next I opened fire on a subject which I have mentioned previously, the use of the Eastern Telegraph Company's cables by the German and Austrian Consuls in Canea and elsewhere, or by any other enemy agents. I strongly resented this employment of British wires by Fritz & Co. and I roundly accused the Foreign Office of a negligence little short of treasonable in permitting the continuance of this practice to the peril of our shipping. As I have said, I believe that my criticisms were reported, perhaps in less trenchant terms, to the Home Government, and

had some effect upon the terms of a note delivered to Greece a month later; but for the moment the Minister could promise nothing.

Perhaps however he saw that I knew something about the situation in Crete and could judge of our needs. For when I laid before him the evidence against the brothers Sourourzadé, over which the Intelligence Officer attached to the Legation was quite exultant, I found him more ready to meet me than I had anticipated. I was advocating no half-measures. I told him of many leading persons of Canea and the other towns, who were undoubtedly in German pay; that the officials in every branch of administration were appointed for their Germanophile sentiments; and that I had seen a confidential circular of the Greek Ministry of the Interior ordering the gendarmerie to obstruct us in any covert way. Neither conciliation nor bribery could alter the situation now. Fear was our only weapon, and frankly I wanted not only a raid upon the premises of the Sourourzadé but a raid so sensational as to disturb the equanimity of Canea for some time to come.

My case was undoubtedly strong, and the Minister accepted my project without reserve, except that it was understood between us that any forecast I might have made of action which the Senior Naval Officer at Suda might be contemplating was in the nature of a private expression of opinion rather than an official or even semi-official communication. That was all right. It meant that the Minister would back us, but was free to express official surprise, concern, or other suitable emotion, when the time came. I might be doing the same for that matter.

I returned to Suda, and was clearing up some arrears of work which had accumulated during my absence, in order to be free to concentrate on the projected raid, when I was called on deck. There was one of the refugees of whom I had spoken at Athens, swaying on his feet even though he held to a stanchion, and scarcely able to articulate. He was far gone in starvation; and when he had had something to revive him, he told me that he, his wife, and his children had been three days without a morsel of food, and that numbers of the other refugees were in the same plight. To add to their misery, there had been a heavy thunderstorm on one of the nights that I was away in Athens, and lying out in the open with no shelter they had all been drenched, and many were now down with fever.

I went ashore at once to investigate, and found the situation far worse than I had looked for. The open spaces in and about Suda village were littered with the *débris* of destitute humanity. Squalid and ragged objects lay in the dust, amid the heat of an August sun and a stench indescribable, too exhausted to beat off the flies which clustered even in the corners of their eyes. Some few families with more enterprise had built a laager of the boxes and bundles of household goods they carried with them, and had stretched a ragged awning of worn and dirty blankets overhead. Others, the thickest crowd of all, had sought the shelter of a belt of trees, resigned to endure the mosquitoes of the night, if only they might escape the glare of the day. And all the time an unceasing conflux of tired feet sought the one village-pump, and carried back tepid water in old tins to thirsting children.

The numbers of the refugees had obviously been multiplied while I was away, and I made inquiries. I had been absent about a week, and during that time three or four crowded boats had come in. The examination of passengers had of necessity been somewhat formal and cursory in my absence, and it had not been realised that the mass of them were not ordinary travellers, but homeless and penniless refugees,—more labour recruited for South France. At the very time when I was receiving French assurances in Athens that no more of these emigrants should be sent *via* Suda, shiploads of them were being sent daily from Piræus. Our numbers had now risen from about fifteen hundred to five thousand; and the feeding of this five thousand would want little short of another miracle, towards which no one had yet contributed either a loaf or a fish. The French Vice-Consul had not even been apprised of their coming, and was now awaiting either instructions to keep them alive or a transport to remove their corpses. The Prefect of Canea and other Greek officials were entirely indifferent to the starvation of their compatriots who had engaged for French service, and hoped no doubt to localise any outbreak of typhus or other epidemic within the vicinity of the British naval base. For the moment I loved the French little better than the Greeks.

It would be a race against time to save these people, and we buckled to. It was reckoned that the present number of completely destitute families, who had already bartered for bread their last earthly belongings except the inadequate rags they wore, numbered about four hundred,—say two thousand mouths in all. For that number we must provide bread or ship's biscuit

at once, together with milk for the children and for some of the mothers, and quinine or other medicines for the sick. The doctor and I were busy late into the night, accompanied by a party of marines laden with sacks of condensed milk and medical stores, searching out the worst cases and having a few of them removed to the back room of a *café* which served as an improvised ward. Other officers were busy superintending the distribution of bread and biscuit elsewhere.

These were the temporary expedients. Meanwhile all the bakers' shops of Suda were commandeered for all-night work. Flour was issued to them, and arrangements made for checking the weight of bread they would return to us in the morning. My chief agent's shop in the village was placed by him at our disposal as the centre for distribution, and lists were prepared, with tickets to correspond, on which the name and numbers of each family drawing a bread-ration, or entitled to a milk-allowance as well, could be entered by a small staff as the *queue* passed along. Parties of bluejackets also were told off to dig latrines at suitable points, and then to police the area and ensure the use of them.

One more thing only was wanted,—shelter for the women and children; and the big barracks in the arsenal-enclosure were standing empty. The enclosure itself had been grudgingly lent to us by the Greek military authorities in Canea for the purposes of recreation ashore; but it was agreed that we should not occupy any of the buildings. We now sent them a note explaining the situation, and asking for the loan of the barracks to house the women and children.

They refused. I had underrated even their inhumanity, for I had not expected obstruction carried to such lengths. However, sharp measures were taken. They were given by telephone an ultimatum expiring in two hours. If by that time we had not received their consent, a landing-party would take forcible possession. They knew that they could hardly rush their own troops down from Canea in so short a period, and perhaps they remembered that on a previous occasion, when they had objected to a sick British officer being nursed ashore and had notified their gallant intention of ejecting him from his bed by force of arms, they had been warned that the ship's guns covered all the approaches to Suda. Anyhow their formal consent was given with ten minutes in hand. So that night, the second after the state of things was discovered, we had the women and children lodged under shelter.

The situation was saved, and we had no deaths, nor any epidemic. The insanitary state of the whole camping-ground was, I imagine, neutralised by the sheer dry heat of those days. The number of families to be fed naturally increased day by day as other refugees exhausted their small supplies, and the inroads upon the ship's stores were heavy; but the organisation once set up was easily extended. Before the transports finally arrived to remove our visitors, we were feeding nearly four thousand.

In general the refugees behaved in the most orderly way, and submitted themselves to the authority of any one in uniform without question. There was only one threatened disturbance. About the fourth or fifth afternoon of our *régime* I was passing through the village when I saw an excited crowd outside my

agent's shop. Alexander Giangi,—that was his name, —no Greek himself, but of mixed French and Arab blood, I believe,—had been devoting himself night and day to the refugees, and on this particular afternoon had not yet had his *déjeuner,* but had carried on since early morning distributing bread so that others who were hungry might eat first; and now with the aid of one or two women in the shop he was trying to bar the entry of an excited mob who were accusing him of holding back their bread and selling it for his own profit. I pushed my way to the steps in front of the shop-door, and the sight of my uniform made them pause for a moment. They were mostly the young or unmarried men, who, having no dependents, had husbanded their resources for their own use, and were not yet rationed by us nor starving either; there was plenty of life in them if they could go looting. I knew the symptoms of starvation by now.

Then from the steps of the shop I delivered my first public speech in Greek. I confess that I was very angry, and I intended them to know it. I told them that some hundreds or thousands of them owed their lives to the British and to the British only. The French had hired them, had promised to convey them to Marseilles, and had dumped them to die at Suda pending further arrangements. Their own beloved compatriots at Canea had not moved one finger to save them from starvation, and had even refused the use of the barracks for the women and children, until we, the British, threatened to occupy them by force. As for Alexander whom they were accusing of stealing their bread, he was the one man not British who had worked for them, and he had

slaved even while they slept that they might not go hungry; even at this hour he was still fasting himself. One thing I could tell them: Alexander was not a Greek and did not steal. Now they could go, and if there were any further trouble of this sort, not one man more should be added to the list of the rationed; they could die, for all I cared, like the dogs they were.

Distinctly indiscreet, but obviously sincere. At any rate the speech had its desired effect, and the mob dispersed. It was an interesting and encouraging experience, as I was expecting to deal with another angry crowd in a day or two.

The inevitable postponement of the raid upon the brothers Sourourzadé had been bothering me not a little. While we were feeding the hungry, those worthy merchants might be thirsty for news and calling for expected letters. And then an event occurred which precipitated matters. The young agent, Sakir, had been busy again and had shown, I thought, almost too much initiative. He had employed one of the most adept thieves in Canea to effect an entrance into the Sourourzadé's office and bring away a whole bundle of papers. These papers had been brought by the thief himself direct to the British Consul, who, on examining them, had found one more letter of the compromising series, pinned to a note of some financial dealings in Athens. The letter was typewritten on paper bearing the business-heading of some ironmongery-concern in Piræus. Like one of the previous two, it referred to the shipment of certain cases of goods, but went on to thank the unnamed person to whom it was written for calling attention to the prospective sailing of a French transport from

Suda. This, it continued, had not been overlooked, but it was not desired to provoke at present any complications with the Greek Government. So the brothers Sourourzadé, it appeared, had suggested the torpedoing of a transport which was to be sent by the French to remove our Greek refugees from Suda. Well, with the chances of the burglary being discovered added to the previous risks, it was time to press on.

The next day, being market-day in Canea, seemed suitable if we wanted a sensation, and arrangements were made accordingly. My plan was that in the morning a trawler with a small motor-launch in tow should proceed round to Canea, timing herself to arrive off the entrance of the harbour about eleven in the forenoon. An officer with a couple of men, other than those forming the motor-launch's crew, should come up the harbour and land on the quay right opposite the Sourourzadé's office,—the two men carrying baskets as if they were coming for provisions from the market. Meanwhile I with four selected petty officers should have reached Canea by land,—the petty officers making their way there independently of me, and being dressed as trawler-hands out for a day's leave. They would seat themselves in pairs outside two *cafés* on either side of the premises to be raided. My own post of observation would be the window of an hotel overlooking the harbour. When the motor-launch was just arriving at the quay, I should come out of the hotel and go straight to the office, and the two men from the launch and the two pairs of petty officers at the *cafés* on either side would close in behind me. One of the two prisoners was a large and fat man weighing some fifteen stone at a guess,

and it would take four men probably to carry him across the quay and deposit him in the launch; the other was of slighter build and somewhat feeble, so that the remaining two could tackle him.

That evening, the day before the raid, I saw a certain officer of police in Canea who could be trusted. I told him what grave evidence we had against the brothers Sourourzadé and the action we proposed taking, and suggested that the disposition of the police on the following day should be such that at eleven in the forenoon none of them should be on duty on the quay, but that for an hour thereafter men whom he could trust in case of trouble should be on the route (particularly at certain corners of it) by which I and my party would be leaving the town. He agreed, subject to being satisfied that the evidence was really conclusive, and I promised to bring with me copies of the incriminating letters next morning and to show them to him at the hotel at ten o'clock, when he could also acquaint me with the dispositions he had made.

The police officer was waiting for me next morning in the *salon* on the first floor of the hotel, from which I purposed also to watch for the motor-launch. I was a little late. On landing at Suda that morning I had been waylaid by a deputation of the refugees. They wished to express to me their heartfelt thanks for all that the British had done and were doing for them, and they begged my acceptance of a bouquet. It was a fine large bouquet of assorted flowers closely packed, and seeing that we were now in August when flowers in general are parched up and gone, they must have organised a systematic pilfering from the better-

kept gardens of the villagers in order to amass this token of their gratitude to me. I replied however, as the reporters always say, in a few well-chosen words, without expressing undue admiration of their resource in procuring the flowers, and then drove on with my bouquet to Canea.

But I had hardly shaken hands with the police officer, when who should follow me in but the Prefect. This was a new Prefect of whom I knew little. The one with whom I had had the pleasure of corresponding over the Gatchieff affair had been dismissed shortly afterwards, possibly for his mismanagement of that delicate matter. I had paid a formal call on his successor, but had little information about him. Now he had dropped in for a cup of coffee and invited us to join him. There was nothing for it but to accept. He had probably seen me entering just ahead of him, and to make excuses and go out again at once would rouse suspicion. So we sat sipping our coffee and making polite conversation while the minutes slipped by. Half-past ten now, and no sign of the Prefect budging. Twenty to eleven, and the motor-launch due at eleven. I rose, made my *adieux,* and went and hid in a bedroom round the corner of the passage outside, from which I could watch through a crack of the door for the Prefect's departure, and through the window for the advent of the launch. At the worst I could but carry on without knowing the police arrangements which had been made.

But in another five minutes the Prefect made a move, and the quarter of an hour in hand sufficed for showing the copies of the letters to the officer, and learning his dispositions of the police. Then he

hurried off to make a final survey, and to be absent from the scene of operations himself.

There were only a few minutes of waiting, and I was glad of it because they are the most trying. Then the launch appeared, and the hour for action had come. It all worked out to plan. The petty officers had entered with such zest into the idea that I should hardly have recognised them in the extremely *négligé* toilet which they had deemed appropriate to a trawler-hand out for a day's leave. But they entered with equal zest into the business of kidnapping. The fat man was sitting conveniently outside his office, and struggled in fact less than the little one; but the latter had been removed from the office without his fez, and, when I handed him that, he was quieter. In thirty seconds or so the launch was under way again, and, unless the Greek military guard at the fort protecting the harbour-entrance should have the spirit to open fire and risk the trawler replying with her gun, our prisoners would soon be aboard.

As a matter of fact there was no trouble there, but a certain liveliness was developing on the quay. I had been informed that the Sourourzadé brothers had only their office on the quay, and lived elsewhere. But this was wrong. The upper storeys of the house formed the harem, and there had been unseen spectators behind those latticed windows all the time. Unseen, but not now unheard; for they lifted up their voices in true Oriental style and wept, with the result that the sensation created and the crowd attracted surpassed my hopes. We were in a tight corner. For purposes of offence the site had been excellent, but there was no means by which the five of us could

consolidate a defensive position. Even if no pistols came into play, we might easily be hustled over the quay-edge. It was necessary to move on somewhere.

Why had not we too departed in the launch, you may ask. Merely because we should have looked like marauders who perpetrated an outrage and ran away. If the Allies were to have any proper control of the district, our opponents overt or covert in Canea must be cowed. Save for that reason, the whole affair would have been conducted more quietly; but the moral effect was worth some risk.

I looked round for a place of retreat, and the Prefect's offices at an angle of the quay close by caught my eye. To pay a call on him would be a distinctly humorous way of escape from a serious predicament. I asked a man standing near, as loudly as I could amid the uproar, whether the Prefect would be in at this hour, and began pushing my way in that direction. Word spread where we were going, and the crowd, agog with excitement over the latest turn of events, moved with us to the house. There was a flight of outside steps leading up to the first floor where the Prefect's own apartments were. I left the four petty officers at the top of the steps to stop any incursion, and had myself announced.

Once closeted with the Prefect, I informed him that, since I had had the pleasure of drinking coffee with him half an hour ago, a grave incident had occurred, which I hoped would in no way disturb our friendly relations. Two prominent merchants of the local community had been arrested and were now on board the trawler which he could see just leaving for Suda. I had brought with me copies of certain letters which

had fallen into my hands; if he would be good enough to read them, he would not be surprised at the action we had been compelled to take. We should of course have preferred to have had resort to the assistance of the police; but in the time of his predecessor a most lamentable occurrence had shaken our confidence in them. A Bulgarian spy had been provided with a police-escort to facilitate his movements in the neighbourhood of our anchorage; and the police-orders issued on that occasion were in my possession. The necessity therefore for direct intervention by us on this present occasion would be self-evident to the Prefect; and we merely ventured to hope that he, once established in his new post, would so control the police as to make it unnecessary for us to repeat such action in future.

He replied very properly that the incident was a distressing breach of municipal law and order which it would be his duty to investigate and to report to his government; but I thought that he appreciated the humour of the situation (a rare trait in a Greek) and moreover was not ill-disposed towards us. He asked me to excuse him a moment, saying that he must telephone at once to the Chief of Police, and I suggested that, while he was doing so, he should mention that both he himself and the Senior Naval Officer at Suda would hold the Chief of Police responsible if there were any improper manifestation of popular feeling against me and my party when we were driving back through the town to Suda. That obviously tickled his fancy, and we parted in the end very amicably, he informing me that he must send to the S.N.O. a formal protest against so irregular a pro-

ceeding, and I assuring him that we would answer it in the spirit in which it was sent. I had in fact judged him rightly; he was all for the Entente, though disguising temporarily his sympathies; a few weeks later he was among the first to declare for Venizelos.

There the adventure ended. We descended from the Prefect's office, packed ourselves, all five together, into a cab which I had in waiting, and drove off by the route I had arranged, alert to watch for any person, particularly if he should be wearing a fez, who might show signs of hostility, but actually provoking little more than curiosity and comment.

As for our prisoners, who reached Suda not long after us, they persisted in a total denial of any knowledge of such letters as we held, and maintained that they had had no dealings of any sort, commercial, financial, or social, with any person in Piræus or Athens. They were accordingly forwarded to Mudros with the evidence and a report, and were passed on from there for internment at Malta. Our original intention of searching their office at Canea at the time of the raid had had to be abandoned as incompatible with the project of creating a sensation; but one of our prisoners had the keys of their safe in his pocket, and with these we might have an opportunity of searching for other papers of interest later on.

The scare which we had given to the people of Canea was illustrated by various items of information which reached me. First, a troublesome enemy, the head of the local *efcaf,* or Mohammedan religious centre, who by virtue of that position exercised also much political influence of a Turcophile and therefore Germanophile tendency, was reported to have made a

bonfire of papers in his courtyard within an hour of the arrest of the Sourourzadé. A few days later a Mohammedan of Suda, who had long been on my black-list as the other's local agent, came on board, while our prisoners were still there, on some flimsy pretext of wanting a licence as bumboatman, which he knew would be refused to him. Presumably he wished to learn from one of our interpreters (we had a Mohammedan at the time) whether the prisoners were still with us, and hoped perhaps to get some message carried to them. Having nothing tangible against him or his master, I thought a little discomfort of mind was the best medicine that I could administer to them. So I sent for the man, and adopting the Oriental style of mystery, said: "Go, say to your master, 'That which I went to seek, I found not, and that which I went to speak, remains unspoken. Yet bring I you a message for which you look not; and the message is this: fire hath two uses, to consume and to illumine' "—but it is better in the Greek, *νἀφανίζει καὶ νὰ φανερόνει*, "to make unseen (*i.e.* destroy) and to make visible." I believe the message, which the emissary learnt by heart before I let him go, troubled his master, who certainly ceased from troubling me.

Ceased, that is, unless he was the instigator of a message which reached both the British Consul and myself from an anonymous source soon afterwards, namely, that some of the Young Turk party in Canea had pledged themselves to assassinate the Senior Naval Officer, the Consul, and me. The Mohammedans then, it would appear, had taken the raid seriously to heart: and this produced, I think, a certain revulsion

of feeling in our favour on the part of the Christian population who always love to see a Mohammedan discomfited. But even more perhaps the fear which we had inspired won us support such as no policy of conciliation would have secured. For the Greek soul is semi-Oriental soil, wherefrom a man reaps not that which he has sown: from the seed of affection, never so sedulously scattered, he will haply garner a harvest of contempt; but fear well planted and rooted will bear for her fruit esteem.

Then lastly there was a quite casual and undesigned event which confirmed my opinion that our opponents' nerves were shaken. One of our trawlers happened to anchor one morning off Canea and send in a boat for some fruit and vegetables. The shrewd folk were not to be caught napping twice, and there was a stampede of the conscience-stricken up from the quay into the by-streets of the town, and they did not reappear till the fruit had been bought.

The raid, we were happy to feel, had been a highly successful enterprise, both in the capture of the local agents of Fritz & Co., and in the moral effect produced upon those who had underrated the rival concern. But the ultimate view which I came to take of the affair puts me in mind of an old story. A lady paying a parochial visit to a woman whose daughter had lately been married, asked her whether the girl was well and happy in her new home. "Ay, ma'am, well enough," replied the woman; "she can't abide her man, but there be aye summat."

There was "summat" to qualify our happiness too. The brothers Sourourzadé were innocent.

PART II.—THE RIDDLE

The unravelling of the plot against them—for plot it had been—was a long and tedious business and occupied months during which uneasiness developed into definite suspicion, suspicion into moral conviction, and conviction needed only some tangible and legal evidence before action could be taken to repair the injustice done.

I was uneasy when I learnt in what esteem the brothers Sourourzadé were held by persons of high standing well acquainted with them. The Italian Consul in particular, though he agreed that on the evidence we could have taken no other course than to arrest them, remained at least puzzled and not wholly convinced of their guilt. He had been many years in Canea and knew them well. His, I could see, was a genuine personal opinion, unaffected in this case by the somewhat ill-dissimulated Italian policy of standing well with the Mohammedans rather than with the Christians of Crete, and preparing for a closer *rapprochement* with Turkey after the war than with Greece. At this time also I first made the personal acquaintance of the agent Sakir, who had been working for, and reporting to, the British Consul, and I profoundly disagreed with the latter's estimate of him. Loquacious and conceited to an extraordinary degree, he appeared to me an undesirable type of agent, and on his general appearance and manner I should have written him down a rogue. In Greece, in default of evidence to the contrary, it is wiser to assume dishonesty.

I was sufficiently impressed by my first judgment

of him to institute some quiet inquiries into the character which he bore and the company which he kept. He had appeared as witness in a local lawsuit two or three years previously, in which, in the judgment both of the court and of the general public, he had committed wilful perjury. His moral character was on a low level even for a town as unspeakably corrupt as Canea. And finally, as I knew, he had committed forgery in the Sourourzadé affair in order to get possession of letters from the post-office.

This last fact, it may seem at first sight, should not have weighed against him. The forgery was committed ostensibly and, as far as I then knew, properly in the course of a secret-service agent's ordinary duties. But here comes in one of the paradoxes of secret-service work. Any man in whom you repose such confidence as to let him lie, steal, and forge at discretion on your behalf must before all things be honest. You may permissibly employ a burglar or other specialist criminal for a given piece of work at his own risk and pay him according to results, as you might employ a mechanic to make a particular wheel or spindle for some new machine you were devising; the purpose and use of it are not his concern and are kept from his knowledge. But the salaried agent of the secret service, just like the engineer who assists you in assembling your new machine or any material part of it, must be a man whom you can trust. Even a high salary will not assure his honesty; it will only have the effect of putting up prices against those who would bribe him if he is dishonest; he and they may agree a figure at which the risk of losing his salary is compensated by

the sure profit of his treachery. You must know then that in his private capacity your agent is not addicted to theft or forgery or other corrupt practices. His motive for service must be one of two, either patriotism pure and simple, or a personal doglike devotion to his employer or those whom his employer represents. The seemingly dishonourable actions which his duty involves must be inspired by the one honourable motive. He must be an honest man, versatile in the seasonable use of dishonesty, enjoying it even as an intellectual game, and playing the game with a humorous zest.

An ideal perhaps; but I have known men who came near to realising it, one by patriotism, two others, less educated men, by sheer personal devotion,—a lighthouse-keeper who had eaten the bread of the French, as he said, for many years, and manipulated his light therefore, if ever he sighted an enemy submarine, as a warning to our shipping, thereby risking his livelihood, now paid by the Greek Government, without thought of reward; and a peasant for whom no labour or danger was too great provided that he was doing my personal bidding. Rare types these, I grant, and not to be obtained in bulk, so that you must needs fall back on some agents of commoner clay. Yet the patriotic or personal devotion must animate these too, or you had better leave them unemployed. Say that their pasts will not bear close scrutiny; still that devotion, if strong and genuine, may render them temporarily honest in the one cause which they have at heart. I had one such agent, a dignitary of the Greek Church, whose past career was not unblemished. But he was a fanatic. His creed

was "the end sanctifies the means," and he professed himself ready to cut his mother's throat in the cause of Venizelos and the British,—a proceeding which I should have deprecated even had it not been irrelevant. I knew what he was or had been, and showed him that I knew. When he asked with what number he was to sign his reports in lieu of his name, I assigned him 666; and he possessed humour enough under all his fanaticism to take the trust well. I trusted him in much, and he did good service.

Now Sakir on the contrary showed no symptom of devotion to any cause or person. He had not been honest in the past; there was no motive discernible to make and keep him honest in the present. His recent forgery was probably on a par with his former perjury,—committed with an eye to his own interests or advancement. He might well be one of the Levantine or other scallywags with which Athens teemed and Canea was adequately provided, men who passed from one secret service to another and preferred working for both sides simultaneously.

And there was yet a third personal factor in my uneasiness. I made the acquaintance of young Sourourzadé, the son of one of our prisoners, in the course of arrangements concerning an adequate wardrobe for them. He made no secret of his family's sympathy with Turkey, but convinced me that he at least was not privy to any dealings with Fritz & Co., and was completely persuaded of his father's and uncle's innocence. I gave him an outline of the evidence against them, contained in the three letters, and told him to produce rebutting evidence if he could. Shortly afterwards he asked me for the

keys of the office, so that he might carry on the business as best he could. Here was a good test. I replied that he should have the keys if he would agree that the Italian Consul and I should first open the safe and any drawers we wished in his presence, and have access to all the papers they contained. He could consult his family in the matter before he replied.

The family accepted, and one night the Italian Consul and I were quietly admitted to the office. The safe gave us some trouble, for, though the two keys of it turned in their locks, the door would not open, and I was beginning to suspect that it had been purposely tampered with; but, having espied an adze lying in the corner beside the safe, I got the edge of its blade into the crack of the door, and using the big leverage of the implement prised it open. There had been no wilful tampering with it; the obstacle had been only one bolt which just failed to clear its socket. We spent an hour or so looking through the papers both from the safe and from various desks, but found nothing incriminating. There was indeed a small amount of correspondence with Athens, a fact conflicting with the statement of the prisoners that they had no dealings whatsoever with anyone there; but it merely concerned some trusteeship which they might well have momentarily forgotten. The family had done well to accept my challenge to a search.

Another search elsewhere now suggested itself. Sakir had informed the British Consul, when he first obtained the two letters addressed to Velisarios Sourouris from the post-office, that he had learnt from a former post-office *employé* that others letters had arrived previously addressed to Velisarios and had been

claimed by the brothers Sourourzadé. If any of these had been registered or express letters like the two in our possession, a record of their receipt would exist in the books of the post-office. There was now no difficulty in consulting these. Since the raid larger public events had changed the political situation. We had had our revolution, and the Provisional Government was now securely installed. The Governor gave me free access to all official records of the post-office, and the Italian Consul and I went through the whole lists of registered and express letters from the beginning of the war; but the name of Velisarios occurred nowhere, save in connection with the two letters we held. I took the opportunity however of possessing myself of the forged authority by which Sakir had obtained these two.

The negative result of these two searches was clearly no negligible fact. It was distinctly disconcerting. It had been strange that the bundle of papers removed haphazard by Sakir's burglar from the office of the Sourourzadé should have contained an incriminating document, and that our scrutiny of all the papers locked away in the safe and elsewhere had discovered no corroborative evidence. It was almost equally strange that none of the letters to Velisarios other than the two which Sakir had obtained should have been sent by either registered or express post. These considerations, reinforcing the doubts engendered by the personal characters of the chief persons concerned, decided me to ask for the return of the letters which had been sent to Mudros along with the report on the whole case.

While I was awaiting them, Sakir came to see me.

He told me that soon after the arrest of the brothers, he had received a mysterious telegram from Athens with which he had not liked to bother the Consul or me at the time. This telegram had now been followed up by a definitely threatening letter. He produced both. The telegram, couched in colloquial language, ran: "Do not stir up the mud, or we will get you into trouble"; the letter contained a plain threat against his life; both were signed "Demotakos." He felt sure, he said, that his connexion with the Sourourzadé affair had been discovered, and he wanted to leave Canea. He could speak Turkish as readily as Greek, and was prepared to go as a secret-service agent anywhere in the Turkish Empire. He suggested that he might be useful to us at Baghdad.

I distrusted him on his whole bearing more than ever, and felt a strong desire that he should not leave Canea just yet. So I pretended to take the matter *au grand sérieux* and decided to keep him amused for some time with the notion of going on a secret mission to Baghdad. I therefore pointed out that Baghdad was a long way outside my area, and I could do nothing in the matter without corresponding first with our authorities in Egypt. He could come back in a week or ten days and see if I had any news for him. Meanwhile I should like to keep the telegram and letter in the hope of identifying this Demotakos, who had written on paper dated as from a certain hotel in Athens. Sakir professed to have no idea who the man might be.

I had some inquiries made whether any Demotakos was known in Canea; but the name was totally unknown. Demotakis is a frequent surname there, but

the ending in -os is not Cretan; it belongs to the mainland district of Maina and, I believe, to some of the Ionian Islands. Nothing could be learnt from the Athens hotel either about any such visitor.

After some days of fruitless inquiry I re-examined the telegram. It had all the appearance of being genuine, but I had not hitherto removed a slip of thin paper pasted over the signature. Sakir had done this, he had told me, some time previously when he had shown the telegram to a friend but had thought best to keep to himself for the time the sender's name. I had been able to read the signature however by holding the telegram up against the light, and it appeared to be the same name as on the letter. Now however for greater assurance I steamed the pasted slip and removed it. The name had originally been Demotakis *à la Crétoise* and had been altered to Demotakos,—carefully altered too, for the reverse of the paper, which had rested on the carbon sheet used by the telegraph-clerks for writing out each message in duplicate, showed a bluish-black "o" as well as the original letter. If then the alteration had been made by Sakir as I surmised,—for why else should he have sought to obscure it with a slip of paper pasted on top?—he deserved some credit for attention to detail in placing a piece of carbon paper underneath while he made his own alteration. And my surmise was right; I verified it afterwards by reference to the records in the telegraph office.

My interpretation of Sakir's latest move then was this. Some Demotakis of his acquaintance in Canea had sent him the telegram in question from Athens, not necessarily in connexion with the Sourourzadé

affair at all. He had decided to use it for our mystification, but foreseeing that we should institute inquiries about the persons named Demotakis and perhaps trace the sender of the telegram, had altered one letter of the name in such a way as to suggest that the person in question was not a Cretan. He had then got some friend to write him a letter signed Demotakos—it was not in Sakir's own handwriting—in confirmation and amplification of the telegram. It certainly looked as if Sakir were an adept in falsification and forgery.

Then at last the three incriminating letters came back to me. There was every reason now to scan each detail of them closely. I felt convinced that they were forgeries, but it still had to be proved. The sight of them recalled the fact that we had never succeeded in identifying the ironmongery-concern in Piræus whose business-heading stood at the top of the third letter, the letter which was found among the papers purloined from the Sourourzadé's office. Our Athens Intelligence Service had apparently not bothered about ascertaining the exact address (the heading gave the name of the firm and Piræus only) or at any rate had sent us no information on the subject. That Service however had now shifted its base to Syra, owing to the massacres of December the first, and was of no further use to us. So I instructed one of my agents to test the firm's existence and ascertain its full address by writing to ask for a quotation for certain goods. No answer was received, but neither was his letter returned through the dead-letter department. It might or might not be a bogus name invented by Sakir. I learnt later that it was. Sakir had had the paper printed in Canea, explaining to the printer that

a business friend from Piræus, who was stopping with him, had run out of his firm's stationery and wanted some fifty sheets of paper printed with their heading to go on with.

For the present however the actual script of the three letters, one written by hand, the other two typed, occupied me most. If Sakir had procured the writing of them, the chances were strong that he had done so locally in Canea, and that those two of them which we knew had come through the post had been sent by the hand of some friend to Athens to be dispatched from there. The third had been found among papers from the Sourourzadé's office, had no envelope belonging to it, and very probably had not been through the post, though it had been folded as if for placing in an envelope. Still I knew that Sakir had an eye for detail, and it was quite likely that he had inserted the letter among the papers, and pinned it to another as it was found, after his burglar had stolen those papers from the office. But these details obviously could be elucidated later if the handwriting or the typed script of the letters could first be identified.

In connexion with the handwriting I obtained as complete a list as possible of the Sourourzadé's personal enemies or business rivals, as well as of Sakir's more intimate friends, together with certain other suspects, and by various means samples of their handwriting were obtained for me. One of these suggested a somewhat startling aspect of the whole affair. I had now been supplied with copies of photographs of a few of the Callimassiotis letters obtained by the French in Athens; previously I had had only typed copies of their contents and a general description

of their appearance. I was by no means sure that the one handwritten letter among our three was in the same writing as the photographs showed, though this had not disturbed me much for the reason that the envelopes too appeared to be addressed in yet a third hand undoubtedly distinct; and moreover our whole *trouvaille* had been submitted to the Intelligence Service at Athens who knew the Callimassiotis correspondence thoroughly, and had been accepted as belonging to the same series of letters. It was likely enough that Callimassiotis would have at least one confidential secretary writing some of his letters. But now, among my samples of various suspects' writing, surely here was a handwriting the exact counterpart of that shown in the Callimassiotis photographs. But no; almost equally surely, it was not the handwriting of the Sourourzadé letter on which I was actually engaged.

I confess I was bewildered. The man whose sample of handwriting I had before me was a native of Canea, now for some time past residing at Piræus. My record of him was black. Formerly in Canea he had been in the employ of the German and Austrian Consuls, and had on one occasion so imposed upon the British and Italian Consuls as to be taken into their confidence and accompany the former on a journey of secret investigation. I possessed a copy of his triumphant and scoffing report of that journey among other papers of interest which I had removed from the vacant Austrian consulate. Did he afterwards perchance become secretary to Callimassiotis, seeing that the correspondence was in his writing? And was Sakir so intimate a friend of his, that he

had acquainted Sakir with Callimassiotis' activities? Or could Sakir himself by any chance be Velisarios? As intimate friend or as actual accomplice, he obviously might or would possess the necessary knowledge for forging the letters incriminating the brothers Sourourzadé; for that he had forged them I still felt sure, though it puzzled me to guess whence he had derived the necessary knowledge. Our Consul assured me that he had employed him merely to find a man named Velisarios, and not admitted him further into his confidence.

Or alternatively what if the mysterious writer with the black record had in fact never become secretary or clerk to Callimassiotis? Why then, if the evidence of handwriting was strong enough, the whole Callimassiotis correspondence must be a forgery no less than the Sourourzadé letters. Was Gregory—so I will name this new figure in the story—was Gregory in league with Sakir? Were they partners in the preparation of forged documents designed to be sold to us amateurs in secret service? If so, Gregory had indeed brought off a *coup* in Athens; a large price, I believed, had been paid; but Sakir—no, the little money he got would not have repaid his work and risk; some other motive must have inspired him.

But this unforeseen development did not distract me from studying the typewritten letters too. One thing was evident: they had both been typed on the same machine, and that machine was not in first-rate order. Six small defects in the script were visible. Two characters inclined slightly to the right, and another to the left; the *iota* struck just too high, above the

line of the other letters; the circumflex accent was consistently thick and blurred; and, most significant of all, one character was from a wrong font, not in keeping with the rest of the type; the machine must have been damaged at some time and repaired from local resources. Quite obviously there would not be more than one typewriter in Canea, nor for that matter in the world, possessing precisely these six defects and no others: and if, as I believed, that machine was in Canea, some day I ought to trace it. Quantities of typewritten matter came under my eye in the form of passports, bills of lading, and other documents incidental to traffic; and I instructed an agent too to write short inquiries on any subject he liked to a number of business houses in Canea and to keep for me all typewritten replies.

But it was aboard an outgoing ship that I at last found the clue. A *laissez-passer* was presented for my inspection, and I recognised the type at once. The document was issued and stamped by the Mayor of Canea; but what was this? A second paragraph had been inserted above the official stamp, typed on a different machine. I inquired of the passenger, "Where did you get this *laissez-passer*?" "At the Mayor's office." "They typed it for you there?" "Yes." "Why did you go there a second time to get an addition made?" He stared at me as if I were Sherlock Holmes; yet obviously he had not asked for the addition to be made when the paper was first handed to him, or the machine on which it had just been typed would probably have been used again. The reason he finally gave for the addition was perfectly good, and I left him mystified with the

wonders of the Intelligence Service while I possessed the information I wanted. There were at least two machines in use in the Mayor's office; the one on which passports and such-like were usually typed—I had naturally seen dozens of them—was in good order; but there was an older machine as well which happened to have been used on this occasion.

I visited the Mayor, who was a good friend of ours, and astonished him too with my knowledge of his typewriters, one in good condition, the other old and repaired. The deductions had been quite right. He himself typed for me on thin paper with the old machine a number of words and phrases from the Sourourzadé letters; I placed them in position over the corresponding words in the originals, and held the two papers against the light. The letters and their defects coincided perfectly. So then Sakir had had the incriminating letters typed at the Mayor's office in Canea; their whole subsequent career had been a complicated fraud; and the brothers Sourourzadé had been arrested on forged evidence.

The next step was clear. I sent Sakir a message that I had news for him and could see him next morning. He came, confident that I was now ready to start him on a secret mission to Baghdad. I told him that I knew of a place for which he seemed well suited (but I was thinking not of Baghdad, but of the internment camp at Malta). However, before we went into details, I wanted to ask him one or two things about the Sourourzadé affair. He had been in the thick of it. Did he feel absolutely convinced of their guilt? I confessed that I had had some misgivings; was there any fact or consideration which

inclined him to the view that they ought to be released? None, he said.

His last chance of confession and of mercy was gone. He was ready to continue his fraudulent career, going to Baghdad as the confidential agent of us whom he had been deceiving, and leaving the Sourourzadé brothers, the victims of his fraud, in their wrongful imprisonment. I put him under arrest, had him searched, and consigned him straight to the cells. Then I took his keys, which the search had produced, and went to Canea where I had already arranged for two gendarmes to accompany me to a house in the Mohammedan quarter.

There was a mass of interesting papers in Sakir's room,—scraps of erotic poems of his own composing; notes which threw a lurid light on his private life; the rough draft of a newspaper article in which he advocated that "the dogs of Franks" should be left to wallow in their own bloodshed, to the end that "we Turks" may have the last laugh; a list of persons to be denounced for various causes; and—to complete the evidence against him—a pencil draft of two of the Sourourzadé letters, the French one being in its original Greek form as he composed it, with notes of equivalent French phrases below for which he had evidently consulted the dictionary.

It remained now only to clear up the whole tangle. With the concurrence of the Governor of the island I arranged for the arrest of the nine or ten persons whom Sakir had noted for denunciation. Some of them were on my black list already, and all of them, if not guilty of anything themselves, might at least be useful witnesses against their denouncer. I sat in

fact for three days as examining magistrate—a most irregular proceeding—at the Canea police-station. I sentenced only one person to imprisonment, and that, I may say, not on Sakir's evidence, though in this case he had got hold of a true story and not invented the charge. Another was placed under police supervision, and the remainder were acquitted. I learnt however some astounding facts about Sakir. Recently at night, when no British officers or men would be about the town, he had been swaggering about in a quasi-British uniform—(I had found the cap appertaining to it in his room)—giving out that he now held a high position in the British Intelligence Service, and was likely to be appointed shortly British Consul; and, for all the Greek astuteness, he had gulled and terrorised quite a number of persons.

But the most interesting witness was the burglar, Mehmet, who, though he had rifled the Sourourzadé's office at the instance of Sakir, figured also in his proscribed list; probably Sakir was not above blackmailing his former *employé*. Now Mehmet was already among my less reputable acquaintances. He is the only burglar I have known well, and I had a liking for him. He was one of the oddities in human nature: proud of his lineage, and I believe he really came of good family: proud of his literary attainments in Turkish and his knowledge of the Koran, though his education had been interrupted at the age of fourteen or so by his father's sudden death, and the Greek which he spoke was a corrupt *argot* almost destitute of inflexion: a good father devoted to his ten children, and crying like a child himself at the thought of being sent to prison and leaving them

hungry: timid and nervous as a child too beforehand about the risks which his profession involved, yet confident and resourceful when the hour for action came: lying habitually because the sort of questions put to him were embarrassing and their true answers compromising, and yet in a quaint manner trustworthy if his fears were removed: a lovable child though singularly depraved and long past reform or penitence. The Greek doctor who had attended his ten children from their birth without fee felt the same affection for him.

Once soothed, and assured that Sakir was safely locked up and could not hurt him, and that he himself should not go to prison but should even have a present for his children if he would tell the truth,—but it took a long time,—he told me the story of the theft of papers from the Sourourzadé's office in this wise: "Sakir bad man. Sakir find Mehmet (he always referred to himself by name in the third person) and say to Mehmet, Mehmet go into Sourourzadé office and bring papers from drawer in table. Office door only tied with string midday when people asleep. Mehmet take bag with vegetables, untie string, slip in, no one see him, push papers under vegetables, bring to Sakir. Next morning Sakir send Mehmet to Consul; papers all neat and tidy now; Consul pleased." So it was as I had supposed: Mehmet had not gone straight from the scene of his theft to the consulate, as we had been told; Sakir had had the papers in the interval, and had placed among them the third and most outrageous of the letters. Yes, Mehmet, even Mehmet, had a right to call Sakir "bad man."

It was now Sakir's own turn to be interrogated; and those interrogations recurred at intervals of three or four days for the whole five or six weeks which he spent in the cells. He made a fresh and voluble confession each time, abandoning the lies he had told on the former occasion as soon as my inquiries had proved them false; but strangely enough each confession contained also one or two true facts. He gave me for instance one by one the names of the various persons who had written his false letters, addressed his envelopes, carried the combined results to Athens and posted them there, forged the authority to the post-office, sent the mysterious telegram to him, and copied out for him the threatening letter to reinforce the effect of the telegram. He had never had recourse to the same person twice. They were all young men of his acquaintance whom he had induced to write at his dictation by flattering them about their fine penmanship, or beguiling them with a tale of some hoax he was playing. Only one of them did I suspect to have any knowledge of the way in which he had been used; for he came on board to see me with a cock-and-bull story about a submarine to cover his intention of communicating, if possible, with Sakir. By a curious chance his name had been given to me by Sakir in his latest confession, on the previous day only. So I told him it would be no good for me to send him to investigate the submarine rumour for me unless he could send me a report in intelligible French. He professed to be competent to do so, and I set him to write a few lines as a test. When he had done so, I pointed out to him that the letter written in French in the Sourourzadé *dossier* was in the handwriting of

which he had just given me a sample, warned him of the folly of inditing letters in false names for a man like Sakir, and of coming to me with faked submarine-yarns, and consigned him too to the cells to think things over.

But the two things known only to Sakir which I wished to extract from him were his motive for singling out the brothers Sourourzadé and the source of his information concerning the Callimassiotis correspondence.

This latter he confessed in his first interrogation, and in that one point I believe the first of his confessions was true, though actual proof was never obtained. He stated that he had asked a man, whom I will call appropriately Satanakis, if he knew any one named Velisarios. A few days later Satanakis met him and said that he had learnt that Velisarios was the name under which the brothers Sourourzadé were receiving certain correspondence touching German submarines. Between them they conceived the notion (Sakir imputed to Satanakis the whole responsibility) of contributing to this correspondence. Satanakis suggested its general lines, Sakir elaborated it in detail.

In testing the accuracy of this confession, which obviously might have been an attempt to shift the larger half of the guilt on to the shoulders of a perfectly innocent person, I discovered that Sakir had on several occasions paid visits to Satanakis under cover of night at the latter's house in Suda: and further,—here the hidden motive at last appeared,—Satanakis was known to have nursed for years past a vindictive hatred of the brothers Sourourzadé.

On the cause of that hatred I will not dwell; suffice it to say that Satanakis had been, and still was (as I learnt from papers seized in his house), engaged in the foulest traffic known to civilisation, and that the brothers Sourourzadé had saved one of his victims not indeed from dishonour, but at least from lifelong degradation.

I arrested Satanakis. He was lying in bed, ill or shamming ill, with a loaded revolver under his pillow. It was not for the protection of his valuables, for he had none. An uneasy conscience was the only explanation of it. He was some weeks on board, where he was confronted with Sakir. He denied everything, and confessed nothing. No man could be convicted on the evidence of Sakir alone, even with the evidence of motive to corroborate it. After some weeks he was released. It mattered less in that he was far advanced in an incurable disease. If he is dead now, the world is cleaner.

I learnt later how in all probability Satanakis had come to know about the Callimassiotis correspondence. One of the agents sent over from Athens to investigate, independently of the consuls, the Cretan issues involved therein was a native of Canea and an intimate friend of the Satanakis family. He had been told far more of the matter than there was any need for him to know. He was a man of courage and capacity in turbulent times, but lacked qualities essential in an agent, reticence and sobriety. I suspect that a bottle too many in Satanakis' company had been the *fons et origo* of all our trouble.

Meantime we were negotiating with the home authorities for the release of the Sourourzadé from

Malta. Negotiating? Well, yes, that is the *mot juste.* We had cabled: "Sourourzadé brothers arrested at Canea and interned at Malta last August are innocent. Letters incriminating them were forgery. Forger is in our hands. Request immediate release and repatriation of Sourourzadé." You might expect the receiver of such a message to wire Malta, and repeat to Suda, "Brothers Sourourzadé to be released and given passage to Suda first opportunity." Not a bit of it. We had to wait, and wire again, and wait once more, and wonder what all the delay was about.

And this is how I pictured it. A faultlessly attired old gentleman with cold feet sitting before a fire in the Foreign Office, and frowning at our message. He rings a bell. Enter an immaculate youth, his nephew. "Look here, Cuthbert, you remember that case we've had an endless fuss about, two Turks arrested by our naval people at Canea with most unnecessary publicity. The whole thing is a blunder, they say now. I wish to the devil we could teach the Navy caution. Bring me the file of that case, will you?" Exit Cuthbert, and re-enter with the required *dossier;* he has turned over a few pages and found the copies of the three incriminating letters. The old gentleman adjusts his glasses and reads them. "There you are. Three bogus letters, and they are hoaxed at once, and rush off and make a most compromising, *most* compromising, arrest in neutral territory. You and I, Cuthbert, would not have given ourselves away like that." Cuthbert's superior smile is a voucher for that, but he ventures to point out that the few pages which he has turned back are a report from the Consul, with which the old gentleman may like to refresh his

memory. There is a pause while he reads and the frown on his face grows portentous. "Upon my word, the Consul hoaxed too, and by his own agent! One service is as incompetent as another. *This* office will be needing reform next." There is another pause, which Cuthbert breaks: "Any reply to be sent, sir?" "Yes. No. Yes; instruct Malta that these Turks are provisionally to be accorded the most favourable treatment permitted by the regulations for select interned persons, and cite the number of the relevant Order in Council. That won't commit us to anything."

The instruction is duly cabled to Malta, is initialled by the O.C. Internment Camp and passed to the Adjutant "for your information and necessary action, please." The Adjutant summons a sergeant. "Sergeant, send a corporal with an interpreter to the hut where those two Turks are billeted—one a very fat man—you know the two I mean." "Yes, sir." "Tell them that they are classed as first-grade prisoners, and can now buy bottled beer up to a dozen a week each, or anything else in reason that they want from the canteen." The corporal conveys the message, and the brothers Sourourzadé are left wondering whether the offer of beer is a preliminary to better news or an insidious attempt to convert them to Christianity.

A week or two later the old gentleman in the Foreign Office, having finished with the *Times* in which some mention of Crete has caught his eye, picks up the Cretan *dossier* again. He turns to the later correspondence, the frown gathers, and he rings the bell with some impatience. Enter again nephew Cuthbert. "Look here, my boy, this is serious. Why didn't

you remind me of these complications with Constantinople? I remember quite well now. It was only a short time ago that the Turkish government threatened reprisals against British prisoners unless the brothers Sourourzadé were released. We wired to the naval people at Suda to ask what they thought about it. They replied that the Sourourzadé family were connected by marriage with Enver or Talaat Bey—I forget which, it will be in the *dossier*—and that the threat of reprisals was presumably a bluff only, put up by some Turkish department at the instance of whichever of those two it was. The people at Suda, I remember, represented very strongly that any clemency on our part would be interpreted as weakness out there, and we let them have their way. Just think, if only we had released those two prisoners as an act of grace then, as we were half inclined to do, we should have been saved all this trouble and loss of *prestige*." "It is too late for that now, sir; there is another cable just in from Suda requesting their early repatriation as an act of justice." "Damn the fellows; do they think I have nothing to do but clear up the mess they make?"

Meanwhile I was damning the Foreign Office for the mess it was making by delay. When the Constantinople incident occurred, I had warned the Sourourzadé family that they were going the wrong way to work. When subsequently Venizelos was pressed to intervene, I warned them again that political influence would have no more effect than enemy threats; and Venizelos' own reply to the family that they must trust to English justice had reinforced my warning. "Prove the prisoners' innocence," I had

said, "as against the strong documentary evidence of their guilt, and they will be released forthwith." And now I had myself proved their innocence, and that "forthwith" had to be interpreted not in a naval but in a diplomatic sense. Our *prestige* was threatened, but only by the old gentleman's dilatory caution.

But that menace disappeared and was forgotten when once the brothers Sourourzadé returned as guests aboard a British destroyer. I took the picket-boat over and brought them aboard the S.N.O.'s ship, where I explained the whole story to them. They took it very well, and their gratitude for their release was even embarrassing when they kissed my hand on the quarter-deck before leaving. They concurred in my suspicions of Satanakis, but would not prosecute either him or even Sakir. They much preferred that the latter should go to Malta in their stead. They wished only to resume their business in peace, and, as British permits were needed for trade with Egypt with which they chiefly dealt, it was easy to compensate them by giving to them a larger share of permits than to their competitors who had prospered by their absence.

As for our *prestige,* if it had been strengthened by the sensational arrest of the Sourourzadé when they were believed guilty, it was confirmed yet more by their sensational release. I accorded interviews to the newspaper men who wanted details (I had written privately to the Sourourzadé family, though that letter too found its way into the public press), and having outlined the story guided their criticisms into the right channel. I expressed the deepest regret (which indeed I felt) for all that the Sourourzadé family had suffered

as victims of a criminal conspiracy. The evidence, as they could see, had been overwhelming and had completely deceived us. For the wrong we had done in error we had made what amends we could: for the deception practised upon us due punishment would be inflicted. British justice, it had been said, was slow but sure; yet it had one quality still greater than sureness; its miscarriages were indeed rare, but, if ever they occurred, it had the courage to acknowledge them openly and to repair them. And this became the text on which the newspapers discoursed, applying for themselves the requisite superlatives. What nation, they asked, except the English, would have owned to a miscarriage of justice, detected only by themselves, and not have sought to cover it from sight?

The question is of the rhetorical order: it does not require an answer; but it affords perhaps food for thought to him who would supply one.

Thus then our heroes and villains all have played their parts and met their deserts, and the curtain may fall, to rise again only for a short epilogue sustained, contrary to all dramatic precedent, by an actor whom we know as yet only by his handwriting. It is Gregory; Gregory whose writing was so much the counterpart of that in which the Callimassiotis correspondence was writ, that I had wondered whether after deluding the consuls in Crete he had become Callimassiotis' secretary, or alternatively had forged that whole correspondence and made a handsome profit by deluding this time the French Secret Service in Athens. Yes, here was Gregory, come back to Crete with his passport in order and sublimely con-

fident that his old sins would not find him out. But here was his record too in my black-book of the "evil beasts" of Crete. An ex-*employé* of the enemy consuls could not be allowed to land: Malta was his proper destination.

But his coming revived my interest in that old problem. True, there was no question any longer of his having been a confederate of Sakir in forgery, or of his having confided to him as a friend the knowledge of the Callimassiotis correspondence. Satanakis had been Sakir's informant and partner. But the handwriting remained. At his first interrogation I questioned him as to what he had been doing at Piræus since he left Crete, and he gave me an account of the business in which he had been engaged. I verified the account. There was nothing to suggest that he had been in Callimassiotis' employ. He had amassed indeed far more money than even a well-paid confidential secretary could have saved from his salary. Pending a further interrogation I allowed him pen and paper in case he should wish to communicate with me. He evidently wrote fluently; there were long protests and appeals written sometimes to me in Greek, sometimes to the S.N.O. in French; and his handwriting in both languages resembled closely that of the Callimassiotis correspondence.

In sending him to Malta I suggested that this second charge against him should be investigated by an expert in handwriting either there or at home. This was never done. The Callimassiotis correspondence was now ancient history, and the authenticity of it was suspect for other reasons. For one thing it had been published by now in the newspapers, and

various persons besides Callimassiotis involved therein had been able to disprove their complicity in the alleged intrigues of Fritz & Co., by means of an *alibi* or other convincing evidence; and further, in spite of the diligence with which a mass of independent agents had followed up every clue which the correspondence offered, none of those clues had led anywhere save into this Cretan labyrinth from which we had hardly extricated ourselves and the brothers Sourourzadé. So it mattered really little whether Gregory or another were the culprit. The Callimassiotis correspondence, no less than the Sourourzadé letters, was a forgery, and incidentally therefore this whole long story has really nothing to do with Fritz & Co.

CHAPTER V

THE REVOLUTION

PART I.—A MIDSUMMER DAY'S DREAM

In pursuance of my instructions to see what was wanted in Crete and to carry on, I soon came to see that a revolution was wanted. The policy of the Greek Government in all branches of its administration was to obstruct us and to support our enemies: their confidential orders to the Cretan police were a sufficiently illuminating example. Isolated acts of repression, like our arrest of the Sourourzadé brothers, might inspire fear enough to curb certain of their activities; but persistent hostility, working by all the secret methods at the Government's disposal, could only be met by the overthrow of the Government itself, and the replacement of its Germanophile officials by men friendly disposed towards us.

Now obviously you cannot wire to a Vice-Admiral or to a Legation, "Request permission to have a revolution." They may want to know further details, such as whether you propose having it alone, or have induced any other persons to join you; and there is the further probability that the representatives of the Foreign Office may deem your project incautious and your request indiscreet. Certainly during the early summer of 1916 our Legation in Athens would have been horrified at the suggestion of such an intrusion

into the domestic politics of a friendly and neutral country; and it was not until the end of July or August that the Entente Ministers there began to toy with the notion that the Protecting Powers, who were the guarantors of Greek independence, were entitled to protest against the unconstitutional position which the King had usurped and to demand the dissolution of the Chamber of Deputies, his partisans and nominees, and the holding of a general election. What a panacea! The general election was to follow close upon the demobilisation of the Greek Army, so that in every constituency the King and his military clique would have disbanded officers and men (with arms probably not yet returned to their depôts) to exercise peaceful persuasion upon the free and independent voter and, in case of need, the returning officer. Yet why criticise the Entente Ministers? The wise heads in counsel at the Peace Conference held or feigned a touching and childlike faith in the virtue and purity of *plébiscites* in Eastern Europe.

As for Crete, the Protecting Powers' programme mattered little to us. If we had to have a general election, the constituencies of the island, excepting perhaps Candia, would go solid for supporters of Venizelos, unless the Government should send at least an army corps for demobilisation in their midst; and even in Candia it was hoped that the peaceful persuasion organised by the Venizelist party would be stronger than that of their opponents. Meantime any propaganda on our part would serve equally well the purposes of a general election or of a larger and less constitutional movement. So I held my peace as to the revolution which I saw was wanted, and fulfilled

the remainder of my orders by carrying on quietly, without submitting my project for approval.

It was well that I did so. The conflicting policies of the several Allies during this period were revealed clearly enough later on. Russia, owing to the family ties of her ruler and her general monarchic sympathies, was for maintaining King Constantine on the throne at any cost. Italy, welcoming any chaos and disunion by which Greece would forfeit any claim to territorial expansion after the war, preferred temporarily a king who was obviously ruining his country to a statesman who might revive her fortunes. France alone, I believe, was clear-sighted and whole-hearted in advocating a clean sweep of the royalist and military party and the restoration of Venizelos to power. England was vacillating and disposed to temporise: not only then, but even after the revolution when Venizelos' provisional government was installed at Salonica, up to the very eve of the Athens massacres of December the first, the British Legation was apparently still nursing the fatuous hope of effecting a reconciliation between Venizelos and the King and scoring a diplomatic triumph; while at home—what shall I say? Only this with certainty, that the Prime Minister of the day did grave disservice both to the Crown and to the country by giving to the House of Commons the false assurance that the national movement led by Venizelos was in no way anti-dynastic. I know what gossip prejudicial to loyalty his assurance unloosed. I know too that the national movement, though not solely or even primarily anti-dynastic, had aims which involved incidentally the fall of the dynasty. I know that later on, when Russia's power

to intrigue was gone, and the French had their way in the removal of Constantine, and the question of his successor arose, Venizelos indeed wanted a king, while a mass of his adherents would have preferred a president, but no one in the nationalist movement, and by no means all the Royalists even, welcomed a scion of the same dynasty. Enough said: it is abundantly clear that a whole year before the expulsion of Constantine neither the diplomats of Athens nor the Powers they represented would have lent a kindly ear to a temporary lieutenant who suggested a revolution.

Now the promotion of a revolutionary movement in Crete is far less difficult than it might prove in any other part of the world, excepting possibly the smaller South American republics. Under Venetian rule, and subsequently under Turkish, there were periods of the island's history which consisted in a series of insurrections, separated only by a few years of oppression borne in grim silence pending the recuperation necessary before another outbreak. Between 1212 and 1365 there were eight insurrections against the Venetians. Then came some four centuries of such rigorous domination that not even in the period of transition from the power of Venice to that of Turkey did any opportunity occur for the assertion of the national spirit. It must have looked as if the Cretan spirit were broken; but the old traditions of hatred and vengeance must still have lived on, I think, in their stories and ballads of an heroic past. In 1770 the second period of insurrections opened, and a second series of eight continued, with short intervals for recovery, down to 1897. These included the Cretan participation in the Greek War of Inde-

pendence from 1821 and onwards, and another protracted insurrection from 1866 to 1869. This was followed by another revolt in 1878; by an outbreak, more in the nature of guerilla warfare by isolated bands, beginning in 1889 and coming to a head in the insurrection of 1896; and by yet one more insurrection in 1897, which at last compelled European intervention. It can hardly be claimed however that the Great Powers were successful in quelling the turbulent spirit of the island. Massacres organised by the Mohammedans in 1898 at Candia, in the course of which a number of English soldiers were shot down, were sternly punished on the spot by Admiral Noel; but the event drove the Powers to a formal and effective occupation of the chief towns of the island, while they attempted to conciliate the nationalist feeling of the Christians by appointing Prince George of Greece as High Commissioner. But this measure was regarded in Crete as one step only in the direction of deliverance from even the nominal suzerainty of Turkey, and towards complete union with Greece. Prince George however seemed unable to move the Powers to further action, and in 1905 Venizelos headed an armed movement at Therisos, which resulted in the departure of Prince George. In 1906 an ex-premier of Greece, Zaïmis, took up the position of High Commissioner, and in the following year the Powers began to withdraw their army of occupation, hoping that the Cretans would chafe less at their anomalous *régime,* if the outward and visible signs of the military power which had imposed it were removed. But in 1908 new happenings in the Balkans reacted on Crete: Bulgaria had proclaimed herself an independent

kingdom; Austria had annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina; Crete must realise her full aspirations too. The union with Greece was proclaimed, and the Great Powers accepted the *fait accompli*.

There are then in Crete quite a number of men, living and still able-abodied, who have taken part in five or six revolutions, and have experience to enhance their natural powers of leadership; and indeed it caused some adverse comment, when we got to business once more, that the man selected to take charge in the Candia district had not had previous experience of so much as one revolution even in a subordinate capacity. Insurrection in fact is in Crete the traditional, one might almost say constitutional, method of remedying public grievances. Leaders and followers alike have both experience of their own and guns. Given only some opinion which they wish to assert, the traditional method of asserting it is easy, popular, and effective.

At the outset obviously, in forming or stimulating public opinion of a kind which will need expression by this traditional method, it would be unwise for a foreigner to present to the independent Cretan any cut-and-dried scheme. Any agent or intelligence officer so engaged should have a receptive ear for any popular grievances which need redress or any popular aspirations as yet unsatisfied. He should get the common-folk to talk freely to him before he makes any suggestions to them.

There was a convenient *café* at the village of Tsikalariá, some half-hour's walk from Suda, which served as a port of call for inhabitants of many of the mountain villages on their way to and from Canea, and another a mile or so east of Suda on the main road

to Retimo. Both these *cafés* were kept by staunch Venizelists, and, the politics of a Greek *café* being of no less importance to its customers than the quality of the drinks provided, I was assured of meeting in them a Venizelist *clientièle*. Peasants who had a drink and chat with a British naval officer at one of these on their way home from market of an afternoon were quite certain to retail their experience and the conversation to a circle of friends that evening in a Venizelist *café* of their own village,—and it might be that some of those friends would repeat the narrative, as an account of their own first-hand experience, yet farther afield; for "the Cretans are alway liars," said or quoted the apostle, and I must confess that some even of the Venizelists were terminological inexactitudinarians.

I spent many a half-hour in the course of an afternoon's stroll at one or other of these two resorts, and the *café*-keepers and I became cronies who sympathised with each other's views; I have no doubt that they helped to disseminate mine. My chats with them and with their customers turned largely, though not of course exclusively, on politics. Contemporary events which loomed large in their minds were the Bulgarian advance on the Macedonian front, with the loss of Cavalla and the surrender of Fort Roupel, and the entry of Roumania into the war. Many of them, though not all, wanted to be up and at the Bulgarians. Then too I used to turn the conversation on the more recent past, the union of Crete with Greece and the benefits or otherwise ensuing therefrom. The benefits, they felt, were none too manifest. True, they were free from the dominion of the hated Turk, but otherwise what had they gained? Their taxation

was higher than ever, and the revenue derived from Crete was spent on the mainland. They too wanted roads, light railways, reservoirs, irrigation. And those mainlanders, and the Athens folk who were supposed to govern them and to spend all that revenue for the good of the people who paid it,—they were a sorry lot; any ten of them would run from two Cretans. They had seen what the mainlanders were worth in the Balkan wars; but a Cretan regiment now—that would clear Macedonia of these cursed Bulgarians. And Venizelos would have given them a chance to go, but for that cursed king of theirs.

I sympathised. I have genuinely always felt that a profound mistake was made by Crete in looking upon union with Greece as the only alternative to Turkish misrule. Complete independence would have offered higher hopes for an essentially virile race. I pictured to them what might have been their present situation if that solution of the problem had been adopted. Their taxes during these past years would have been spent on the improvement of their own communications and industries; modern agricultural machinery might have been imported to turn their land to better account; their island might have been self-supporting now. Politically they would have been free to join Greece in liberating Epirus and Macedonia from the Turkish yoke, as in fact they had done; they would be free now to strike another blow at the hated Bulgarian; they could ask from England the ships to transport their volunteers to the front to fight side by side with the English in this last great struggle for the overthrow of the Bulgarian and the Turk. Maybe they would have had a republic with Venizelos as their

president—president of the Cretan Republic, or perhaps of a greater Ægean Republic, a confederation of the Greek isles looking to a Cretan city as their metropolis. And what was Venizelos now? A prime minister deposed by the unconstitutional act of a worthless king—powerless. What a pity that all that might have been was only a dream! Ah, if it were only not too late!

Not the whole idea at once, you understand, but in doses. And that vision of the Ægean Republic attracted them as I confess it attracted me and still attracts me. A confederation of those wonderful islands of the Ægean, wherein alone survives a pure strain of the old Greek blood; a little world belonging neither to the West nor to the East; enjoying freedom, yet not coveting progress as the Western world interprets it, nor measuring its weal with a tradesman's measure; looking to no foreign model of greatness, but foreseeing the fulfilment of its own stature; disdaining the bastard pedagogic speech of modern Athens,—debating, writing, teaching, perhaps in time even worshipping, each several island-state in its own true-born tongue; proud each of its customs, its dress, its industries, its ballads, its dances and pastimes; content with the frugal revenue of cornland and vineyard and olive-grove, of quarrying and forestry and mining, of flax and wool and silk, of sponge-fishing and all that the sea affords, laden in caïques to barter among themselves or in great ships to exchange against their few external needs. And their capital a new city perhaps of wide spaces bordered with trees, in shape a horse-shoe about Suda Bay, its wharves and warehouses on the southern shore, below

the Canea-Retimo road and that light railway which would be the Cretans' pride; away westward,—with houses of wide verandahs dotted amid the olives on the slope towards Tsikalariá and that *café* wherefrom in a midsummer day's dream the yet unfounded city might be seen,—the residential quarter; below this, on the flatter ground at the head of the bay, the public gardens, on either side of a stream cleaner than now, with orange-groves sheltered by tall contrasting cypresses; and opposite, clear cut against the hills of the northern shore, the President's house, the Government offices, and the Parliament of the Ægean Republic. And everywhere in our new city water in abundance carried from the river away behind Canea.

Might not the dream have come true? Yes, if Venizelos too had dreamt it. But his vision was of the Greece to which he had united Crete made greater by the union of yet other lands redeemed from the same oppressor. Will she be greater, I wonder, or only larger? Will his statesmanship devise for her some division into provinces administered by honest and able lieutenant-governors on whom will devolve large powers now centralised in Athens? Can he find such men? If not, the union may not much outlast his lifetime; and if disintegration once begins and revolutions are afoot, Crete will be true to her traditions. Perhaps my programme may receive fresh consideration then.

PART II.—THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS

Meantime, besides the villagers of the mountains, there were also the townsfolk and semi-educated

classes in general to be taken into account, and the pabulum suitable for their minds consisted in no dreams or ideals. The Ægean Republic would have appealed little to them until the time should come for securing options on the sites round Suda Bay where the castles now built in the air would assume material form. Any propaganda adapted to their outlook must be of a more sordid type such as would serve equally the purposes of a general election, if that were forced upon us before the island was ripe for a revolution. The towns, and even the villages too, were being flooded with pamphlets of German origin, and steps had to be taken to counteract their influence. The publicity department of the British Legation in Athens supplied us with a mass of pamphlets designed to win sympathy for the Allies, and we had to organise the distribution of them throughout the island.

As a matter of fact neither the British nor the German literature impressed me much with its suitability. It consisted mainly of tedious argumentative treatises composed originally in London or Berlin and translated into the artificial Greek of the would-be learned periodical. The subject-matter too was largely ill-chosen: the causes of the war, and the responsibility for it which each side imputed to the other, interested no one; they wanted to know what the issue of it would be, and what profit would accrue to themselves if they should join the winning side betimes. The English pictures of German atrocities in Belgium even did harm; for they presented too clearly the ruthlessness of Germany in destroying small countries which presumed to stand in her path:

the Cretan townsfolk were not for exposing their country incautiously to that risk.

In the end we decided to write and issue our own propaganda. It was a considerable task, but there were two Greek-speaking English officers now associated with me in Crete, formerly members like myself of the British Archæological School in Athens, free to travel continuously in the eastern and western halves of Crete while I was in general tied to our base at Suda; where however before long the West Cretan officer was soon required permanently to help me. Between us we turned out a number of short and breezy pamphlets adapted to the local taste. My own chief contribution was a reply to a solemn German treatise which argued that a German victory in the war was "an historical necessity," and contained enough catch-words and impressive phrases to be dangerous: the Greek is quick to appropriate such and to reproduce them as his own. The reply was a brief skit, in the form of a Platonic dialogue between a German professor and a humorous Cretan scamp aboard a steamship bound for Candia. The professor, who talks and mispronounces the stilted language of a leading article, turns out to have had as his pupil the author of the said German treatise. The Cretan, an ex-schoolmaster who now keeps a cook-shop which makes a speciality of snails, makes an effort to revert to the pedagogic style of speech, and introduces himself in such high-flown terms, to match those of the professor, that the latter mistakes him for a scientific specialist in conchology. In the conversation which ensues the Cretan makes fun of the German professor and his country, broken only by one tirade

in the vernacular, some of which is beyond the professor's comprehension. Finally he proposes to debate seriously the meaning of "historical necessity"; gets the professor to admit that necessity means only the relation of cause and effect, by which is governed the evolution of the whole natural world, snails as well as men; demonstrates that historical necessity is only that branch of natural necessity which governs the development of nations and men, in reference to whom therefore the two terms are interchangeable; and then asks the professor what is the first and greatest necessity of men. The professor pronounces for systematic education and the assimilation of German culture. The Cretan apologises for having expressed his question badly, and suggests that even the children being educated in German schools need food first; and food, not to mention certain other supplies, is the first necessity of their soldiers in the field. "Where," he asks, "will you get your supplies for your blockaded country?" "We had made large provision before the war," replies the German. "A damning enough fact," retorts the Cretan; "but even they will not last for ever. We have experienced a short blockade in Greece and Crete lately, and know what it means." "Our commercial submarines will bring supplies from America," says the German; "haven't you read in the papers about those two?" "Bah!" retorts the Cretan, "we had two smuggling caïques which ran the blockade here; but they didn't save many of us from feeling hungry. Sea-power must starve you out too in the end. Sea-power always wins. It is a natural necessity." "Excuse me," says the German, breaking off the conversation

and making hastily for the ship's side, "the sea affects my stomach." "The sea will affect every German stomach," replies the Cretan; "it is a natural necessity."

This was the lighter side of our propaganda work; but the anonymous and flippant pamphlet served our purposes, I suspect, no less well than the open and serious measures which we threatened or took against newspapers subsidised by the enemy. There were two such in Canea and one in Candia whose influence was considerable. The Canea papers got into trouble with us first. I have before me a couple of pages, torn from the press-copy-book of the Austrian Consul at Canea, which I preserved as a memento. Writing on 18th May 1916 from Laccus, the mountain village where he and his German colleague had fled for refuge, he set forth for the edification of his Excellency the Minister of the Exterior, Stephan Baron Burian, the details of a serious menace to the liberty of the press. He had the story quite right—so right that the "unimpeachable source" from which he professed to have learnt it could have been none other than the Prefect of Canea, with whom the British Vice-Consul and I had had our interview on this matter.

We called on him one evening to represent that two newspapers of Canea, the *Nea Erevna* and the *Himerisia,* were overstepping the bounds of legitimate criticism and publishing libellous and defamatory articles about Great Britain in general and the portion of the British fleet at Suda in particular. We hoped that the Prefect would use his friendly influence with the editors of the two papers to prevent the recurrence of such libels, which we could not permit to continue.

Now the Prefect was not only a Germanophile rogue but a lawyer to boot. He replied therefore that the niceties of defamation, libel, and slander furnished matter for much legal discussion, and that he would be loth to give an opinion off-hand whether the passages of which we complained constituted a libel in the legal sense. Thereupon I assured him that we had not come to consult him in his professional capacity, and that we were not contemplating any action in the Greek courts. The S.N.O. at Suda, though no lawyer, would take upon himself the responsibility of deciding whether any given criticism amounted to defamation, and would regretfully arrest the editors concerned and close their premises. To avoid so untoward an incident, it would be well if the Prefect, as a friend of both parties, would advise the editors to abstain from any comment which might even be construed as a libel by anyone not versed in the law.

I am sure this was very polite and did not merit the censure which the German Consul (for I saw his despatch too subsequently) passed on my conduct. I was mentioned in his despatches for "brutal directness." He never liked me. I suspect that he really did set a price on my head. However both he and his Austrian colleague agreed that the editors must take the advice offered to them, and the Austrian warned his Excellency the Minister of the Exterior that even "the hitherto so highly successful publication of impartial foreign articles" (he himself contributed these) "must in the future be rigorously reduced or wholly abandoned." I am glad that they did not call that bluff, for our orders were to arrest no one ashore.

The aggrieved editors missed a fine opportunity of retaliation a few weeks later, and sank in my estimation. One evening in June I was in Canea, and a number of other officers from Suda were also there. Soon after five the editor of the one friendly paper of the place found me in the square, and asked to have a word with me. He had received a telegram from Athens saying that the die was cast, and Greece had openly joined the Central Powers and was at war with England and France. What was he to do about publishing the news? Now I knew of course that the attitude of the Greek army in the Salonica area had been threatening for some time past, and the news might be true. But for the moment all that mattered was to get our officers out of Canea before the news became public. Shore-leave at this time expired at 7.30—our padre and an officer from another ship had reported being fired at on two occasions, and shore-going was limited to certain roads and hours—and the very latest at which any officer could leave Canea would be seven o'clock. I should naturally warn any whom I could find to return to Suda at once, but I could reckon the place clear by seven and make a move then myself. Accordingly I asked the editor to defer his next edition containing the news, no matter whether accurate or no, until just after seven, which he agreed to do.

I then took a stroll round the town and found some officers at various *cafés* and asked them to go back to Suda; and I was passing again through the square when one of the hostile editors approached me. He was particularly ingratiating and wanted my advice. He had in fact received the same telegram

and was presumably a little anxious concerning the fate of himself and his journal if he should publish the news and it should subsequently prove inaccurate. If only he could get corroboration of it from me, he could play his stroke without fear of consequences. He asked me what he was to do. I told him I was incredulous of the truth of his information: had war broken out, I should have known by wireless far sooner than he by cable. But obviously there would be nothing defamatory of us in publishing such a telegram, though he might be defaming the good sense of the Greek government. It was not for me to advise him; it was purely a journalistic question whether he could sell enough of an edition containing the news before his or any other newspaper had to publish an official denial. He went away perplexed, and missed his chance. He must have been furious when shortly after half-past six the bugles began to sound in various parts of the town, and the soldiers about the place were mustered at various centres and marched through the streets with fixed bayonets to concentrate at headquarters. The Greek always overdoes things: I could not see the point of the fixed bayonets, or rather I could see it but certainly did not expect that any British officers about would feel it.

Anyhow I intended to watch developments till seven. So I took a seat outside the main *café* in the square and ordered a large ice as a hint to the military that they too should keep cool. My neighbours at the surrounding tables moved away, I observed, and left me in splendid isolation: they looked for a *fracas,* it seemed. If so, they were disappointed. I had finished

my ice, and it wanted only a few minutes to seven, when a young Frenchman who lived in the place came up to me in a state of hardly suppressed excitement. Didn't I know what was up? War had broken out between Greece and the Entente. As soon as he heard, he had got out his car and had been driving round the town to warn any officers he might see. He believed I was the only one left. His car was now at my service. "What about you?" I asked. "Quite safe," he replied. He and his family, old residents in the place, knew far too many people to be in any immediate danger. If the situation began to look worse, they would get warning in plenty of time to pack off to Suda. Meantime he proposed to show me the pace of his car and his skill in handling her through the narrow and ill-kept streets of Canea and down to Suda, which indeed he did.

But war had not broken out, you may say. How did all the commotion arise? The answer is an interesting item of secret history which shows on what a thread the fortunes of Greece have hung. The story was told me by a Greek colonel, since dead, who was a central figure in it. The Minister of War in Athens, with the approval, possibly of the King or Queen, possibly of one or two of his colleagues, but not with the knowledge and consent of the whole government, decided to cast in the lot of Greece with that of the Central Powers. He telegraphed orders to Greek headquarters in the Salonica area to open fire on the British and French lines and shipping without more ado. These orders upset the general in command, and he called a conclave of a few senior officers, among whom was my informant. When his

turn came to speak, he pressed the point that a declaration of war by the Government should have preceded the War Minister's order to commence hostilities. That order, he maintained, was not valid and binding until such declaration had been made. His view was accepted, and it was decided to make immediate preparations for an attack, but to await the formal declaration of war, which as all the world knows was never made.

Meantime the Minister of War, confident that his orders must have already involved Greece, communicated the news that war had broken out to some journalists in Athens and to certain military headquarters in Crete and doubtless elsewhere. What happened when he learnt that his orders had not been obeyed at Salonica and his communications had been premature, I cannot say, save only that the colonel, my informant, was shortly afterwards relieved of his post.

My next skirmish with one of the hostile editors arose out of a pure accident. One of my duties in boarding any ship arriving from Piræus was to have the bundles of Athens newspapers overhauled, to see if any contraband or private correspondence was hidden in them. One evening I had cleared for discharge a quantity of these bundles stacked on deck, and had afterwards been occupied for a couple of hours perhaps with the inspection of passports, manifests, and such-like, when my attention was called to another lot of newspapers which had been stowed in one of the holds. I told one of the marines to look them through as quickly as possible, and passed them too for discharge. Next day there appeared in one of

the two hostile papers of Canea a violent attack upon me for clearing the Venizelist papers at once and holding up the Government papers until it was too late to distribute and sell them in Canea that night. The immemorial rights of the press were being trodden ruthlessly in the mire, and the British Navy which enjoyed the hospitality of the magnificent harbour of Suda was abusing the neighbourly accommodation of a neutral country by a shameless interference in its domestic politics; and so on.

A storm in a teacup indeed, all because a bundle or two of papers had been delayed in transit; but the editor must be taught not to get agitated; it was too good a chance to miss. Besides I wanted to find out how much he knew about our propaganda in Crete, my suggestions of a revolution, or my pamphlet touching the German professor, which was at the time being printed in the next street.

To this end I called on him in person. I opened with quite gentle remonstrance. I was ready of course to accept his word that it was the Venizelist papers which had been delivered in good time and the Government papers which had been delayed: but how did that concern me? Greek politics naturally absorbed persons like himself, but we had a big war on hand, and must be pardoned if we attached less importance to their party squabbles. What had happened was actually this—and I narrated the trifling incident. By a mere chance, on one occasion only, a quantity of newspapers had been delayed a couple of hours. If I really objected to papers of any given political complexion entering Crete, should I not get waste paper declared contraband and save

myself all the trouble of searching those bundles of newspapers each time a ship arrived?

He began to see that he had made an error, and wished to apologise. I replied that unfortunately his attack upon me had been public, and the apology therefore should be public likewise. But the personal aspect of the affair was not the worst part of it, I continued. He had charged the British nation, as represented by the naval squadron at Suda, with trampling on the liberty of the press and interfering in domestic politics. Those charges he must either justify or withdraw—publicly likewise. He now began trying to justify them. The Athens papers, he said, were full of protests against British interference in the domestic politics of Greece. I pointed out to him that the statements of newspapers were not evidence. Did he maintain, I asked, that the newspapers of Athens and elsewhere always told the truth, and that his was the only one which published lies? He must furnish evidence, tangible evidence, that the British were interfering in any way with the political situation in Crete, or else publicly retract and apologise.

For a journalist he was badly up in current affairs. He could produce no evidence. He wrote an apology while I waited. I inserted a few amendments to stiffen it, and then I revealed to him the full measure of his punishment. The apology was to appear not only in his own paper but in all the papers of Canea. He demurred to one,—the sole Anglophile paper: he was not sure, he said, that the editor of it would accept a letter from him. I told him that I was sure the editor would take it at special advertisement rates,

and that I would go round at once and reserve space for it on the front page. That settled him, and an ample retractation appeared next day in all the local papers, headed "For the sake of truth." It was a great compliment to the secrecy of our propaganda.

The journalism of Canea was thus temporarily quieted, but the leading enemy newspaper of Candia still required attention, the more so because, if a general election was our immediate destiny, Candia was the one place where the success of a Venizelist candidate was not assured. But no occasion offered until, not a general election, but the revolution, was close at hand. This however did not make a knock-out for the Candia paper any less desirable, and at the right moment the editor thereof delivered himself into our hands.

Early in September I received one day a confidential message that a gentleman from Candia desired urgently to see me in Canea. There were reasons why he wished the interview to be secret and could not himself come to me at Suda. He appointed a rather disreputable hotel in a back-street where he would await me at any hour I might name. The hotel indicated did not commend itself to me. If the gentleman from Candia was, as I inclined to think, an emissary from our insurgent party at Candia, I should excite unnecessary comment by meeting him there; on the other hand it might be a trap for me,—the Mohammedans of Canea had been making threats of violence since the recent arrest of the Sourourzadé,—and a back-street hotel would favour such a project. So I told the messenger that as it happened I was just on the point of starting for Canea, and would see

the gentleman in an hour's time at the chief hotel, where my presence would excite no remark. I reckoned that if his business was genuine and urgent, he would come; but if any trap was being laid, he would not have time to alter the arrangements.

I followed close on the heels of the messenger, and my man duly presented himself at the hour named. It was neither a trap nor a message from the revolutionaries of Candia. He introduced himself as a confidential representative of Mr. Eleutheriádis of Candia, the editor of the *Palingenesia*—so, if I remember rightly, his paper was named—that is "Regeneration." Tortuously he approached his subject. Mr. Eleutheriádis, it seemed, desired himself to become regenerate in the political sense,—in other words to rat. But he could not afford the luxury. The circulation of his influential paper would inevitably fall off, at least for a time. Indeed hitherto, like so many other papers, it could hardly be said to have thrived on the revenue from subscribers alone. The Germans had recognised the value of Mr. Eleutheriádis's support: the British, he hoped, if they approved of the paper in a form in which it might even become their official organ, would show their appreciation with no less liberality.

We came to figures after a bit. The Germans, he said, had found 10,000 francs at the outset for new plant in the printing-office; since then they had paid a subsidy of 1000 francs a month, and their Legation in Athens had provided paper *gratis*. Mr. Eleutheriádis, having changed his views or being minded to change them, placed himself at our disposal. Any offer we might make to him should take into

account the rapidity with which the change of tone in his leading articles was to be effected, and the ultimate orientation of political views which we desired. To support the British only would obviously require a less pronounced *volte-face* than to support the whole Entente, and that in turn would be less serious and less prejudicial to the paper's circulation than to support the Entente *plus* Venizelos. I was unable to get a quotation for these several orientations; so I asked him to give me a day or two to think over the suggestion, and, as there was no boat for Candia for three days, he said he would stay in Canea and await my reply.

But before three days had passed, Mr. Eleutheriádis received his answer. I sent a note of the conversation to our Intelligence Officer in East Crete, who happened to have just arrived, with the officer commanding our trawlers, off Candia. They sent for Mr. Eleutheriádis to come aboard. His offer was discussed with him, and with his own mouth he confirmed all the details. He was then informed that the conversation would be continued at Suda. His enforced absence prevented the issue of his paper next day, and his premises were closed; but the rival paper was advised to prepare for an increased circulation, and the newspaper-loving public of Candia were in no way defrauded or disappointed; for a narrative signed by a British officer had not previously appeared in any paper, and the article written by our Intelligence Officer on the ratting of Eleutheriádis caused a definite sensation. This was not least among the Royalist party and their leaders, who had been in close touch with the editor. Some, who had them-

selves been in receipt of German pay, were fearful of further revelations; others, who had not, felt resentment and chagrin at the thought of their missed opportunities, and a malicious pleasure in the downfall of their more business-like colleague; all alike disavowed any real intimacy with Eleutheriádis and expressed reprobation of his conduct. But it was all a trifle unsettling for a political party on the eve of a revolution.

As for Eleutheriádis, we sent him to Malta for internment, charged on his own confession with having acted as a paid enemy agent. He appeared to be genuinely surprised by our attitude towards him, and quite unconscious of any moral obliquity attaching to his proposed conversion. He was well out of the way. He had, I think, smelt a rat, and decided to follow its example by leaving the sinking Royalist ship. For by this time history was in the making, and it needed no great *flair* to detect that some serious movement was imminent.

PART III.—THE MEETING OF THE STREAMS

In the course of August, as the result of propaganda stimulating the natural sentiments of the population particularly in the mountain-villages, I had already been able to report that "popular dissatisfaction with the Greek Government's policy of non-intervention is aggravated by the Bulgarian occupation of Greek territory and by the contrast between that neutral policy and the Roumanian declaration of war; symptoms of active unrest have been noted." That sounds so much less crude than to say "our revolu-

tionary propaganda is spreading nicely, and the idea of an Ægean Republic, free to join the Allies, rooting well."

But hardly had I so reported when other symptoms, of some unknown movement, also appeared. It came to my knowledge that two or three Venizelist deputies or ex-deputies had left Crete with every precaution of secrecy, bound for Athens. Now a Greek deputy does not commonly hide his light under a bushel either when he is travelling or at any time. He claims precedence in presenting his passport, and preferential treatment in general befitting his dignity. A deputy afflicted with a sudden attack of modesty wants watching. I made some inquiries as to whether there was anything contagious in these gentlemen's distemper, and within two days had a list of over thirty prominent politicians in the western half of Crete alone, and a few in the eastern half, to whom the mysterious malady had spread. There was a veritable epidemic of modesty. All these persons had been called away on business to Athens, and so little desired to court publicity that they had left or were leaving, as far as possible, singly, by different routes, and actually *incognito*. In case they should chance to meet for any purpose in Athens, I communicated their names to our Legation.

As a quick piece of intelligence work I considered this good, and I was disappointed at receiving no response from Athens. Whether it was that the Legation did not know at this stage the purpose of that Venizelist gathering, or, as I think more likely, treated the matter as a diplomatic secret until the Foreign Office could make up its mind how to steer

or on what current to drift, I cannot say; but I am fairly sure that the Cretan politicians who took part in that conference returned home with the feeling that British sympathy with their project was lukewarm or even chilly. I had to force the confidence of one or two whom I knew well, before I could get at the true reason of their trip. They assured me first that they had been anxious about the personal safety of Venizelos in Athens, and had gone to form a bodyguard for him; but I pointed out to them that their political leadership in their constituencies was far too valuable to justify their absence or the risk to their lives in what was after all only police-work, and that in point of fact many of their colleagues were too fat to be very efficient watch-dogs. I added too that I might be able to be of some service if I knew precisely what was going on, and they could count in any case on my sympathy and my discretion. Then it came out. Venizelos too was planning a revolution. Crete would start the game by declaring a provisional government. Samos, Chios, Mytilene, and perhaps other islands would join in. Salonica would become the temporary capital.

Good-bye then to the Ægean Republic; that dream must vanish; our scheme of revolution must be merged in that of Venizelos; our stream must be diverted into the same channel, and its volume go to turn the same mill. The change of direction would not affect the force of our influx from the mountains; that would turn one mill-wheel now with the same energy as another, careless to what exact use the resulting power was put. One or two of the hill-chieftains indeed observed the altered trend of affairs

so little, that they gave me the credit of having induced Venizelos to join and lead a movement initiated by us. I did not disclaim the attribution; any personal *prestige* might be an asset when the time for action should come. And that time must be nearer now that Venizelos was with us, or rather we with him. Once the two streams had met in one, the doubled volume of their waters must flow with increased velocity, or else, if we should try to dam them till the mill was ready to work (we realised this later), their banks must be builded strong and high if they were not to burst their confines and overflow, wasted and laying waste.

For a week or more we now waited, daily expecting instructions from the Legation or the Vice-Admiral, and receiving none. The Consul indeed received an extremely confidential hint that there was a whisper that Venizelos himself might possibly pay a visit to Crete. I suppose anyone who considered the matter would have offered ten to one on that without the hint. Venizelos obviously could not stay in Athens; he might of course go straight to Salonica; but it would be unlike him to leave the Cretans to run a revolution in his interest and not put in an appearance. The number of deputies however who knew definitely that he would come was, I think, small; that intention had not been divulged to the whole conference; none of them had as yet mentioned it to me, and I naturally kept the Legation's hint secret.

At last, on 10th September, the Venizelist organising committee in Canea made a move which gave us hope of obtaining some guidance from our Legation. Mr. Moazzo, a leading resident of Canea and for-

merly a British Vice-Consul, came on board, as the representative of the Venizelist leaders, to ask the Senior Naval Officer officially what would be his attitude in the event of a revolution breaking out in the island. The S.N.O. could not but reply that he had no instructions to be other than neutral, and that consequently the Suda arsenal enclosure, which was lent to us, as well as British ships, must be regarded as sanctuary for unarmed refugees of either party. I corrected any false inference that might have been drawn by the Venizelists from this statement by assuring them afterwards unofficially that we had no instructions to be neutral either. It was decided however that the British Consul should go over to Athens next day on our behalf, and one or two of Mr. Moazzo's friends at the same time, with the purpose of inducing Venizelos and our Legation to provide some programme of work. All that came of the expedition however was that the Consul was ordered by the Legation to stay on in Athens so as to avoid any suspicion of complicity in the coming revolution. I should have liked to send a gross of foot-warmers to the Foreign Office with my compliments: as it was, we saw that we must discount any chance of instructions arriving until too late. Carry on then, carry on.

The emissaries to Venizelos were hardly more successful than our Consul. They came back again, it is true, but brought no substantial information. Their committee resumed its sittings at Canea. Its members were mostly deputies, ex-deputies, or aspirant-deputies, who wore the black coat of respectability and took their exercise slowly between

cafés. Whatever committee was formed in their neighbourhood, they were obviously the men to sit upon it. They were thoroughly good sitters, crowded now into the one nest, and without a fertile egg under them to hatch,—or, if there were, it would get broken in the contest for hatching it,—but they were just as happy with wind-eggs, and it mattered less if these were broken. When this happened, and the nest got messy and uncomfortable, in the absence of any cock-of-the-walk they started a crowing match among themselves, and finally asked Venizelos to select the best crower as deputy-cock,—or cock deputy.

I dare say the committee was really no more futile a body than the majority of committees, and merely a trifle more quarrelsome for the reason that it was Greek, and it appears to be an historical necessity that the leaders of Greek movements shall quarrel among themselves which shall be greatest. But there were two or three of the members who besides talking in the committee-room worked outside. One of them, Dr. George Marís, was largely absent at Candia where he was to take command in this "his first revolution," so they told me, though he had some experience as a leader of irregulars in the Balkan Wars. Others, residents of Canea, did some excellent quiet work in winning over junior officers and men of the local troops to the Venizelist cause. They worked best singly; in committee, they sank to the level of the least intelligent. The larger questions of general strategy, supplies, and communications appeared to be crowded out by the discussion of comparatively petty details. These questions needed to be settled in consultation with the chieftains

who would actually lead the insurgents in the field. I decided to get into direct touch with these chieftains, and to short-circuit the committee.

The highlands of West Crete are divided up into a number of chieftaincies, based ultimately on the exigencies of cattle-lifting and insurrection. The chieftainship of a given village or area rests on no claim of heredity or wealth. It passes from the best man deceased to the best man living; and, if there is any doubt about the succession, it is determined, I suppose, like many other controversies in Crete, on the principle of the survival of the fittest in the use of the rifle. These men compare with the town-bred politicians as the clean open expanse of their mountains with the squalor of tortuous streets. Their code is rough and hard, but it is binding and has its own chivalry. Above the local chieftains is the chieftain-in-chief to whom all owe allegiance in time of insurrection. There are, it is true, a few isolated clans within the borders of the grand chieftaincy, such as the Sphakiotes (their leaders had been bought early in the war by the Germans), who stand aloof; but the sway of the supreme chieftain over the mountain-folk of West Crete is none the less a vast power.

I had already met this man in Canea, "Capetan" —such is the courtesy-title—Capetan Iannis Kalligerís. The local politicians spoke of him then and afterwards with a patronising smile as of a simple illiterate peasant who possessed withal some gifts of leadership of which they would gladly avail themselves. Little they understood that he was worth the lot of them and their progeny to the third generation. Next to Venizelos he was the biggest man in Crete, and

without him Venizelos himself could hardly have made history.

Illiterate, yes; but he took with him a trusty *aide-de-camp* who could read and write, and he himself carried a rubber stamp, a memento of the Balkan Wars, whereon he was described as Chieftain of the Cretans in Epirus, and this served as a seal for the messages he dictated. Simple too, and with the truest simplicity; when, after the revolution, in company with some other of the ship's officers I paid him a visit in his mountain home, he sent mules and an escort to bring us on our way, and received us on our arrival with a *feu-de-joie* fired with live cartridges in the streets of the village and from the windows of the cottages; but, when we sat down to table, his wife remained cooking and dishing up in the next room, and he himself waited on the company, carrying in with his own hands first a vast tray of assorted dry fruits and cheese, next a platter of boiled eggs calculated at four a-piece, and finally one boiled chicken each, and would not sit down, save to drink imperturbably our healths and many other toasts in raw distilled spirits, until the edge of our hunger should be less keen. His home was but a good-sized cottage; the door opened off his now depleted poultry-yard into a living-room with a plain earthen floor and furnished only with a rough table, a settle against one wall, sundry common chairs, and some large chests to hold household-goods; a small kitchen opened off it, and there were a couple of bedrooms above, reached by what was more ladder than staircase from the living-room. True, it was temporary accommodation; his own cottage had been burnt down accidentally while

he was away leading the revolution, and when the news was brought to him, he asked no details but sent back word that he was busy. When he was free again, he had found this new abode. But he was quite satisfied with it till his own should be rebuilt. Yet this was the man whose word was law through the highlands of West Crete. Given such men, need the Ægean Republic have been only a dream?

At this moment however the reality was an approaching revolution, and I wanted to see Capetan Iannis about it. I sent him a message asking if he could meet me soon in the neighbourhood of Suda. He appointed ten o'clock next morning, 15th September, at the *café* on the Retimo road where I had conducted my earlier propaganda. The S.N.O. went with me, notwithstanding his official statement that we had no instructions to be other than neutral. We made a slight *détour* on the hill-side above the road, as if taking a morning stroll only, so that our direction on leaving Suda village should not be remarked, and descended to the road again when out of sight. The *café* itself, situated by the roadside, seemed a somewhat public place for our conference, but we meant at least to reach it without attracting notice. We need not really have troubled. Capetan Iannis had had his scouts out from early morning, and the road was quietly picketed. No person not wanted would intrude. Capetan Iannis with two of his most trusted chieftains was awaiting us, and a picturesque group they formed in all the bravery of Cretan dress and accoutrements under the big plane-tree beside the rivulet, with their mules tied up against the *café* wall in the background.

Our bows and salutes exchanged—these stalwart highlanders lack nothing in courtesy and dignity—and glasses of raw spirits set before us, we came to business. No words were wasted. We all wanted a revolution: we had met to discuss plans and apportion responsibilities. Capetan Iannis would command on land in the Canea area, with which we were first concerned, finding all the necessary troops and supplies, and arranging for internal communications by couriers for our own use, and for parties standing by to cut the inland wires if the moment came for isolating the town. We should control the sea, preventing any reinforcements reaching the Royalists in that way, and maintain external communications, as with Venizelos in Athens, or long-distance communications in the island, as between Canea or Suda and Candia. The general plan of action which commended itself to both parties was that Capetan Iannis should occupy all villages round Canea and picket all roads and paths, investing the place completely on the land side, while we watched the sea, until Venizelos himself should arrive or an order for the entry of Canea be received. Retimo and Candia were to be handled in the same way, except that the entry into those towns would be delayed until Canea was in our hands; the moral effect of our success there should react quickly on the situation farther east. Capetan Iannis was not personally responsible for operations in those areas, but his advice was certain to be accepted.

I asked Capetan Iannis how many men he would have at his disposal for investing Canea. His answer quietly and simply given was characteristic of the man: "If Capetan Iannis takes his gun and comes down

from the hills, five thousand men follow him." It was no boast, just a plain statement of fact. For Candia another four or five thousand would be available; for Retimo two thousand; for various other small ports or large inland villages detachments amounting in all to two or three thousand; total, as near as might be, fifteen thousand. They would bring their own rifles and ammunition, and food supplies (probably in fact bread and olives) sufficient for three days.

As for the capture of Canea, the most uncertain factor in the resistance which might be offered was the attitude of the battalion of Greek troops quartered there—about a thousand strong and equipped with six machine-guns. A mutiny was obviously desirable, and should be timed to precede immediately or to coincide with the insurgents' advance from their villages upon the town. As far as we knew, the Venizelist propaganda among the soldiers was going well. But you cannot hope for statistics in such a matter, and there is a high and constant risk that some soldier will reveal to his commanding officer the overtures that are being made. It was bound to remain the most uncertain factor which Capetan Iannis' generalship must face.

Then some mention was made of another dangerous factor in the situation,—the Mohammedan population of Canea. Capetan Iannis was at once ablaze. His manner had been hitherto so quiet and self-restrained that I had not suspected the fires hidden below. Now the lava overflowed. The Cretan code is an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, or preferably two. The Mohammedans were to him as the Amalekites. He mimicked in bitter irony the mealy-

mouthed speech of the "beys," as the well-to-do Mohammedans of Crete call themselves, and their feigned devotion to "our beloved King Tino"; it was strange to see how his own mountain dialect fell from him, and he spoke in mimicry the speech of educated men; and then from ridicule he passed to full-blooded cursing. His own brother, a priest, had been hanged by the Turks in Canea some twenty years before. The day of vengeance was at hand, and he exulted in it. The outburst opened my eyes to a danger worse than any Mohammedan resistance,—the danger of excesses by our own allies. Fighting we expected; reprisals on a Cretan scale for Turkish atrocities of twenty years ago were no part of our programme. Nor did it quiet my anxiety on this score when a day or two later I saw a list of the proscribed, containing the names of three military officers, the editors of the two Royalist papers, several politicians, and a number of influential Mohammedans.

I had learnt more of Crete in that one wayside conference than in all my comings and goings in Canea. The population of Greek towns degenerates fast; but here in the mountain fastnesses was a virile race,—material not the less fine because inflammable. Only no more fuel was now needed: we were playing with fire, and were more like to need an extinguisher. I could but hope that the Candia contingent was less volcanic. George Marís, their leader, a doctor and a deputy, whatever his Cretan instincts might be, should have political perception enough to see at least the inexpediency of wholesale massacre. Moreover the Royalist party there had undoubtedly been disorganised by the arrest of Eleutheriádis and the ensuing

revelations; and there were no troops there to constitute an unknown factor. Once Canea was in our hands, Candia should be an easier prey. As for Retimo, I hardly doubted that it would capitulate without trouble to a force of two thousand insurgents.

The days passed, and still no instructions came from the Legation or any other authority. But I did not want any now; we were too deeply committed. We learnt afterwards that the Legation believed that the Foreign Office would acquaint us through the Admiralty with the policy to be pursued. But what the official policy, if any, may have been, I never heard. On 21st September indeed, when the movement was well under way, the Admiralty wired to us: "Athens reports that 3000 Cretans with rifles, 6 machine-guns, and 1,000,000 rounds ammunition may present themselves. French Government is prepared to accept them for service under Sarrail"; and, as an afterthought, a supplementary message ordered us to give to the French any necessary help in transporting these volunteers to Salonica. The message appeared both ill-informed and premature. By this time not 3000, but 15,000 Cretans had presented themselves with rifles, and not for service at Salonica, but nearer home; the six machine-guns happened unfortunately to be the property of our opponents; and some part of the million rounds might be expended at any moment. But that message was all the help anyone at home gave us. No one can accuse the Foreign Office of precipitating that revolution.

Is it not time that that necessary national institution should recruit its *personnel* among other than the butterflies, bright or dull, that hover gracefully enough

maybe, while young, on ambassadorial terraces, but, by some inverted parody of nature, are doomed to pass ere middle life into pupæ sealed within silken cocoons, whence the longer-lived emerge as caterpillars, tenacious and woolly, crawling from branch to branch of diplomatic life, till one veteran perchance reaches at random the top of the tree? *Quousque tandem,* old caterpillar, *abuteris patientia nostra?* When will you learn to use as your emissaries to foreign climes not butterflies only, but bees who work unsleepingly, who bring their honey home, and who at need can sting?

PART IV.—IN FULL FLOOD

But from another source an urgent message reached us. An emissary from Venizelos told us to expect him on 19th September or at latest on 20th September: an agreed telegram of conventional greetings would signify his actual departure from Piræus. On the 19th, in expectation of the telegram, word was passed for the gathering of the clans, and by the early morning of the 20th they were in occupation of the villages assigned to them, and the roads from Canea were picketed.

In the course of the day news reached us of a premature outbreak at Vamos, a small inland town some fifteen or twenty miles from Suda, and served by the main road to Retimo. The place was already in the insurgents' hands, and the excitement caused by the event was certainly conducive to an outbreak round Canea too. The insurgents at Vamos had not cut the wires to Canea, so that the military and civil authorities there were now alive to their danger, and a

report came in that emplacements were being prepared for the six machine-guns to command the main approaches to the town. A telegram was sent to Venizelos setting forth the situation, and in the hope that he would hasten his departure. He was angry about the Vamos outbreak, but merely bade us wait.

The next day, Thursday, 21st September, there was a conference at the Italian Consulate in Canea about the protection of foreign residents. It was agreed that we should continue to hold the arsenal at Suda open as sanctuary for any unarmed refugees, foreign or native, and that a sloop or trawler, which was required off Canea in any case to watch the harbour, should receive on board the Consuls and their families or any other foreigners.

About noon grave news reached me from the friendly officers of the troops in Canea. They believed that that evening their colonel purposed to give them such orders as they would be forced to disobey, and their disobedience would be the occasion for their arrest and the replacement of them by Royalist officers. A reply was sent back begging them not to let themselves be caught in a trap of which they were forewarned, and a second telegram was sent to Venizelos representing the gravity of the situation and urging the need of haste.

That afternoon I felt that a crisis could not be long delayed, and induced the S.N.O. to let me wire to the Vice-Admiral for permission to set up a military censorship over all messages passing in and out of Crete by the Eastern Telegraph Company's cables. The fact that the Allies had set up a censorship at Piræus a few days earlier mitigated the proposal,

which might thus appear as an extension only of a principle already sanctioned; and in that sense I framed the request, pointing out that the same powers exercised by us in Crete would enable us to keep in touch with the movement in progress. I confess that the telegram revealed only half my motive; if things should go smoothly, it was still clearly an advantage to read and, if necessary, to delay the communications of the other side; but in the event of a crisis, if things should go seriously wrong, the power to cut off all external communication other than our own, and to leave the world in general and Athens in particular unenlightened until we had righted the situation or Venizelos had escaped from Athens, might prove our salvation. The same evening I had a confidential talk with the manager of the Eastern Telegraph Company's Canea branch, on whom I knew I could rely, and made provisional arrangements.

Friday, 22nd September, brought disquieting news from Candia. Some two thousand Venizelists, nearly half our force in that district, had entered the town but were far from having secure control of the place. Details were lacking, and indeed no one on the spot really knew what was happening. There was general confusion and alarm, and the streets were full of armed men, but no actual fighting was in progress; yet obviously any incident might provoke a conflict. As far as we could judge, George Marís must have lost control of half his men, who had grown impatient of waiting outside the town and had walked in unopposed. A sloop and a trawler were sent to Candia in readiness for any emergency pending the receipt of further information on which we could act.

At Canea the situation remained as grave as on the previous day. Our friends among the military officers had indeed avoided giving any excuse for their arrest, but the delay was clearly injurious to our hold upon their men. If once the feeling should begin to spread through the barracks that the revolutionary movement was in danger of failing, the fainter-hearted and the more indifferent would hesitate to commit themselves to open mutiny. The political leaders in the town were indeed so anxious concerning the effect of further waiting, that they asked us to transmit a telegram from them to Venizelos describing the situation and ending peremptorily, "We must have instructions." The situation was further aggravated in the course of the day by one of the Royalist newspapers. It contained a derisory article, mocking the insurgents as mere marauding bands who would not have the pluck to enter the town in face of the preparations made to receive them, but warning people living on the outskirts to keep their poultry well locked up at night and a dog unchained.

When copies of this paper found their way out of the town into the hands of the insurgents, and the gist of the mockery was passed from mouth to mouth, feeling ran high. There was one touch of truth in it which enhanced the ridicule. Food was running short among our irregulars; their three days' rations were nearly consumed (Venizelos had been apprised of this difficulty too); and, as it happened, the cordon had been drawn closer about Canea, so that the poultry-yards of the outskirts were no doubt a temptation: such visible supplies as could be furnished by the villages where the first concentrations had taken

place were presumably now exhausted. I was ashore till late that evening exhorting to patience and trying to ascertain whether any more food was forthcoming.

I returned on board about eleven o'clock, just in time, I remember, to get some food for myself before the servants turned in and the bar was closed. There was a signal from Athens just arrived,—Venizelos' reply to our telegrams of the morning. Nothing, it said, was to be done until he should arrive in person at Canea; his arrival would not be long delayed; in the meantime he would be responsible for the sustenance of his supporters. "Financially responsible, I suppose," I commented to myself; "and as for nothing being done till he arrives, the business of finding food to buy won't leave us idle." I was getting intolerant of this mischievous delay, and had no notion what could be causing it. Later I learnt that Admiral Coundouriotis, who was to accompany Venizelos, hoped by his personal influence, deservedly great since the Balkan Wars, to bring away with him the whole or a large part of the Greek fleet. The project failed; Royalist sympathies among the naval officers were far too strong; only one or two small ships slipped their anchors and stole away. Yet I will not say that the project was not worth the risk which Venizelos took in Crete, though his decision might have been modified had he known in what volume and force the current of revolution was running since the streams had met.

I passed the message, if I remember rightly, by telephone (we had a private line, and the risk was comparatively small), to our Vice-Consul in Canea for immediate communication to the Venizelist leaders there, who would have to provide the funds for dis-

tribution on the morrow. We clearly could not cart food in large quantities out of Canea, and I hoped that the sight of ready money in the outlying villages would open up private stores in which the produce of the harvest lay concealed. Then I considered the remainder of the telegram. The message passed to Canea was from Venizelos to his representatives there; but the Legation had added a confidential suggestion for us. "It would be advantageous," so they phrased it, if all communication by wire or shipping from Crete to the mainland could be prevented until Sunday night.

So Venizelos proposed to leave Piræus on Sunday night, two days hence, and would arrive in the course of Monday. "It would be advantageous" if the military censorship of cables, for which I had asked the Vice-Admiral's permission the previous afternoon, could operate meanwhile. In other words the V.A., who had not yet replied to us, had been consulting our Minister in Athens, who had probably replied to him, as he now wired to us, that "it would be advantageous" —provided that some one else, so I read it, would bear the responsibility. As for the shipping, it would clearly not be used for couriers as long as the cable was open to our opponents; the situation was changing too rapidly from day to day and hour to hour for dispatches sent by a seven- or eight-knot coasting steamer to have much value on delivery. Even with the cable in our hands, it was difficult to see how our opponents could really make much of their one remaining resource; possibly a steamer or caïque to the nearest island possessing a cable might be better than nothing. Still if the Legation thought that "it would

be advantageous," on our own responsibility *bien entendu,* that we should institute a blockade of outgoing craft as well as a military censorship of cables, why not? I was in for the devil of a row now anyway, if things went wrong; and if I pulled through, —well, secret service must not look for open recognition; it is a game without prizes; there is no Distinguished Lying Cross.

I allowed myself in fact the relief of a healthy grumble; and it was the "Chief" (*i.e.* the Engineer-Commander) who, having sat on with me in the ward-room when I came aboard for a late supper, was thus rewarded for his kindness. He was an understanding man, and knew perhaps the signs of overwork at the end of a long hot summer. I did not intend to take any further action on the telegram from Athens that night; a signal from the Vice-Admiral containing definite orders on the same lines ought to be in shortly. The best thing at present was to get some sleep; and we were smoking a last cigarette before turning in, when just at midnight my chief agent came aboard.

His news was brief and precise. Our friends had orders to close in on Canea by 4 a.m. when a number of our leading opponents were to be massacred and the Turkish quarter burnt. The crisis then had come, and the most strenuous part of the game must be played in the next four hours. The news hardly surprised me. I knew the insurgents' impatience of delay, reasonably augmented on this occasion by their desire to return home for the work of the vintage. I knew their scarcity of food. I knew the excitement aroused by some fool of a journalist's derision. Only a select few of their leaders knew definitely that

Venizelos was coming. Apart from that fact, there was every reason to finish the work this night and to have food in abundance on the morrow. Presumably Capetan Iannis had chosen this course as the lesser of two evils; perhaps he had not realised that if there were a massacre in Canea and the news of it reached the Royalists in Athens, Venizelos would never leave Athens alive.

I must go ashore in any case, I felt, and it might be well to be not too conspicuous. While I shifted from white uniform into khaki, I thought out the possibilities. There was no time to be wasted. I could not report to the S.N.O., as I should have been bound to do had he been in the ship. But he was sleeping ashore these nights; his wife was ill, and his house in Suda village was the only available refuge for the Consuls' wives and families, should they be driven to make a move in the night-time. I could not spare the time to go and knock him up: I must act first and report afterwards.

To get in touch with Capetan Iannis and persuade him to cancel the orders seemed the obvious course, if it were practicable. His headquarters were at Mourniés, Venizelos' native village, some six miles from Suda by road,—less across country, but then the night was dark and to miss the path would be fatal. I might get ashore and cover the six miles by 2 a.m., hardly earlier. Then, if Capetan Iannis were there, there might be just time for couriers across country to head off the contingents closing in from the villages upon the town. But if he were not there, if he should already have moved up to some advanced position and I had to track him for another hour or two,—the risk

was too great, and I cast about for a better plan. The massacre and the burning of the Turkish quarter must be averted. But how? By warning Canea of its danger? It is a pretty point in military ethics, I grant you. Our allies were breaking Venizelos' direct orders, and were meditating unpardonable excesses, leaving us deliberately unwarned and yet implicated. Could that situation justify intelligence with the enemy? I did not argue the point with myself then. My instinct said, "No; intelligence with the enemy is treachery in any case, be the conduct of allies what it may"; and to that view on maturer reflection I still hold.

Should I then write to Capetan Iannis, and send couriers enough with copies of my letter to ensure the delivery of one wherever he might be? The writing of several copies would take time; the desired number of couriers might not be available at this hour; and, most cogent point of all, the written word would not have the same effect as the spoken. Face to face I believed that I could turn Capetan Iannis from his purpose; but would a note, read to him by his *aide-de-camp,* command the same attention? No; the personal element would be needed to turn the scale: he was breaking even Venizelos' written orders. And then, while I was being rowed ashore, the thought flashed into my mind, would Capetan Iannis have been breaking Venizelos' written orders if he had fully understood the motive of them? If he had realised, for example, that the massacre in Canea would imperil Venizelos' life in Athens? A really explicit telegram from Venizelos would save the situation even now. If a telegram should arrive imparting to Capetan

Iannis and his chieftains as much confidential knowledge as I now possessed, and confirming my judgment of Venizelos' motive in ordering us to stay our hand till his arrival, the massacre would be averted. It might run, "Maintain complete quiet and order till I come. Any disturbance or outbreak will seriously imperil my chance of leaving Athens. Expect me within three days." It would not take long to write and circulate copies of that message, and there was no chieftain but would obey orders so expressed.

It would be a bold stroke to play, but on the whole the safest. There were certain objections to the thing in itself. The opening of my message "Following urgent telegram from Venizelos to leaders of movement just received" would be a lie, though I trust that Plato would have classed it as a "noble lie." The British rule-of-thumb commandment, to which also one distinguished American subscribed, "thou shalt not tell a lie," is an admirable working principle in private life, and would be, I think, in public life too. Much of our repute among other nations rests on the belief that an Englishman does not lie for his own private advantage. But the state of war must relax this like other commandments in the public interest. Plato's study of the ethics of falsehood elucidates the governing principle. "The veritable falsehood then," he says (meaning thereby moral ignorance and self-deception), "is hateful alike to gods and to men. But what of the verbal falsehood? When and for whom does it possess such utility as not to merit hate? Does it not prove its utility as a weapon against our enemies, and as a medicine for those who are called our friends, to turn them from any deed to which in madness or

any want of understanding they are setting their hand?" The present position of Capetan Iannis and his friends could hardly be more accurately defined: a dose of the useful medicine was needed quickly.

The objection to the body of the false telegram might appear graver. Every word of it was true, but the information to be divulged was confidential, and a breach of confidence is, I suppose, the unpardonable sin in an Intelligence Officer, and liable to be visited with Heaven knows what penalties. And yet that short sentence "Expect me within three days" was worth adding. It would distinguish this telegram from the previous exhortations to unlimited waiting, and would give the final touch of verisimilitude to the whole message. It was no good spoiling the ship now for want of a hap'orth of tar.

As for the possible consequences, if the leaders should be indiscreet or be forced to explain to their men the reason for turning back at the last hour,—if it should become generally known to the insurgents and, by means of an enemy informant or two in the villages, to the Royalists also, that Venizelos was due to start from Piræus on Sunday night,—that news, if it were passed to Royalist circles in Athens, would jeopardise his liberty if not his life; but not more so than if there were a massacre and the news of that went through. In preparation for either event alike, success or failure, communications with Athens must be stopped: the censorship of cables must commence forthwith, and, to stop the last chance of leakage, a blockade of outgoing traffic by all means.

By the time I reached my agent's house, my

mind was made up. I sent him to wake and fetch a messenger whom I could trust; and while he was gone I wrote two copies of the fateful telegram. The agent himself should take one to the Venizelist leaders inside Canea with an urgent request that copies should be sent out by every road and path to the leaders of the several contingents: messengers radiating thus from the centre must meet the converging parties even if they were already on the march. My other man should carry a copy direct to Capetan Iannis at Mourniés, or follow him up till he found him. "Ianni," I said when he arrived (he was one of the many of that name), "this paper which you will carry to Capetan Iannis at Mourniés or wherever else he may have gone is a matter of life and death. Go by the quickest road and let no one delay you. If a picket holds you up for want of a password, you may show them what I have written. No one must detain you longer than that. The paper you will hand to Capetan Iannis himself at all costs." "I will take a rifle," he said (we had one at hand), "and no one will detain me." Then the agent too left, with his instructions and revolver, in a cab which he had somewhere found, and I returned on board.

It was a little after one: the last hour had sufficed for a decision rapidly formed and the first step towards its execution. It remained to secure the communications with Athens. I rang up our Vice-Consul at Canea and asked him to fetch the manager of the Eastern Telegraph Company from his bed, and to let him speak to me on the consulate telephone. It was about two o'clock when the call came; I had had plenty of time to cogitate any details of the censorship-

scheme for which I had not already provisionally arranged; but there was nothing intricate. "Orders," I said, but I did not mention whose, "orders are that the military censorship of all cable-messages to and from Crete comes into force from the time of this notification. I am afraid that the hour is inconvenient; but will you please go direct to the company's offices and give the necessary instructions? Wire Candia that the line *via* Syra is not to be used for outgoing messages, which, along with any messages received by that line, must be passed to you for transmission abroad or delivery in the island as the case may be. These, as well as all messages passing through the Canea office in the ordinary course, you will transmit to the ship for censorship (we had a private direct wire connecting us with the E.T.C.). I will provide for continuous censorship night and day, and release batches of messages by their numbers as arranged."

The continuous censorship was going to mean some hard work; and the E.T.C. operators on board were likely to be kept in practice. They however could probably be reinforced next day; the censorship must be divided between the two of us who knew Greek. My fellow Intelligence Officer had been tied to his bed for some days past with a badly damaged knee. He must do day-duty, say from 8 a.m. till midnight, if I were busy with other things on board or, as was more likely, ashore, and I must deal with telegrams, or those marked "urgent" at any rate, at intervals during my sleeping hours. I woke him and explained matters, and he offered for duty for the remainder of this night as soon as the inrush should begin. I stirred up the nodding operator too, and told him

that the tedium of his night-watch would shortly be relieved.

Then I went ashore again, and took with me the signal from the Legation. I felt that the S.N.O. might jib next morning if I delayed so long to show it to him and to mention the fact that a military censorship was in working order. Besides I wanted authorisation for a blockade. I might have exceeded the limits of my discretion already, but I drew the line here. It was not so urgent either.

All went well, and the blockade was authorised,—not under that name, of course; we could be diplomatic sometimes; but all ships of the squadron were warned to detain, and to send in to Suda as convenient, all shipping leaving Crete; the right of search would be exercised for the present at Suda. A little delay in exercising the right would affect all we wanted. But I did not mention to the S.N.O. or to anyone else the little episode of the spurious telegram. An accomplice, even after the fact, may have qualms. Personally I felt none.

Nor, when I returned on board and found the censorship already in operation, did I feel much anxiety either. Were this not a veracious chronicle, I should at this point have depicted myself tossing for a while feverishly in my bunk, then climbing on deck and restlessly pacing the bridge, gnawing a moustache grown suddenly for the purpose in defiance of the King's Regulations, impatiently throwing away good cigars half smoked and lighting fresh ones, straining my ears for the rattle of musketry in the direction of Canea and starting at the sound of an anchor-cable running out, fearful lest that red glow

which I could descry in the heavens (due in fact to the sun, which rises in the east) were the reflection of a raging fire in the Turkish quarter of Canea (which lay due west). But as a matter of fact I slept very nicely, thank you.

My agent woke me. He had not slept. He had waited in Canea until the messengers sent out from the centre should return and report their task completed. He had also seen my messenger Ianni, who had covered his five miles or more across country in the dark in an hour, and had found Capetan Iannis still at Mourniés. All had gone well, but it had been a near thing: some of the messengers had met their contingents on the march. "Well done, Alexander," I said, "and tell Ianni he did splendidly. We shall have no more trouble here for a day or two." "But what about Athens, sir," he said, "if they hear there, what everyone here knows now, that Venizelos is coming?" "That is all right," I said; "communications were under control by 3 a.m."; and I explained to him how we stood. There was no fear that any secret would pass his lips. The whole story of what had happened that night and what might have happened was known then and long afterwards only to him and to me.

As for myself, I had established in my agent's esteem a reputation as a master-liar with a capacity for forestalling evil consequences, and he expected me to live up to it. Some three months and more later, when the Provisional Government was now firmly established, he came to me with a pitiful tale. Ianni, my messenger of that troubled night, had been sent to investigate some unusually circumstantial reports of

the visit of an enemy submarine to a point of the coast not far from Suda Bay. He had taken a gun and was ostensibly out to shoot partridges for the Canea market. But a shrewd gendarme patrolling the coast had viewed his doings with suspicion, because he was exploring certain caves on the suspected portion of the coast, and caves are not the usual haunt of partridges. So Ianni, protesting the innocence of his doings, was none the less hailed off to justice and was ultimately lodged in prison at Suda. This he would have borne with a good grace, as incidental to the service on which he was employed, had it not now been New Year's Eve; but his wife was in tears at the thought of his separation from her on that festival, and in any case we could not leave him in prison indefinitely.

Now, though the gendarmerie were at this date friendly to us, I had ample reasons for not wishing them to know that Ianni was in my service; I might for example need information about certain members of the local police-force itself; and my chief agent, who realised this, recounted to me the details of Ianni's misfortune, and his own perplexity to devise a means of escape without telling the truth. "Monsieur," he ended, "I cannot think of a good lie; I have come to you."

Clearly my reputation was at stake, and I had to maintain it. I pondered the matter. Then, "Alexander," I said, "the common-folk here attach much importance to dreams, do they not?" He assented at once; belief in dreams is a marked feature of Greek superstition everywhere. "Very well then," I said, "let Ianni ask for an interview with the

superintendent of police, and embroider with local colouring the following story: 'Mr. Superintendent,' he will say, 'I want to tell you the truth. I was not on a shooting expedition, as I said; that was only an excuse. What happened was this, but I beg that you will not tell people here; they would laugh at me for the trouble into which my dreams have brought me. I dreamt for three nights in succession the same dream. I was standing on a cliff and saw a strange-looking boat heading straight towards me, and it disappeared into the cliff below my feet. I climbed down, and found there a large cave, but the strange ship was not in it; it had disappeared. But as I groped about in the darkness I found at the end of the cave a sack, and it was full of gold. And thereupon each time I woke.

" 'Now I wondered day after day what this dream could mean, till I chanced one evening in a *café* to see a newspaper showing a silhouette of just such a strange ship as I had seen in my dream; and I read below that it represented a submarine, and that the English would pay two thousand pounds in gold for information leading to the destruction of such a ship (an advertisement to this effect was regularly published in a Canea newspaper). So I knew then what the sack of gold had meant, and I told my wife that I was going away shooting for a few days, and I was searching the coast for a submarine when the gendarme arrested me. Please let me go, Mr. Superintendent, and say nothing to anyone, or they will laugh at me.' "

My agent obtained an interview with Ianni, and Ianni in turn with the superintendent of police. Ianni was a plausible and effective *raconteur,* and was

free to dry his wife's tears that evening. I had saved my reputation in my agent's eyes, and, when later the superintendent himself retailed to me Ianni's confession as a typical illustration of native superstition, I felt that I had deserved it.

But I must return to the morning when I first made it. Hardly had my agent left me, when there arrived a note from Capetan Iannis, dated not from Mourniés but from another village to which he had moved since 2 a.m.,—so that I wondered how he too had spent his night. It was laconic.

"Nerokouro,
10 (*i.e.* 23) *September* 1916.

"Dear Mr. Admiral,—We received your note of Mr. Venizelos' telegram. We thank you very much, and we will act strictly in accordance with the instructions which he gives us.

"To-day some of our army will come for a walk to Suda.

"We will preserve order as far as possible.—Yours, etc., The Chieftains,

"Captain Kalogerís
"Charalambos Th. Ploumidakis."

I wonder how far Captain Iannis suspected me of any knowledge of the previous night's doings. The part of his army which came for a walk to Suda had orders from him to stop there. Were they offered in any sense as hostages, in surety that no further move should be made without our knowledge? I cannot say. I met him many times afterwards, but the subject of that night was not one which either of us

could conveniently approach. It may be that he sent them only in the hope of opening up new food supplies. I was ashore in the forenoon talking to them, and the distribution of money for sustenance, a franc daily apiece, was proceeding. There was perfect quiet and order, as his letter had promised.

PART V.—WORKING TO TIME

It was just as well that Canea was now tranquil; for it was the turn of Candia to give us trouble. A little before noon one of the Canea committee, who had been meaning to come on board, espied me in the village street, where I was chatting with the new arrivals, and gave me news received by telephone from Candia. The two thousand Venizelists reported on the previous day as having penetrated into the town were in a parlous state. They were short of both food and ammunition. They were indeed patrolling the streets and in occupation of the ramparts; but an armed body of Royalists had massed outside the town, cutting off the Venizelists within from communication with the rest of their comrades in the villages round about. The shops were shut, and though the Venizelist patrols were strong enough to keep the Royalists of the town shut up in their houses and unable to concentrate, the latter might open fire from their windows on the patrols at any time, and were refraining from doing so, it was supposed, only through fear of being the first to provoke an attack and so getting their houses burnt down. It was an unstable deadlock; but, whether the Royalists knew it or not, the continuance

of the deadlock would tell against the Venizelists: without ammunition they could not break out of the town; without food they could not stay in it. It was proposed, my informant said, to supply them with ammunition that night, so that they might rejoin their comrades in the villages next morning. The gist of the matter was,—would we lend a trawler to run the ammunition through?

This meant implicating ourselves fairly thoroughly, considering that officially we had no instructions to be other than neutral; but the military censorship and the blockade were hardly neutral actions, and so why not a bit of gun-running, or whatever was wanted? I did not see why the S.N.O. should stick at anything now, so I made provisional arrangements. A trawler, I knew, was available.

A curious difficulty which arose was this. The envoy from Canea was insistent that the whole operation must be carried through under cover of dark. The Venizelists picketing the road from Canea, whence the ammunition would be supplied, and those quartered now in Suda village, could not be trusted to let consignments of cartridges pass through their midst even for the use of their fellow-insurgents elsewhere. Food could be sent through, however hungry they might be, if they had orders to let it pass; but no Cretan of the mountains could keep his hands off good cartridges. I had been so much impressed with the discipline of our friends that I thought this must be an exaggeration, and consulted the chieftain of our local contingent. He confirmed it, and absolutely refused to be held responsible for good order in the village if we carted ammunition through it in daylight.

I could but accept such a man's judgment. Acting upon it we should have only a bare twelve hours for the whole business; cartage from Canea to Suda arsenal; transfer by boat from the arsenal to a trawler (which could not come alongside any jetty); over six hours' steaming, even with good weather, to Candia; discharging into boats, with little light permissible, in the open sea outside Candia harbour; and distribution of the material ashore. It was not impossible; only every one must work to time. We arranged that closed cabs should be used for the first stage; they would be quicker and less remarked than a procession of carts. They would be driven straight through the village to the arsenal gates, which would be opened at once to admit them on presentation of a card which I initialled. Orders were also to be telephoned to Candia for some half-dozen heavy shore-boats to be lying off the harbour there three hours before sunrise.

The plan was approved by the S.N.O. and the necessary arrangements made for loading the trawler rapidly that evening. The skipper of the trawler was as keen as could be over his share in the proceedings, and meant to make a record trip to Candia. When darkness fell, every one concerned kept just ahead of time, but the skipper deserved most credit, for a heavy swell was running off Candia, as it often does, and he carried through the discharge of all his cases of ammunition into the shore-boats without loss or mishap; and the stuff had been delivered and served out ashore before dawn.

But before the hour for this operation had come, we spent an anxious afternoon. Reports kept on arriving at the Consulates in Canea by telephone from

their respective Vice-Consulates in Candia, which were retransmitted to the ship; and other messages too reached us from other sources. They were confusing and even contradictory. According to one firing had broken out; according to another the situation was critical, but no actual hostilities had begun. From what I learnt afterwards, I should say that the situation throughout that day was farcical, though it might have become tragic at any moment. Both Venizelists and Royalists were ardently hoping that no one would fire a shot and necessitate a reply. The Prefect (himself a Royalist, but chiefly concerned to obviate any street-fighting or destruction of property), the Chief of the Police, the several Vice-Consuls, and the British naval officer commanding the trawlers, accompanied by his native interpreter, were engaged all the forenoon in a series of conferences with each other and with the leaders of the two parties, Dr. Marís and Mr. Michaelidákis. By the intervention of these several authorities spheres of influence were arranged. Royalist patrols were to guard the outskirts beyond the ramparts; the Venizelist patrols, aided if you please by the police under the direction of Royalist officers, were to control the streets; while the Venizelists alone should keep possession of the ramparts and the harbour. The Prefect, to avoid any outbreak, even agreed to requisition food from some of the closed Royalist shops and to issue rations to the insurgents; but this promise, I believe, was never made good.

As the afternoon wore on, the Venizelists, many with empty stomachs now, became more and more despondent; and finally Dr. Marís, whose hold on his

men was apparently none too strong, asked our officer to negotiate with the Prefect for an armistice, during which the Venizelist leaders should disband their men and send them back to their own villages, and they themselves, having done this, should be guaranteed a safe-conduct aboard the British trawler. Our officer, who had failed to discriminate sufficiently clearly between our official and unofficial attitudes towards the revolution, and had engaged rather in what would have been admirable police-work had we been both officially and actually neutral, telephoned a message which reached me a little after four o'clock proposing to give effect to Dr. Marís' request at six, unless orders to the contrary were received in the meantime.

The S.N.O. was away somewhere, and the decision therefore rested with me. To consent would have meant the loss of Candia and the eastern half of the island before we had even occupied Canea or a shot had been fired. I replied, "Not approved. The Venizelists have their orders, and must carry them out. Further instructions await you aboard your trawler,"—these instructions being about supervising the military censorship at Candia. The sudden institution of the censorship had not become known to all our opponents, and illuminating messages were passing, or not passing, as we thought fit, between them and Athens. It was not a subject to mention yet on the telephone. The S.N.O. subsequently approved my action, and a signal to confirm and amplify my telephone-message was made by wireless. I had also telephoned a message for Marís urging him to hold out until the ammunition should reach him.

He held out, and by dawn, as I have said, the

ammunition was landed and distributed among his followers. As to what happened next, I am not quite certain; but I infer that, having withdrawn his men from the streets to the vicinity of the harbour in order to serve out the ammunition, he decided to hold the harbour only, for which a portion of them would suffice, and to push westward along the coast with the remainder, securing communications as they proceeded, so as to join up with a body of adherents camped outside in that direction, and so obtain food from the villages beyond. On this Sunday morning we certainly received a message from him for transmission to Venizelos which suggested that he was still in grave difficulties and could not hold out. *"Impossible de retenir les hommes,"* it said, *"au delá de dimanche soir";* but it was undated, and had, I imagine, been written about noon on the Saturday, before the increasing despondency of his men led him to suggest an armistice that same evening. For when we sent him an interim reply as it were, counselling him to use his own judgment as to the temporary disposal of his men, but to have them ready without fail on the Tuesday morning, he replied in far more cheerful strain. In the course of this Sunday one of the sloops, the *Peony,* took on board further supplies, mainly food-stuffs, for Marís, which were transshipped to a trawler lying off Candia on the next day, for landing in the course of the night before the possible operations on Tuesday morning should begin. By the Monday night we hoped to have Canea in our hands, and that success might make any armed conflict at Candia unnecessary.

PART VI.—THE SIX MACHINE-GUNS

On the whole this Sunday was the most quiet day we had had for some time, and, as the duties of the cable-censorship now broke up my night's rest to some extent, I was glad of some less crowded hours in which to clear up sundry arrears at my leisure.

Among other things a signal had at last been received the previous evening from the Vice-Admiral, in response to my request for leave to set up a censorship, approving the proposal subject to our protecting the interests of the Eastern Telegraph Co. as against the Greek Government, by giving them their orders in writing. We were able to inform the V.A. quite truly that the censorship had been set up the same day; there was no need to mention the exact time when it was set up, or that we had anticipated his wishes by sixteen hours; and a formal copy of my orders, as telephoned previously, was sent to the E.T.C. accompanied by a declaration that in obeying them they were acting under *force majeure*. The *force majeure* was represented at Canea by a trawler patrolling outside the harbour and by the proximity of Suda Bay; at Candia a British officer with an interpreter had been stationed in the E.T.C. office, and the trawler lying off the place was now reinforced by a French cruiser sent in response to a telegram which the French Vice-Consul there had addressed to Athens (unknown to us, and quite unnecessarily), demanding protection, when the insurgents first entered Candia on the Friday. I also received the same afternoon from the Venizelist leaders in Canea for transmission to Venizelos a very satisfactory account of the local

troops: nine-tenths of them were expected to declare for him. The proportion of the officers was less favourable, but we were counting on nearly half of them.

Our prospects for the following day were thus distinctly good. A mutiny inside the town, coinciding with the advance of the insurgents outside under Venizelos' own direction, should ensure the speedy capture of the place. There was only one factor in the situation which might be the cause of much bloodshed in the course of the operation: our opponents possessed six machine-guns. These were not in emplacements commanding the main approaches, as we had previously been led to expect, but were at headquarters under the eye of senior Royalist officers and, presumably, picked men. But there was necessarily much coming and going of all ranks at headquarters, and we had two or three men who had easy access thereto and might achieve our purpose. Our intention was to tamper with the six machine-guns and put them out of action on the eve of the mutiny before open hostilities began; and this Sunday night was therefore the appointed time.

What actually happened, I did not hear till next morning when the consequences had to be faced; but it was this. Two of our men were successful in gaining an entry and had dealt with three out of the six machine-guns, when one of the most determined Royalist officers (his name was one which I had seen on the list of the proscribed) caught them. He whipped out his revolver and fired several shots at them, clipping a bit off one man's ear but doing no further damage, and they made good their escape.

Rumour soon ran the round of the barracks that some half-dozen men had been killed or wounded by this officer, whom all the men hated. The mutiny broke out. The Colonel with upwards of twenty of his officers and some fifty or sixty men managed to concentrate in headquarters, a detached building, before it was surrounded. They disposed the three remaining machine-guns as best they could on the flat roof and elsewhere, but the back of the building, owing to a wall which gave cover to anyone approaching from that side, would have been practically defenceless even in daylight. The mutineers demanded their unconditional surrender. This was refused; but when in turn the Colonel asked for a short armistice to afford time for deliberation, the request was granted, and a Royalist council of war was held. The Colonel refused flatly to surrender to any of his rebellious junior officers. Many of his supporters were for fighting the matter out. But in the end, to avoid useless bloodshed, the Colonel offered to surrender to the Consuls of the four Allied Powers on conditions to be arranged through their mediation.

The four consulates were rung up, and about midnight the consular representatives of Italy, Russia, France, and Great Britain—that was their seniority, our recently appointed acting Vice-Consul attending in place of our Consul still detained at Athens, and being the junior in rank as well as the least conversant with the whole situation—arrived at headquarters. After negotiations protracted during several hours and involving much coming and going between headquarters and the room where the Venizelist representatives sat, a protocol was drawn up and signed.

The terms in brief were that the Colonel with his officers and men should surrender to the four Consuls and be placed under the protection of the Powers whom they represented; and that headquarters together with all arms, ammunitions, books, papers, and other appurtenances and contents, should be handed over to the custody of the same four Powers until the said Powers should determine what was to be done with them.

I had had a telephone message from our Vice-Consul about 2 a.m. to tell me that the mutiny had broken out and that the assistance of the Consuls had been invoked; but it was not till five in the morning that I received, by telephone again, a summary of the terms agreed. The Consuls wanted me to attend a conference at the Italian Consulate at 10. There was plenty to be done meantime. The latest turn of events had to be reported to the Vice-Admiral; a telegram received from Venizelos during the night, "I shall arrive Canea or Suda Bay on Monday evening, but shall not land. The meeting (*i.e.* for the declaration of the Provisional Government) will take place on Tuesday," had to be passed to the Venizelist leaders, and later to be supplemented by a signal, received from a French ship escorting Venizelos, announcing his arrival at Suda for 5 p.m.; and there was the usual pile of non-urgent telegrams, accumulated during the night, to be censored.

When I arrived at the Conference, I was not impressed with the practical ability of the consular corps. They had taken no steps to give effect to their promise of protection for the surrendered officers and men, and of the safe custody of headquarters.

Quite the reverse; they had dispersed all the officers to their own homes about the town, where we could give nothing but verbal protection, and had left the men under no one's charge at headquarters, free to pilfer or damage the contents for which the Allies had assumed responsibility; and now the only suggestion before us was that the Consuls should dispatch identic telegrams to their Legations in Athens, explaining the situation and asking for instructions. As Venizelos was due in seven hours' time and, even though his landing and the meeting were deferred till next day, we might reasonably look for some effervescence of feelings and of fire-arms that evening, some more active measure seemed requisite. To obtain joint instructions from four Legations within seven hours was really impossible,—within seven days would have been phenomenal, within seven weeks quite good. I expressed my views with some frankness.

What then did I propose, they asked me. I was ready to propose a considerable programme for the day if they would enable me to carry it through; so I countered with another question,—did any one of the Consuls suppose that the lives of all the officers and men under their protection were sufficiently safeguarded for the next twenty-four hours by the verbal guarantee given? They were unanimous in saying "No." Did they intend then to redeem their pledge by offering them the shelter of the Consulates, and taking in some twenty or more apiece? An equally unanimous "No." Did they then wish the S.N.O. to relieve them of their responsibility and to make all provision for carrying out the terms of the surrender?

Yes, they would welcome that. One more question (and a slightly delicate one, for a Consul proper ranks in dignity and precedence with a post-captain, and a lieutenant R.N.V.R. is probably on a level with an acting Vice-Consul or thereabouts): seeing that the matter was urgent, would they accept me as the S.N.O.'s representative and comply with my orders for the day? The Italian Consul who was my very good friend acquiesced willingly, and as he was *doyen* the others could not but follow suit; but it was really good of them to commit themselves to a stiff day's work when none of them had been to bed that night.

My plan was briefly to have a guard of marines or bluejackets under an officer sent up to headquarters at once to take charge there. "What flag will be hoisted?" said the Russian Consul, who had a taste for etiquette and red herrings. "All four," I said gravely; "one at each corner of the roof; and the Greek flag over the entrance." That red herring was scotched. The officers, I proceeded, must be notified to assemble not later than 2.30 at some centre—might we say the Italian Consulate? My friend the *doyen* consented. They must place themselves at the disposal of the S.N.O. entirely, and would in the first place be conveyed to Suda Arsenal. "But they will want to bring their wives and families," said some one. That was true; if a hue and cry were raised for the most hated officers by any drunken mutineers that evening, and they were not at home, their families would not be safe. Very good then; the assembly at the consulate would be larger, and we must have more carriages. The *cortège* would be conducted to Suda by an escort of bluejackets; and the moment

that we were clear of them, a roll-call would be taken of the men who had surrendered and were still at headquarters, and they would march to Suda under the escort of another party of bluejackets.

The first task was to notify officers and men of the arrangements made for them. The men's case presented no difficulty; one message sent at once to headquarters would give them ample warning, even if they too should wish to collect their wives and families. The officers on the other hand were at their own houses. The Consuls had a list of their names, and their addresses were forthcoming from a directory or some such source. They were to be portioned out into four zones, for each of which one of the Consuls would be responsible, driving round and seeing each officer personally—so the scheme gradually took shape—and requiring him to sign a short notice which we would type out at once.

While one or two of them mapped out the zones, I drafted a short notice: "The Senior Naval Officer assumes responsibility for giving effect to the protocol by which the lives of the officers who placed themselves under the protection of the four Consuls are guaranteed, on the condition that the said officers assemble not later than 2.30 p.m. at the Italian Consulate and hold themselves at the disposal of the British Naval Officer representing him." Then came the hitch: no one present could typewrite in Greek. The Consulate possessed a machine, but those of the Consuls who knew any Greek knew it for household purposes mainly, and were not competent to write in it; and the Consul's clerk too was away, taking part probably in the general confusion of the town. I

unfortunately had never used a typewriter, but had to volunteer for this duty. The Italian Consul arranged the instrument for the requisite number of carbon-copies, and stood by to control the mechanism while I laboriously fingered the keys, using capitals only, to avoid the further complication of accents, and telling him each time a word was completed. And all the while I felt we were wasting precious minutes, for the elaboration of the project had naturally caused some discussion and taken time.

But it was done at last, and if it was not a masterpiece of typography it was at least readable. Carriages had been called meantime, and the Consuls set out on their rounds.

I now got busy on the telephone, calling up the ship first, where the commander was soon at the other end of the wire. I asked him to explain to the S.N.O. that I was carrying on in his name, and what I was doing; and stated my requirements in guard and escorts. These the commander promised to send. Next I called up my agent in Suda village. A good deal had to depend on his activity. The risky part of the scheme lay in conveying the Royalist officers and men along a road picketed by the insurgents and through Suda village where two or three hundred of them were quartered. But the only alternative method of rescuing them would have been to ask for a trawler to embark them at Canea harbour, and I reckoned that a concentration of them on the quay for this purpose would expose us to worse risks than the land route to Suda. The town was full of the soldiers who had mutinied overnight, and their partisans there would be celebrating the occasion with them.

I learnt indeed in the course of the day, after my decision had been taken, that some of these soldiers were more in hand than I had expected. One of the Venizelist leaders had been down to Suda during the morning to ask for a trawler to carry two hundred and fifty of them with their officers to Candia as a reinforcement for George Marís; and the S.N.O. had sent him back to me with a message that a trawler could be provided if I saw no objection to assisting in the transport of the revolted troops. I was long past objecting to any form of complicity in the revolution, and the troops were duly sent. But I could not help picturing the consternation which our doings would have caused at the Legation in Athens had they been known. Within half an hour of this permission being given, our Consul turned up, having just arrived in a sloop from Piræus; and when I asked him why the sloop had not waited to escort Venizelos (we had assumed that she would do so), he informed me that the French were taking the responsibility for bringing Venizelos over. Truly our Legation was safeguarding itself and the Consul thoroughly from any suspicion of complicity. There were some cautious folk in the Foreign Office.

Nevertheless I think that the choice of routes was right; there were still some six or seven hundred soldiers about the town, and, even if their remaining officers could control them, there would be a large unruly element of civilian partisans with no officers nor chieftains to impose order. On the Suda road the chieftains could maintain discipline if they were warned betimes. I told my agent therefore to see the chieftain in Suda on my behalf, to explain in

detail what I was intending, to say that I had given my word for the safe-conduct of the Royalists, and to request that the route might be patrolled and picketed by trustworthy men as a precaution against any irresponsible outbreak. The same message was to be given to any chieftain at present in charge of any part of the route and, if possible, to Capetan Iannis. The officers' carriages would be due to leave the Italian Consulate at 3 p.m., but in case of delay my agent was to be at his telephone from that hour to receive a message from me as to the exact time of starting, and was then to bicycle at once up the road to Canea to pass the word and see that all was in order. Each batch of carriages would have a formal escort of bluejackets to indicate that it was under British protection.

There was only one more preparation to make,—the provision of carriages for an indeterminate number of persons. I went down into the town, and ordered the two companies who owned most of the carriages of the town to send me every vehicle they possessed to the Italian Consulate by 2.30, and snatched the opportunity to get a bite of food at a *café* while waiting for one of the carriages to drive me up to the Consulate again.

By the time I got back, our guests had begun to arrive, and the cabs in which they came were detained, whether they belonged to either of the companies or no; and gradually a scene of wonderful confusion developed. The officers had brought not only wives and families with a reasonable amount of baggage, but household gear of all sorts in hastily improvised bundles,—blankets, kitchen utensils, and even a few

iron bedsteads. They were all far too excited to sit in their carriages, and the road was strewn with impedimenta which had had to be removed before the occupants could struggle out; and up and down among the *débris* they surged, gesticulating and ejaculating, losing their children and their belongings, and searching the wrong cabs frantically to retrieve them.

The only orderly element was the carriages, which were marshalled, by the escort of a dozen bluejackets now arrived, into a *queue* heading towards the Suda road.

I have spoken of the Italian Consulate as being in Canea; more strictly speaking, it is in the suburb of Halépa, from which the main Suda road can be reached by skirting the town proper. A crowd had naturally collected to watch the proceedings, but no Greek crowd is very large or active in the heat of the early afternoon, and a few bluejackets easily sufficed to keep them back; once *en route* there was little fear of interference by the townspeople on the outskirts.

Somehow we ticked off the officers' names, and only two were missing,—one who had not been found by the Consuls, and another who was due to be married that evening. The wedding however was postponed, and he arrived in time to catch the last carriages. The hour for starting was now already past, and the Italian Consul offered to get the mob into their carriages with due regard to their dignity and precedence. Most of them being in plain clothes and unknown to me, I was only too thankful that he should. He was the only one of the consular corps who really worked incessantly. The Russian was

present in an ornamental way and engaged the Colonel and the leading ladies in polite conversation as at a *soirée*. The French Vice-Consul had gone to sleep on a sofa, while I was typewriting in the morning, and punctuated the proceedings with snores; and, after he had done his round in quest of the officers, the call of *déjeuner* had proved paramount. The British Vice-Consul had been withdrawn from further service when the Consul returned.

So the Italian set to work; but, as fast as he induced them to get into the carriages, they popped out into the roadway on the other side, to see where their friends were seated, or to find missing bags, and then mistaking their carriage came round clamouring and complaining that their seats had been appropriated by an officer or lady of less dignity. *"Comment ça va?"* I asked the Italian Consul, and he spread his hands in humorous despair. But it really was serious; we were badly behind time, and I wanted to have all these people in safety at Suda by 5 o'clock when Venizelos was due, or at any rate before dusk. So I asked the Consul whether I should try another method of filling the carriages with less regard to precedence, and he was thankful this time.

I passed word to the bluejackets that the carriages would start in batches of six at three-minute intervals. Three of the men would form the escort for each six. Any persons and any baggage were to be stowed in any carriage to the limit of its capacity, and no carriage was to stop for any purpose until it arrived in the arsenal: any passengers or goods that fell out would be picked up by the last carriage,—my own. Then I tried my device. "The first six carriages,

gentlemen, leave in three minutes," I shouted. There was a rush for them; the bluejackets piled promiscuous paraphernalia, wherever it would lodge, inside or out, and perched themselves grinning on top. They were off in less than the three minutes, as ramshackle a *cortège* as Crete will ever see. And so it went on,—next six carriages in another three minutes, next and next ditto,—and our four squadrons were under way. Only my own carriage remained. I left my Italian friend laughing as genially as any of the bluejackets at the successful pandemonium, drove round to headquarters to see that all was in order for the men to be marched down, thence to the house of the one missing officer, took him and his wife with me, and so reached Suda. The Venizelist patrols had been organised, and behaved admirably. I had not forgotten to have the hour of our actual departure telephoned to my agent, and the word had been passed. The only incident was that as the men marched down after me, accompanied by their escort under one of our officers, there had been a *feu-de-joie* by way of ironical salute from one knot of insurgents who watched them pass.

The S.N.O. met me in the arsenal and approved of what I had done, but seemed a little doubtful about the best means to entertain our guests. I had been pondering the same matter myself. The barracks would do for the men who were coming, but the officers and their families would need better accommodation. The unofficial blockade proved a blessing now. The *Peneos,* a Greek steamship, was among those awaiting examination, and I suggested that we should commandeer her. I went off and broke the

news to her captain that his ship was temporarily a floating hotel, and that dinner and beds were wanted at once for about seventy persons. Then the picket-boat and others got to work, and our guests and their baggage were deposited safe aboard the *Peneos*.

Venizelos' ship was late and not yet in. I had time for some dinner before she was reported, and then in company with our navigating officer went down the harbour to meet and board her. While the navigating officer brought her to her anchorage, I told Venizelos how things stood, and was glad to think (not quite correctly) that we were now relieved of our work. As a third party who had no instructions to be other than neutral, we had done a fair share toward furthering a bloodless revolution.

PART VII.—A PROBLEM OF JURISPRUDENCE

It was a relief to wake next morning free from any anticipations of massacres, mutinies, or other mischief. The Vice-Admiral provided a little quiet fun after breakfast by a signal informing us that Monsieur Venizelos, accompanied by Admiral Coundouriotis and several naval and military officers, would arrive in Crete this morning, Tuesday, to lead a movement in favour of action against the Bulgarians. We had been nourishing suspicions that something of this sort might be in the wind, and were glad to receive official confirmation of them, although we were still left in doubt what our correct attitude should be towards any local strife which might be apprehended. Another signal from the same source ordered us to remove all arms from military headquarters in Canea

to Suda Bay, so as to avoid maintaining a guard there; so clearly the possibility or fact of local strife had not been overlooked. This order could not safely be carried out at once, as it would have been tempting Providence, or at any rate our allies, to cart some seventeen hundred rifles and a quantity of ammunition through their midst. I had been warned once of their besetting sin.

I spent the forenoon in a cursory examination of the shipping which we had collected in the harbour, and, the blockade being no longer required, released them. The *Peneos*, being full of the Royalist officers and their families, constituted the only difficulty; but, just before Venizelos landed, I obtained from him the loan of the *Atrómetos,* in which some of his staff and followers had come (his own ship was the *Hespería*), and the Royalists were transshipped to her. They were a nuisance for some days, as we could get no orders as to disposing of them in spite of repeated signals both to the V.A. and to the Legation asking for instructions. Finally on 30th September, after five days' detention, we put them once more aboard the *Peneos,* which had been to Retimo and Candia and back, and was now bound for Piræus, and merely reported the action as taken.

After lunch Venizelos, who had been receiving the local leaders aboard the *Hespería* all the forenoon, went ashore in our picket-boat. I landed with him, and many of our officers were already ashore awaiting his landing, but none of us went on to the meeting at Canea. We were reverting to the *rôle* of interested and friendly spectators of an historic event, but it was not for us to do the shouting if a Provisional

Government should be proposed. Had not the press of Canea certified, not so long before, that we were blameless of any interference in domestic politics? So we saw Venizelos off in a flower-decked motor-car, lent and driven by my young French friend from Canea, with all the ramshackle vehicles of Canea and the neighbourhood racing through clouds of dust in his wake.

By the next morning, 27th September, the Provisional Government, to wit Venizelos and Coundouriotis to whom a third partner (General Danglís) was subsequently to be added, was installed in the best hotel, and Canea was in their hands without a shot being fired. But the position of Candia was still disquieting, and I was summoned to a conference.

The less said about that conference the better. I would omit all mention of it, were it not that the finale of this narrative would become inconsequent without it, and also that I had the opportunity of seeing that the new government consisted of two straight-dealing men. Suffice it to say that the political leaders in Canea had repented of the bad bargain they had made when Colonel Bákas and his officers surrendered. They saw now, what the Colonel had been acute enough to see then, that arms handed over to the custody of the four Allied Powers, until those Powers should determine what was to be done with them, were not likely to be immediately available for the use of the Venizelists; and they wanted those three intact machine-guns for use at Candia. They wanted them in fact so badly that they proposed to "vary" the terms of the surrender. The method of "varying" involved the suppression

of one document and the alteration of another. But the matter had passed out of the hands of the Consuls into those of the S.N.O. by virtue of my circular to the Royalist officers, and of a further formal confirmatory letter from the S.N.O. to the consular corps; and to this fact I owed my summons to the meeting. Venizelos and Coundouriotis, who naturally could not yet know all the details of recent affairs, were present to hear what could be done, and were most anxious in view of the military situation to have the machine-guns if it were possible.

But, to cut the story short, it was not possible without a breach of faith. I refused to consider the proposal or, when this was pressed, even to submit it to the S.N.O. To do so would be degrading to myself and insulting to him. Thereupon Admiral Coundouriotis made his sole contribution to the debate: "You are right," he said; and, Venizelos at once concurring, the proposal was defeated.

The discussion now turned to the possibility of obtaining the three machine-guns by legitimate means, —that is with the consent of the four Powers. As the S.N.O. had now, with the acquiescence of both Royalists and Venizelists, relieved the Consuls of their responsibility, a decision on this matter would necessarily be conveyed to us by the Vice-Admiral, under whose orders we were, and not by the Legations in Athens. This fact might make for a quicker decision; for the Vice-Admiral would be entitled to give orders on his own responsibility, if he wished, as representing the Allies as a whole in those waters. Pending his decision the machine-guns must remain in our custody; but there was nothing to prevent us from

making such arrangements as were convenient for handing over the machine-guns without further delay and at a suitable spot, should the Vice-Admiral's authorisation be received. I proposed therefore to Venizelos that we should at once submit to the Vice-Admiral his request for the guns (the V.A. knew of course already the conditions on which we held them), and meantime transfer to Suda both them and the rest of the arms at headquarters. At Suda they would be ready for shipping wherever desired. The removal of the arms had already been ordered by the V.A., and, if Venizelos would see that there was no interference by his partisans, we were anxious to give effect to the order as soon as possible.

Venizelos agreed to this, but wanted more. At Suda the machine-guns would still be a long way from Candia. Could nothing be done to have them ready at the spot where they would be wanted? I offered to send them by sea to Candia, and to deposit them, still in our custody, in the trawler lying off Candia harbour. This satisfied him, and I returned to Suda and reported. A signal was then made to the V.A., and the rest of the day was spent in making arrangements for removing the arms on the morrow. The provision of the necessary carts, mainly borrowed from the barracks, and of working-parties, entailed some organisation, and the *déménagement* itself would require a whole day. In the evening the V.A. replied refusing to give an answer with regard to the machine-guns until the whole of the arms had been removed, as ordered, to Suda. Next day, 28th September, we were able to report that this had been done, and that the naval guard had been withdrawn from head-

quarters, leaving all papers, etc., in sealed cupboards for which Venizelos had accepted responsibility.

On the morning of 29th September, the situation at Candia, though vastly improved in the course of the last five days, still caused much concern. The ammunition which we had run through before the dawn of Sunday the 24th had just saved an almost hopeless position; the food supplies and further ammunition sent two days later had put heart into our friends for a *coup,* if required, on the Tuesday; but no fighting had actually been necessary, for the arrival of the two hundred and fifty soldiers from among those who had mutinied at Canea so disheartened the Royalists, that those of them who meant to show fight abandoned the town, as they were free to do (the Venizelists being concentrated at the harbour and along the coast westward), and joined up with the other bands of Royalists outside the town on the south and east. Then on the 27th, the day on which the conference over the machine-guns was held, we had carried some three hundred more of these troops, at Venizelos' request, to Retimo (which needed a small garrison) and to Candia. The upshot was that Candia itself, with its government offices and means of communication, was as completely in the hands of the Provisional Government as Canea; but there was a force of Royalists, estimated at some two thousand, concentrated at a village east of the town and within easy striking distance.

Such was the position when in the forenoon of 29th September the Vice-Admiral's reply arrived. "The two machine-guns"—one of the three not tampered with had been found to be defective, so that

the issue of our local wars was hanging on two only—"the two machine-guns may be lent, if you consider it necessary for the maintenance of law and order, but are not to be used in a partisan manner."

The wisdom of the decree, I could not help feeling, was like the wisdom of our legislators who draft and sanction laws and leave the judges to interpret their meaning: and the interpretation was expressly left to us,—"if you consider." The S.N.O. authorised me to see Venizelos at once and practically left to me that interpretation. As I drove up to Canea, there was plenty of consideration to be done. "The maintenance of law and order" is obviously the first function of a government; but if that government styles its own self "provisional," is less than three days old, and is not recognised by a large body of opponents some of whom are still under arms to resist it, would an attack upon that armed force be a governmental or a partisan action? Were not the Royalists still lawfully under arms, so far as legality is compatible with revolution? Could not they justly claim to be championing the maintenance of law and order which an insurrection had upset? It is a nice point of political jurisprudence, but from a common-sense point of view I judged that an attack upon the Royalist force outside Candia would be a partisan act.

On the other hand the Provisional Government was a government *de facto,* if not yet *de jure.* It had not been recognised by any other government, as a government *de jure* should be; but *de facto* it controlled by now the civil and military administration of the island; the former prefects and mayors had accepted its authority, or had been replaced by others

who did; the chief towns with their municipal officers, telegraphs, and police were in its hands. It was justified then in using every resource at its disposal, including the military, to discharge the first function of government, the maintenance of law and order. If therefore the Royalists concentrated outside Candia should disturb public order by attacking the place, the government, as such, would be not merely at liberty, but actually under the obligation, to use force —machine-guns and all, if they had any—to repel and defeat them.

In fact if the Provisional Government were recognised as a government, we might lend them the machine-guns for the discharge of a government's function, and for no other purpose. So I summed it up. Could we then recognise this *de facto* government? It seemed to me that if I should take this last presumptuous step, I should be inviting rebuke for myself and possibly repudiation for my signature: even ministers plenipotentiary so-called may not sign such documents without instructions from home; but on the other hand weeks would pass (as indeed they did) before the Foreign Office would have taken sufficient cognisance of the *fait accompli* (the one argument which never fails of final, if tardy, effect in the diplomatic world) to accord the recognition needed now.

Yes, but there was still one way of escape. Why should we not accept from Venizelos and Coundouriotis a written statement in which, after describing themselves as the *de facto* government of Crete, they should undertake to use the machine-guns, if lent to them, solely in discharging the government's first function,

the maintenance of law and order? Any partisan use of the guns, such as for an attack upon the Royalists, could be explicitly ruled out by the terms on which the loan was made.

Such was the proposition I made to Venizelos when I had shown him the Vice-Admiral's reply; and sitting in the *salon* of the hotel overlooking Canea quay and harbour, the same room in which I had awaited the hour for our raid on the Sourourzadé brothers not many weeks before, and had more recently had converse with Mr. Eleutheriádis' emissary, we drafted together the following document.

"GOUVERNEMENT PROVISOIRE.

"LA CANÉE,
"le 16/29 *Sept.* 1916.

"A Monsieur le Capitaine de Vaisseau,
Commandant l'Escadre Anglaise,
à la Sude.

"Nous soussignés, formant actuellement le gouvernement de fait dans l'île de Crète, et étant maîtres de la ville de Candie, nous engageons, si Monsieur l'officier naval supérieur à la Sude nous remet les mitrailleuses qui lui ont été confiées, de ne les employer que pour soutenir le bon ordre dans le pays, c'est à dire, pour la défense de l'état des choses établi et non pas dans le but d'une attaque. Il est bien entendu que ces mitrailleuses seront à la disposition de Monsieur le capitaine de vaisseau pour lui être remises dans le cas où il nous en ferait la demande.

"E. K. VENIZELOS,
"P. COUNDOURIOTIS."

I returned with this document to Suda, having promised that, if the S.N.O. should be satisfied with the undertaking, we would make a signal to the trawler at Candia to hand over the guns to Venizelos' representative, who would be instructed by him meanwhile as to the strict conditions governing their use. To make assurance doubly sure, we exacted from the military commandant at Candia, when he took delivery, a receipt for them specifying the conditions in similar terms.

Awaiting me at Suda I found a further signal from the Vice-Admiral: "Any *de facto* governments established in Crete, Mytilene, Lemnos, and Chios may be recognised unofficially." Once more I was happy to think I had anticipated his wishes with precision; there had been something quite unofficial about the proceedings. Whether I ought to have emphasised that aspect of the negotiations by wearing a claw-hammer coat, as consular propriety afterwards prescribed, I leave as an unsolved problem.

A day or two later Venizelos asked me verbally whether it would be in accord with the provisions of our agreement to make a military demonstration, in which the two machine-guns would have a place of honour, in the vicinity of the village where the Royalists were still concentrated. I replied that if the demonstration did not approach the village so nearly as to provoke an attack, but merely exhibited the machine-guns at a distance well out of range, there could be no objection; but that, to obviate any possible indiscretion on the part of the officer conducting the demonstration, it would be preferable that the machine-guns should be exhibited unac-

companied by their ammunition. This was done; and the Royalist resistance in the village collapsed like the walls of Jericho, but without the machine-gun party completing even one circuit.

And the rest of the acts of the Provisional Government, and the islands that they won to their cause, and their recognition by the Foreign Office, and the mustering of their troops at Salonica, and the dethronement of Constantine, and the victory of the Cretan and Serres divisions on the heights of Doiran, are they not written in the chronicles of "our special correspondent"?

CHAPTER VI

THE CONQUEST OF CERIGO

PART I.—AN UNAUTHORISED STROKE

It might have been expected that the success of the Cretan revolution would have heartened the Allied governments to take some decisive and effective action in Greece proper. But our Foreign Office at least was still officially advised that a reconciliation between Venizelos and the king was not beyond the power of our skilled diplomacy, and the general disunion of the four Great Powers concerned prevented the presentation of any ultimatum. Notes of course continued to flow in, sometimes semi-officially described as penultimata or antepenultimata, but the king and his clique rightly estimated them as scraps of paper, and kept the Allied Legations diverted and divided by a specious haggling over details; while we, who had done our work in despite of official timidity, were eating out our hearts in despair that half its fruits should be left ungathered, and waiting, waiting, day by day, for an ultimatum that never came.

For, if the Allies had neither the sense nor the spirit to use the opportunity thrust ready into their hands, the situation on the mainland could not but deteriorate to their detriment. A child might have seen that. Day by day the more ardent Venizelists had been leaving the king's domain,—some few selected

officers or counsellors to accompany their leader in his first venture in Crete, others to Samos, Chios, and Mytilene to raise in those islands too the spirit of revolt, and yet more, not leaders only, but soldiers volunteering for service in the ranks against the Bulgarians, to Salonica, where the Committee of National Defence had merged its existence and aims in those of the Provisional Government: and day by day as the country was drained of its patriots, the power of the king and his military advisers became more absolute and unchallenged. Yes, a child might have seen it; but was it seen? And if seen, why was no action taken? Was there ineptitude to see, or timidity to act? Or will our mandarins prefer to plead the disunion of Allied counsels, the joint ineptitude of all?

Two months passed in the exchange and discussion of Notes and their amendments, and late in November the four Powers agreed that something must be done, —something impressive without being too serious, and above all without committing them to any new line of policy,—a naval demonstration, say, off Piræus, and a formal military occupation of Athens, but purely formal, *bien entendu,* nothing to hurt the susceptibilities of the Royalists or to make them think that the Allies meant business. The king was approached accordingly, and informed that on 1st December a few companies of British and French troops would be disembarked at Piræus and marched up to Athens. The two Powers concerned had certain rights of intervention as the guarantors of Greek independence and of the Greek constitution over which His Majesty so happily presided. The landing of troops must therefore be

viewed, not as a hostile act, but as an assertion of the guaranteeing Powers' lively concern to discharge their obligations. The king accepted these assurances for what they were worth, and gave his word, for what it too was worth, that no opposition should be offered.

So orders were given for the parade in full service kit and the formal march to Athens; and meantime at Athens, where no opposition was to be offered, printed hand-bills inciting to massacre were posted and circulated in the streets, and crosses were painted at night on the doors of Venizelist households, and trenches were dug on the hills south and south-west of Athens that command the routes from Piræus and Phalerum, and machine-gun emplacements were constructed, and the Legations shut their eyes, for to doubt the king's word was abominable unto them.

What ensued, all the world knows. Machine-gun fire was opened on the troops still in column of route; riflemen in trenches on the hills shot them down in the open plain; the French Admiral in command of the whole demonstration, who should have been aboard his ship, was caught unawares in Athens and besieged inside the Zappeion; the British naval officer on whom the command devolved fired a few rounds of blank, but when the captain of some smaller ship took the matter more seriously and put a couple of shells through the king's palace, he was ordered to desist.

The king was thoroughly frightened now, but one or other of the Allied Ministers was more so, and forestalled the king in his haste to capitulate. The "cease fire" was sounded, and the British and French troops were allowed to retire to their ships; but the massacre of Venizelists in Athens went merrily on,

and the Greek troops from the trenches were now free to assist.

So at any rate I had the story in outline from Venizelist refugees who escaped and took refuge in Crete. There were many versions, and divers apportionments of blame. Whether an official version was ever issued, I do not know, nor, if it was, what credence should attach to it. One fact only I will put on record: four or five days before the massacre, refugees from Athens, more prompt to act than those who later described it to me, had been arriving at Canea, convinced that no Venizelist's life was safe in Athens; and I was so fully persuaded that serious trouble was brewing (though I knew nothing then of any projected landing of troops which might furnish the occasion), that I inserted in my Intelligence Report for the Vice-Admiral and the Legation a warning based on the refugees' information. How the authorities on the spot failed to the very last to see what even at that distance we foresaw some days in advance, would need a long official explanation.

By next day, thanks mainly to the exertions of one R.N.R. officer, who got no recognition of his services, though more than one of those whom he rescued were decorated for their share in the disaster, the Legation staffs and the foreign residents under their protection were safely housed in a ship lying off Salamis; the British Intelligence Service decamped to Syra; and in Athens the massacre of the Venizelists continued spasmodically, while gross cartoons appeared in the Royalist papers, ridiculing even our dead soldiers, the victims of the king's perfidy and the Legations' folly.

It was now felt that the incident could not be

overlooked, and a fresh interchange of notes began between the floating Legation and the Greek government. It was ultimately arranged that the flags of the four Allied Powers should be publicly saluted, and that compensation should be paid to the next-of-kin of the men who had fallen. Also, so the story went round, when in the course of the negotiations the king offered once again to give his word for some detail, one of the ministers retorted, "Your Majesty gave your word before; I should have preferred that you had kept it." And this *bon mot* not only served to rehabilitate the minister's reputation, but was deemed a just and adequate penalty for the king, who retained the throne for yet another six months. True, by breaking his word, he had been guilty of a treacherous murder; and when in 1898 a similarly treacherous attack was made by the Mohammedans of Candia upon a small British force occupying the place, the while they massacred also the Christian inhabitants of the town, the penalty inflicted by Admiral Noel was the hanging of seventeen ringleaders—one for each British soldier killed. But this exact parallel, and the precedent which it furnished, were, it seems, forgotten; it occurred to no one that Constantine should have been hanged like any one of those seventeen. *Que voulez-vous?* There are many who think the Kaiser has not yet earned the gibbet. It is hard indeed for monarchs to earn it; what could the man have done more?

These happenings were the prelude to a blockade of Greece, to be enforced until such time as the Allies' demands, including the dissolution of the soldiers' leagues and the disarming of the men belonging to

them, should have been satisfied; and thereupon arose the question to what parts of Greece the blockade should extend. The mainland was obviously Royalist and subject therefore to punishment for royal misdoings; equally clearly Crete, Samos, Chios, Mytilene, and some few other islands had declared against the king and were immune; but what of all the remaining islands whose political sympathies were as yet unknown?

The British Intelligence Service, late of Athens, was now at Syra in the midst of these islands. It had arrived there in force, some seventy strong, I was told, looking like a jaded theatrical company *en déshabillé* after a long and tempestuous night's journey. It seized on the vacant Turkish Consulate for its headquarters, and exposed itself gratuitously to ribald mirth by quartering its lady typists in the harem. I fear that the management had all along been deficient in both humour and common-sense. At Athens its secret agents had of late been furnished with a formal certificate of their employ, signed by the head of the service, to be presented by them in person at the central office of the Royalist police, so that there should be no mistake about their identity, and to be countersigned there and stamped. It sounds incredible, does it not? but I have seen two such certificates, one of them issued to an ex-spy of Sultan Hamid, who had also spent six months in German service. But the farce did not end even there; believe it if you can, doubt it if you must, but it is true; not only was a certificate issued, but a brassard too, which the agent might wear to protect him from arrest when breaking the Greek law on British account. *Gott in Himmel!*

even a Prussian's sense of humour would have saved him from protecting thus his secret agents.

Would that there had been no other deficiencies! The task of winning Syra and the surrounding islands to the Venizelist cause needed little but patient and good-humoured cajolery; yet—suffice it to say that there were episodes not easily forgiven. Let me sketch rather how the islands should have been won, since I say the task was easy.

Syra itself had furnished the example. The Ægean Intelligence Bureau—for so, if I remember rightly, the Athens Service now styled itself—had brought much good money into the capital Hermoupolis, so christened by the vote of its inhabitants after the god of the market-place whose votaries they are. So Syra was quite willing to be Anglophile and Venizelist, and, since it is the shipping centre of the Ægean islands, and was moreover reminded of British naval power by the presence of a cruiser sent from Suda, was quite equally unwilling to be blockaded. "The Conversion of Syra" was in fact a comedy which had been played unrehearsed by the shrewd traders of Hermoupolis, without much prompting from their British visitors, and with no stage-properties provided by the British save only a cruiser in the background. With a small cast of British actors the comedy could have been so easily adapted to other islands,—as "The Conversion of Andros," or "of Paros" or "of Tenos" or of what you will; native talent would quickly have taken its cue and played up to the leading performers. One officer and a trustworthy interpreter could have sustained the chief parts; and a trawler could have

replaced the cruiser in these provincial theatres. Here, in outline, is one such comedy.

ACT I. Scene 1.—Enter an interpreter, disguised as an honest Greek merchant forced by the exigencies of the blockade to meditate arrangements for smuggling. He climbs onto the quay at the back of the stage, having just arrived in a caïque depicted at anchor in the still waters of the harbour which forms the background. He observes two *cafés* to right and left—right for the Venizelist sheep and left for the Royalist goats. Their respective politics he has already learnt from the boatman who rowed him ashore. He approaches the Venizelist *café,* and, in response to the many inquiries touching his name, native place, age, family, and business, hints that full enlightenment would be better deferred, and lets it be understood merely that he is a shrewd and honest merchant who, foreseeing trouble, such as that now threatened by the blockade, or the possible outbreak of war, has hoarded considerable quantities of food-stuffs, and is now in a position to avert the starvation of the islanders on more reasonable terms than any of his trade rivals. "The risks, the very grave risks," he adds, "of running the blockade must be taken into account; insurance against seizure is out of the question, owing to the publicity involved; the possible loss of one cargo must be compensated by the enhanced price of goods safely delivered; but even so my prices are moderate, extremely moderate." Inquiries for particular food-stuffs now begin, and he quotes prices astoundingly extortionate. Attempts are made to bargain, but he remains obdurate. With starvation

so imminent, he maintains, and the risks of running the blockade so high, his quotations are moderate, extremely moderate. He then stands them an *apéritif* all round before they disperse for *déjeuner,* and, in wishing them *bon appétit,* assures them that, if they desire to make provision for satisfying their *bon appétit* in the future, he is very much at their disposal, and always to be found during working hours at the *café.*

Scene 2.—Siestas are over, and the *soi-disant* honest merchant is seated again in the *café,* in a corner of the verandah, a position which will both favour quiet confidential talk and command a view of the Royalist *café* across the way. One by one some half-dozen leading Venizelists saunter in, and, as if in courtesy towards a stranger, join the merchant in his corner. They order drinks in turn for the party, and will not hear of his paying for one, and, while this hospitable entertainment proceeds, they ask him what his quotations would be if they themselves were taking the risk of running the blockade or—in strict confidence, of course, but they had foregone their siesta in view of the gravity of his news, and had had a little private conference among themselves, just the half-dozen of them—or, then, if for any political reason the blockade should not be enforced against their island.

The worthy merchant is puzzled. "I am no politician," he says, "but I admire Mr. Venizelos, who is a straight man, like myself, and can foresee too the opportunities of politics, as well as I have foreseen those of commerce. But what political reason could exempt your island from the blockade? You have not broken away from the king's government, have

you, and declared for Venizelos? I gathered that yonder *café* across the way was Royalist, and that the Mayor and the Chief of Police and the schoolmaster all frequented that: some one I was chatting with told me so."

"Aye," says one of the party, tapping the side of his nose with his forefinger the while, to indicate his acumen, "aye, but what if we changed our damned Mayor and all his clique for good Venizelists like us six? If we acknowledged the Provisional Government, as Samos and Chios have done, and were therefore not liable to be blockaded, what then?"

"My quotations," replies the merchant, "moderate, extremely moderate, as they are now, would drop proportionately to the elimination of risks; you would wonder, gentlemen, that any merchant could supply you so cheaply. I will cypher it out, and give you quotations applicable to such political circumstances as you describe. But remember please, gentlemen, that I am no politician; I am an honest trader ready to adapt myself to any political changes. As a man, I offer you my sympathy and promise to respect your confidence; as a trader, and a stranger withal in your island, I must not be implicated in any local disturbance. If, for example, you should decide to round up your leading opponents where they are now sitting in yonder *café,* and lodge them in some safe place like this cellar here, or aboard some craft in the harbour, you will understand that I should wish to take no part, and should indeed be grateful for any hint which would enable me to keep out of the way. Meantime, should any of the Royalist gentlemen opposite care to do business

with me at the old quotations, you may be sure that in my dealings with them I shall respect your confidence in my own interest no less than in yours. *Au revoir,* gentlemen."

ACT II. Scene 1.—Time, two days later, in the forenoon. Scene, the same, save that a British trawler is now depicted in the harbour that forms the background. Enter a British officer, climbing onto the quay as the interpreter had done. Catching sight of the interpreter seated outside the right-hand *café,* he approaches it casually as if to get a drink, and seating himself at one of the tables in front of it, calls to the *café*-keeper in language adapted to foreign comprehension: "Hi, George, avez-vous bono vino?" The *café*-keeper being unversed in that tongue hurries forward with a conciliatory smile and a dirty napkin to polish the table for so distinguished a guest, demanding in his loudest tone, by way of compensating for his unfamiliar speech, with what he may have the honour of serving Monsieur. The honest merchant intervenes and offers his services to interpret.

"Good," says the officer, "you speak English; I thought I should have to carry on somehow in French. Are you free for the next hour?" and proceeds to inform him, for appearances' sake, of what he already knows. In return the interpreter informs him that a Venizelist movement is already arranged, and can be carried through by noon. He then leaves the officer to have his drink, and explains to the other occupants of the *café,* that the British officer has been sent to enforce the blockade, and wishes formally to notify the Mayor of the fact.

They beg the interpreter to defer the visit to the Mayor till noon, making what excuse he can. The interpreter obliges them by bidding one of them make pretence of going to the Mayor's office and returning with a message that he is away but is expected back at noon. This done, the interpreter informs the officer, who disappears for a stroll till that hour.

Scene 2.—Soon after half-past eleven the leading persons of the place begin to assemble in the two *cafés,* to take their *apéritif* before *déjeuner.* The Venizelist resort is uncommonly full, though one leading personage is absent. There is also an unusual crowd of loungers on the quay, attracted no doubt by the sight of the British trawler. At the Royalist *café* the Mayor and the Chief of Police are seated at their usual table. Suddenly, as at a signal, there is an *émeute.* The occupants of the Venizelist *café* and the loungers on the quay surround the Mayor, the Chief of Police, and the other Royalist leaders, and bundle them off to the cellar of the Venizelist *café.*

Into the centre of the stage emerges now a figure who has taken no part in the commotion; he it is who, tapping his nose with his forefinger, had acutely suggested changing the damned Mayor for one of the Venizelist sort; he carries now a roll of paper in his hand, and mounts a platform improvised as if by magic from the tables of the Royalist *café* (those from the Venizelist *café* might get broken, which would be a pity).

"Long live the Mayor!" shouts the crowd. The new Mayor bows, and unrolls his paper amid a breathless pause, broken only by the muffled imprecations

of his predecessor now in the cellar. He reads a resolution: "Liberated from the unconstitutional oppression of a Germanophile tyrant and of his sycophantic minions by the unanimous choice and act of her enlightened and liberal-minded sons, this island hereby declares her accession to the cause championed by Venizelos"—the rest is drowned in applause, which causes the British officer, now returning from his stroll, to salute in some embarrassment, surprised at his sudden popularity.

The Mayor descends more rapidly than gracefully and approaches him. Through the medium of the interpreter he apologises for having been busy elsewhere all the forenoon, but, hearing that the officer desired to see him at noon, he has hastened down to the quay, he says, to save Monsieur the trouble of coming to his office. As for the mission on which Monsieur has come, he thinks there is some mistake. The island is Venizelist, as he himself, Mayor of the town and a staunch Venizelist, can vouch. He begs Monsieur to do him the honour of lunching with him at the *café* here and now, so that they may discuss further the situation.

Déjeuner on a lavish scale has, it appears, been already ordered, and they take their places. The little affair of the blockade having been settled, and several loyal toasts drunk, the Mayor says he has a favour to ask. The officer may have observed certain sounds issuing from the cellar: the fact is the town has no proper jail, and confined in the cellar are certain fanatical Royalists recently concerned in an *émeute* which disturbed the peace of the town. If the officer is returning to Syra, will he be good enough to

convey them in his trawler and hand them over for imprisonment there? The officer consents, provided that they are on board in half an hour, when he must sail. The merchant, who has served as interpreter, makes bold to ask for a passage too, offering his assistance in explaining the situation on arrival; and his request is granted. Exit the officer accompanied by the merchant.

The Mayor calls some loungers from the quay to transfer the prisoners from the cellar to the trawler, while he and his chief confederates stand watching. A thought strikes one of them: "Mr. Mayor," he says, "we have let the merchant go without learning his name and address or his revised quotations." "Let him go," says the Mayor, "he was an extortionate rogue, and tried to bleed us; but we were too sharp for him, and he has served our purpose; even if he gives us away to that English officer, whom I bluffed so nicely, the officer clearly must keep quiet for his own sake."

Some such tactics should I have recommended for the Ægean Islands, which contained a population largely Venizelist in sympathy and needing only the stimulus of the blockade to make them face the facts and declare for the Provisional Government. But Cerigo (or Cythera, for the ancient name has been revived) presented a different problem. Unlike the Ægean Islands, it lies close to the mainland, to which, by trade, by cable, and for administrative purposes, it is attached. The blockade of the Peloponnese, the most Royalist part of all Greece, involved the blockade of Cerigo, through which island, by means of a short

voyage to or from the Malea promontory under cover of night, there would otherwise have been an open passage of traffic.

But there were reasons why I was not content that Cerigo should merely be left in Royalist hands and be blockaded. During the summer and autumn of 1916 reports had reached me, and had been duly forwarded to the proper quarters, that the channel between Cerigo and the mainland was a favourite resort of enemy submarines. They could lie on the surface in sheltered water on one side or other of the island's northern point, and needed merely an agent or two ashore to keep a look-out for any of the French trawlers which had the duty of patrolling that coast, and to signal a timely warning. They were reported even to receive supplies sent down the coast from Gytheion at the head of the gulf, and to take them on board, safely screened by the island from the observation of any ships to the southward.

The significance of these reports was enhanced by the fact that during the latter half of 1916 there was no point in our area, and few in the whole Mediterranean, where submarines were so frequently sighted as at a point some fifty or sixty miles west of the Cerigo Channel (the channel, that is, between Cerigo and the western end of Crete). At that point approximately all traffic between the Western Mediterranean and Salonica or Alexandria or other eastern bases, whatever its previous route, was bound to converge, and our losses by submarine attack in that neighbourhood had been considerable. The French, who were responsible for a trawler-patrol in that area, had presumably insufficient craft at their disposal for

the purpose: even up to the end of the war the Mediterranean was never adequately supplied with ships for patrol and escort in those vast waters, and every service was in the nature of a makeshift. At any rate no effective steps were taken to deal with this danger-spot, and personally I felt convinced that Cerigo was serving as a base for enemy submarines commanding the main artery of Mediterranean traffic.

Finally in December a fisher-lad was sent over from Cerigo by certain British sympathisers there, to give me the details of definite occurrences which he and others had seen with their own eyes, in particular the landing of two officers from a German submarine on the mainland opposite the north end of Cerigo, and their visit to an isolated house tenanted by an enemy agent (his name and doings had been ascertained), who travelled frequently between that spot and Gytheion on German business. Other sightings of submarines too were circumstantially recorded with such detail as convinced me that for once I was receiving first-hand and accurate information. Neither was the lad even seeking remuneration.

A day or two later I saw Mr. Tsirimokos, the representative of the Provisional Government in charge of Crete. I was on terms of intimate friendship and confidence with him, and his hearty and capable co-operation in anything that affected the common cause of the Allies was always assured. I asked him what he knew of the present situation in Cerigo. He told me first that, in spite of the blockade, caïques from Cerigo were getting through to Crete for the purpose of buying food and were doubtless obtaining some. This I already knew, for it was by one such caïque

that the fisher-lad who brought me news had arrived. But he told me further that Cerigo, though in Royalist hands, was largely Venizelist in sympathy, and moreover strongly pro-British too; this for the reason that in old times Cerigo, in spite of its geographical position, had ranked as one of the Ionian Islands, formerly in British possession and bestowed by Gladstone on Greece. From that time to this, it appears, a pro-British sentiment has been strong in the island, and quite a number of the inhabitants still claim British nationality.

I suggested to the Governor that we should find means to detach the island from the mainland and attach it to Crete, setting up an effective Venizelist *régime* and keeping it supplied with food from our Cretan resources. I explained the naval importance of the matter as I viewed it; and he was able to confirm my information concerning enemy submarines from yet another source. We agreed that the conquest of Cerigo was a desirable project.

The main difficulty was that the island lay in the French zone, and to ask our Vice-Admiral's permission for the expedition would be to invite a snub. He might regard such a request, in view of the reasons which must be assigned for it, as a reflection on his own naval vigilance, and would certainly feel it a delicate matter to communicate the proposal to the French without offending them. It would obviously be best to act first and to report afterwards. This the Governor fully recognised, and was quite willing to accept any responsibility convenient to me for the inception of the enterprise. We agreed that he should send to the S.N.O. a formal request for the use of a

trawler for the conveyance of certain detachments of gendarmerie etc. to Cerigo. We had often obliged him in the matter of similar transport to various parts of Crete, and a request of the sort would naturally be granted.

The details were easily arranged. The numbers, I said, which the trawler could conveniently carry, especially if bad weather were encountered, must not exceed two hundred. Some ten tons of flour, we agreed, could be sent as well, for distribution among our adherents in Cerigo, and as a foretaste of future food supplies when the Venizelist *régime* should be established and the blockade raised. The passage from Suda to Cerigo should be by night, in order both to evade observation by any French patrol and to effect a surprise in the island itself. The landing, weather permitting, should take place at Pelagia Bay on the north-east coast, which was only some two hours distant from the inland capital, Potamos; for Kapsáli, the usual port, at the southern end, besides being farther from the capital, might also have a police force strong enough to cause trouble during disembarkation. Finally provision must be made for the public meeting which would have to be summoned as soon as the capital was occupied and the Royalist administration dispossessed. A formal resolution should be prepared, to be read to the meeting and carried by acclamation; a picture of Venizelos and some flags would add effect to the appearance of the troops; and a prospective Governor, provided with an official seal, stamped paper, and what not, should accompany the expedition, disposed to accept nomination, by public acclaim of the same meeting, to that responsible post.

And so it came to pass that one evening early in January 1917 detachments of 110 soldiers and 50 gendarmes, with flour, picture, flags, Governor, seal, and other appurtenances, under the leadership of Mr. Karapános, the Governor's secretary, embarked in a trawler at Suda Bay, and set forth for the conquest of Cerigo. A considerable sea was running outside, and their first experience of a trawler was far from comfortable; but a landing was effected, under some difficulties of weather but without opposition, just as dawn broke, at Pelagia Bay.

There was no romantic adventure thereafter, I grieve to say. It was singularly prosaic. While the men were recovering from the tossing of the night, their leader, having ascertained locally that there were no troops in the island, and only a handful of police in the capital, had resort to the telephone, and having called up the Mayor, told him that he was marching in force on the town and demanded the surrender of the leading Royalist officials. Mr. Strategós (*i.e.* "General"), for all his military name, recognised that surrender was the only course open to him, and, when the expedition reached the capital, he and some eight or nine others were waiting to make their submission and hand over their offices; which done, they were marched down to the coast and put aboard the trawler for conveyance to Crete.

A public meeting was at once called. The liberators of the island with their flags and the picture of Venizelos received an ovation. Cheers were raised for England and the ten tons of flour. The resolution was carried unanimously, and the Governor nominated and installed.

The first act of the new Governor was to order the organisation of an efficient coast-guard service to watch for submarines and to report them when possible to any French trawlers or other vessels in those waters. In other respects the island resumed its normal life; and, when a week later another British trawler arrived with a further consignment of food-stuffs, the re-organisation of the island was so far complete, that Mr. Karapános was able to return to Crete. At a dinner which he gave on his name-day, the Greek Epiphany, a few days later, I had the honour of introducing the toast of the evening by a mock-heroic Greek ballad chronicling his exploits as Conqueror of Cerigo; and we flattered ourselves, prematurely as it proved, that Cerigo would no more trouble us.

PART II.—EVADING THE CONSEQUENCES

The Vice-Admiral was not wholly enthusiastic about this expedition when it was reported to him. He appeared to think that we had been too accommodating to the Governor of Crete in lending him a trawler without first assuring ourselves that she would not be put to any irregular or compromising use; and he made it reasonably clear that he would not have sanctioned an excursion into the French zone, had his permission been previously asked. Seeing however that the thing was done, he sanctioned a weekly trawler-service between Crete and Cerigo to carry mails and food-stuffs.

But then the trouble began in earnest. Just at the time of our expedition, the Allies had been demanding of the Greek Government the withdrawal

of their troops from certain areas, chiefly in North Greece; and the Greek Government, fearing that the withdrawal of Royalist troops might be followed by a Venizelist rising in some districts, had negotiated terms. A pact had been formulated in respect of Royalist and Venizelist territory, but the precise conditions of it I have never been able to learn. The Greek Government certainly undertook to withdraw its troops from the specified areas; but whether the Provisional Government undertook in turn not to occupy any more Royalist territory whatsoever, or merely not to occupy any Royalist territory evacuated by the troops under this pact, was a matter, to us at any rate, of uncertainty. In the former case the seizure of Cerigo was a violation of the agreement; in the latter case it was legitimate, for no Royalist troops had been withdrawn from the island. There was some doubt also as to the date at which the agreement came into force, but, so far as I could discover afterwards, our expedition had been about twelve hours too late. At the time we had known nothing about any such agreement projected or made.

In the upshot however the Greek Government lodged a protest against our action, and the Allied Legations being unable to resolve the point in dispute —there must, I think, have been some real ambiguity in the phrasing of the agreement—referred the question ultimately to the Rome Conference, where the Allied Prime Ministers were sitting in council.

It is worth noting that we, the naval authorities on the spot by whose co-operation Cerigo was occupied, were never asked by the Legation in Athens, the Foreign Office, or any other authority, whether Cerigo

possessed from our point of view any special naval importance. Just as in greater matters the Foreign Office nullified naval work, as by releasing for German use cotton and copper and other essentials of warfare which the Northern blockade had held up, or jeopardised all Allied shipping in the Mediterranean for the first two years of the war by allowing the Eastern Telegraph Company to transmit enemy messages, so in this smaller matter a decision was taken without any question being put to the naval authorities on the spot as to whether this island, lying alongside the main route of Mediterranean traffic, had any naval importance.

It may be of course that the agreement was so clear that the Rome Conference could but reach one decision; but, in that case, what was it that had puzzled the united brains of the Legations in Athens, and made them refer the question to their superiors at home? It may equally well be that the Rome Conference, having found the island of Cerigo on a map, said, "This is a very small bit of territory to make a fuss about, and a very long way from Salonica; let the Royalists have it if they want it." But, whatever the cause, the decision was against us, and the first intimation which reached us that any question about Cerigo had even been raised was an order from the Vice-Admiral to withdraw the Venizelist forces, which served as garrison and coast-guard, and to restore our Royalist prisoners to their own island.

Well, orders are orders, and must be obeyed in the letter and in the spirit—or at least in one of the two. On this occasion I preferred the letter, for "the letter killeth" and I was minded to kill this scheme if I could

compass it. I make no apology for my frame of mind. I had seen survivors from torpedoed troopships brought into Suda; I had seen the captain of a vessel, which had done fine work in saving them, shaken in nerve and temporarily broken by the sights he had witnessed; I had seen, or been notified by others who had seen, the dead bodies of those whom he could not save washed ashore for weeks afterwards; and I was convinced that that havoc was worked by submarines whose base was Cerigo. I was not prepared to acquiesce in facilitating the recrudescence of those horrors at the bidding of the Rome Conference or any one else.

How then to defeat the purposes of higher authority? Argument would plainly be useless. I could not for example ask the S.N.O. to wire to the Vice-Admiral, "My Intelligence Officer disapproves of the decision of the Rome Conference and of your orders, for the reason that Cerigo, as previously reported, serves as a German submarine-base": his answer would have been distinctly curt, if not opprobrious. To argue with your superior officers is only to encourage them in the use of bad language, and nothing is gained. If you are convinced that an order given is thoroughly mischievous, you should prepare to carry it out without protest, but discover in the course of doing so a new and embarrassing fact which you feel obliged to submit to the superior judgment of your captain or admiral, in case he may wish to vary his orders in any particular. If the *fait accompli* fails, as it was failing at Cerigo, try the effect of the *fait imprévu*.

I could see only one such new fact—one not

beyond our contrivance, if the Governor of the island would work with me; and when I went to see him and to report, as in duty bound, the orders we had received for the withdrawal of his forces, I laid my suggestion frankly before him. He was as indignant as I had been at this official blunder, and was quite ready to circumvent our orders and frustrate their execution.

It might happen, I suggested, that even though we withdrew the troops and the police, the islanders would still maintain their new *régime* and their loyalty to the Venizelist cause, and consequently of course would be exempt from the blockade and entitled to continue receiving food-supplies from Crete. It might be that their feelings would carry them so far that they would be prepared to have recourse to arms to prevent the return of the Royalist prisoners now in Canea jail—provided of course that they possessed arms or acquired them in time. It might well be that some time would elapse before all the troops could be brought away: we could not spare a trawler more than once a week; there was no cable from Crete to Cerigo by which to send word that the troops should be concentrated ready for embarkation; and at this time of the year the weather was so bad round Cerigo, that it must be uncertain which, if any, harbour would be accessible from week to week; and, if orders were left after the first trip for a concentration next week at a given harbour, it might easily happen that, when the day came, the trawler could only touch elsewhere. It might in fact take three or four weeks to execute our orders.

Meantime the Royalist prisoners in Canea should

be acquainted with the decision, and might perhaps be released from jail and live in the town under police supervision only, until the island of Cerigo was clear of troops and open for their return. In their comparative liberty they would naturally get to know the latest news of Cerigo: the returning troops would bring tidings of the enthusiasm of the islanders for the cause of Venizelos; rumours might even spread that the people there had somehow armed themselves to resist any Royalist incursion from the mainland or elsewhere; and a few discreet persons, having made the acquaintance of our liberated Royalists, might congratulate them on their courage in risking a return to an island obviously in a state of political ferment. Possibly the Royalists would even reconsider then their own wishes, and petition us not to send them back. If such a petition were received, and if we ourselves also had strong grounds for believing that the rumours about the arming of the islanders were correct—why, it would be sheer murder to put the Royalists ashore there without first reporting this strange development and asking if our instructions still held good.

But as regards those rumours of arming, we could not afford to rely on bluff only. The islanders must be armed as against a possible expedition of Royalist troops or police from the mainland to take over the control of the island as we withdrew from it. Our first detachment withdrawn might of course come away in a hurry leaving their arms in the local depôt to be brought over when the evacuation was completed; but it looked as if we must press on with a bit of gun-running.

The Governor saw no objection to this scheme nor any flaw in the conception of it. The method of the gun-running was the main point requiring consideration. Our own trawler had obvious advantages inasmuch as it would not be liable to search by any French patrol; but though you can stow ammunition and revolvers in sacks of flour with reasonable security, a rifle is an awkward object to pack in that way. So we decided to use the trawler for the smaller stuff only; that could be despatched at once, and from week to week as required; there would undoubtedly be some few rifles available in the island—those of the disbanded Royalist police for example—and in view of a possible expedition from the mainland for the re-conquest of Cerigo, we deemed the matter urgent. For the next week or two some of the sacks of flour dispatched by the Governor for the sustenance of Cerigo were heavier than others, but no one knew this except a faithful merchant of Canea who accompanied them and supervised their distribution on arrival.

I do not know to what penalties an officer is liable for illicit gun-running in one of His Majesty's trawlers. I doubt whether any naval code deals with that specific offence. But detection was very improbable: the impudence of the action was its best safeguard.

The rifles went by caïque in oil-drums. Large iron drums, tall enough to take a package of rifles, are commonly used for the export of oil. They had two advantages for our purpose. First, if the caïque were searched by a French patrol, and the number of oil-drums were found to tally with the manifest (which

was in perfect order), the odds were a hundred to one that the search-party would not broach the drums and sample their contents: it is a troublesome business, as I know from my experience as boarding-officer. And secondly, the drums could be floated ashore anywhere, and there would be no need to land them at any particular harbour and pass them through the Customs. A certain measure of secrecy was desirable until the rifles were in the right hands; and indeed the manifest, I believe, named a destination other than Cerigo, which might be held to be blockaded. The preparation of this consignment occupied some time, as one end of the drums had to be altered for the insertion of non-liquid contents; but in the end delivery was made without incident.

Meantime the Vice-Admiral's orders were being obeyed in the letter. The first trip to Cerigo in quest of the Venizelist troops was superintended personally by my fellow Intelligence Officer, who was able to report on his return that the weather had been very heavy, and that it had been impossible to lie at anchor off Pelagía long enough to await a general concentration; he had therefore brought back some thirty or forty men only, and had warned the others to be ready the next week. But the second trip too encountered heavy weather from another quarter, and, Pelagía Bay being too exposed, the trawler made Kapsáli in the south instead, and, having landed the mail and the sacks of flour, was unable to wait for the majority of the soldiers and gendarmes to march right across the island, and came away with a few only on board. Indeed for four successive weeks the same sort of trouble continued: January and

February are always tempestuous months in those waters.

Those however of the Venizelists who returned spoke highly of the enthusiasm of the islanders. They were even organising and arming their own coast-guard in lieu of the gendarmerie who were being withdrawn. Moreover an eloquent protest against the decision of the Allies to surrender the island into the hands of its Royalist minority was influentially signed, and formally forwarded to us, for transmission to the proper authority.

Then one day two of the Royalist prisoners, now at large in Canea, obtained permission from the police to call on me at Suda. They represented that, from what they had heard, they judged that popular feeling in Cerigo was not favourable to their political views, and that their return to that island might be attended by a certain danger. They asked in fact to be allowed to proceed to the mainland instead, and, in view of the blockade, by a British trawler if possible.

I replied in an official manner that their request should be conveyed to the Vice-Admiral, but that our present orders were to repatriate the whole party at an early date, adding that for myself I felt doubtful whether the Vice-Admiral would sanction the diversion of a trawler to the mainland for the convenience of two members of the party, when the rest were destined for Cerigo. Thereupon they pleaded for some delay at least, and protested that at present their lives would not be safe there. I replied that I would represent that possibility on their behalf to the Vice-Admiral, and, if they wished it, would even go so far as to add my personal assurance that, as far as I could ascertain,

the danger was genuinely serious. They were very grateful, and departed.

I did not report to the Vice-Admiral at once, for there was a good chance now that the leaven of misgiving would work in the minds of others of the party; and obviously my two visitors would point out to the others that, if they were unanimous in desiring to go to the mainland, the chance of being conveyed there by trawler would be much improved. I was not mistaken. Two days later I received a formal petition, signed by all but one of them, praying for the indulgence of a passage to any port of the mainland, but not to Cerigo.

This was good enough. A translation of their petition, as also of the protest from the leading inhabitants of Cerigo, together with a report on the manifestation of strong Venizelist sympathies in that island and the possibility of a resort to violence, was forwarded to the Vice-Admiral, with a request for further instructions for dealing with the new situation. The Vice-Admiral replied that the Royalists were to be kept in Crete pending further orders; and the question of the political status of Cerigo was once more referred home to the Four Powers.

In the course of March the new decision reached us. Cerigo was not permitted to come under the Provisional Government; but, since it had revolted against Royalist authority, and would justly resent being placed again under its former *régime,* it was constituted temporarily an independent state with power to elect its own President, and to settle its own administration. Incidentally too we were authorised to accede to our Royalists' petition for a passage to the

mainland, and a trawler dumped them accordingly at the nearest point.

In Cerigo a public meeting was once more called, and the Governor whom we had provided was asked to accept the office of President. He was a native of the island, in sympathy with its present political sentiments, and no better appointment could have been made. As for the administration, the new President adopted in its entirety the system approved by his predecessor, the Governor. All that the latest decision of the Allied Powers really necessitated was the cutting of a new seal and a changed heading for the official paper; and this need could be temporarily satisfied at small cost by the purchase of two rubber stamps.

The new state also, but of its own initiative, designed and ordered its own postage stamps, but these did not arrive in time for use before the Royalist *régime* of the mainland ended with the deposition of Constantine, and the independent state of Cerigo was reabsorbed in reunited Greece.

During the three months that the state existed, its internal administration was marked by the maintenance of an efficient coast-guard on the look-out for submarines abusing the hospitality of its territorial waters, while its foreign policy was inspired by benevolence and friendship towards the Governor and people of Crete, against whose imports of food-stuffs no hostile tariff-barrier was erected.

Thus then the supreme authorities of the Allied Powers, acknowledging no defeat in their arrangements for the future of Cerigo but merely a strategic change of front, had the last word; while we, their

humble servants, knowing that by our use of certain byways we had outflanked their first position and forced that change of front, were content with our work. For our stratagem was justified by the issue: from the time of the conquest of Cerigo the sightings of enemy submarines at the approaches to that dangerous channel had shown a marked decrease; and towards the end of the war I learnt too that the little island, for reasons which could not have been other than naval, had possessed an interest for the German High Command. A White Book issued by the restored Venizelist Government contained the telegraphic correspondence of the late royal household and its ministers with the Kaiser and his military advisers; and therein, under date, 13th January 1917, is a despondent telegram from Queen Sophia to Falkenhausen, which ends: "Cerigo has been occupied by the insurgents and other surprises may be in store for us." There were indeed; but the last of the surprises which I can credit to my own contrivance was this conquest of Cerigo.

APPENDIX

CAVIARE TO THE GENERAL

THE ballad and the pamphlet here appended will be Greek to the many and of interest to the few only.

The gist of the pamphlet has already been given in Part ii. of Chapter V, and to translate it is beyond my power. It was composed in Greek for Greeks, and, so as to encourage them to read it, was given the form of a skit on that linguistic question which never fails to rouse interest and indeed acrimony in the Greek breast, the conflict between the "popular" and the "refined" idioms of their country. Politics and religion, patriotism and snobbery, all become involved in this endlessly debated question, and even blood was spilt over it in Athens some years ago when some bold spirit issued a "popular" version of the Gospels. A pamphlet therefore conceived as a skit on this controversy might attract attention where the more serious propaganda, issued in impeccably "refined" style, failed of its primary object—namely, to be read; but for the same reason the pamphlet defies translation into a language where no such rivalry of conflicting idioms exists.

The ballad I have ventured to translate. My rendering retains the metre and, in some part, the alliteration and verbal plays of the original; but it necessarily lacks such humour as the original derives

from borrowed or parodied lines and *clichés* of Greek popular poetry; it does not claim to be more than synthetic caviare.

THE CONQUEST OF CERIGO

"What is afoot on yonder shore? What errand hath yon trawler
Wherein they stow that freight of sheep, and sacks of flour, and muskets?"
"Lo! Karapános now hath come, and forth his craft will carry
Full three-score Yeomen of the Watch, true lions from out Canéa,
And men-at-arms five-score and ten, the falcon-breed of Suda,
With fifteen fatlings of the flock and flour in ten-ton measure."
"Haste ye aboard, my lads," he cries, "come haste ye your embarking!
Sea-sick or no, my lads, heave ho! for Cýthera we're sailing;
My sword shall vanquish Potamó, and fire consume Kapsáli,
And all the Cytheraean land to smithereens be shattered."
He posts his fatlings in the fore, astern he posts his comrades,
He spreads his flour-sacks in the hold, and lays him down to slumber.
Ah! terribly the storm doth rage, and buffets sore the trawler;

They vomit once, they vomit twice, they vomit times
past number;
Pallid goes Pericles ashore, pallid go all his com-
rades.
And lo! a bird, a noisome bird, espied their sorry
suff'rings,
And sped Sir Marshall for to find, and speak to him
a message:
"Rouse thee, Sir Marshall, give me heed, and rouse
thy doughty warriors;
Lo! Karapános now hath come, and from his ship
pour shoreward
Full three-score Yeomen of the Watch, false curs
from out Canéa,
And men-at-arms five-score and ten, the viper-spawn
of Suda,
With fifteen fatlings of the flock and flour in ten-ton
measure,
That sword may vanquish Potamó and fire consume
Kapsáli
And all the Cytheraean land to smithereens be shat-
tered.
But tempest-tossed were they and sick; I spied their
sorry suff'rings;
Pallid and haggard is their mien, sore empty be their
stomachs.
Up then, I say, be not afraid, up, that thou may'st
o'erwhelm them
Ere from their flour they bake them bread, ere they
may roast their fatlings,
And eat and gather heart again, like lions full-fed
and lusty."

Yet vainly doth the bird forewarn, forearmed is Karapános;
Fourfold his eyes, not twain alone, quick to foresee his peril.
Forward he goes, forward he goes, he smites, he smites with fury—
But, mark, 'tis to the 'phone he goes, the bell that feels his fury.
"Number, please." "Marshall is the name, two, number two, Kapsáli."
"Hullo, who's there?" "I, Pericles Photios Karapános.
A thousand men-at-arms have I, ten thousand valiant comrades,
And countless sacks of bread withal and full five-hundred fatlings,—
The bread in loaves all ready-baked, the fatlings ready-roasted,—
Whereof my lions may eat their fill, and sally forth to battle.
Their swords shall vanquish Potamó and fire consume Kapsáli,
And all the Cytheraean land to smithereens be shattered.
Bestir thee then, make speed to come and do me due obeisance,
And greet with reverential kiss the picture of our Leader."
And so, quick march, out Marshall goes, by quicker wit out-marshalled.

ΤΟ ΠΑΡΣΙΜΟ ΤΩΝ ΚΥΘΗΡΩΝ

"Τί τρέχει στὴν ἀκρογιαλιὰ ; τί κάνουν τὸ καράβι
ὅπου στρυμόνουν τὰ σακκιὰ, τἀρνιὰ, τὰ καρυοφύλλια ;"
"ὁ Καραπάνος ἔφθασε καὶ θὲ νὰ ξεκινήσῃ
μ' ἐξῆντα χωροφύλακας, Χανιώτικα λεοντάρια,
μ' ἑκατὸν δέκα ἁρματωλοὺς, τῆς Σούδας τὰ ξεφτέρια,
με δέκα τόννους ἄλευρο καὶ δεκαπέντε ἀρνάκια."
"βαρκαρισθῆτε, βρὲ παιδιὰ, τρέξτε βαρκαρισθῆτε·
πιάνει, δὲν πιάνει, ἡ θάλασσα, στὰ Κύθηρα τραβοῦμε,
γιὰ νὰ πιάσω τὸν Ποταμὸ, νὰ κάψω τὸ Καψάλι,
κι' ὁλόκαιρα τὰ Κύθηρα νὰ κατακουρελιάσω."
βάζει τἀρνάκια του μπροστὰ, τὰ παλληκάρια 'πίσω,
στρώνει στἀμπάρι τἄλευρο, καὶ πέφτει νὰ πλαγιάσῃ.
ἄχ, φουρτουνιάζει φοβερὰ, κουνιέται τὸ καράβι·
ξερνᾶνε μιὰ, ξερνᾶνε δυὸ, ξερνᾶνε τρεῖς καὶ πέντε·
χλωμὸς βγαίνει ἔξω ὁ Περικλῆς, χλωμὰ τὰ παλληκάρια.
ἕνα πουλὶ, κακὸ πουλὶ, τοὺς εἶδε τί παθαίνουν,
καὶ πάει νὰ βρῇ τὸ Στρατηγὸ, πάει νὰ τοῦ τὸ μηνύσῃ·
"σήκου, καλέ μου Στρατηγὲ, σήκωσε τοὺς λεβέντες·
ὁ Καραπάνος ἔφθασε καὶ θὲ νὰ ξεμπαρκάρῃ
ἐξῆντα χωροφύλακας, Χανιώτικα σκυλάκια,
κι' ἑκατὸν δέκα ἁρματωλοὺς, τῆς Σούδας τὰ φειδάκια,
με δέκα τόννους ἄλευρο καὶ δεκαπέντε ἀρνάκια,
γιὰ νὰ πιάσουν τὸν Ποταμὸ, νὰ κάψουν τὸ Καψάλι,
κι' ὁλόκαιρα τὰ Κύθηρα νὰ κατακουρελιάσουν.
μὰ σαλευτήκανε πολὺ, τοὺς εἶδα τί παθαίνουν,
κι' ἔχουν χλωμὰ τὰ πρόσωπα, κι' ἄδεια καὶ τὰ στομάχια.
σήκου λοιπὸν, μὴ φοβηθῆς, σήκου νὰ τοὺς πλακώσῃς
πρὶν φτειάσουν τἄλευρο ψωμὶ, πρὶν ψήσουνε τἀρνάκια,
νὰ φᾶνε καὶ νὰ μαζωχτοῦν, σὰν παχουλὰ λεοντάρια."
μὰ δὲν προφθάνει τὸ πουλὶ, προκάνει ὁ Καραπάνος·

ἔχει τὰ μάτια τέσσαρα, θωρεῖ καλὰ τί τρέχει.
ὁρμάει μπροστὰ, ὁρμάει μπροστὰ, χτυπάει, χτυπάει με
ζόρη·—
μὰ στὸ τηλέφωνο ὅρμησε, χτύπησε τὸ κουδοῦνι.
"ἐμπρὸς." "θέλω τὸ Στρατηγὸ, νούμερο δυὸ, Καψάλι."
"ποιὸς εἶν' αὐτοῦ;" "ὁ Περικλῆς, ὁ Φώτης Καραπάνος·
ἔχω χίλιους ἀρματωλοὺς καὶ μύρια παλληκάρια
κι' ἀνάριθμα σακκιὰ ψωμὶ καὶ πεντακόσι' ἀρνάκια,—
ξεροψημένο τὸ ψωμὶ, ψημένα καὶ τἀρνάκια,—
νὰ φᾶνε τὰ λεοντάρια μου, νὰ φᾶν, νὰ πολεμήσουν,
νὰ πιάσουνε τὸν Ποταμὸ, νὰ κάψουν τὸ Καψάλι,
κι' ὁλόκαιρα τὰ Κύθηρα νὰ κατακουρελιάσουν;
ἄϊντε, λοιπὸν, καταίβα 'δῶ, προσκύνησέ μ' ἐμένα,
καὶ τὴν εἰκόνα φίλησε τοῦ καπετὰν Λεφτέρη."
παίρνει τὴ στράτα ὁ Στρατηγὸς καταστρατηγημένος.

Note.—Στρατηγός was the name of the Royalist leader in Cerigo, and Λεφτέρης is the popular form of Venizelos' Christian name, Eleutherios.

Ο ΝΙΚΗΤΗΣ ΤΟΥ ΓΕΡΜΑΝΟΥ

BEING A PAMPHLET ISSUED IN CRETE IN SEPTEMBER 1916 IN REPLY TO A PAMPHLET OF ENEMY ORIGIN, BY ARISTOTLE P.:

Η ΝΙΚΗ ΤΗΣ ΓΕΡΜΑΝΙΑΣ

ΤΑ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΙΑΛΟΓΟΥ

ΓΟΥΛΙΕΛΜΟΣ ΖΕΠΠΕΛΙΝΑΚΗΣ, ΓΕΡΜΑΝΟΣ
ΠΑΝΟΣ ΣΚΥΛΑΚΗΣ, ΚΡΗΤΙΚΟΣ

Η ΣΚΗΝΗ—ΤΟ ΑΤΜΟΠΛΟΙΟΝ "ΚΕΦΙ"

Γερμανὸς. *Καλημέρα σου, κύριε.*

Κρητικὸς. *Καλόστονέ. Τοῦ λόγου σου ποῦθεν εἶσαι;*

Γ. *Ἀμπὸ τὸν Πειραιᾶ· καὶ τώρα μὲ μπολλὴν τὴν εὐκαρίστησίν μου γκυρίζω μπίσω 'στὴν ἀγκαμπητήν μου μπατρίντα.*

Κ. *Σ' ἐγέλασε λοιπὸν ὁ πράκτορας ὅταν ἔβγαλες τὸ εἰσιτήριό σου: 'στὴν Κρήτη πηγαίνομε, ὄχι 'στὴ Γερμανία, καὶ, γιὰ νὰ σοῦ πῶ τὴν ἀλήθεια, δὲν εἶνε εὔκολο τὸ ταξείδι 'στὴ Γερμανία οὔτε ἀπ' ἐδῶ οὔτε ἀπ' ἄλλο μέρος, ἂν δὲν ἔχεις λεφτὰ νὰ νοικιάσῃς ὑποβρύχιο.*

Γ. *Τί λές; σοῦ φαίνομαι νὰ ἦμαι Γκερμανός; ἐγκὼ εἶμαι Κρηντιγκὸς ἀνέκατεν. Λαμβάνω τὴν τιμὴν νὰ σοῦ μπροσφέρω τὸ ἐπισκεπτήριόν μου.*

Κ. *Εὐχαριστῶ πολύ.—"ΓΟΥΛΙΕΛΜΟΣ ΖΕΠΠΕΛΙΝΑΚΗΣ, Καθηγητὴς τῆς Ἱστορικοαναγκαιότητος*

τοῦ ἐν Λειψίᾳ Αὐτοκρατορικωτατοπανεπιστημίου."—(*Δόξα σοι ὁ Θεός· τὰ ξέρασα διὰ μιᾶς ὁλόκληρα καὶ δὲν ἐπνίγηκα. Ἀλλὰ πρέπει νὰ ἀντιπρόσφερω δική μου κάρτα, γιὰ νὰ εἶμαι τῆς μόδας, καὶ δὲν ἔχω πλιά. Ἄλλη φορὰ βεβαίως ὅταν ἤμουνα καὶ δημοδιδάσκαλος καὶ μεγαλοπιανόμουν πολὺ 'στὸ χωριό μου, εἶχα καὶ κάρταις καὶ ἄλλα κομψοτεχνήματα τοῦ συρμοῦ, ἀλλ' ἀφοῦ μ' ἐβγάλανε ἀπὸ τὸ σχολειὸ καὶ κατήντησα νὰ μαζεύω σαλιάγκους γιὰ νὰ βγάλλω τὸ ψωμί μου, λείπει πλιὰ τέτοια πολυτέλεια. Καὶ τὸ ὄνομά μου ἀκόμη ἐὰν τὸ ἤξευρε αὐτὸς ὁ Γερμανοκρητικὸς, χωρὶς νὰ εἶναι ἀληθινῶς κριτικὸς, θὰ τὄκανε γέλοια, ὅπως ἐκάνανε καὶ οἱ μαθητάδες μου. Ναὶ, τὸ ὁμολογῶ καὶ ὁ ἴδιος, Πάνος Σκυλάκης δὲν εἶναι σπουδαῖο ὄνομα, καὶ θαῦμα θὰ ἦτανε ἂν δὲν μὲ παρανομιάζανε τὰ παιδιὰ σὲ "σπανὸ σκυλάκι." Μπράβο, ἔτσι τὰ καταφέρω)—Μὲ συγχωρεῖτε, κύριε καθηγητὰ Ζεππελινάκη· ἀπὸ τὰς πολλάς μου ἐπισκέψεις τὰς ὁποίας ἔκαμον ἐν Ἀθήναις εἰς τοὺς Βουλευτάς μας, ὅπως ὑποδείξω κατὰ ποῖον τρόπον δέον νὰ ἀντιμετωπίσωσι τὴν ἐπείγουσαν οἰκονομικὴν κατάστασιν τοῦ κράτους, (μαστορικά, μοῦ φαίνεται, ἀνακτῶμαι τὸ σχολαστικὸν ὕφος), ἐσωθήκανε—δηλαδὴ κατηναλώθησαν τὰ ἐπισκεπτήριά μου. Ἐὰν ἐπιτρέπετε ὅμως, γράφω τὸ ὄνομά μου.*

(*Ψάχνει τὴν τσέπη του, βγάζει χαρτάκι καὶ γράφει,*

ΣΩΚΡΑΤΗΣ Ο ΑΝΑΚΡΙΤΑΚΗΣ

Κοχλιοδίφης, καὶ Διευθυντὴς
τοῦ ἐν Ἡρακλείῳ παλαιοσαλιαγκοσυλλεκτηρίου,
πρώην δημοδιδάσκαλος.)

Ὁρίστε, κύριε.

Γ. *Εὐκαριστῶ, καὶ καίρω πολὺ γιὰ τὴν γνωριμίαν σου. Καὶ μάλιστα σὲ συγκαίρω ἀκόμη διότι ἔλαβες τὸ τάρρος νὰ παραιτηθῇς τὴν ντιντασκαλικήν σου ἔντραν καὶ νὰ*

καταγκίνεσαι εἰς ἔρευναν ἐπιστημονικήν· ντυστυκῶς ντὲν εἶμαι ἐπιστήμων κατ' αὐτό, εἶμαι φιλόλογκος, καὶ ντὲν γνωρίζω ἐκεῖνον τὸν κλάντον τῆς φυσικῆς ἐπιστήμης τὸν ὁποῖον σπουντάζεις· ὑποτέτω ὅμως ὅτι πᾶσα ἐπιστήμη εἴτε φυσικὴ εἴτε ἱστορικὴ βασίζεται ἐπὶ τῆς ἀνάγκης, καὶ ὅτι ἡ ἐξέλιξις τῶν κοχλιῶν ὅπως καὶ τῶν ἀντρώπων συμμορφοῦται πρὸς τοὺς ἀναγκαίους τῆς φύσεως νόμους.

Κ. Βεβαίως, κύριε. (Παναγία μου, μαστορικώτερα τὰ κατάφερα παρ' ὅσο φανταζόμουν. Νομίζει ὁ χριστιανὸς ὅτι τὸ παλαιοσαλιαγκοσυλλεκτήριό μου εἶναι ζωολογικὸ μουσεῖο ὅπου καὶ σπουδάζω ἀπὸ φυσικὴ ἐξέλιξι τοῦ εἴδους. Ἔ, με καρφίτσα ἢ σουβλάκι ἐξελίσσονται 'στὸ δικό μου μαγαζί.) Ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ μιλεῖς ἔτσι γιὰ τὴν ἀνάγκη καὶ τῆς φύσεως καὶ τῆς ἱστορίας, καὶ εἶσαι καθηγητὴς τοῦ Πανεπιστημίου τῆς Λειψίας, μήπως γνωρίζεις κάποιον Ἀριστοτέλην;—τὸ ἐπίθετό του δὲν ξέρω ἐκτὸς ὅτι ἀρχινεῖ ἀπὸ Π. Φαίνεται ὅτι ἔχει βιβλιάριο συγγραμμένο πέρυσι, Η ΝΙΚΗ ΤΗΣ ΓΕΡΜΑΝΙΑΣ, καὶ δὲν κατώρθωσε καλὰ νὰ τὸ πουλήσῃ· περισσεύουν τουλάχιστον ἀντίτυπα 'στὴν πατρίδα μου. Ἐγύρεψα καὶ ἐγὼ δωρεὰν δύο χιλιάδες, "ἐπὶ κυκλοφορίᾳ ἐθνικοφρονικῆς προπαγάνδας" καθὼς μοῦ παρήγγειλε ἕνας γουναρικοκάπηλος ἀπὸ τὴν Πάτρα, καὶ τὰ διανέμω μάλιστα περιτυλιγμένα σε κάθε πεντάρα σαλιάγκους τριγύρω· εἶμαι πιστὸς ἄνθρωπος, βλέπεις, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἔξυπνος· καὶ γιὰ νὰ σοῦ πῶ τὴν ἀλήθεια, κύριε, ἐμένα μοῦ κακοφαίνεται λιγάκι νὰ εἶνε μπαγιάτικαις καὶ κλούβιαις πρὶν μᾶς προσφερθοῦνε ἡ κομματικαὶς ρεκλάμαις τοῦ σκορπίζουνε ἐδῶ. Ἀλλὰ πῶς σοῦ φαίνεται ὁ συγγραφεὺς, ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης—Περυσινορεκλαμάκης; Τὸν γνωρίζεις; Εἶναι "Κρηντιγκὸς" καὶ αὐτός;

Γ. Ἀστεΐζεσαι, φίλε μου, καὶ ντὲν πρέπει· εἶναι καλὸς ἄντρωπος καὶ ἤτανε βεβαίως ὁ σπουδαιότερος ἀπ' ὅλους

τοὺς ματητάς μου. Ἅμα ἐπαληθεύσῃ ἡ πραγματεία του καὶ κυριεύσουμε ἐμεῖς ὅλον τὸν κόσμον, ντὲν τὰ ἀστεΐζεται κανεὶς πλιά· παντοῦ τὰ τοικοκολλητῇ ἡ γνωστοποίησις, "Ὁ κορατεύων ἢ ἀστεϊζόμενος κωρὶς αὐτοκρατορικὴν ἄντειαν ὑπόκειται εἰς ποινικὴν καταντίωξιν."

Κ. Τοῦ λόγου σου λοιπὸν, ὅταν προσποιήθηκες νὰ εἶσαι Κρητικὸς, δὲν τὸ εἶπες 'στὰ χωρατά;

Γ. Ὄκι, ἐψεύτηκα, τὸ ὁμολογκῶ, μὰ ντὲν ἐκωράτευσα· οἱ Γκερμανοὶ ντὲν κωρατεύουν, κατάλαβες;

Κ. Κατάλαβα, μονάχα ψεύδονται.

Γ. Ἐπιτρέπεται εἰς τοὺς Γκερμανοὺς νὰ ψεύντονται μὲ καλὸν σκοπὸν, ὅταν τὸ ἀπαιτεῖ ὁ πατριωτισμός.

Κ. Καὶ νὰ καταξεσχίζουνε συνθήκες, ὑποθέτω, καὶ νὰ βασανίζουνε αἰχμαλώτους καὶ νὰ παραβιάζουνε γυναῖκες καὶ νὰ σφάζουνε παιδάκια. Ὁ Θεὸς νὰ φυλάξῃ! εἶναι πατριωτισμὸς βρυκολάκων. Καὶ ἐσένα, κύριε Ζεππελινάκη, ἂν ἐγκρίνεις τέτοια κακουργήματα, σὲ συμβουλεύω νὰ βγάλῃς αὐτὸ τὸ ψεύτικό σου ὄνομα καὶ νὰ λάβῃς πιὸ κατάλληλο καὶ γνησίως Κρητικὸ, Καταχαναδάκης.

Γ. Τώρα ντὲν καταλαβαίνω πλιὰ τὶ λέγεις· ἀλλὰ μολονότι ὑβρίζεις τοὺς Γκερμανοὺς, τὰ νικήσουμε· ἡ νίκη μας, ὅπως καὶ ἔγκραψε ὁ συμπατριώτης μου, εἶναι ἱστορικὴ ἀνάγκη· ἡ φυσικὴ ἐξέλιξις τῶν ἐθνῶν τοῦ κόσμου τὴν ἐπιβάλλει ἀπαραιτήτως καὶ ἀναποφεύκτως.

Κ. Εἶναι ζήτημα μεγάλο· ἀλλ' ἂν θέλῃς νὰ τὸ συζητήσουμε, δὲν μοῦ λὲς, παρακαλῶ,—ἡ ἱστορικὴ ἀνάγκη διαφέρει ἀπὸ τὴ φυσικὴ, ἢ τὸ ἴδιο εἶναι;

Γ. Ντιαφέρει, ὅπως ἀκριβῶς ντιαφέρει τὸ μέρος ἀπὸ τὸ σύνολον. Ἡ ἱστορικὴ ἀνάγκη περιορίζεται εἰς τὰ ἀντρώ-

πινα ἔτνη τοῦ κόσμου· ἡ φυσικὴ ντεσπόζει, πλὴν τῶν ἀντρώπων, καὶ τὸν κόσμον ὁλόκληρον, τὴν γκὴν, τὴν τάλασσαν, τὸν οὐρανὸν, καὶ ὅσα ζῷα καὶ φυτὰ ὑπάρκουν.

Κ. Ὅσον ἀφορᾷ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους λοιπὸν, λέγουμε ἡ ἱστορικὴ ἡ φυσικὴ τὴν ἀνάγκη, ὅπως θέλουμε· ἀδιάφορο εἶναι ἀφοῦ ἔχει τὴν ἴδια σημασία.

Γ. Ἀντιάφορον, ἀντιάφορον.

Κ. Ὡραῖα· τώρα, παρακαλῶ, ποία σοῦ φαίνεται ἡ πρώτη καὶ μεγαλείτερη ἀνάγκη τῶν ἀνθρώπων;

Γ. Νὰ παιντεύονται καλὰ, νὰ ἀντιλαμβάνωνται τῆς ντιανοητικῆς ἀναπτύξεως τῆς πατρίντος μου, καὶ ἐπομένως νὰ παρομοιάζουν ὅσον τὸ ντυνατὸν πρὸς τοὺς Γκερμανούς.

Κ. Μὰ δὲν μ' ἐννόησες, κύριε. Φταίω ἴσως ἐγὼ καὶ δὲν ἐκφράζω καλὰ τὲς ἐρώτησές μου. Ἀλλ' ἔτσι θὰ συνεννοηθοῦμε, πιστεύω· τὰ παιδιά σας ποῦ παιδεύονται τόσο περίφημα, μήπως τρῶνε κάθε πρωΐ πρὶν νὰ πᾶνε σχολειό;

Γ. Πῶς; κωρὶς φαγκὶ δὲν θὰ ὑπομένανε τὸν κόπον τῶν ματημάτων των· εἶναι ἀπολύτως ἀνάγκη νὰ τρώγκουν.

Κ. Μπράβο· καὶ οἱ στρατιῶται διὰ νὰ ὑπομένουν τοὺς κόπους τοῦ πολέμου, εἶναι ἀπολύτως ἀνάγκη νὰ τρώγουν καὶ αὐτοί;

Γ. Ἴσως.

Κ. Φαίνεται λοιπὸν ἡ πρώτη καὶ μεγαλείτερη ἀνάγκη τῶν ἀνθρώπων νὰ εἶναι τὸ φαγί; Καὶ, σὰν πεινοῦνε, θὰ προτιμοῦνε νὰ τρῶνε καὶ τὰ ἄγουρα κολοκύθια παρὰ νὰ σπουδάζουνε τὰ Γερμανικὰ τοιαῦτα;

Γ. Κωρατεύεις καὶ πάλιν, καὶ ντὲν ἀπαντῶ πλιὰ, ἐὰν ἐξακολουτεῖς νὰ μὲ πειράζῃς.

Κ. *Λυποῦμαι πολὺ, κύριε· εἶναι κακή μου συνήθεια νὰ γελῶ λιγάκι κι' ὅταν εἶναι πολὺ σοβαρὸ τὸ ζήτημα. Μᾶς λείπουν ἐδῶ, βλέπεις, τὰ προτερήματα τῆς Γερμανικῆς παιδείας, καὶ προκύπτει παντοῦ ἡ Ρωμαϊϊκη παιδιά. Συγγνώμην, σὲ πειράζω καὶ πάλιν. Ἀλλ' αὐτὸ ἤθελα νὰ σ' ἐρωτήσω πολὺ σπουδαίως· ἂς ποῦμε ὅτι ἡ πρώτη ἀνάγκη τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀποτελεῖται ἀπὸ τὸ φαγητό· ἀλλὰ, τὸν καιρὸ ποῦ πολεμοῦνε, μήπως ἡ δευτέρα ἀνάγκη εἶναι νὰ καταστρέφουνε τοὺς ἐχθρούς των ἢ τοὐλάχιστον ν' ἀποκρούουν ἐπιτυχῶς καὶ διαρκῶς τὲς ἐπιθέσεις των.*

Γ. *Μάλιστα.*

Κ. *Διὰ τοῦτο χρειάζονται, μοῦ φαίνεται, πολλὰ πράματα, ροῦχα καὶ παπούτσια στερεὰ, καὶ ὅπλα, καὶ πυρομαχικὰ κάθε λογῆς, καὶ ἀπὸ κάθε εἶδος μεγαλείτερη ποσότητα παρὰ ὅση παράγεται εἰς εἰρηνικὴ ἐποχή. Ἐσεῖς ἀπὸ ποῖο μέρος θὰ τὰ λάβητε;*

Γ. *Προετοιμάσαμε παρὰ πολλὰ, πρίν νὰ γκίνῃ ὁ πόλεμος.*

Κ. *Προετοιμάσατε βεβαίως διότι ἀποφασίσατε ἐσεῖς τὴν καταραμένη αὐτὴ αἱματοχυσία· ἀλλὰ ἐπειδὴ καταναλώσατε πλιὰ τὰ περισσότερα, ἀπὸ ποῖο μέρος θὰ τὰ πάρητε τώρα;*

Γ. *Παράγκουμε μερικά.*

Κ. *Ἀλλ' ὄχι ἀρκετὰ διὰ νὰ τροφοδοτεῖτε καὶ τὰ δικα σας στρατεύματα καὶ τὰ Αὐστριακὰ καὶ τὰ Βουλγαρικὰ καὶ τὰ Τουρκικά. Ἐπειδὴ συνεχίζει τὸν ἀποκλεισμὸ ὁ στόλος τῶν Ἄγγλων καὶ τῶν συμμάχων τους, ποῦθεν θὰ λάβητε τὰ πολεμοφόδια;*

Γ. *Μπορεῖ νὰ πάρουμε ἀπὸ τὴν Ἀμερικήν· ντὲν εἶντες στὰς ἐφημερίντας πῶς κατέπλευσαν ἐκεῖ πέρα ντύο ἐμπορικά μας ὑποβρύκια;*

Κ *Εἶδα· καὶ ὅταν ἔγινε πρὸ ὀλίγου ὁ ἀποκλεισμὸς τῆς Κρήτης, καταπλεύσανε δύο λαθρεμπορικά μας καΐκια εἰς— ὄχι, δὲν πρέπει νὰ ἀναφέρω τὸν τόπο—καὶ γυρίσανε πίσω σωστὰ καὶ τὰ δύο, ἀλλὰ μολοτοῦτο εἰς ὀλίγες ἡμέρες μέσα εἴχαμε φόβο καὶ ἐκοντέψαμε μάλιστα νὰ πεινᾶμε.*

Γ. *Ἀλλ' ἐμεῖς καὶ ὕστερα ἀπὸ ντύο ἐτῶν ἀποκλεισμὸν βαστοῦμε ἀκόμη.*

Κ. *Μάλιστα, διότι εἶναι πολὺ μεγαλείτερη ἡ χώρα σας καὶ πλουσιώτερη, καὶ ὅπως εἶπα εἴχατε καὶ πολλὰ τρόφιμα προετοιμασμένα· μὰ δὲν θὰ βαστᾶτε ὁλονέν· τὸ ἴδιο θὰ ὑποφέρετε μὲ τὸν καιρό· πάντοτε νικᾷ ἡ θαλασσοκρατία· εἶναι φυσικὴ ἀνάγκη.*

Γ. *Μὲ συγκωρεῖτε, ντὲν ἠμπορῶ πλέον νὰ συζητήσω· μὲ πιάνει ἡ τάλασσα.*

Κ. *Καὶ θὰ σᾶς πιάσῃ ὅλους· εἶναι φυσικὴ ἀνάγκη.*