

No drop shall fall, no wind shall blow,
 Nor sound of any foot shall pass.
 Alone of its accursèd state
 One thing the hand of Time shall spare,
 For the grim Idiot at the gate
 Is deathless and eternal there!

Archibald Lampman.

A GREEK PRIME MINISTER: CHARILAOS TRICOUPIS.

"POOR charming Greece! How she is to get out of her scrapes I do not see, but I love her all the same." So, not long ago, wrote a friend, a careful student of Greece, her people and politics; and I am sure that any one who has taken even a passing interest in her later history will echo his feeling. More than fifty years have passed since her struggle for freedom from Turkish rule awoke the sympathy and aid of Europe; but though more than once since then her importance in the ever living "Eastern question" has made European diplomats anxious on her account, in America the Greece that we know is still that of Pericles and Aristotle. We know that there is a free modern Greece, but what she has done, what she is doing, we know little about; few of us suspect that the Greek of to-day is not merely proud of his ancestors of the "golden age," but that he is ambitious and even hopeful of emulating them in many fields, and that he often expects a speedy realization of his dreams of conquest. Still less often do we think that the effort of Greece to attain and to improve the highest civilization of Europe, in spite of her poverty and the heritage of ignorance and disorder and misrule of the Turk, has many lessons that statesmen may well heed. Yet the progress of Greece within the last thirty years is astonishing. In habits of life, in wealth, in facilities for education, in the development of the arts and sciences, in government, in all that

tends toward refinement and culture, the Greece of to-day is not to be compared with that of a generation ago. Many mistakes have been made; many undertakings have failed. The people in the country districts are yet not well educated. The country to-day is so deeply in debt that its solvency is a matter of doubt; but the progress has been wonderful, and in the achievements of the past lies in great part the hope of the future.

One peculiarity of Greece has been that these changes have been brought about especially through the influence of a few chosen leaders. The form of government is parliamentary, and hence democratic in spirit; but probably in no other country of Europe is there so little popular initiative, so much reliance upon the political leaders. The system, or rather the habit, has its disadvantages; but it has also its benefits. For one thing, it serves to develop strong, self-reliant, though possibly at times reckless leaders, upon whom, in great part, must fall the praise or the blame of all public acts.

For the last dozen years, the most prominent of these leaders has been Charilaos Tricoupis, a man who, in the opinion of more than one member of European cabinets, is a great statesman in a small country, but a man who would have been a great statesman in any country. He comes of a well-known political family. His father, Spiridion Tricoupis, perhaps best known abroad as the author of the

standard history of the Greek Revolution and the eulogist of Lord Byron, at home is noted rather as one of the chief actors in that history, and as a *littérateur*, poet as well as historian. His father's brother-in-law, Maurocordatos, was perhaps the most prominent political actor on one side of the revolutionary struggle, while Spiridion Tricoupis himself was a member of several cabinets, and in 1855 Prime Minister; he had studied in France and England, was once envoy extraordinary to France, twice envoy extraordinary at London, and was accredited there a third time, when he refused the appointment in order to become Prime Minister at home.

Charilaos Tricoupis, born at Nauplia, in Greece, in 1832, had thus, from his father's long residence abroad in France and England, the inestimable benefit not only of a thorough knowledge of the languages, learned when he was young, but, what is of vastly greater importance for a statesman, a sympathetic understanding of foreign politicians and peoples and of their institutions, acquired much as a native acquires it. Though he studied at Athens and had a careful home training in Greece, he also studied law in Paris, and in fact took there the diploma of law. In 1852 he was made *attaché* of the Greek legation in London; in 1855 he became secretary of legation there, and in 1862 he was made *chargé d'affaires*.

Tricoupis began his political career in Greece in 1863, when, on the occasion of the revolutionary change of dynasty, he was chosen with his father, by Greeks in England, as their representative in the National Assembly, though he took no especially prominent part in the proceedings. From the time when he was first chosen member of the *Boulé* (Chamber of Deputies) from Missolonghi until to-day, with the exception of one year, he has been either in political life at home, or on some special mission abroad.

In physique, as his portrait would show,
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he is very robust and strong, carrying his sixty-two years with the vigor of a man twenty years younger. His powers of work and endurance are simply phenomenal, though one may perhaps question at times the judgment of the man who so abuses a good constitution. When he is in office, with the burden upon him not merely of the treasury, but of all the multifarious duties in the way of local government, office-distributing, and general dictatorship that fall to the lot of the Prime Minister of Greece, he often works from eighteen to twenty hours a day, and, so far as one can learn, makes no provision at all for regular recreation or rest. At his house, one day, his sister told me that he had gone to bed that morning at three o'clock, and at seven was again in his office at the treasury department. People who wish to see him on business have, at times, appointments made late in the night, when he is more likely to have leisure than when, in the daytime, his anteroom is thronged with visitors. A Greek Prime Minister needs unlimited powers of endurance, for his work is almost that of a dictator, with corresponding duties, while his political opponents are ever watchful to catch him napping, and often do not hesitate to go to extremes to upset him.

Three or four years ago, the opposition filibustered and talked on the budget from four o'clock in the afternoon until ten the next morning. Divided into relays, they talked against time, raising technical points, and using all the arts common to such tactics. Members read, yawned, slept, went to the lobbies and elsewhere in small squads for refreshments, keeping well within call of the party whips; but for sixteen hours Tricoupis never left the Chamber, sitting quiet, watchful, apparently unwearied and needing no refreshment. At another session he remained fourteen hours, and was led finally to rest a moment only by the ruse of a friend, who sent for him to give advice on an impor-

tant question concerning the matter in hand. In the lobby he found his friend with a freshly prepared cup of chocolate, and no further matter to settle.

Many people, friends and opponents, say of him, "Tricoupis has no physical wants." To his scorn of physical feeling and indulgence, and to his almost unlimited power for work, is due in great part, doubtless, his remarkable versatility and breadth of knowledge; a versatility that his friends are fond of comparing with Gladstone's, though until his knowledge manifests itself more in print few will be prepared to go so far. Certainly, however, this knowledge is extraordinary. A few moments' talk with him on politics shows not merely the politician of the keenly practical type, who deals with men as they are, and who knows their weaknesses well, but shows also the political philosopher and student, the master of comparative constitutional law and practice. One might expect this, perhaps, from a lifelong political and diplomatic training; but he is also generally conceded to be easily the first financier of Greece, and he would be a great financier anywhere. Yet — and this illustrates his power of acquisition and reasoning — one of the members of the cabinet, and himself commonly considered one of the strongest students of finance in the country, a man well worthy to be minister of finance, said of him: "When I first knew him well, in 1874, Tricoupis was not a financier, was not even a strong student of finance, not having turned his attention that way. Later, the question became of vital importance, and he took it up. In an almost incredibly short time, he had become a master of the subject, in theory and in practice, as applied to Greece."

Nearly every educated Greek knows French well; but Tricoupis speaks English also, practically like a native Englishman, with perfect readiness and mastery of idiom. Though he does not pretend to the same familiarity with German, yet

he speaks the language with Germans who call to see him, and has a like command of other tongues.

A Prussian general said that he had rarely known a politician with so good a knowledge of military affairs. When in 1886–88 the question of buying ironclads for the Greek navy came up, he was found by naval men and shipbuilders to be thoroughly conversant with the problems of their work. So, whatever the subject, — geography, statistics, history, science, the last book of travel, — he takes an interest in it. He does so much that his breadth of knowledge is remarkable, and in all concerning his special work he is profound. To his interest in archæology is due in great part the rapid development of the study and of the museums in Greece. The best laws favoring the extension and direction of the museums have been his; and he has given the greatest aid and encouragement to foreign schools in his country, not merely officially, but personally aiding them in securing sites for buildings and in arranging streets near at hand.

The relation of the central government to local government in Greece, as well as the personal ascendancy of Tricoupis as Prime Minister, is clearly shown by an experience of the English and American Archæological Schools. A narrow street running by their properties had become a place for deposit of nuisances by people in the neighborhood; so much so that it seemed best to the schools to have it closed. On trying to discover the best method of bringing this about, they were advised to see Tricoupis. The directors of the schools accordingly sought an interview with him, and stated their case. As one of them said afterwards, Tricoupis appeared at once to see the whole case in all its bearings. He stated to them, very briefly, but very completely, all the disadvantages of such a procedure, and asked if they still wished to have the street closed. When they said Yes, he promised that it should

be done. They did nothing more; but, to their great surprise, — for promptness in such matters is rarely expected anywhere, — within a few days workmen appeared, and the street was closed.

In speaking to him afterwards of the relations of the central government to the city government, this case came up, and I asked him how the Prime Minister could thus direct a purely local affair. He replied that it had not seemed necessary to him to explain to the directors the course of proceeding. It would have taken time, and he knew that what they wanted could be done; so he had promised it. In fact, he had simply brought the case before the local authorities, and the matter had been arranged by them. He added, "Because I speak English, a large part of the public business of the English and American residents comes to me first; and it is often, as in this case, easier for me personally to see that it is done than to send them to the local authorities." It is, however, also true that it is a much surer way. Owing to the fact that the prefects of departments, to use the corresponding French term, are appointees of the central government, and that these prefects have practically unlimited control — at any rate, through obstruction — over the local finances by means of a veto and power of amendment, the Prime Minister can, if it should seem to him wise, bring overwhelming pressure to bear upon the local officers. In consequence, when the Prime Minister promises that something in the field of local government shall be done, it is no idle promise, depending upon the whim of a local city council for its fulfillment. It will probably be done without opposition, for the Prime Minister, as a sensible man, will not bring forward a bad case; but if the council does object, the Minister — if he is strong and willing to risk the political influence of his acts — is in a position to block completely the wheels of local government.

In speaking of Tricoupis as an orator, — for he is easily, especially from the standpoint of a thoughtful Englishman or American, the greatest orator of modern Greece, — it is not a little amusing to note that Greeks are impressed, even in his speaking, by his power of endurance. "I have seen him speak four hours at a stretch without taking a sip of water," said one of his admirers, "while Delyannis" (his chief political rival) "drinks glass after glass in a budget speech." I have even seen the same statement in print. His opponents, too, tell a rather malicious story of a motion to adjourn the House in the middle of one of his speeches, on the ground that the members were tired out, and of the reply by the president, that if the orator could stand it, he thought they would have to. On the other hand, a German admirer says, on the authority of one of Tricoupis' political opponents: "He does not speak; he roars from the tribune. He does not refute; he tears his enemy to pieces. His dialectic power not only persuades, but carries away like a torrent." In fact, his oratory is impressive from the evident sincerity and power of the orator, and from the nature of the subject matter. Tricoupis' power of very condensed lucid statement is most exceptional. In his budget speeches, he shows rare clearness and force in the exposition of a difficult subject. To these qualities are added a coolness of judgment, a willingness to look to the bottom of things and to see the unfavorable side of his own case, that are very persuasive in an orator. His frankness, lately, in openly recognizing the bankrupt condition of the treasury illustrates his direct way of dealing with difficulties, while his striking statement of the case shows his oratorical power. In its English dress, one of his budget speeches lacks, as it must, perhaps, in translation, something of the polish of phrase and of allusion and apt comparison that make a similar speech by Gladstone really de-

lightful reading; but it is no less clear or persuasive. His diction, too, is said by the Greeks to be remarkably pure, and even classic in tone, — the highest praise for a Greek to give it, — though I believe that some of his political opponents, who, to make capital, call him the “Englishman,” and speak of his foreign training as if it made him a less patriotic Greek, affect at times to find in his pronunciation and style a lack of the true native flavor of idiom.

In his long experience in foreign affairs, however, it would seem that he has not lacked patriotism. Rather, his love for Greece and his vigor in her behalf have won him the compliment of consideration by foreign courts that has not always been friendly. When, for example, in 1870, it was proposed to send him to Constantinople as minister, Turkey objected at first. As acting minister for foreign affairs at the time of the Cretan insurrection, he had been, for Turkish taste, too positively and emphatically a Greek, with the “great idea” that it is the duty of Greece to watch over the interests of all people of Greek blood wherever found. Though for the last ten years he has been exhorting his countrymen to reasonable patience in the carrying out of their plans for territorial extension; though he is often denounced at home as unpatriotic, because he is too cool-headed to permit his people to rush unreasonably into an unequal conflict before their own resources and power are more fully developed, yet he has the hot blood of the Greek, and feels as keenly as the most rampant among them. He knows self-control better.

In 1878, however, when he thought that France, at the Berlin Conference, was betraying the interests of Greece, his words of blame were so stinging that it gave his political opponents a chance to pass a vote of apology to France for them. It should be remembered, too, that Russia, even if she did not press her objection, did not wish him to be the Greek

member of that Conference, though it had been proposed to send him there. It was known on all hands that he was the ablest and boldest Greek for such a position.

So in 1885, at the time of the Bulgarian *coup d'état*, when he was out of power, and Delyannis, then Prime Minister, mobilized the Greek army, to get also, if possible, a slice of Turkish territory, he criticised the action sharply, not because it was warlike, but because it was not warlike enough. Before Greece did anything of importance the powers blockaded her ports and compelled her to desist; so that she gained nothing but a large increase of debt, and a vigorous hint to King George that if he prized his crown he must not let such things happen again. Tricoupis, now, would have acted more quickly. “Had we been in power,” said he, in speaking of the event lately, “our policy would have been to seize promptly as much of the territory as we could hold, before Turkey could guard it, and then to open negotiations. Possession is often nine points of the law, but in such cases it is ninety-nine points out of a hundred.” Of course his opponents say that he could not have done better than did Delyannis; but still they confess that he often has a way of doing more than he promises, and that he is not afraid. He is, nevertheless, Machiavellian enough (I am one of those who see much to admire in Machiavelli) to think it wise to be prudent, and not to keep other nations unfriendly, when nothing can be gained by hostility. This same prudence is noticeable in his personal conduct. For example, he makes it a principle never to receive a present. It would not do to let even a suspicion of his personal honesty and honor arise.

His diplomatic training also appears in a most interesting light in his correspondence with the foreign office when he was so skillfully conducting the negotiations that led to the cession of the Ionian Islands to Greece. We are the more im-

pressed with the diligence and ability and pluck and character of the man when we reflect that, a young man but thirty-two years of age, he found himself pitted against the shrewdest and best trained diplomats of Russia and Austria. In a letter dated March 2, 1864, occurs a sentence or two which, though innocent enough, would have delighted Machiavelli himself. Referring to a declaration which Earl Russell had said that he would send him, Tricoupis writes: "I have not refused to accept it, in order that I may send it to Athens, but I am resolved not to sign; indeed, it is better to be silent on some subjects than to make reservations, as by thus acting we lead others to suppose that we accept the proposals which had no reservations."

It would be unfitting, of course, to attempt to give in detail, in such an article as this, any account of Greek finance, and of the part that Tricoupis has played as minister of finance, yet this is perhaps his highest claim to statesmanship. The general nature of his policy, however, and the principles by which he has been guided are simple, complicated as are the specific problems.

Greece, on account of her limited area, is not a wealthy country, but she ought to pay her running expenses and the interest on her debt. This, in the opinion of English financial experts as well as of Tricoupis himself, she is fully able to do without burdening industry to the point of exhaustion. Instead of running behind each year, as she has usually done, she should get a budget balance, even if this does necessitate high taxes.

Again, the inner resources of the country cannot be properly developed without means of communication that will enable producers to reach markets at a distance. It is, therefore, Tricoupis thinks, the only wise policy, if one looks to the future, to build good roads and railroads as fast as the country can afford them. He thinks, too, that she can afford a good many. The country cannot develop its own resources

without them. And besides, Greece is especially well fitted in many ways to attract tourists, if only the means of access to the chief places of interest are not too rare and expensive. Tourists in large numbers are a source of wealth, as Switzerland has long since proved. For this reason, also, it will pay to build roads.

There must be a sound currency to do business with. An irredeemable paper currency not only brings difficulty into budget calculations, an enormous loss in exchange in buying abroad and in paying interest on the public debt abroad in gold, while taxes are collected in depreciated paper, but it is always a poison in the business circulation, making it speculative, uncertain, and weak. Greece has a paper currency badly depreciated, gold standing at points fluctuating between 150 and 175 as political prospects change. Seldom does it fall to one man twice to do away with such a blighting influence on financial prosperity as paper money is, yet Tricoupis has done this once, and it is his plan to do it a second time, if the present policy succeeds. Rarely is the statesman whose position depends upon the will of the people so courageous and self-sacrificing that he is willing alone to take into his hands the responsibility of such an act, especially if it brings with it an increase of taxation and a probable fall from power; yet such a man is Tricoupis.

In 1883-84, he raised a loan, withdrew surplus paper, and abolished legal tender at one stroke, coupling with fiscal reforms an increase in taxation and his scheme of internal improvement. In 1885, largely in consequence of the increase in taxation that his necessary reforms demanded, he fell from power, and in his year of absence from office he was compelled to see a useless mobilization of the army, to which we have already referred, that added millions to the already heavy burden of the debt, and a reintroduction of the legal tender money that he had made such efforts to abolish. And now it has been his policy to abolish it

once more, though we must await the event to see if he can succeed.

Such, briefly, is and has been his policy, — sound money, internal development, a budget balance, even with high taxes. To be sure, with this have gone many reforms in taxation. Indeed, the whole system has been revised and bettered, though, to save his country's credit, he has not shrunk from increasing taxation. So long as this increase is not carried so far as to cut into the sources of income, as every student of finance is aware, no harm is done, and Tricoupis knows his country well. The taxes have been tripled within a dozen years, but a year ago, according to foreign finance experts, the country showed no signs of exhaustion.

The perplexities of the finance minister in Greece, however, are not more the weight of taxation than the difficulties of collection, due to the nature and habits of the people, and to the trouble in securing continuous support in carrying out any policy that involves an increase of taxes. The opposition promises a lessening of taxes, but the opposition never gets a balance for the budget; and a late finance minister, M. Carapanos, who told me a year ago that he was endeavoring to found a party that should be devoted to a principle instead of being personal, as most Greek political parties are, and who, according to late papers from Athens, has secured enough followers in the House to give his party a name, the Progressive, — this M. Carapanos recommended an understanding with the creditors of the state by which they should receive in hand sixty per cent of the interest money due them, and the assurance that the rest would be given them "when the resources of the country enable us to do so." So long as Greece showed no more signs of exhaustion than it did a year ago, a finance minister who did not earnestly strive to balance his budget and pay his country's obligations was either ignorant, or was simply cowardly and playing for popular support; knowing that if he con-

tinued his policy the future had nothing for him but bankruptcy and repudiation of debts. Tricoupis prefers the honor of his country to popular applause, though the six months that he was out of office last year have made the task almost hopeless even for him. He has had to cut down two payments when they were due, though he hopes to complete arrangements promptly for meeting the others.

This leads me to consider him briefly as an administrator, and to note some of his views on the nature of Greek politics, as well as to consider certain problems that a Greek Prime Minister finds confronting him; for a Greek Prime Minister is by no means in the position of one in England or in France; he is more autocratic, and at the same time more dependent upon personal favor.

Since King George came to the throne there has been only one legislative body, the Boulé, and, as in England and France, the Prime Minister is dependent upon his majority there. As, however, with this majority he can pass into law any bill without reckoning later with Senate or House of Lords, and as also the number of deputies is small, the value of individual votes is great. The members know their value, and do not hesitate to bring about concessions of various kinds from the cabinet. Of course I do not mean to say that all members of the Boulé sell their votes for favors. Rather, as the matter was stated to me by more than one Greek in a position to know, it is not wise for the government to offend members, if it wishes to remain in power. When a member asks the government for an office for one of his faithful constituents, or that some army officer whose turn it is to go to the frontier be allowed to remain in the capital, or that a teacher be transferred to some more pleasant locality, the government wishes to grant the favor, and often does so. The practice is not materially different from that which holds with us at times, only the member can make his influence more directly felt

on the executive; he may vote against him; and the members are not so held within party traces as in England and in the United States.

It is said that Tricoupis is moved less than any other minister by such requests from members. He is not so easily accessible; his rather cool demeanor and businesslike way of looking at things do not encourage the asking of favors. Indeed, he is said to lose votes at times by summary refusal of such petitions; and yet, doubtless, when he is in office, office-mongering is carried on in his cabinet, and without his express disapproval, if not directly by himself. In a country given over to the spoils system perhaps as badly as ours, he has yet done much to check the evil and to put things on a better basis. He has passed more than one law providing for qualifications for office holders that should insure the selection of fit men for office. When Delyannis was last in power, he repealed these laws and changed many office holders, intending, as he himself told me, to pass better laws on the same subject, since these were faulty; but, he said, he was dismissed by the King before he could carry out his intention. Tricoupis afterwards reenacted his former laws, though not, his enemies say, before he had put out Delyannists, and put in his own friends. The practice of removals on party grounds is evidently active on both sides, though all recognize the evil, and are honestly endeavoring to remove it, with still the strong temptation that we find at home to do so in good part at the expense of the opposite party. "I think," said M. Tricoupis, "that the government ought not to have the power to dismiss and appoint non-political officials at will, though I do believe in a strong executive with much power and responsibility. The government should not have its hands too much tied, but should be able really to *do* something." In fact, whatever may be said by friends or enemies, he is the only one who has deliberately gone ahead

to deprive himself, by legislation, of the burden of office-mongering, though M. Sotiropoulos, the late Prime Minister, wrote, before accepting office, as if he intended to go even further. What he did I have as yet been unable to learn.

Tricoupis is businesslike in the conduct of public affairs. Officials say that they must work harder when he is in office; but as he is a hard worker himself, they cannot complain. Indeed, it is his intense earnestness in work, and his unwillingness to spare himself in the public service, as well as his consummate ability, that, rather than any personal courting of favor, give him his firm hold on party and country.

A word or two regarding the personal nature of Greek political parties, to which I have already referred, will put this relationship between leader and followers in a clearer light. The political parties in Greece all start in the Boulé. As soon as a man gets influence enough to direct the votes of a small group of members, he has a party; and if he is strong, this party may grow until he can control the Boulé, and later, in a general election, the vote of the people. Thus, Tricoupis himself, first a follower of Kumunduros, but with some vigorous reform notions of his own that won him adherents, in 1872 founded his party with five or six members. In 1879, his party in the Boulé numbered fourteen, though in the mean time he had been Prime Minister. And to-day the Greeks — an intensely political nation — are Tricoupists or Delyannists, Carapanists or Rhallyists. The leaders may represent some special ideas, though party lines are not closely drawn on principles; but for the great mass of their followers, at any rate, the allegiance to party is a personal allegiance to the chief. Throughout the country, each party chief has his local leaders of the people, who are more or less faithful to him, and to whom in turn the voters are more or less faithful. I say more or less faithful. A friend of mine in Ath-

ens asked a candidate who was soliciting his vote three or four years ago whether he was to support Tricoupis or Delyannis in the next Boulé. "I cannot tell," he frankly replied, "until after the election, when I can see how matters stand."

As citizens the Greeks are very keen and bright. In the cities they are well read, and are all politicians; and even in the rural districts, though the rate of illiteracy is high, the political interest seems remarkably strong. When it comes to voting, however, the motives are as mixed as our own. Patriotism, judgment on party questions, fidelity to chiefs, personal interests, even bribery in many localities, — all have their influence, as with us. Many candidates expect to put one hundred drachmæ or so with the innkeepers to supply wine and *raki* free to electors. Elections often cost the candidate ten thousand drachmæ, and queer stories are told of election debts and their payment.

Even the *kumpari* system — that is, the relation of godfather to children, which in the Greek Church is a sacred relationship, binding the child to the godfather for life in bonds of duty — has been used to hold votes, a man thus widening his influence greatly.

Such methods are employed, of course, only with the more ignorant; and one must not misjudge the wisdom or patriotism of the Greeks because these things occur. The country is still young in self-government; and until lately the country districts were far removed from the political centres through lack of means of communication, while the Church and the customs of the people smack strongly of patriarchal government.

"The Greeks are the best sons and brothers in the world," said proudly one of the most intelligent men in Athens, a Greek, familiar with Europe and America, though the same man had just been telling me some of the above-named weaknesses of his people.

Perhaps no other people exhibit their

love of fatherland and home as do the Greeks. Witness the magnificent public buildings, museums, and monuments built by the wealthy for the education of their people and the beautifying of their country. Witness also those who come to pass their green old age in Athens, when they have gathered their portion in foreign lands. One of the most striking buildings in Athens, the Academy, built for the use of a society which the Greeks hope some day may rival in reputation the French Institute, was given to his country by a wealthy banker.

Now, in a country where the people, in spite of these excellent traits, are often so susceptible to political trickery and art as are the Greeks, Tricoupis stands out sharply distinguished from his fellow-politicians in his habits and manner. He has courted neither politicians nor people; he has made himself necessary to them. They may not love him; they admire, and fear, and trust him. Said a very keen observer, not a Greek, who has passed a dozen years in close relations with the court and politics in Athens: "Tricoupis is an autocrat. Nobody dares do anything without his aid, even in local government, when he is in power. He puts on airs. He is very able, is a genius. He has no physical wants, makes no concessions, will not condescend. Delyannis will drink mastic on a street corner with the coachmen, and is popular; Tricoupis shuts himself off with his lordly airs. But when the people get into trouble, they want Tricoupis." "This reserve is his art," his opponents say, of course; but to one who has seen him even a little, this reserve appears perfectly natural and sincere. He neither could nor would stoop to other methods; and, moreover, while he may seem more reserved than most Greeks, and while he is very direct in his speech, certainly foreigners would not consider him lacking in courtesy.

His apparent indifference to praise or blame is striking. Indeed, it may fairly be

a question if he is not at times unwise in his neglect of the press ; if he does not really owe it to the country that he is serving to have the side of the government fairly represented before the people and the world. It is an open secret that the governments of France and Italy and other countries keep part of the press subsidized ; they justify themselves on the grounds given above. Tricoupis certainly does not subsidize many papers. Only two out of all in Athens could say a good word for him before his last resignation, and now when he is again in power the situation is about the same. An article in the *Contemporary Review* a year or two ago says that the gentlemen on the staff of a paper that favored him asked him once to guarantee two seats in the *Boulé*. He refused point-blank, and the paper went to the opposition. Another ministerial paper kept a gambling den. Tricoupis ordered it closed, regardless of the wish of the paper. There was one more issue of the journal, in which it sought revenge by a violent onslaught on him ; then it stopped.

This disregard of opposition is seen in many acts of his. He has never hesitated to increase taxes when it seemed wise to do so, though such an act is always unpopular. Not long ago, in order to lessen expenditures, he suspended the foreign ministers, and left the business of the legations in the hands of the secretaries. In 1887, he had strength enough to reduce the number of deputies in the *Boulé* from two hundred and fifty to one hundred and fifty, — a measure which, however useful it might be from the standpoint of economy and of improving the grade of deputies, could hardly make him beloved by the politicians. In 1891, Delyannis, who was the Prime Minister, increased the number to two hundred and seven, where it still remains.

A year or two ago, Tricoupis passed a bill providing for payment of tuition by

students in the university, an act which nearly caused a riot in that susceptible class, and brought about a characteristic scene, characteristic both of Greek students and of the stern directness of Tricoupis. A crowd of students gathered in front of his office, and a delegation waited upon the Prime Minister. As soon as they had announced the purpose of their visit, without waiting to hear their argument, he demanded, "Do you come here as students or as citizens? If as students, you are not competent to discuss the question ; if as citizens, you are unpatriotic, being unwilling to bear your share of the burdens of the country." Whereupon he turned away to his private office. The students went out ; and when, later, an outbreak was imminent, the cool-headed chief of police turned water on the crowd from the fire hose, and they dispersed. This treatment of the students, just or not, was not a means to secure popularity. To despise popularity may be heroic at times ; to refuse to descend to trickery is always so ; but when one's power to do good for one's state rests in the people, needless severity is weakness and un wisdom.

"Sometimes," said he one day, "it is best for the country to do things that the people do not want just then." But that does not make one popular. Moreover, it is unsafe as a principle. In rare desperate cases it is true ; at other times it may be true, when the people can be made to see what is best in season to prevent their overthrow of the policy ; but it is always risky, and when it fails may do far more harm than delay would have done. When it was intimated that his proposed line of policy — recalling the legal tender, making a loan, raising taxes — was a bold one, he replied : "We have counted the cost. It is a policy that is sure to defeat us ultimately. Raising taxes, contracting the currency, dismissing officials, can have no other result. But it is worth the cost if we can get the policy so firmly established

before we fall that our successors must carry it on after us. Then we have won."

Noble words these, and, I feel sure, sincere ones; and yet there is the great "if." Can he get his policy established? Under the existing circumstances, desperate as they were, he was surely right in making the attempt; and to his heroic determination at the time Greece probably owes to-day what is left of its financial credit. But still such circumstances are extremely rare.

The experience of Greece during the last few years; its ambition to extend its territory, without the requisite strength; the checks by the great European powers; its increasing burden of debt; its failure as yet to bring all the Greeks in Macedonia, Crete, and elsewhere under its control, as many devotees of the "great idea," with lack of judgment, hoped that it might soon do; and the unrest that all these conditions have given the people, make not uncommon among Greeks a feeling that their present form of government is not a success, and that it needs serious modification. A prominent member of the cabinet said, not long ago, that he would favor a senate of some kind to check the *Boulé*, and to lessen the pressure from its members. Many articles have appeared in the papers, advocating a more active participation in affairs by the King, — practically the advice to the King to act as his own Prime Minister. Lately, again, the King has been blamed for acting too much on his own judgment. One very intelligent Greek — not an active politician, but a man conversant with politics at home and abroad — told me that he really doubted, in view of the experience under the constitution, if the Greeks were yet ready for self-government. In country districts the people are ignorant; very many cannot read or write, and take little interest in politics, except from the personal standpoint with reference to the success or failure of their leaders. He

was inclined to think that if the King were a somewhat different man, it might be both wise and practicable to abolish the constitution, and to let the sovereign govern as well as reign, with the aid of chosen counselors. Strange views, these, in a popular government of to-day, with the drift toward democracy that is seen throughout Europe! They all remind us that Greece is not yet free from a touch of Orientalism.

The ideas of Tricoupis on the subject are quite different, and are of great interest and value in the present crisis. When these views were set before him, he said that he considered the Greeks a thoroughly intelligent people, though in the country districts many are illiterate. Very many of them are now landowners; there is land enough for nearly every one to be so, and the laws favor such holding. There is no proletariat in Greece, such as is found elsewhere in Europe; consequently, there is no socialistic movement there. The interests of the people are well enough defined, and the people understand them well enough in the long run, so that it is safe and best to trust them. "This is not true of all countries," he continued, "but in my judgment it is true of Greece. Political parties are based on principles and interests. On the whole, it is safer and wiser to base action upon the *interests* of the people. When the people are intelligent enough to recognize these interests, as, I think, the Greeks are, they are ready for self-government." Lately the people have seemed slow in following his judgment; and if they were to overthrow him in the next election, it would militate against his opinion regarding them.

Believing thus in his people; knowing that, without a proletariat, and with the great natural resources of the country, the people could well bear an increase of present burdens for the more rapid development of the country, he has not hesitated to push them on in the way of

development. Were they of his mind, were they ready to make the effort, one cannot doubt their ability to do all that he has asked, and more, and that it would be wise for them to do so. Keen observers, however, who have lived long in Athens, — not Greeks, — think that he has been a little too far ahead of his people, and that they will not follow him. Recent events would seem to point that way, and yet one can but hope that they will be ready to trust again so strong an intelligence.

If Tricoupis has a weak point as a statesman, it is probably this: he is a little too willing to drive public opinion, or rather the public, into the right road, instead of following the slower but surer plan of leading them thither. He possibly pushes his measures — wise ones — too fast. One can but contrast his methods with those of Lincoln in his first term. Lincoln waited until the people were with him, leading them; and thereby he won. Had his patience been less wise, his sympathetic knowledge of the people less, he could not have been so great a statesman as the world now confesses him to have been, however great he might have been in intellect or heart.

Tricoupis, nevertheless, in spite of his rather autocratic methods, may fairly be said to have created popular government in Greece; for until he had stirred the King and people by his articles advocating trust in the people's majority, and so had won his first premiership, elections in Greece were hardly free, and the government was not in fact really of the people. Now the government is of the majority in the Boulé.

One can but admire his rigid independence and scorn of petty trickery; but it is not necessary to be careless of popular feeling in order to be upright and honest; and, moreover, if one is to rely upon the people, one cannot be too far in advance of them. In the present financial condition, to avert bankruptcy, heroic measures are needed. It is not a mis-

take to drive matters now; but it may be a question whether great expenditures for roads and railroads and other developing agencies could wisely precede the popular demand and willingness to pay heavy taxes. Doubtless the people were glad to have the improvements, but the result seems to show that they had not counted the cost.

Throughout his long political career Tricoupis has remained a poor man, caring only for his work, and living on the meagre salary paid him and the slenderest income from some little inherited property. He lives very modestly, in a rented house, with his sister, who, unmarried also, seems with him to give her life to politics and the state. No sketch of him would be complete without mention of this highly gifted lady, who has been for years his most useful aid. Day after day, and all day long, she receives friends, strangers, constituents, opponents, greeting all with the unflinching tact and courtesy that delight and win, and speaking to each his own language with an accuracy that astonishes one. "Her drawing-room," well says a writer in the *St. James Gazette*, "is perhaps the nearest approach to the political and literary salon of the last century."

From what has been written it will be seen that Tricoupis is essentially a man of action. "It is better to make a campaign upon what you have done than upon what you have said and promised," he declared, in speaking of his policy; and he acts upon this view. A German writer, in describing him, says that his most striking characteristic is will; and I think that this opinion is shared by all who come to know him, though on first meeting him, the chief impression upon many people is made by the wonderful rapidity with which he seems to grasp in all its details the subject presented. Delyannis, who from his long years of contest with him ought to know his characteristics well, said of

him, "M. Tricoupis is a man who dares." The remark was not intended to be complimentary, for Delyannis thinks that he dares do more than he has a right to do. Indeed, others also think that Tricoupis has not hesitated at times to bend the letter when it seemed to conflict with the spirit of the law, or with what he thought to be the real interest of the country; but in no case have I heard any charge that he ever had a personal end in view, or that he considered anything but the highest interests of his country; and in most cases those who gave the facts justified them as in themselves wise, but perhaps dangerous, as being precedents which unwise or unpatriotic men might follow. "A man who dares," a most necessary characterization of all great men, I think an excellent one of him, though I have already shown that he is also prudent, *audax et cautus*. But he is not vacillating or timid. He is prompt, vigorous, sure. In many things said of him, and in many things that one sees, he reminds one of Bismarck: a man of blood and iron, if need be, in a small country with limited means, forced to be prudent and to wait, doomed to be checked by being thrown out of power every few years, and to see his good work undone by his opponents. Think of his tax reforms, legal tender repeals, civil service laws, set aside, to be remade by him, while he had also to pay the debts uselessly heaped on the country by others. The debts made by him have been in the main for substantial benefits to the country. Greece is too poor and small to cope with Turkey on land; but a struggle with Turkey every Greek considers inevitable. Tricoupis provided for ironclads that would give Greece control of the sea so far as Turkey was concerned; but at the moment when the ironclads were firing the first salute to their new masters, as they entered the Piræus for the first time, the minister who had secured them was with the King laying

down his office. With all his strength and enthusiasm Tricoupis feels keenly these reverses; but he knows that the only fortunate outcome for Greece is through prudence and patience, and he will do his best to raise her by every possible means. He, with the rest of his countrymen, hopes for a greater Greece; but, as he has written to his people, "the true policy for Greece is to become a strong country. Strengthen Greece morally and in wealth, then she will be sound and right, and ready to take what comes in the future."

The events of the last two ministerial changes in Greece, when Tricoupis resigned, and after a six months' interval returned to power, serve to throw further light upon his character, the nature of Greek politics, and his relation to the policy of the country and to the King.

The basis of his late financial policy was a new loan, which should pay the interest of the old debts for three or four years, enable them to be consolidated, the paper money to be withdrawn, and the tax system arranged to suit the circumstances. The policy originated with him, and was favorably commented upon and declared entirely practicable by the special English commissioner sent to investigate the condition of the country. The loan was negotiated, and all was settled but one point. The English bankers wished some English control over the taxes that were pledged to the payment of the loan and its interest. This neither the King nor Tricoupis would grant in any form that would take away the suzerainty of Greece. At length, after long negotiation, it was arranged that these pledged taxes were to be paid into the hands of English trustees, to be remitted to the bankers in question. Both the King and Tricoupis were agreed that the suzerain rights of the people were not alienated, and that the loan might be closed by royal decree, under existing laws. At this point the opposition

press stirred up so violent an outcry, asserting that any such condition was unpatriotic and a sacrifice of Greek sovereignty, that public opinion veered around; placards appeared denouncing Tricoupis as a dictator, and criticising his policy and the loan as unconstitutional; and finally the King lost his courage, and suggested the idea of reserving the realization of the loan for the legislative sanction. Tricoupis felt that the outcry was uncalled for, and was willing, if backed by the King, as before, to go ahead and sanction the loan by royal decree, as first intended. When the King was unwilling, however, to take the responsibility without the consent of the Boulé, Tricoupis accepted the suggestion, and telegraphed to London that the loan was to be submitted to the Boulé for sanction, as the case had been with all other Greek loans. He knew that he could count upon his majority in the Boulé; and he wished, as a minister should, to stand by the King in all forms, however unnecessary, without protest. The bankers, in those circumstances, not having confidence in the fickle Boulé, categorically refused that condition, and insisted upon the decree alone, saying that was sufficient. In consequence, Tricoupis promptly resigned, so as to give his successor as much time as possible to meet the difficulties. Had the King stood by him, his pluck was enough to put the matter through, while late events show that he

was not mistaken in relying upon his majority.

The new cabinet struggled through the summer without calling together the Boulé, but when, in November, the Boulé met, on the ballot for the presidency the ministry fell on a vote of 102 to 50 against it. Tricoupis' candidate had more votes than the candidates of all his opponents combined. The King, perforce, has called his great minister again to power, and, with a very strong majority, he takes up the heavy task where he laid it down,—a task made heavier by the weakness of the King and the delay that he had caused. The whole story brings more vividly to view the difficulties of a statesman in a small state, with a people passionate and fickle, hardly ripe for self-government.

What the outcome is ultimately to be is doubtful; what the next few years, or even the next year, may have in store for Greece is a grave problem; and yet, one who has seen the land and the people can hardly believe that the Greeks are not to be a successful nation. At any rate, we may be sure that in power — as he has been most of the time for the past twelve years — or in opposition, Charilaos Tricoupis is to be a prime factor in directing the course of his country. He is easily the greatest Greek of his day, is one of the great statesmen of the century, and his influence must be felt, and felt for good.

Jeremiah W. Jenks.

THE SAPPHIC SECRET.

*Ἔρος δαῦτ' ἐτίναξεν ἔμοι φρένας,
ἄνεμος κατ' ὄρος δρύσιν ἐμπέσων.

Shaking my soul a gust of passion goes,
A mountain wind that on the oak-tree blows.

SOME subjects never wear out, but, like those broadcloth coats so prized by our grandfathers, keep even their shiny

surface nap to the very last. If we think out the matter to its bottom, we shall find that these perennial themes have an honest connection with what is elemental in human nature. We are growing prouder every day, as we continue to add web over web to the cocoon