

DUNDONALD THOMAS

COCHRANE, BOURNE HENRY FOX

**THE LIFE OF
THOMAS, LORD
COCHRANE, TENTH
EARL OF
DUNDONALD, VOL.
II**

Henry Bourne

**The Life of Thomas, Lord Cochrane,
Tenth Earl of Dundonald, Vol. II**

«Public Domain»

Bourne H.

The Life of Thomas, Lord Cochrane, Tenth Earl of Dundonald, Vol. II
/ H. Bourne — «Public Domain»,

Содержание

CHAPTER XVII	5
CHAPTER XVIII	14
CHAPTER XIX	28
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	36

The Life of Thomas, Lord Cochrane, Tenth Earl of Dundonald, Vol. II

CHAPTER XVII

LORD COCHRANE'S ARRIVAL IN GREECE. – HIS ACCOUNT OF HYDRA AND POROS. – THE CONGRATULATIONS OFFERED TO HIM. – VISITS FROM TOMBAZES, MAVROCORDATOS, AND MIAOULIS. – LETTERS FROM THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND OTHER PUBLIC BODIES AND LEADING MEN. – THE DIVISIONS IN GREECE. – THE FRENCH OR MOREOT, AND ENGLISH OR PHANARIOT FACTIONS. – LORD COCHRANE'S RELATIONS WITH THEM. – THE VISIT OF KOLOKOTRONES AND OTHER DEPUTIES FROM THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. – LORD COCHRANE'S EFFORTS TO PROCURE UNANIMITY. – SIR RICHARD CHURCH. – LORD COCHRANE'S COMMISSION AS FIRST ADMIRAL. – THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AT TROEZENE. – THE EJECTION OF CAPODISTRIAS AS PRESIDENT. – LORD COCHRANE'S OATH-TAKING. – HIS ADVICE TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND PROCLAMATION TO THE GREEKS.

[1827.]

Lord Cochrane entered the Egean Sea with his little schooner *Unicorn* and the French brig *Sauveur* on the 17th of March, 1827. In the afternoon he halted off the island of Hydra, there to leave the Greek deputy Orlando, who had accompanied him from Marseilles. "I was surprised," he said, "to observe that, except the open batteries near the town of Hydra, the whole coast of the island remained unprotected, although, in a smooth sea, a landing might be effected in almost every part of its circumference. The town of Hydra is built in an irregular manner on the fall of the mountain about the port, and presents a clean appearance, the houses being all whitewashed. There is not a tree on the island, though there are a few straggling bushes. There is scarcely any land capable of cultivation; but there are some vineyards on the south side and a few small gardens near the town. The port is small, the water deep, and the vessels made fast by hawsers to the shore. It is evident, that, if Greece obtains independence, this island, to which the inhabitants fled to enjoy that species of precarious liberty that depends on eluding the view of tyranny, must be abandoned. Even water is only to be had from tanks which are filled by the winter's rain."

From Hydra Lord Cochrane proceeded to Egina, making a circuit in order that he might have a view of Athens. "The Acropolis," he wrote, "with the whole scenery at sunset, was beautiful. Alas, what a change! what melancholy recollections crowd on the mind! There was the seat of science, of literature, and the arts. At this instant the barbarian Turk is actually demolishing, by the shells that now are flying through the air, the scanty remains of the once magnificent temples in the Acropolis."

He called at Egina on the 18th, in order to despatch letters, announcing his arrival, to the Governing Commission, as it was called, then located in the island, before proceeding to Poros, where he anchored on the morning of the 19th. "The main entrance," we further read in his journal, "is scarcely wide enough to work a ship in, if the wind is from the land. The water, however, is sufficiently

deep close to the shore; and the port, when you have entered through this narrow channel, is one of the finest in the world. There is another entrance towards the south, but it is shallow and crooked, and consequently used only by small vessels. The town of Poros consists of a number of irregularly-built houses on the side of a hill, and merits the appellation of picturesque. There are remains of temples on the island, and the stone is yet to be seen on which Demosthenes is said to have been sitting when he was recalled by Antipater to Athens, and in consequence of which recall he took poison and died."

No sooner was the joyful intelligence conveyed to the inhabitants that Lord Cochrane, the long-expected deliverer of Greece, had actually arrived, than all the leading men who happened to be in Poros at the time hurried on board the Unicorn to welcome their champion and to give personal assurance of their devotion to him. The first to arrive was Jakomaki Tombazes, who was now acting with Dr. Gosse as superintendent of marine affairs, having surrendered the chief command of the fleet into the hands of Andreas Miaoulis. Miaoulis himself soon followed, and with him Alexander Mavrocordatos and many others. "Prince Mavrocordatos," wrote Lord Cochrane's secretary, Mr. George Cochrane, "was a short, stout, well-built man, of very dark complexion, with black eyes, an oval face expressing great intelligence, and his hair very long, hanging upon his shoulders. He was dressed in the European style, and wore on his head a little cloth cap. He also habitually wore spectacles. His manners indicated a man perfectly accustomed to the society of persons of rank. He immediately entered into familiar conversation with Lord Cochrane in the French language. He carried his pipe with him, which he continually smoked. Miaoulis was dressed in the Hydriot fashion; but, of course, as became a primate of the island, his attire was of a description much superior to that of his poorer fellow-countrymen.¹ His countenance was open and dignified, and so calm that it appeared like a rock which nothing could move. Not that it had any character of sternness in it; on the contrary, it possessed a placidity, blended with firmness, which was anything but forbidding. The moment Miaoulis came on deck, he cordially shook hands with Lord Cochrane, and a broken conversation commenced between them in Spanish, Miaoulis speaking that language but imperfectly. At the period in question he commanded the *Hellas* frigate. He knew perfectly well that Lord Cochrane's arrival would take the command out of his hands. Nevertheless, he evinced not the least jealousy, but was one of the first to offer his services under Lord Cochrane. 'I know my countrymen,' he said, 'and that I can be of service to your lordship on board the frigate. I will therefore sail under your command.' Such an offer was not to be refused, and he was requested to remain on board. Miaoulis informed Lord Cochrane that the hope of Greece rested in the *Hellas*, and in the quondam merchant brigs belonging to private individuals in the islands of Hydra, Spetzas, Poros, and Egina, amounting to about two hundred and fifty. These vessels had been armed as men-of-war; some had been turned into fireships, and it was the latter that struck so much terror into the Turks, several Turkish vessels of the line and frigates having been destroyed under the guidance of the brave Kanaris, a native of the ill-fated island of Psara."

The compliments and congratulations offered in person to Lord Cochrane immediately after his anchoring off Poros were followed by compliments and congratulations yet more profuse conveyed to him in writing by all classes and from all quarters. One of the first and most important communications was addressed to him on the 18th of March, in the name of the National Assembly, as it styled itself, met at Kastri, by its president, Georgios Sissinis. "Greece," he said, "rejoices at your

¹ "These men," says the same authority, "generally speaking, from their complexions, evinced that they had been mariners all their lives, the sun having well tanned them. They wore small red caps, from which their hair flowed wildly down their shoulders. On the upper lip they wore very long mustachios, which the older ones were continually curling, and bringing out the point. They wore trousers of blue cotton, and a jacket; and by the immense capacity of the former, I should suppose they must have contained at least twelve yards. This was gathered into plaits round the waist, and only descended to the knees, which were left open. The hinder part presented a most singular appearance. It hung down almost trailing upon the ground in a huge bag, which kept moving backwards and forwards in a ludicrous manner at every motion of the body. They wore shoes, but no stockings; and their legs were as dark as their countenances, and covered with hair. Round their waist they wore a large red sash in several folds. Their jacket was similar to a waistcoat, with sleeves, and ornamented with small buttons from the wrist to the elbow, and the same on the bosom." – "Wanderings in Greece."

appearance in her seas. The aspirations of the Greeks are realised. Their hopes in the success of their sacred struggle revive. The Greek nation, assembled here in a third National Assembly, desires to see you and invites you here, sending to you, with that object, the General-in-Chief of the armies of the Peloponnesus, Theodore Kolokotronis, Messrs. Kanaris, Botazes, and Bulgaris, General Zavella and Count Metaxas, who will tender to you the thanks of all for your zeal on behalf of their cause." "The Government is seized with unutterable joy at your auspicious arrival," wrote the members of the rival assembly at Egina, on the same day: "the Government wishes you happy success in all your enterprises, and hopes soon to find in you a triumphant conqueror." "For a long while past," wrote the governors of Hydra, "our brave mariners have centred all their hopes on your arrival. You can understand then the joy that we felt when we saw your brig and schooner, and when we knew that you had actually arrived. We hasten to tender to you the homage of our island, and to express to you our impatience to see our little navy placed under your orders, and guided by you to new victories, by which the safety and independence of Greece may be secured." "Your arrival in our beloved country," wrote the primates of Spetzas, "has filled the soul of every inhabitant of our island with joy, and every one presents his thanks to Heaven for having at last sent such an one to fight with us and to protect our fatherland." "You have come to Greece," wrote Konduriottes, "at a moment when this unfortunate country most needs all that it can hope from the wisdom and courage of so great a defender. The announcement of your arrival will form an epoch in the history of our Revolution, and, I dare to hope, in that of our moral regeneration."

That moral regeneration was needed Lord Cochrane already well knew, and he had not been a day in Greece before the knowledge was forced upon him afresh. The unworthy disposition of most of the men in power had never been more plainly shown, nor threatened more imminent danger to the independence of Greece, than at the time of Lord Cochrane's arrival. With a few notable exceptions, of whom Miaoulis was perhaps the chief, the Greek leaders had forgotten all their national duty in personal ambition and jealousy. If they united in parties, it was only because each one hoped that, as soon as his own party was triumphant, he himself would be able to obtain the mastery over all his associates.

Two factions, especially, prevailed in Greece at this time, which, partly from the circumstance that they were supported by unwise Philhellenes of the two nations, partly because their native members looked for their chief support to those nations, were known as the French and English parties.

Among Philhellenes the leading promoter of the French party was Colonel Fabvier, who was now, with some of the troops whom he commanded, defending the Acropolis from the siege of the Turks. He was an officer of considerable merit, with the interests of the Greeks at heart, but of surpassing vanity and ambition. His hope was to become the Napoleon of the East, to convert the whole male population of Greece into a huge army, with himself at its head. With him sympathized most of the military leaders, who, originally little better than brigands, found everything to gratify their present tastes and their future hopes in a scheme which would give them endless employment in lawless warfare and martial dominion. These, coming chiefly from the Morea, caused the faction also to be known as the Moreot party.

More formidable was the English party, with little that was English about it but the name. Its ambition was not military, but diplomatic, the possession of place and power in such ways as were then possible. Its real, if not avowed, leader was Prince Mavrocordatos, with an able abettor in his brother-in-law, Mr. Spiridion Trikoupes. All through the previous year Mavrocordatos and his friends had sought zealously to win for Greece the protection of England. They had corresponded to that end with Mr. Stratford Canning, the British ambassador at Constantinople, with Captain Hamilton, who was then stationed in Greek waters to watch the interests of English shipping, and with others. They had sent an irregular deputation to treat with the British Government, and had used all the means in their power, so far as foreign intervention was concerned, for the establishment of a smaller

but more organized Greek nation than that which their rivals desired. Had that end been worthily sought, they would have deserved universal sympathy. But they showed by their conduct that they cared little for good government, or for the real interests of the community. They exercised their abilities and squandered their resources in schemes for selfish aggrandisement, and the possession of authority which was to benefit none but themselves. Many of their prominent members having studied statecraft, before the time of the Revolution, as Christian officials in the employment of Turkey, to whom the name Phanariot was given from the Christian quarter of Constantinople, the whole party acquired the name of Phanariot.

This latter party had all along hoped to make Lord Cochrane its tool. It was Mavrocordatos who first invited him to enter the service of the Greeks; and when that service was agreed upon no effort was spared to attach him to the group of partizans among whom Mavrocordatos was chief. Lord Cochrane, steadily refusing this, soon incurred their opposition, and to this opposition is to be attributed some of the unreasonable blame which was afterwards brought upon him. Much further opposition to him, moreover, was soon aroused by his, in like manner, refusing to become the creature of the other leading faction. He wisely resolved, from the first – and he maintained his resolution throughout – to belong to no party, but having devoted himself to the cause of the Greek nation as a whole, to seek only those objects which were for the good of all.

That resolution was soon put to the test. Immediately after his arrival on the 19th of March, great efforts were made to implicate him in the schemes of the Governing Commission, as it was called, which, having outrun the time appointed for its duration, was continuing to assert its authority in Egina, and to use that authority in the interests of the Phanariot party. Two days after that his partizanship was sought for the Moreot faction, which had set up a rival government, styled the National Assembly, at Hermione, under the joint leadership of Kolokotrones, Konduriottes, and Kolettes. On the 20th he was waited upon by the deputation named in the congratulatory letter which has already been quoted from.

"With his whole party," said Lord Cochrane's secretary, reporting this interview, "Kolokotrones rode down to the beach opposite the ship, and sent off to say he would there wait until a boat should be sent for him and his followers, the whole being about a hundred men, armed, according to the custom of the country, with pistols or daggers stuck in the left side of a sash or belt. The two boats sent being insufficient, not more than twenty came on board with the general. Kolokotrones was the spokesman, and there appeared to be great energy in his gesticulations, which did not correspond with the translation by Count Metaxas, who, from the smile on his countenance, seemed to hold in no great respect the mental acquirements of Kolokotrones. 'Greece,' said the latter, 'required a government to bring order out of chaos. The functions of the commission appointed by the last Legislative Assembly ought to have ceased. Its continuance in power was not legal, and consequently the members of the National Assembly had met at Hermione to name their successors; to which place it was requested that Lord Cochrane would proceed, in order to be present at their deliberations.' A letter to this effect, signed by the President of the Assembly, was then put into Lord Cochrane's hands.

"Lord Cochrane made answer verbally through Count Metaxas to the deputies, that he held in due estimation the honour they had done him by personally delivering the communication as well as by the very flattering terms used towards him by the members assembled at Hermione. He regretted the decision that had taken place, and, recommending reconciliation, urged the necessity of prompt exertion and the little good that the wisest legislative enactments could effect, whilst the Turks overran their country, whilst they possessed three-fourths of its strongholds, and whilst the enemy besieged the capital of the state, which was in danger of falling into their power. His lordship expressed his regret that so many able and brave military officers as those he saw before him should occupy themselves with civil discussions in the present state of their country.

"Upon this being interpreted to Kolokotrones, he became exceedingly warm, and urged that the duty he was now occupied with was more essential than any other. He, however, cooled on seeing,

as we presume, that no one seconded his opinion, which he evidently expected by his glances towards his companions. Kolokotrones remained some time without saying a word, and then rising, took Lord Cochrane by the hand and assured him that he would do his utmost to produce a reconciliation of parties. Lord Cochrane urged that the termination of differences between the parties should be within the space of three days. Kolokotrones requested five; but afterwards caused his interpreter, Count Metaxas, to say that possibly an answer might be received from Hermione even before the shortest period fixed. Count Metaxas was the last who left the cabin, and as soon as the others were gone, he turned to Lord Cochrane and assured him that his utmost endeavours should not be wanting to accomplish so desirable an object. The Count has evidently the management of Kolokotrones, to whom he probably adheres in order to arrive at real power, under the sanction of an individual on whose shoulders may be heaped all the evil measures to be anticipated in acquiring or upholding any authority over a multitude of rival chiefs and their rude followers.

"Kolokotrones and his party then left the schooner, having first directed one of their soldiers to await Lord Cochrane's reply to the communication of the Assembly. A deputation from Hydra, and a crowd of other visitors, however, precluded Lord Cochrane's despatching the courier until the following morning."

The reply, dated the 21st of March, was wise and bold. "I have had the honour," wrote Lord Cochrane, "to receive the despatches which you have addressed to me, and I cannot but be flattered by the sentiments that they convey. This satisfaction is the more lively because I have had the opportunity of becoming personally acquainted with his excellency General Kolokotrones, and the officers who accompanied him. But I freely acknowledge that it is blended with a feeling of regret, in that it appears to me that the bravest and most renowned officers of Greece are devoting all their energies to the formation of a civil government and wasting their time in discussions as to the place in which they shall effect a reunion while the enemy is overrunning the country without resistance. Already he possesses three-fourths of the fortresses of Greece, and is besieging the capital of the republic. Athens is on the point of falling into the power of the Ottoman forces; the brave Fabvier and a few heroes, full of enthusiasm, are engaged in aiding the valiant defenders of that city; and meanwhile the officers of Greece betake themselves again and again to frivolous discussions on civil affairs. If the shade of Demosthenes could again animate the ashes of this great man which are here entombed, he would, changing only the names of persons and places, address to you his first Philippic, and you would hear from the lips of a compatriot profoundly versed in history and in the knowledge of mankind, what ought to be your manner of acting. I recommend you to read his discourse in full assembly, and I especially recommend the citizens charged with presiding over the destinies of Greece to follow his counsels point by point. With an authority so applicable to the existing circumstances, it would be unpardonable presumption in me to address to you other than his own words. 'If, Athenians, you will now, though you did not before, adopt the principle of every man being ready, where he can and ought to give his service to the state, to give it without excuse, the wealthy to contribute, the able-bodied to enlist; in a word, plainly, if you will become your own masters, and cease each expecting to do nothing himself, while his neighbour does everything for him, you will then, with God's permission, get back your own, and recover what has been lost, and punish your enemy.'"

To the same effect were Lord Cochrane's answers to the congratulatory letters sent to him by the other leading persons and parties in Greece. "It may be well to notice," he wrote on the same day to the Government at Egina, "that in the conversation which I had with the deputation from Hermione, I respectfully suggested that, as laws cannot be promulgated with advantage whilst the mass of the country is under the iron yoke of Turkish despotism, nor executed whilst the lives and properties of all continue insecure, the National Assembly might be adjourned with advantage until the capital is free, and thus we should avoid debating whilst we should be acting, and check those animosities and divisions which naturally arise from difference of sentiment under the peculiar conditions of modern Greece." "The time now draws near," he wrote to the Government of Hydra, "when the approach

of a large force may reasonably be anticipated, and when consequently the means that the Greeks possess of contending with their enemies will be comparatively diminished. I have, therefore, in the name of all Europe – by whose people I may in truth say that I have been sent here – called upon the Executive Government, and upon all those connected with public affairs, to act with union and promptitude, and I have informed them that without harmony and exertion amongst the chiefs, the slender means placed at my disposal, and any services which I personally could render, would prove of no avail. The people are split into factions, and operations are paralyzed by the conflicting personal interests of chiefs who perceive not that the prize about which they are contending will fall to the share of others. I have as yet taken no authority upon me in naval affairs, because if union do not prevail I shall deceive Greece and deceive the world by inducing a belief that I could assist you."

While waiting, however, for the rivalries of the Greek leaders to be removed, or at any rate set aside for a time, Lord Cochrane was not idle. He had frequent interviews, not only with Admiral Miaoulis and the other native seamen of ability, but also with Dr. Gosse, and with Captain Abney Hastings, who joined him on the 22nd, and provided him with much precise information as to the naval strength of Greece, the character of the officers and crews, and the best methods of attacking the Turks with advantage. Information as precise about the land forces was derived from other Philhellenes, among whom Colonel Heideck and Colonel Gordon were perhaps the best informed. Lord Cochrane also made the acquaintance of a new comer in Greece, with whom he was soon to have very intimate relations – Sir Richard Church.

General Church had begun life as an officer in the British army. He had seen various service between 1801 and 1809, and in the latter year had organised a battalion of Greeks at Zante, with which, and afterwards with another which he also formed, he had played an important part in the war for the liberation of the Ionian Islands. On the establishment of peace, he had passed into the Neapolitan service. Many of his old Greek soldiers were now leaders in the Revolution, and, while Lord Cochrane was on his way to become the First Admiral of the Greeks, General Church had been invited to become Generalissimo on land. He arrived at Porto Kheli, near Kastri or Hermione, on the 9th of March, eight days before the appearance of Lord Cochrane. The generals assembled at Hermione came out to meet him and tender their submission. "Our father is at last come," said one; "we have only to obey him and our liberty is secured." Sir Richard Church was at once sought as a leader by the Moreot faction, just as Lord Cochrane was claimed by the Phanariots as their champion. He, however, like his new comrade, wisely resolved to avoid partisanship and to study the interests of Greece as a whole, and to him must be assigned a share of the good work of pacification in which Lord Cochrane was the prime mover. "This unhappy country," he wrote to his new friend on the 19th of March, "is now divided by absurd and criminal dissensions. I hope, however, that your lordship's arrival will have a happy effect, and that they will do everything in their power to be worthy of such a leader."

They did something, if not everything. It was firmly believed that party strife had reached such a point that, had Lord Cochrane's arrival been delayed only a few days longer, the leaders of the National Assembly at Hermione, turning aside from their useless discussions, would have acted upon a plot that had been in preparation for several weeks, and, landing a hostile force at Egina, would have violently seized the whole Governing Commission there established. Lord Cochrane's honest reproofs averted this, and so saved Greece from the horrors of another civil war.

"I am happy to be able to inform you," wrote General Church on the 25th of March, "that things are brought to that state that the union of the parties is, I think, now effected. The deputies from Kastri came over to me yesterday morning to Damala, and there they met those of Egina. After some discussion, they have come to a conclusion, which, if ratified by the Assembly at Egina, will finally terminate the affair."

The affair was not terminated immediately. Lord Cochrane had to despatch many more letters and messages of earnest entreaty and indignant reproach to the leaders of the rival factions at Egina

and Hermione, and to other prominent men, before the good end that he and all true Philhellenes and patriots sought could be gained. "I have received the letter which your excellency has addressed to me," wrote the worthy Miaoulis, on the 3rd of April, in answer to a letter declining to take command of the fleet until the differences were settled; "and I appreciate the objections which it contains. I wish with all my heart that the reasons which prevent you may not exist beyond this evening, and that a general union will induce you to place yourself at the head of the Greek navy."

Before that, on the 28th of March, Lord Cochrane had received a formal commission from the Government at Egina. "Knowing well," ran the document, "the valour, wisdom, ability, and energy, and all the warlike virtues which are joined in the estimable person of Lord Cochrane, and by which he has been distinguished in all the various services with which he has elsewhere been charged, the Governing Commission ordains, first, that Lord Cochrane be appointed First Admiral of the Fleet and of all the naval forces of Greece; secondly, that he rank above all other naval officers, and enjoy all the honours, privileges, and rights that appertain to his office; thirdly, that all the admirals, officers, and seamen of Greece recognize him as their superior, and obey his orders in all that concerns the service of the nation, and that all servants of the State, whether civil or military, render him the honour and respect that are his due; fourthly, that the General Secretary of the Government execute this order in all respects so soon as his Excellency Lord Cochrane shall have taken oath to perform the duties, in regard of which he pledges himself to serve and to act." The document was signed by Andreas Zaimes, as president, by Trikoupes, Demetrakopoulos, Blakos, Zamados, Mavromichales, Anargiros, Monarchides, and Zotos, and by Glarakes, the Secretary of State.

Lord Cochrane refused to accept the trust thus imposed upon him, however, until the authorities at Egina had united with those at Hermione and with the primates of the islands in forming one true National Assembly. They still hesitated and objected, and he still had to warn and to expostulate. At length, on the 3rd of April, being convinced that milder language was useless, he wrote to the rival leaders, informing them that, as his counsels appeared to be of no avail, seeing that they were addressed to persons, who, professing to have the interests of the nation at heart, were determined to ruin those interests by their obstinate selfishness, he should quit Greece at once, unless, before the close of the day, they agreed to lay aside their differences.

That wise threat was successful. The factions coalesced, and decided to meet in joint assembly at Damala, also known by its ancient name of Troezen. On the 4th of April Lord Cochrane was able to write to them in a different tone. "Having come to Greece," he said, "with a firm determination to have nothing to do with party rivalries, except so far as to seek to conciliate them for the public good, and not to trouble myself about civil affairs, beyond assuring myself of the legality of my functions as Admiral of Greece, and having resolved to do all in my power to obtain its deliverance from the Mahometan yoke, as well as from all foreign domination, I am well pleased at the reunion of all your members in a single National Assembly, and congratulate you on the restoration of harmony. Allow me, at the same time, to offer my prayers for the unanimity of the members of the Government, and for the prompt completion of the business of the National Assembly, in order that its members may depart to their respective provinces, and use their great influence to impress upon their compatriots the imminent danger of the State, and induce them to rush to arms, and by one simultaneous effort expel the oppressors of Greece. After that the Legislative Assembly will have leisure, and the requisite security, to deliberate upon the constitution, the laws, and the arrangements necessary to establish upon a permanent footing the happiness and the prosperity of their fellow-citizens."

Having thus done so much for Greece, Lord Cochrane was asked to do more. "The deputies whom you did me the honour to send," he wrote, on the following day, "having informed me of the difficulties which you find in forming a Government with the necessary promptitude because of the jealousies shown in choosing citizens to fill situations of authority, permit me to advise that each member should write down the name of the person of his choice, and place it in an urn, and that he who thus obtains the highest number of votes should be president, the second, vice-president, and

the others ranged in order until the number of functionaries is complete. In this way you will avoid discussions, animosities, and the loss of time, which is so precious in the present circumstances of Greece. At present naval and military operations alike are all suspended, while the enemy is preparing to put an end at once to the question which engrosses your attention, and to the independence and liberty of Greece!" That sensible advice was not taken, but the first difficulties in the way of administrative reform were overcome.

On the 7th of April, the National Assembly met at Damala, on the coast opposite to Poros, and half way between Hermione and Egina – the meeting-place, for want of a building large enough, to hold the two hundred members, being a lemon-grove, watered by the classic fountain of Hippocrene. Its first business, attended by turmoil which threatened to bring the whole proceeding to a violent close, was the election of Count Capodistrias as President, for seven years, of the Greek nation. Capodistrias was the favourite of the Moreot party, but disliked by the Phanariots, and hated by the island primates. The two latter would have prevented the election, but for the support given to it by Lord Cochrane, who on this account has been frequently and seriously blamed.² There can be no doubt, however, that, whatever may have been the subsequent shortcomings of Capodistrias, he was greatly superior to any of the other and native candidates for the office. None of these candidates had given any proof of statesmanlike powers or disinterested regard for the welfare of Greece. Lord Cochrane judged, with good reason, that that welfare could only be promoted by placing at the head of affairs a man who had hitherto had no share in party strife, who had proved himself to be possessed of great abilities and of generous love for the nation of which, as a native of Corfu, he was in some sort a citizen. Unfortunately, though for this Lord Cochrane was in no way responsible, the management of affairs during the time that must elapse before Capodistrias, if he accepted the office tendered to him, could enter upon it, was entrusted to a Vice-governing Commission composed of three inefficient men, Georgios Mavromichales, Milaites of Psara, and Nakos of Livadia.

The most important business done by the Troezen Assembly was the installation of Lord Cochrane as First Admiral of Greece. This was done on the 18th of April. Landing for the first time on the continent, Lord Cochrane proceeded in state on horseback for the distance of a mile and a-half that was between the shore and the lemon-grove. At the entrance he was met by Kolokotrones, who embraced him, saying, "You are welcome;" words that were repeated by many other leading Greeks, who attended and conducted him into the centre of the grove. There he was formally introduced to the delegates as the First Admiral. Through an interpreter he addressed to them a few sentences, urging the necessity of continued harmony, and of a prompt expedition against the Turks, to be conducted both by sea and by land. After that, placing his hand on the hilt of his sword, he took the necessary oath: "I swear to shed my blood for the safety of the Greeks and for the liberation of their country; I swear that I will not abandon their cause so long as they do not themselves abandon it, but sustain my efforts."

The election of Sir Richard Church as Generalissimo of the Land Forces was, in like manner, completed on the 15th of April.

The essential business for which Lord Cochrane had desired that the united National Assembly should meet at Troezen being now accomplished, he hoped that it would speedily adjourn, in order that the military leaders should be enabled to proceed at once to the work pressing urgently upon them. "The critical moment," said Lord Cochrane, in a letter addressed to them on the 16th of April, "has arrived in which you are called upon to decide whether the population of Greece shall be annihilated or enslaved, your country peopled with barbarous hordes, and the name of Greece blotted out from the list of independent nations." The National Assembly, however, spent more than another month in idle discussions, and in disputing upon matters the settlement of which ought to have been postponed

² See especially Trikoupes, vol. iv., p. 126, and Gordon, vol. ii., p. 364. Mr. Finlay approves of the choice, but, not caring to say anything in favour of Lord Cochrane, makes no mention of his share in the work. Vol. ii., p. 139.

to a less perilous time. Again and again Lord Cochrane had to impress upon them the necessity, in war as in council, of prompt and united action; but with very poor result.

"Once more I address you by letter," he wrote a few days later, "in the hope that you may be persuaded instantly to take measures to save your country from the ruin which protracted deliberations must at the present moment entail – ay, with as much certainty as a continuance of those dissensions which have hitherto so unhappily prevailed; and I follow this course the more readily in order that, as I have ever advocated liberal forms of government, my advice, that your Assembly shall bring its labours to a close, shall not be misrepresented to Greece and to the world. First, then, the agitated state of the country, by reason of the presence of the enemy, precludes the hope of obedience in ordinary course of law, which is as essential to the existence even of a shadow of republican forms as the practice of virtue and forbearance are to their reality – which, in states that would be free, ever must be accompanied by universal conviction in the public mind that power and wealth are not essential to the enjoyment of personal security, and are desirable or useful only as they promote the common welfare or administer to the wants or comforts of individuals themselves. The Grecian people, however good, naturally cannot be expected instantly to practise virtues which are the offspring of long-established freedom. Greece requires not, at the present moment, sage deliberations regarding permanent forms of government, nor permanent rulers; but she requires energetic authority, that she may be free at least from her foreign oppressors. If, without delay, the military officers take the field, if your labours be brought to a close and every citizen in his respective capacity exert himself to the utmost for the defence of his country, Athens perhaps may yet be saved, although that object assuredly is rendered far more doubtful by the unfortunate delay that has already occurred."

In entering upon his own share of the work no time was wasted by Lord Cochrane. He had already made himself acquainted with the naval resources of Greece, and done much in devising measures for augmenting them. He had resolved upon the first enterprise to be entered upon; and, while rapidly completing his arrangements for it, he did everything in his power to quicken in the hearts of the Greeks a patriotism as pure and zealous as was his own philanthropy. "To arms! to arms!" he wrote in a proclamation issued at this time. "One simultaneous effort, and Greece is free. Discord, the deadly foe you have had most to fear, is conquered. The task that now remains is easy. The youth everywhere fly to arms. The fate of the Acropolis is no longer doubtful. The Turks surrounded, their supplies cut off, the passes occupied, and retreat impossible, you can ensure the freedom of the classic plains of Athens, again destined to become the seat of liberty, the sciences, and the arts. Rest not content with such limited success. Sheathe not the sword whilst the brutal Turk, the enemy of the progress of civilization and improvement of the human mind, shall occupy one foot of that classic ground which once was yours. Let the young seamen of the islands emulate the glory that awaits the military force. Let them hasten to join the national ships, and, if denied your independence and rights, blockade the Hellespont, thus carrying the war into the enemy's country. Then the fate of the cruel Sultan, the destroyer of his subjects, the tyrant taskmaster of a Christian people, shall be sealed by the hands of the executioners who yet obey his bloody commands. Then shall prophecy be fulfilled, and Moslem sway be overthrown by the corruptions itself has engendered. Then shall the sacred banner of the Cross once more wave on the dome of Saint Sophia. Then shall the Grecian people live secure under the protection of just laws. Then shall noble cities rise from their ruins, and the splendour of future times rival the days that are past."

CHAPTER XVIII

THE SIEGE OF ATHENS. – THE DEFENDERS OF THE ACROPOLIS. – THE EFFORTS OF GORDON AND KARAÏSKAKES. – LORD COCHRANE'S PLAN FOR CUTTING OFF THE TURKISH SUPPLIES. – THE ARGUMENTS BY WHICH HE WAS INDUCED TO PROCEED INSTEAD TO THE PHALERUM. – HIS ARRIVAL THERE. – HIS OTHER ARRANGEMENTS FOR SERVING GREECE. – HIS FIRST MEETING WITH KARAÏSKAKES. – THE CONDITION OF THE GREEK CAMP. – LORD COCHRANE'S POSITION. – HIS EFFORTS TO GIVE IMMEDIATE RELIEF TO THE ACROPOLIS, AND THE OBSTACLES RAISED BY THE GREEKS. – KARAÏSKAKES'S DELAYS, AND GENERAL CHURCH'S DIFFICULTIES. – THE CONVENT OF SAINT SPIRIDION. – THE BATTLE OF PHALERUM. – THE CAPTURE OF SAINT SPIRIDION. – THE MASSACRE OF THE TURKS, AND ITS CONSEQUENCES. – LORD COCHRANE'S RENEWED EFFORTS TO SAVE THE ACROPOLIS. – THE DEATH OF KARAÏSKAKES. – THE MARCH TO THE ACROPOLIS. – ITS FAILURE THROUGH THE PERVERSITY OF THE GREEKS. – THE BATTLE OF ATHENS. – THE FALL OF THE ACROPOLIS.

[1827.]

After the conquest of Missolonghi, by which all Western Greece was brought under Turkish dominion, Reshid Pasha lost no time in proceeding to drive the Greeks from Athens, their chief stronghold in the east. The siege of the town had been begun by Omar Pasha of Negropont, with a small Ottoman force, on the 21st of June, 1826. Reshid arrived on the 11th of July, and, after much previous fighting, stormed Athens so vigorously on the 14th of August, that the inhabitants were forced to abandon it. Many of them, however, took refuge in the Acropolis, where a strong garrison was established under the tyrannical rule of Goura, and in this fortress the defence was maintained for nearly two months. Goura died in October, and the rivalries of the officers whom he had held in awe, now allowed to have free exercise, threatened to make easy the further triumph of the besiegers. The citadel must have surrendered, but for the timely arrival of Karaïskakes and Fabvier, each with a strong body of troops, who diverted the enemy by formidable attacks in the rear. Karaïskakes and his force continued, with various success, to watch and harass the enemy from without. On the 12th of December Fabvier, by a brilliant exploit, forced his way into the Acropolis with about six hundred men. He had intended only to give it temporary relief, but many of the native chiefs, gladly taking advantage of the arrival of a body for which, conjointly with the garrison already established, there was not room in the fortress, hastily departed. Thus the leadership of the garrison, comprising about a thousand soldiers, with whom were four or five hundred women and children, and more than forty Philhellenes from France, Switzerland, Germany, and Italy, devolved upon Colonel Fabvier. The besiegers numbered about seven thousand picked soldiers, including a regiment of cavalry veterans and a good train of artillery. The Greek regulars and irregulars, including a corps of Philhellenes, commanded by Captain Inglesi, who attempted to raise the siege, varied, at different times, from two or three thousand to seven or eight thousand.

That was the state of affairs when Lord Cochrane arrived in Greece. That the expulsion of the Turks from Attica and the recovery of Athens was the first great work to be attempted was clear to every one, whether native or Philhellene, who had the welfare of Greece at heart; but opinions varied

as to the best mode of procedure. Nearly all previous efforts had been aimed at the direct attack of the besiegers in Athens and its neighbourhood. General Gordon had established a camp of about three thousand men at Munychia, the hill from which, two and twenty centuries before, Thrasybulus had gone down to deliver Athens from the thirty tyrants; and Karaïskakes, with some two thousand five hundred followers, was stationed at Keratsina, on the other side of the Piræus. But the operations of both leaders were restrained by Reshid Pasha's establishment of a garrison in the monastery of Saint Spiridion, midway between the two camps; and, without wiser leaders than the Greeks had hitherto possessed, there seemed small chance of their chasing the enemy from his strong positions. Another plan, feebly recommended and yet more feebly attempted before Lord Cochrane's arrival, was to starve him out by intercepting the supplies of provisions that were brought from Turkey by way of the northern channel of the Negropont, to be sent overland from Oropos, a well-fortified magazine on the northern shore of Attica.

Lord Cochrane saw at once that this latter course was the one most likely to be of service, or, at any rate, the one rightly devolving upon him, while General Church was pursuing his operations nearer to Athens; and he was strengthened in this conviction by discussion on the subject with General Gordon, who came for a short visit to Poros, on the 21st of March, in his own yacht. To this end he laboured while he was waiting for the reconciliation of parties and the official recognition of his employment as First Admiral. "The fate of Athens," he wrote, both to Kolokotrones and to Karaïskakes, on the 29th of March, "depends upon our depriving the enemy of the provisions obtained by him from the north. The general and the soldiers who first devote themselves to this object will have the glory of raising the siege. For myself, I offer the heartiest co-operation of the fleet, accompanied by two thousand brave marines, and the use of all the war-steamers and transports in any port of eastern Attica. There is not a moment to be lost." This proposal was rejected by Kolokotrones. On the 2nd of April, Karaïskakes sent an ambiguous acceptance of it, which he cancelled on the 13th. "We are so mixed up with the enemy," he wrote, "that if we abandon the smallest of our positions we must resign ourselves to the loss of all. The Turks are so embarrassed by us that they can offer only a feeble siege to the Acropolis. Of this I am assured by several Greeks who have lately come from their camp. Therefore, my lord, I am deterred from assailing the enemy from the north; and I have the boldness to assure and promise you that, if you will aid me here, Athens will be free in a few days. With the help of two thousand good recruits, the enemy will not be able to resist our enthusiasm. I implore you, in the name of Greece, to assist me as soon as possible with the means of destroying him and of saving Athens."

That letter, and the advice of all in office, whether military or civil, to the same effect, altered Lord Cochrane's plans. "As he," said Gordon, who afterwards blamed him on this account, "unacquainted with the country and the language, could not form a correct judgment on the innumerable reports transmitted to him, it is not surprising that he was deceived by letters written from the Acropolis, and entrusted to soldiers who, disguised as Turks or Albanians, slipped from time to time through the enemy's lines. In these epistles, Fabvier and the other chiefs painted their situation in the blackest colours, carefully concealing the fact of their having provisions for many months."³ By them native Greeks and foreigners long resident in the country were deceived. Lord Cochrane, still clinging to his project for injuring the Turks by cutting off their supplies, was constrained to defer it for the present, and in compliance with the requests of the Government, of General Church, and of Karaïskakes, to co-operate in the direct attack upon the enemy in the Piræus. "I now agree with you," he wrote to the latter, on the 14th of April, "that the time is past when a movement in the rear of the Turks, and the cutting off of their provisions, could have the effect of saving the Acropolis, and I see

³ Gordon, vol. ii., p. 386. As Gordon was with Lord Cochrane at the time, and on intimate relations with him, it is strange, unless he himself, with far less excuse, shared the error for which he blamed him, that he did not advise him to pursue his former plan. Compare Trikoupes, vol. iv., p. 137, who blames and involuntarily acquits Lord Cochrane almost in the same breath.

clearly the justice of your observation that a decisive blow must be struck at once against the enemy. The eyes of Europe are turned towards Greece, and on the success or failure of the measures now to be adopted depends the support of your glorious cause, or its abandonment in despair."

Something was done by Lord Cochrane at once, however, towards the fulfilment of his first design. He despatched Captain Abney Hastings, with the *Karteria* and five other vessels, to the Gulf of Volo and the Channel of Negropont, with orders to seize as many Turkish provision-ships as he could there find within the next fourteen days. One expedition was very successful. Off Volo, on the 20th of April, Hastings found eight transports protected by the guns of the fort. He silenced the guns, captured five of the vessels, and destroyed the other three. He then passed down the channel, and near Tricheri fell in with a Turkish brig-of-war, which, after some skilful fighting, he destroyed by shells that exploded her powder magazine. After that he proceeded to Kumi, where he captured a store of grain, and reached Poros within the time appointed.

In the meanwhile Lord Cochrane had gone to the Bay of Athens as soon as he could complete his arrangements for the present and future employment of the Greek shipping. "Four of the largest brigs at Poros are in process of equipment," he wrote to the Government on the 16th of April, "and five of the fastest small sailing vessels of Spetzas, and eight transports, with a thousand men, are ready at Hydra to proceed on service. The frigate *Hellas* is victualled for two months, four gun-boats have been ordered to be built, and fireships are in progress in addition to those which were already fitted out. The expenses of these preparations have been, or will be, defrayed out of the funds in my possession. In addition to these disbursements, a very considerable sum, out of the money destined for the naval service, has been advanced by me for military purposes. I consider that the fate of Greece depends, in a great measure, on pecuniary aid from the rest of Europe, and such aid on the probability of ultimate success; but assuredly it will not be afforded if Greece proves unable or unwilling to exert herself against the handful of sickly and enfeebled Turks who continue to besiege the Acropolis of Athens."

On the 17th of April, Lord Cochrane passed from Poros to Salamis in the *Hellas*, attended by twelve brigs and schooners from Hydra and Spetzas. In his pay were a thousand Hydriots, two hundred Cretans, and a corps of Roumeliots. On the same day, General Church embarked with three thousand soldiers collected in the Morea, under Gennaios Kolokotrones, Chrisanthos Sessini, and others. These new supplies, with the troops already at Keratsina and Munychia, composed a force of about ten thousand men.

Five days were spent in organising this force, over which Sir Richard Church, though nominally generalissimo, had very little real command. The delay and the want of discipline which caused it were alike annoying to Lord Cochrane, whose little fleet was anchored in the small Bay of Phalerum, his Hydriot recruits, under Major Gordon Urquhart, being established on the adjoining shore. On the 18th he received a four hours' visit on board the *Hellas* from Karaïskakes, a tall, bony, athletic man, small-featured, and swarthy, with flashing eyes, and a lively tongue, about forty years of age. On the 19th he and General Church went to inspect the camp of the famous Greek leader at Keratsina. It gave but slight evidence of military organization, and both officers and men appeared to Lord Cochrane more willing to talk than to fight. His presence among them, however, stirred up a new and fitful enthusiasm. On this occasion he brought with him a large blue and white flag, with an owl, the national emblem of Greece, painted on the centre, which had been conveyed from Marseilles. The flag was unfurled in the presence of seven thousand Greek soldiers, within sight of the Turkish camp. Through his interpreter, Lord Cochrane briefly addressed the soldiers, urging them, for love of their country, and for their own honour and welfare, to unite in a prompt and vigorous attack on the enemy. Then, firmly planting the flag in the ground, he exclaimed, "Soldiers, whoever of you will lodge this flag on the summit of the Acropolis, shall receive from me, as a reward of his bravery, a thousand dollars, and ten times that sum shall be my share of the recompense to the force that accompanies him!" Great applause, of course, followed that announcement, but not much more than applause.

Lord Cochrane's popularity with the troops and their leaders, for the time at any rate, was unbounded. Karaïskakes, Niketas, Zavella, Notaras, Makriyannes, Gennaios Kolokotrones, and all the other captains vied with one another in offering fulsome adulation to him, and pledging themselves to yield implicit obedience to his instructions. By word, indeed, they were more submissive than he wished. He had to remind them that he was admiral of the fleet, not generalissimo on land, and that the latter office was held by Sir Richard Church. Unfortunately, Karaïskakes and his followers were, from the first, jealous of General Church; and General Church, accustomed only to the management of a small disciplined band, was unequal to the troublesome duties appertaining to him as controller of a heterogeneous crowd of irregular soldiers, most of them trained as brigands, and accustomed to the half-lawless rule of their own petty officers. Hardly a day passed in which he did not complain bitterly to Lord Cochrane of the obstructions thrown in his way; and Lord Cochrane had to take upon himself the thankless functions of a mediator between a good-hearted commander-in-chief and his disaffected subordinates.

This state of things would at any time have been irksome to him. It was especially so in the condition of affairs represented to him. Each day fresh reports were brought of the desperate state of the Acropolis. "The affairs of the fortress of Athens," we read in one document, signed by seven leaders of the besieged, and dated the 22nd of April, "have arrived at a very critical height, and no longer any remedy is expected from within, and therefore the besieged are obliged to address themselves to the Government of Greece and to the commanders of her forces, and to urge them to adopt the best, the speediest, and the most efficient measures to relieve the citadel. The Government and the commanders have always replied with promises of the most positive kind to raise the siege in a very few days. We can no longer believe their word. To give you further intelligence, we send now five men, who will tell you verbally what we cannot describe. If, however, they do not persuade you, we tell you this is our last letter. We will wait five days longer, and we can hold out no more. We have been brothers, and remain so during dearth, sickness, and all evils. Our nature is like that of all men: we can suffer no more than others. We are neither angels nor workers of miracles, to raise the dead, or do impossible things. If any evil should happen, we are not to blame, nor has God to condemn us in anything." The bearers of this letter, and others who brought a like report, were carefully examined by Lord Cochrane, and by them he was solemnly assured that the garrison of the Acropolis, destitute of provisions and every other necessary, could not possibly hold out more than five days longer.

He and all others were deceived; but he alone thoroughly felt the urgent need of instant action. "As I perceive the ruin of Greece," he wrote to Karaïskakes on the 23rd of April, "in the delay now taking place, and as I have every reason to believe that intrigues are carrying on by persons of desperate fortune and worthless character, with a view to promote their private ends, they not being aware that the subjection of Greece to a foreign power will ultimately destroy the hopes which they entertain, I take the liberty of urging, as an officer who has some character to lose in this affair, that your excellency should caution the officers of your army against the vain belief that intrigues at the present moment can produce any other effect than the ruin of themselves and their country. The education which my countrymen, in common with myself, have received, leads to an attachment to the cause of Greece amounting to enthusiasm, and this feeling cannot but be increased by viewing the monuments of her ancient grandeur. I am ready to do my utmost to promote the interests of your country, but I am by no means willing to allow myself to be made the puppet of intriguers. I shall put an end to intrigue in the navy or I shall quit it, and I trust your excellency will excuse me if I adopt the same resolutions respecting the army, if you yourself cannot put it down. I have been but a short time in Greece, but have taken effectual measures to obtain that sort of information which is necessary for my guidance. This has led me to the resolution to act by myself and for Greece, so far as I can, whenever I find that others are either disinclined or unable to co-operate. I have moved the transports close to the Phalerum in order that they may be more conveniently situated when I shall learn the determination of your excellency and the officers in your camp. If that determination is to

relieve Athens the night of the 26th is passed, the marines whom I have hired, paid, and victualled, shall co-operate; if not, I shall try to render them serviceable in some other quarter, and I will denounce to the world as traitors to their country those intriguers who are the cause of the captivity and perhaps annihilation of the garrison in the Acropolis. My advice to your excellency is, that passing the tambourias by night, without firing a shot, you join our troops in the olive-grove, where I will take care they shall meet your excellency, if such is your pleasure. I have been anxious that the glory of relieving Athens should accrue to a Greek, and especially to your excellency. That object I am ready to promote by every means in my power. The friendly manner in which we the other day met will cause me to regret, if in my next letter I shall be obliged to bid your excellency adieu for ever."

That letter to Karaïskakes was followed by one, written on the 24th, to General Church. "In forty-eight hours," wrote Lord Cochrane, "the question of relieving Athens will be at a close. I have told Karaïskakes what I think of the state of affairs, and have made up my mind to act accordingly; taking upon myself all the responsibility of not looking longer on tambouria disputes whilst it seems resolved by the Greeks themselves not to march to the relief of Athens. I have not sent the transports to Attica to raise the miserable inhabitants at this hour, when too late for them to be of the least use in relieving the Acropolis. If I had done so, I should have the load on my conscience of causing their heads to be struck off. I can assure you, Sir Richard, that Colonel Gordon and myself laboured long ago to prevail on Karaïskakes to do this, but he resisted every application, for reasons which it will be well if he can satisfactorily explain hereafter. If your men will not come on, and Karaïskakes's men will not in the night pass those miserable tambourias, which in that case are no impediment, what is the use of my detaining the squadron here? I have viewed the bugbear of a convent this day from opposite sides, and it is no more in Karaïskakes's way than the church of Poros.

"Since writing the above," Lord Cochrane added, "I have received your note requesting that six hundred men shall be transported hence to Karaïskakes's head-quarters in the rear. The naval funds have been expended and our funds exhausted in bringing forces nearer to the enemy. I am sure if you reflect on this demand of his, and that Karaïskakes's head-quarters are twice as far from Athens as the Phalerum, you will be of the opinion that it would be better to bring an equal number, or even the whole of Karaïskakes's force here, and endeavour immediately to do something effectual to save Fabvier and the garrison from the inevitable destruction consequent on the present mode of proceeding. If Karaïskakes wants more men he wants them to take tambourias, and not to march past them as he ought, for his present position is of no use whatever. Do cause some rational mode of proceeding to be adopted, or let us give it up; for we are now only in the way by occasioning jealousy and promoting the vilest intrigues."

The "bugbear of a convent," which Karaïskakes wished first to capture, was the monastery of Saint Spiridion, occupied by a few scores of Turks, who from it overlooked the Greek encampments on each side, the one at Piræus, the other at Munychia, with a distant view of Lord Cochrane's station at Phalerum and of Sir Richard Church's on the other side. Finding that Karaïskakes would not join with Church and press on to Athens, at a distance of about seven miles, Lord Cochrane had urged the co-operation of all the forces at Cape Colias, whence the way to Athens was only about five miles long. Karaïskakes, however, refused this plan also. He maintained that the only safe course was to preserve his position and strengthen it by the formation of innumerable small circular earthworks, known as tambourias, within which the soldiers could crouch by day and lie securely on the bare ground at night. In this way he hoped to starve out the garrison at Saint Spiridion, the capture of which he deemed essential before any formidable attempt was made upon the main body of the Turkish camp, in Athens and around it, and especially under the walls of the Acropolis. In vain Lord Cochrane urged that this mode of warfare, tardy and expensive enough at the best of times, was cruelly reprehensible when they considered the wretched state in which the garrison of the Acropolis was supposed to be, and the prospect of its speedy evacuation. Karaïskakes refused to move, answering each appeal by unreasonable demands upon Lord Cochrane for supplies of ammunition and provisions, which it was

no part of his duty to supply out of the residue of the insignificant sum of 8,000*l.* supplied to him out of the Greek loan for naval purposes.⁴ It may be that Karaïskakes – a bold and shrewd man – was not personally responsible for his inactivity. His army was little more than a commonwealth of small bands, of which each leader claimed an authoritative share in all deliberations, and owed, even to him, only a nominal subjection. But if we acquit him individually of cowardice, we only throw the greater blame on the Greek force as a whole. That it was blameworthy is clear. "Your lordship," wrote Sir Richard Church in answer to the letter just quoted, "is not aware of all the difficulties I had to encounter in passing our troops who had all struck for pay. Not one would move. However, that difficulty is now nearly over and the greater part are passing to the camp at this moment."

Unexpected boldness was forced upon them on the 25th of April. "I am now in a position," wrote Lord Cochrane to General Church at eight o'clock in the morning from the Piræus, "to carry you all over to the rear of the enemy, if Karaïskakes's army have the courage to walk to this point, which is in their own possession, in order to land on the opposite shore at two hundred yards distance, and whereon is not a living soul. I can make such a diversion by means of the seamen at night as would enable Karaïskakes's army to move on by land towards the Phalerum, whilst those on the Phalerum, with the exception of a few, might take up a position near Athens or in the town. I can embark you and yours, and leave Karaïskakes's men without food, taking all the provisions to the advanced post, leaving him to starve or come on."

That desperate expedient was averted. Two or three hours after suggesting it, Lord Cochrane was superintending the debarkation of some thirty soldiers, under cover of two gunboats. A party of Ottomans, seeing the operation, hurried down with the intention of harassing the new comers. Lord Cochrane's Hydriots, however, rushed to the rescue. Other Turkish troops came up, to be met by other Greeks, and the battle became general. Lord Cochrane, with nothing but his telescope in his hand, gathered the Christian troops round him, and, with encouraging words, led them on in an orderly attack upon the entrenchments about the monastery of Saint Spiridion. Within an hour, nine entrenchments were in the hands of the Greeks, who lost only eight men. Sixty Turks were slain, and then their comrades fled, most of them hurrying up to the camp of Athens, a few betaking themselves to the convent.

"The Greeks," wrote Lord Cochrane to the Government, "have this day done as their forefathers were wont to do. Henceforth commences a new era in the system of modern Grecian warfare. If every one behaves to-morrow as all, without exception, have behaved to-day, the siege of the Acropolis will be raised and the liberty of Greece secured."

By this success the Turks, with exception of the garrison in the convent, were driven back to the neighbourhood of Athens, and Karaïskakes was encouraged to remove his camp from Keratsina to the Piræus. At a council of war held the same evening Lord Cochrane urged a sudden and united attack upon the Turkish camp on the morrow. Karaïskakes, however, declined to move a step further until the monastery was captured, and, as General Church agreed with this view, Lord Cochrane assented to it.

Early next morning the bombardment of the monastery was begun. The *Hellas*, commanded by Miaoulis, discharged her heavy guns upon it during several hours, with such effect that it seemed to be only a mass of ruins. It was feebly invested by Karaïskakes on land. But its garrison held out with excellent bravery. Thrice the Greeks tried to storm it; but thrice they were driven back.

In the evening the Turks solicited an armistice, and offered to capitulate on condition that they should be allowed to retire with all their arms and properties: and this proposal Karaïskakes was inclined to accept. Lord Cochrane, however, contended that they should have nothing but bare life. While this was being discussed, the Turks perfidiously assassinated a Greek messenger sent to treat

⁴ Trikoupes, Gordon, Finlay, and all the other authorities, say that Lord Cochrane had 20,000*l.* He had only been supplied with 8,000*l.*; and nearly all this sum had been already disposed of in fitting out the fleet at Poros, and paying the seamen's wages.

with them, and fired upon a boat in which Lord Cochrane's secretary, Mr. Edward Masson, was carrying the flag of truce. Thereupon, the Chief Admiral refused to hear any more of a compromise. Returning to his ship, he ordered the bombardment of the convent to be resumed, and besought Karaïskakes to continue storming it by land.

This was done throughout the 27th, but unsuccessfully, because unwillingly. The Greeks asserted that the Turkish garrison was utterly without provisions and water. Lord Cochrane urged that, if it was so, a small detachment of the Greek army and the ships of war would suffice for its investment, while the main force marched boldly on to Athens before the terror inspired by its recent achievements had died out. He reproached them with cowardice, and threatened to leave them unless they took prompt measures for completing their triumph. "The services of the navy," he wrote to Karaïskakes, "are immediately required for other purposes than those of attending upon an inactive army. My duty I am determined to execute in all possible ways in which my services can benefit Greece. I shall therefore be gratified if, in reply to this letter, you will inform me if it is in your power to make the army advance, and if that advance will take place before to-morrow night. It will give me the greatest pleasure to co-operate with you in all manner of ways, but my desire to that effect is rendered null if those under your orders will not conform to your wishes or obey your commands."

To the same effect Lord Cochrane wrote, on the following morning, to General Church. "The convent and its walls," he said, "have been levelled to the ground. The rubbish alone remains on the southern side towards the shipping; and it appears that not more than one hundred of those it contained, or who fled within its walls for safety, now remain to oppose, or assault, or threaten, the rear of the Greek army, should you be able to prevail on its leaders to advance. I should remind those leaders that, independently of the army, I have full fifteen hundred men under my command, a thousand of whom, being on shore now at this port, are more than sufficient to blockade these ruins or destroy all within; which last event might have taken place yesterday had it not been that the seamen were removed from the positions which they had stormed and taken, in the neighbourhood of the convent, and soldiers placed in their stead – a circumstance which seems to have given them offence, so that they leave the storming of the ruins of the convent to those thus placed, as they say, in the post of honour. These feelings, in such minds – however proper the proceedings may have been in a military point of view – I cannot prevent or remove. Time, provisions, and money, are wasting in inaction. The enemy is concentrating troops and fortifying positions around Athens, each of which positions will be a pretext for delay; even were I not aware that abundant excuses of other kinds will not be wanting – such as the arrival of a few hundred cavalry from Negropont or the like; so that I really begin to despair of one step being made in advance for the relief of the Acropolis. I know the difficulties of your situation, and I fear that they are more than even your energy can surmount. When you shall have done your utmost towards the end we have in view, I shall make one effort for the safety of the unfortunate women and children who are threatened with immediate destruction or perpetual slavery. Pray let me have a decisive reply as to what is to be done, and when."

General Church's reply is instructive. "I have read your letter with great attention," he wrote, "and fully enter into your view of affairs. The Hydriots are unquestionably the best to storm, if anybody will storm. The soldiers that they say have taken their post were placed to co-operate in a general assault, and I had made an arrangement with a chief who certainly displayed considerable courage the other day. I gave him directions to collect a band, or forlorn hope, of volunteers to lead with, and he is to have five hundred dollars for himself and five hundred for his band. Had it not rained – however ridiculous it may seem to say so – I am sure that a storming party would have advanced yesterday evening, and I hope it will do so to-day. In fact, the rain yesterday almost dispersed the whole camp, and many of our outposts were quite abandoned. If the Hydriots will advance, I will order the others away immediately. You have no idea of my anxiety to move on, and I cannot express it. Karaïskakes is at this moment going round his outposts. As soon as he returns, I shall send for him and combine with him, *bon gré mal gré*, an advance for to-night or to-morrow. I will let you know as

soon as we have had our conference. I think, my lord, that if the weather clears up, we shall be able still to storm, and perhaps a little firing again would have the effect of rousing the fellows."

Soldiers who could only fight in fine weather were hardly fit to rescue Greece in the heaviest pressure of her misfortunes. On the previous night something like a mutiny had been occasioned by Lord Cochrane's complaints at their inactivity. Even Karaïskakes sympathised with his captains. "We shall not go well with these English," he said; "I fear they will ruin us by their impatience. They cannot restrain themselves. But we must make the best we can of them." Sir Richard Church, fired with Lord Cochrane's ardour, would not be made the best of, according to the views of Karaïskakes and his followers. The letter from him last quoted was followed within an hour by a brief one: – "My lord, I have the honour to inform you that I have given over the command to General Karaïskakes."

Karaïskakes and the Greek officers were thus left, at about ten o'clock in the morning of the 28th, to work out their own devices. At eleven, Lord Cochrane received orders to cease the firing which he had reopened from the guns of the *Hellas*. The movements which, through his telescope, he saw in process within the convent walls and at its gate induced him to send strict orders to Major Urquhart to withdraw his Hydriot marines from their post near the convent, and station them on the summit of Munychia.

The Turks had again sent offers of capitulation, and Karaïskakes, now uncontrolled by Lord Cochrane or General Church, and in contempt of his positive assertion, made two days before, that the garrison had not a ration of provisions left and could easily be starved into utter submission, had acceded to their terms. It was agreed that they were to be allowed to surrender with all the honours of war. Bearing their arms and all their property, they were to pass unmolested into the Turkish camp on the hills. Karaïskakes must be blamed for this excess of generosity; but, to his credit be it stated, that, having agreed to the capitulation, he took all reasonable care to have it honourably observed. Along the road leading from the gate of the convent to the fortifications on the hills he ranged soldiers on either side, in order that the Turks might be protected from the crowd of less disciplined soldiers. All looked well as the two hundred and seventy men, women, and children who had been locked within the shattered building passed out of it and began their march. But no sooner was the convent evacuated than a swarm of Greeks rushed into it, each hoping to seize the largest share of the booty which they expected to find. They found nothing, and then angrily rushed out again to inform their comrades of their disappointment.

Lord Cochrane watched their proceedings from the deck of the *Unicorn*, General Gordon and Mr. Finlay, who was then serving as a volunteer on Gordon's staff, being by his side. "All those men will be murdered!" exclaimed Mr. Finlay, pointing to the retreating Turks. Lord Cochrane, not yet initiated in all the depths of Greek treachery, turned in horror to General Gordon and said, "Do you hear what he says?" "My lord," answered Gordon, "I fear it is too true."⁵

And so it proved. A Greek soldier, pushing through the guard, snatched at the sword of one of the Turks passing along the line. The Turk resisted, and a scuffle followed. Two or three other Turks raised their muskets and fired. A score of Greeks at once retaliated. A shadow of an excuse was thus afforded to the Christians for wreaking vengeance for all the ills they had endured from the enemy, and for giving vent to their anger at finding no prizes in the deserted convent. A horrible massacre ensued. Two hundred or more Turks were murdered. Less than seventy escaped. "Forgive me, as I forgive you," shouted Karaïskakes to the Moslems, after vainly trying to stay the slaughter; "I can do nothing more for you."

"Islanders," wrote Lord Cochrane, in a proclamation to his Hydriot force, "I was no party to the capitulation this day. Fearing that some outrage might be committed, I sent you an order to retire; and I glory in the consciousness that I have saved you as well as myself from being inculpated in the most horrid scene I ever beheld, – a scene which freezes my blood, and which cannot be palliated by any

⁵ Finlay, vol. ii., p. 148.

barbarities which the Turks have committed on you. I send you the thousand dollars which I promised should be distributed, as a reward for your valour and for your obedience to my directions, which you will ever find lead to the path of honour and humanity and the duty we owe to your country."

Utter confusion among the Greeks resulted, for a time, from the barbarous massacre of Saint Spiridion. The soldiers quarrelled and fought over the blood-stained spoil. The officers were occupied with mutual recriminations and excuses regarding their several shares in the atrocity. Karaïskakes found himself unable to establish order, and had to entreat Sir Richard Church to take back his surrendered authority.

To this General Church assented on the promise that, if he did so, he should be aided in bringing the chief wrong-doers to justice. Indeed, both he and Lord Cochrane hoped, for a little while, that their very misconduct, filling the Greeks with shame and penitence, would incline them to listen to the counsels in which they both saw the only chance of safety to the garrison of the Acropolis. "The destinies of Greece," wrote Lord Cochrane to Karaïskakes, on the 29th of April, "the fate of your army, and the character of its chiefs, are now wholly in the hands of your excellency. You and you alone will be held responsible for all that shall happen. The hour of clemency for Greece is past; the sword alone can decide the contest. Courage is a characteristic of men who deserve to be free. Let then the conduct of a few atrocious individuals yesterday be effaced by a march direct to Athens, at least to relieve the women and children now doomed to destruction, if prompt exertions be not made to save them. Your excellency has hitherto treated my friendly advice in a manner which I did not anticipate; but the world will judge between the course you have taken and that which I wished you, for the benefit of your country, to pursue. I shall wait three days for your excellency's reply, when it will be my duty, if the fortress be not relieved, to attend exclusively to naval affairs. I hope you will reflect on the glory you may yet attain by saving your country, and on the ruinous consequences of persevering in inaction until the last resources of war shall be exhausted."

Karaïskakes's only answer was that the army was in urgent need of spades and shovels, with which he hoped that Lord Cochrane would supply him, as without those means of making fresh tambourias he could not move from his encampment. Lord Cochrane was reasonably indignant. "I confess," he wrote in reply, "that I am now in despair of your making any movement for the relief of the Acropolis, because I have now ascertained that, all the obstacles which first presented themselves to your excellency being overcome, others successively present themselves, to put off the day of your march to the Acropolis. I have made a diversion here this day in favour of your excellency, which, by all the rules of military tactics, must increase the relative strength of your army and facilitate its march. My time and attention must now be devoted to naval matters, and unless you advance this evening, I shall have deeply and bitterly to regret, for the sake of Greece, that I ever put faith in anything being accomplished by individuals to whom so many difficulties, which my experience has taught me to be imaginary, present themselves. I recall to your excellency's recollection your promises and assurances, and I call upon you to make some effort to save your country from inevitable ruin. I solemnly declare that it is my opinion that a thousand men who would obey orders and do their duty are more than are necessary to perform the task at which your excellency hesitates. I shall be oppressed with grief if, after the scene of yesterday, I am compelled to return, first, to the seat of Government, and next to Europe, without having witnessed any deed that can tend to obliterate the stain thereby affixed on the Grecian people."

"I am making my last effort," wrote Lord Cochrane to Dr. Gosse, "to get Karaïskakes to advance. The monastery is taken, its defenders are destroyed, and now the sheepfold on the other side of the Phalerum is the obstacle. We want mortars, shells, and fuses, shoes for the seamen, and food for the mob denominated falsely the army of Greece."

The letter to Karaïskakes had some effect. On the 30th of April, General Church wrote to say that he had persuaded the Greek captains to agree unanimously to an immediate movement against Athens. Two thousand men were to go, during the following night, by water to the neighbourhood of

Cape Colias, and thence march stealthily to a hill about a mile south of Athens, which they hoped to seize and secure under cover of the darkness. During the next evening, a force about twice as large was to join them by the same route, and all were to do their best to drive the Turks from their encampments round the Acropolis. This was Lord Cochrane's plan; and there can be no doubt that it would have been successful had the Greeks acted upon it and done their duty.

Unfortunately they did neither. Having promised overnight, they found reasons in the morning for breaking their promises. Nothing was done on the 1st of May, and Lord Cochrane, tired of their excuses for procrastination, paid a brief visit to the authorities at Poros. The result was, that he thought of going without the Greek leaders. "I have seen the Government," he wrote to Sir Richard Church on the 2nd, "and prepared them for the worst, should things go on as they have hitherto done. They are incapable of applying any remedy. Therefore, the more credit will be due to you if you shall be enabled to save the garrison of the Acropolis; in which endeavour count on my utmost exertions and most unlimited co-operation. I hope now you will be able to act without Karaïskakes. In addition to your own people, I can provide two thousand marines, seamen, and volunteers. With these, if you land at night to the eastward, you may be in the neighbourhood of Athens in two hours; and then there is the garrison of fifteen hundred in addition to co-operate, making in the whole a force of nearly five thousand, without taking a soldier from Karaïskakes's tambourias. If, however, you judge well to have volunteers from Karaïskakes's camp, I shall offer 200,000 piastres amongst all who will accompany you or meet you at Athens; by which means I have little doubt you will find Karaïskakes deserted, and the whole mob at the gates of Athens. All the vessels are at your service."

Sir Richard Church feared to undertake the exploit without the co-operation of Karaïskakes, and, on again consulting him, he was informed that a fresh supply of entrenching tools was necessary. Lord Cochrane immediately sent messengers to procure them, but was none the less annoyed at what seemed to him an unnecessary excuse, and again threatened to take his ships where they could do good work for Greece. "You have done everything in your power," wrote Sir Richard to him on the 3rd of May, "and so have I. The soldiers will not embark without the entrenching tools. All we could collect do not amount to two hundred and fifty. I would have gone without one, but no one will follow me. I cannot say more; but to-morrow we may be more fortunate. I cannot say to you stay or otherwise. If you go, I cannot deplore it more than yourself."

Lord Cochrane consented to wait till the morrow, and on the morrow an incident occurred which caused a little further delay. On the 4th of May a small body of Greeks, chiefly Hydriots, went on a skirmishing expedition. At first they were successful, and they had nearly won a redoubt, when a large force of Turks suddenly assailed them on the flank, and drove them back to Phalerum with a loss of nearly a hundred men. Karaïskakes, hearing of this reverse, hurried to the rescue, and with the bravery which was never wanting to him when in actual battle, sought to rally the fugitives. He was on the point of leading them back, when a ball from a pistol struck him in the belly. He was conveyed, in a dying state, to General Church's schooner. Regret at his previous vacillations seems to have filled his mind. "Where is Cochrane? Bring Cochrane to me!" he exclaimed over and over again. Lord Cochrane soon arrived. Karaïskakes, on seeing him, murmured repeated thanks to him for his forbearance towards himself and his devotion to the cause of the Greeks. In his eagerness, he seized the interpreter, Mr. Masson, by the beard, and, pointing towards Cape Colias, said, with all the strength he could muster, "Tell them to be sure to land the division over there to-morrow." Then, not doubting that the expedition would be successful, he uttered solemn thanks to Heaven that he was dying in the moment of victory. Then he made his will – a soldier's will. "I leave my sword and my gun to my son. Tell him to remember they belonged to Karaïskakes." He had little else to leave, having always been free from the avarice by which many of his countrymen were disgraced. He died in the night, and in him Greece lost the worthiest of her native warriors. His faults were the faults of his nation. Many of his virtues were his own. Had his followers been as brave and honest as he was in his best moments, he might have led them on to easy victory. But they wavered and procrastinated,

and, in listening to their excuses, he lost his chance of triumph and subjected himself to blame, for which his brave death only half atoned.

On the evening of the 4th, Lord Cochrane assembled the Greek captains at Munychia, and telling them of their leader's dying message, asked whether they were ready to obey it. For some time they made no answer. At length, on the question being repeated, they replied that they thought they had only been brought thither to hear from the Admiral words of consolation for the loss they had sustained in the death of the brave and wise Karaïskakes. Being asked a third time whether they would obey the dying injunction of the leader for whom they now mourned so much, they answered that they were not ready, that the army was in disorder, that some of them were occupied in burying the slain, that some were tending the wounded, and that all desired to stay near their chief as long as the soul was in his body, and to have at any rate the opportunity of kissing his body before its burial.

With some bitterness, Lord Cochrane replied that such an excess of grief was inopportune, and that their love for Karaïskakes would be best shown in obeying his last command. He added that, if they really refused to go to the rescue of the Acropolis, they would not need his presence on the coast and could not complain of his going to serve Greece elsewhere. Having said that, he returned to his ship.

He had not been long on board, however, when a messenger followed him with intelligence that the army would adopt his plan and be ready, without fail, to proceed to the Acropolis on the following evening. There was no further procrastination, and throughout the next day preparations were being made for what one historian of the Greek Revolution calls "a whim,"⁶ and another "an insane scheme."⁷

"The scheme," says one who was in close attendance on Lord Cochrane all through this time, Mr. Edward Masson, "was anything but insane. It was one of the most sober, safe, and practicable plans ever formed. The first and fundamental condition on which Lord Cochrane consented to cooperate in any plan of landing troops at Cape Colias was, that the troops landed should not expose themselves to an attack of cavalry in the plains, but should, on being landed, proceed by a night march, in compact order, and without halting, to a specified rocky height beyond the temple of Jupiter Olympus, a position which, it was admitted by all, they could hold with perfect safety during the day. From this position, the leaders were to try to communicate, by signals or otherwise, with the garrison, and in concert with it, act as circumstances might dictate. Should the garrison resolve to make a sortie, the main body of the Greek army advancing simultaneously from the Phalerum, it was confidently hoped that the combined attack on the enemy would prove victorious; or, at least, would be so far successful, as to enable the Greeks to save the garrison and bring away the families. The great characteristic of the plan was, that nothing should be risked in reference to the enemy's cavalry, and that if the detachment should find they could accomplish nothing, they should, on the following night, return as they went, in safety, and be embarked for the Phalerum."

Unfortunately, the two main points on which Lord Cochrane had insisted were neglected, and thereby what must otherwise have been a brilliant victory was turned into a miserable defeat. He had insisted upon the movement from Cape Colias being aided by the march of the main body of the army direct from the Piræus to the hills, thus diverting the attention of many of the Turks while the advancing party and the garrison were uniting; but Zavella, to whom this part of the work had been entrusted, never moved at all. He had urged yet more strongly that the preparations for the advance should be so hastened as that all the ground should be travelled over during the night-time, while the Turks were in ignorance of it; but instead of that, the Greeks, though they were embarked at Phalerum by midnight, and landed at Cape Colias before two o'clock in the morning, loitered near the shore till daylight, so that their whole enterprise was exposed to the enemy. The critics who have

⁶ Trikoupes, vol. iv., p. 152.

⁷ Gordon, vol. ii., p. 392.

laid the blame of the disaster on Lord Cochrane have neglected to show how these circumstances caused the failure of the enterprise.

The story of the disaster of the 6th of May will be best told in the words of an eye-witness. "About three thousand soldiers," said Dr. Gosse, in a letter written to M. Eynard on the 23rd, "were embarked in the night between the 5th and the 6th of May, in a clear moonlight, and in the most perfect order, and promptly landed on the other shore. Up to that time everything favoured our enterprise; but the treason and negligence of the chiefs, and the indolence of some of the soldiers, altogether destroyed it. Instead of marching directly to Athens during the night, they employed themselves in constructing redoubt after redoubt, as bad as they were useless, of the sort called by them *tambourias*. We counted a dozen. Only the Suliots, the Candiots, commanded by Demetrius Kalerdji, two hundred regular troops, under the orders of Inglesi and D'aujourd'hui, and twenty-two Philhellenes, went in advance. Without any hindrance, they reached within cannon-shot of the Acropolis, towards Philippapus, so that, as I have heard, they could even speak with the besieged; but, having received no orders to enter, they waited until the day rendered their position hazardous. The enemy thus had time to ascertain their weakness and to send against them eight hundred horsemen. Thrice these troops were repulsed. Vasso and Notaras, however, who covered the right flank, abandoned their posts, as they had done in the affair of the unfortunate Bourbakes, and thereby they caused confusion among the troops in the centre. The latter defended themselves with renewed valour, but yielded at last to the sabres of the Dehli cavalry. Then was exhibited such a panic as cannot be described. The soldiers who occupied the redoubts in the rear, and near to the place of debarkation, began to flee almost at the same time as those of Vasso, and threw themselves into the sea at the risk of being drowned. I was at this time with Lord Cochrane, who did not wish to mix himself up with the affair, when the sudden flight forced us at once to rejoin our boat, and even this was not done without great difficulty. General Church was also on the shore, and he too was only saved by the sloop which was waiting for him. The Turkish cavalry, after having killed or captured all the advanced party, rushed into the plain and made terrible havoc among the Greeks. Seven hundred of them were killed; and two hundred and forty were taken prisoners. The rest, numbering about two thousand, rushed down towards the sea, and would soon have been all destroyed by the Turkish guns placed on the hills if the fire from the vessels off the coast had not kept the enemy at a respectful distance. They passed the day in a terrible uncertainty, but were sustained by the courage of certain chiefs, especially of Nicolo Serva, a Suliot captain; and in the following night they were embarked and carried back to Phalerum. While this portion of the army was being thus troubled, the Greeks, under the orders of Kisso Zavella, remained inactive. That chief quietly smoked his pipe, and when implored to march, was content to answer coldly, 'When they pay me I will go.' The troops of Kolokotrones the younger, and of Sessinis, deserted in the direction of Livonia. The Turks, taking advantage of the disorganized condition of the Greeks, attacked the Phalerum on the night of the 6th, but were repulsed."

Lord Cochrane's account of the battle sent to the Government on the 7th of May, though more general, supplies some other details. "The plan concocted previous to the death of General Karaïskakes," he said, "was carried into effect on the 6th, by his excellency General Church, with this difference in the execution of the service, that his excellency and myself were anxious that a rapid march should be made from the place of debarkation direct to Athens, by a body of four thousand men, in order to return with the women and children and the wounded, whereas the officers of the army insisted upon entrenchments being made in the line of their progress – an operation which required so much time as to preclude the possibility of effecting the object surprised and unopposed. The redoubts were in progress of construction, and the work continued with unremitting labour until about nine o'clock in the morning, when the enemy's cavalry, having collected from all quarters, broke in upon the unfinished redoubts and vigorously attacked those who had advanced the furthest, and who, from the number of subdivisions left, according to the custom of the country, in these redoubts during their progress, had become so weakened as to be incapable of making effectual

resistance. The loss on our side has been very considerable. I had to lament this day that the Greeks still continue their aversion to that regularity of movement and honesty of action which constitute the strength of armies, and I grieve to see great bravery rendered useless to their country and dangerous to themselves, and wasted in desultory and unsupported personal efforts. The use of the bayonet and very slight military instruction would have saved most of those who fell on this occasion, and would have rendered unnecessary those redoubts which delay the progress of your arms, and destroy more men in insignificant enterprises which tend to no result, than would be required for the deliverance of your country. The affairs of Greece require energy, and that remedy be at once applied to whatever impedes the progress of affairs."

Lord Cochrane testified to the excellent soldiership of the Turkish horsemen. With sabres and short muskets, they dashed in and out of the crowd of retreating Greeks, who, having no bayonets and no weapons adapted for close fighting, were utterly defenceless. He himself, having landed with Dr. Gosse to watch the operations from the shore, was so hard pressed by these formidable antagonists that he was only rescued by his own bravery and the daring of Dr. Gosse, who retained possession of the boat which was waiting for him on the shore until his chief had time to force his way back to it through the crowd of fighting Turks and Greeks and through the waves beating up to his neck. It was only when he was again on board the *Hellas*, and able to direct the firing of the guns, that the Turks were driven back, and the remnant of the Greek force was allowed to collect and prepare for the return to Phalerum.

The fall of the Acropolis soon followed this terrible defeat. By it the Greeks were utterly disorganized. Lord Cochrane, finding it impossible to persuade them to another attempt, returned to Poros with the fleet on the 10th of May. Sir Richard Church remained at Munychia, his army being every hour reduced by desertions, till the 27th, when he and the two thousand starving men who were left to him abandoned their position. Fabvier and the garrison, through the intervention of the French Captain Le Blanc and Admiral De Rigny, capitulated on the 5th of June. It was then found that the Acropolis still contained stores of food and ammunition sufficient for four months' use, and that their reports of destitution had been deliberate falsehoods, intended only to force their friends outside to come speedily to their relief.

Those falsehoods had been particularly mischievous. By them, as has been shown, Lord Cochrane was induced to listen to the entreaties of Karaïskakes and the Government, and take his ships to Phalerum, instead of carrying out his plan of stopping the Turkish supplies in the Negropont and at Oropos. Had that plan been adhered to, it seems as if a very different issue might easily have been brought about.

The work on which he had been engaged having terminated so unfortunately, Lord Cochrane was much blamed for it by critics who had private reasons for being jealous. We have shown, however, that he only entered upon that work at the request of men whose power and influence he could not gainsay; that, having undertaken it, he set himself shrewdly and earnestly to render it successful; and that the failure was occasioned, not by adoption of his plans, but by their perversion or rejection. If he erred, he erred only in expecting too much patriotism and valour from the people whom he was doing his utmost to serve.

If anything further need be said in explanation and defence of Lord Cochrane's position up to this time, it will be best done by quoting part of a letter addressed to M. Eynard on the 27th of May, in which he concisely repeated the whole story. "On my arrival in Greece," he wrote, "I found that the authority was claimed by two factions, that nothing like a navy existed, and that a number of individuals called an army were collected to raise the siege of Athens, – but wholly deficient in military talent on the part of the commanders, or in obedience and discipline on the part of the troops. As soon as I had accepted my commission, I commenced active exertions to save the Acropolis. I advised Karaïskakes to embark and land to the southward and eastward of the Phalerum, and, marching direct to the Acropolis, bring out the women and children. But my counsel was in vain, as he had no idea of

any combined naval and military movement, nor indeed of any military plan, except that of advancing by slow steps, after the manner of the Turks, who construct little fortifications, called tambourias, at every few hundred yards, which are again opposed by others of the adverse party; and, as neither army attacks these forts by active force, the whole, after a few hours, are brought to a stand, and the result of the contest depends on who can the longest continue to furnish pay and provisions. Such was the state of the military contest when General Church took the command. The battle at Phalerum, though brilliant, was accidental, and, not being followed up, was productive of no result. Karaïskakes fell, and General Church embarked the troops in order to execute the movement that ought to have taken place a month before. The moment was more inauspicious than we were aware of; for the Turkish commander had that very night been joined by a large body of cavalry and a number of infantry from Negropont and elsewhere. This, however, would not have proved decisive, had not General Church, with a view to conciliate the officers under his command, and indeed in order to induce them to embark at all upon the expedition, conformed to their absurd views of military movement, and permitted them to carry entrenching tools to form their usual numerous positions on the line of their route, the construction of which wholly defeated the intention of surprise, and enabled the enemy to surround their advanced guard or van, weakened by the division of the troops into fourteen garrisons left in a line in their advance, whereas the whole body might, with perfect safety and in two hours, have reached the Acropolis. The slaughter which the Turks made in the advanced posts of the Greeks was horrible, and the panic which took possession of those who remained on the Phalerum, at three leagues' distance from the scene of action, was as disgraceful as the conduct of their chief, Zavella, who made no movement even to create a diversion, but sat coolly looking at the slaughter of his countrymen. With six thousand men under his command he remained totally inactive. This expedition to Athens cost upwards of twenty-five thousand dollars of the naval money and destroyed most of our provisions. At the same time, I believed it to be my duty to act as I did, and I have not since regretted any step that I took, because, if Fabvier and the garrison fall into the hands of the Turks and are destroyed, I shall at least have the consolation of knowing that my utmost efforts were made to avert their fate."

CHAPTER XIX

LORD COCHRANE'S RETURN TO POROS. – HIS ATTEMPTS TO ORGANIZE AN EFFICIENT GREEK NAVY. – THE WANT OF FUNDS AND THE APATHY OF THE GREEKS. – HIS LETTER TO THE PSARIANS, AND HIS VISITS TO HYDRA AND SPETZAS. – HIS CRUISE ROUND THE MOREA. – HIS FIRST ENGAGEMENT WITH THE TURKS. – THE DISORGANIZATION OF HIS GREEK SAILORS. – HIS CAPTURE OF A VESSEL BEARING THE BRITISH FLAG, LADEN WITH GREEK PRISONERS. – SEIZURE OF PART OF RESHID PASHA'S HAREM. – IBRAHIM PASHA'S NARROW ESCAPE. – LORD COCHRANE'S FURTHER DIFFICULTIES. – HIS EXPEDITION TO ALEXANDRIA. – ITS FAILURE THROUGH THE COWARDICE OF HIS SEAMEN. – HIS TWO LETTERS TO THE PASHA OF EGYPT. – HIS RETURN TO POROS. – FURTHER EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE NAVY. – HIS VISIT TO SYRA. – THE TROUBLES OF THE GREEK GOVERNMENT. – LORD COCHRANE'S VISIT TO NAVARINO. – HIS DEFEAT OF A TURKISH SQUADRON.

[1827.]

Before arriving in Greece, Lord Cochrane had been informed by Captain Abney Hastings and other experienced Philhellenes of the inefficiency of the navy, and a very short stay at Poros served to convince him of the truth of the information. On the 17th of April he obtained from the National Assembly a decree authorizing the organization of a better national fleet, and, before proceeding to join in the efforts for the relief of the Acropolis, he did all that was possible towards the achievement of this object, making such arrangements as would prevent any hindrance thereto arising from his temporary absence on the most pressing work that devolved upon him. Having sent Captain Hastings with all the available ships on the expedition to the Negropont which has already been described, he established at Poros the centre of the administration of the fleet, entrusting its direction to Dr. Gosse, as Commissary-General. He then visited Hydra, Spetzas, and other islands, and left in each direction for the inspection of all the ships there stationed, in order that, according to the national decrees, the best of them might be bought up by the Government, on equitable terms, and converted into vessels of war at Poros. During his stay near the Piræus he was in almost daily correspondence with Dr. Grosse and Emanuel Tombazes respecting the purchase of stores, the construction of gunboats, and every other essential to the fulfilment of his purpose. He sent Jakomaki Tombazes, the elder of the two brothers, to look out near Candia for a new corvette which had just been built at Leghorn for the Pasha of Egypt. All other means in his power were adopted by him for augmenting the naval strength of Greece, and fitting it to oppose the force of her enemies so soon as he was able to devote himself exclusively to that work.

This he did promptly and zealously immediately after the failure of the expedition in favour of the garrison of the Acropolis. "Brave officers and soldiers and seamen of the military and naval services," he wrote in a proclamation issued on the 7th of May, "a defeat of the enemy's naval force will tenfold repay the check which was sustained in yesterday's attempt to relieve the Acropolis. Let every man maintain his post as duty to his country demands, and in a few days I trust you will find your affairs not only retrieved but secured on a permanent base."

That trust was not fulfilled. The Greeks proved themselves on sea as well as on land unable to fight worthily, and with enough real patriotism, for the liberty of their country. But honour must not

on that account be withheld from the man who used all his large experience and larger philanthropy in trying to put them in the way of victory.

Lord Cochrane returned to Poros on the 10th of May, after an absence of just three weeks. He lost no time in rendering to the Government, then located in that island, a personal account of his recent proceedings, and in doing his utmost to persuade the Greeks to aid him in the new exploits on which he hoped to enter with better prospect of success. An address to the Psarians, dated the 11th of May, will serve as a specimen of many documents of the same nature. "It was my intention yesterday," he said, "to have paid my respects to you, in order personally to have made known to you the circumstances in which the naval service is placed and the state and preparations of the enemy, and to have called on you to show an example to the other islanders, on whose exertions now depend the liberties and fate of their country. The abandonment of the schooner, in which I have hitherto been embarked by all her seamen, prevented me from fulfilling my intention, and the certain intelligence received this morning that the Turkish fleet from Constantinople passed Syra the day before yesterday, to join the Egyptian fleet, compels me now to recommend you by writing, instead of by word of mouth, to save your country and yourselves by prompt and energetic exertions. The money I brought here with me, being the proceeds of subscriptions made throughout Europe for your cause, has unfortunately been nearly consumed in fruitless endeavours to save the capital of Greece by means of an irregular and unmanageable body of men, who will neither receive instruction nor listen to advice. I hope that the brave seamen who understand their duty will listen to my recommendation through you that they should at once step forward to save their families from oppression and slavery, and the name of their country from being struck out of the list of independent nations. By one glorious effort Greece may be free; but if she remain in her present state of apathy all hope must be abandoned. I call upon you now to stand forward in defence of your religion and all that is valuable to man. I send you a thousand dollars, which is all that I can spare. Those who will equip their ships may depend on repayment out of the first money that shall be remitted to me for the public service of Greece."

As that letter implies, Lord Cochrane had to begin his reconstruction of the Greek navy – now the only remaining resource of the nation in its hope of working out and assuring its independence by effort of its own – almost without funds. The small sum of 8000*l.* which he had brought with him, as well as the money collected by the European committees and transmitted to the Philhellenic Committee in Greece, composed of Colonel Heydeck, Dr. Bailli, and Dr. Gosse, was nearly exhausted, and the bankrupt Government was unable to provide him with any adequate resources for carrying on his work. It had authorized him to buy ships and stores and to employ labourers and seamen, and expected him to do all without stint, but gave him no money for the purpose. In lieu it authorized him to borrow upon the security of all the future revenue to be derived from the islands; and every effort to utilize this mortgage was made by his agent Dr. Gosse, but with very poor success. The credit of the Greek Government was so low that the prospects of any considerable revenue in the depressed state of commerce – likely to be yet more depressed by the steady advances made by the Turks in regaining their dominion over the insurgents – deterred capitalists from staking their money thereupon. Lord Cochrane, as we shall see, had to apply half his energies in performing the work of a financier, never anticipated by him, and certainly not proper to his functions as First Admiral; and, the result of all being feeble, his legitimate duties were grievously crippled.

Money being absolutely needed, however, he did his best to procure it, and with this view, as well as in order to make personal acquaintance with the principal ports, and the ships and sailors contained in them, he left Poros, three days after returning to it, on a tour among the other important islands.

Starting on Sunday, the 13th of May, he reached Hydra on the following morning. There, in the house of the brothers Konduriottes, its richest and most influential inhabitants, he met several other leading primates, and prevailed on them to take upon themselves the outfit of several brigs

and brulottes, the cost of which he had at present no means of paying. Having, on the 15th, passed on to Spetzas, Lord Cochrane had a similar interview with its chief residents. "I have been highly gratified," he wrote on the 16th to the elder Konduriottes, "by the spirit here manifested in following the noble example which you have set, and I have no doubt but a sufficient force will be immediately equipped to cut off all the resources by which the army of Reshid Pasha is maintained, and so destroy that army even more effectually than by the sword. The utmost promptitude, however, is necessary. One day's delay may permit several weeks' provisions and stores to enter the Negropont."

Promptitude was not easy, in spite of the favourable promises of the primates. "Strange as it may appear to you," said Lord Cochrane, in a letter to his friend, M. Eynard, "it is yet a fact that, out of the thousands of seamen idle and starving at Hydra, Spetzas, and Egina, not a man will enter the service of his country without being paid in advance; nor will they engage to prolong their service beyond a month, so that the labour of disciplining a crew is interminable. Were there funds to increase the pay for each month, the sailors would remain, and there might be some hope of getting a ship in order. At the present moment there are no individuals in Greece who are instructed in their duties as officers in ships of war." "I see no termination to the obstacles," he wrote to Dr. Gosse on the 17th, "which present themselves at every step I advance. Neither the Hydriots nor the Psarians, nor the Spetziots, nor the Porriots, will embark in this frigate, which is thus useless to Greece, if not prejudicial, because her maintenance is an expense without benefit. I wish I could do a thousand things which I am compelled to neglect, by reason of the difficulties and want of assistance of all kinds. You, my good friend, are my only aid."

At Spetzas, and in its neighbourhood, Lord Cochrane remained four days, directing the arrangements to be made in organizing a fleet strong enough to go against the enemy's shipping, and, while waiting for that, in appointing two minor expeditions upon services that were urgent. On the 18th of May, he sent Admiral Saktoures with ten brigs and four fireships to cruise about the Negropont and capture as much as he could of the stores sent through that channel from Constantinople for the use of the Turkish army in Attica. On the following day he went himself in the *Hellas*, attended by the *Karteria*, under Captain Abney Hastings, in the direction of Cape Clarenza, the north-westernmost point of the Morea, opposite to Zante.⁸

Castle Tornese, there situated, was being besieged by the Turks, and Lord Cochrane hoped to be in time to avert its capture. In this he failed. Arriving on the 22nd of May, he found that the castle had capitulated a few hours before. All he could do was to chase two Turkish frigates which he found on the coast. "We fired into them," he said, "but our guns were ill-directed, and the noise and confusion on board this ship was excessive, which prevented my choosing to attack them again, though they did us not the slightest injury, because I am desirous that the *Hellas* shall be in somewhat better order before I voluntarily attack an enemy who may take advantage of the impossibility of causing my orders to be obeyed, and so leave the fate of the ship to the conduct of a rabble."

One capture, however, the *Hellas* was able to make on the following day. She fell in with a vessel, manned by Turks and Ionian Islanders, bearing the British flag, loaded with captives, chiefly women and children, just taken in the Castle Tornese. Lord Cochrane seized her, and sent her, with a reasonably indignant letter, to the Lord High Commissioner at Corfu. "If I do not attempt to express my feelings in addressing you," he said, "it is because I am aware that the terms I should employ would fall far short of the sensations that will arise in the breast of every honourable man throughout the civilized world, and the degradation which every Englishman will experience, on learning that the flag of England, first prostituted by supplying the traffickers in Christian slaves with all the necessaries for their horrid purposes, is now further debased by a traffic in the slaves themselves. I send you an

⁸ "The admiral," says Gordon, "weighed with the *Hellas* and *Karteria* alone, leaving the rest of his squadron to draw pay and rations at Porto Kheli" (vol. ii., p. 415). The fact was that all the rest of his squadron that was fit for service was sent to the Negropont; and Lord Cochrane left directions that the other vessels, as soon as there were men to be rationed and funds for paying them, should follow him to Clarenza. But they only came to run away.

Ionian vessel, full of women violated in their persons, and who, with their children, had been reduced to slavery, in order that the British public and the world may ascertain whether these unfortunate people will be protected by the decision of an Ionian tribunal. If there were any hope that the people in the Ionian Islands would abandon their infamous dealings otherwise than by force, I should ask your excellency to issue an order upon the subject. I beg, however, to signify that I am ready to cooperate with the admiral and officers of the British naval service in the Mediterranean in enforcing obedience to the laws of justice and humanity, and putting down the Ionian trade in slaves, as well as the piracies which have originated chiefly in the total contempt shown by the Ionian people and others for the laws of nations and the principles of justice during the contest between Greeks and Turks. I also put at your disposal the Turks found on board the Ionian boat, not considering them as prisoners of war, but as men apprehended in violating the laws of civilized nations and insulting the feelings of Christendom." "Since writing the above," it was added in a postscript, "I have experienced considerable difficulty in restraining the fury of the Greeks from bursting forth upon the violators of their countrywomen. From what I foresee, I also feel it my duty to warn you that, should the transportation of Christian captives by neutrals be continued, I cannot answer for the safety of Ionians found so employed by the other vessels of the Greek squadron."

A formal acknowledgment of that letter was all the answer received by Lord Cochrane.

On the 24th of May, when near Missolonghi, he made another capture – a Turkish brig, with eight guns, bearing Austrian colours, which was proceeding from Previsa to Navarino. In her, besides a good store of flour and gunpowder, were found some Turkish officials and several members of Reshid Pasha's harem. The alarm of these prisoners was very great at first; but they were treated with courtesy, and landed, with all their personal properties, at the first convenient halting-place, the brig and its cargo being retained as prizes. Reshid Pasha, in return for the generous treatment shown to his attendants, afterwards released a hundred Greek prisoners without ransom.

Another curious incident occurred at this time. Several small Turkish merchant-vessels passed Lord Cochrane's ship during his stay near Missolonghi, but he abstained from capturing them, deeming it unworthy to interfere with such small crafts, devoted, as it was supposed, only to trading purposes. He was afterwards informed that in one of them Ibrahim Pasha himself had been concealed. Had the Egyptian leader been thus made prisoner, the future course of the war might have been altogether changed.

Lord Cochrane had gone into the Gulf of Patras in hope of meeting with Captain Hastings, from whom he had parted soon after leaving Spetzas; but the *Karteria* had been disabled by a squall, which took away both her masts, and so had to return to Poros; and with the ill-manned *Hellas* alone Lord Cochrane did not deem it prudent, as he had wished, to attack Navarino, whither the besiegers of the Castle Tornese had gone, and where twelve Egyptian frigates, twenty corvettes, and forty or fifty smaller vessels were for some time lying. Several of these came out to take on board the Ottoman troops who had done their work at Cape Clarenza, and Lord Cochrane, on the 1st of June, remained for several hours within sight of them, ready and hoping to be attacked. No fight being offered, however, he did not choose to run the risk of going single-handed into their midst. He accordingly contented himself with surveying the coast, and forming his own judgment as to the relative value of its ports and harbours, as he sailed back in the direction of Poros.

To Poros itself Lord Cochrane did not venture to proceed. "I have written for all the Greek vessels that are ready, including the fireships and explosion-vessels, to join me," he said in a letter to Dr. Gosse, written on the 7th of June, off Cerigo; "I remain at sea with this frigate, lest the whole of her crew should desert, according to custom, were I to pay a visit to Poros." The want of zeal which he thus perceived in his seamen was shared by nearly all their countrymen. All wished him to serve them, but very few made any patriotic effort to aid him in the service. His most active supporter was Captain Abney Hastings; and Captain Abney Hastings complained yet more loudly than did his superior of the indolence and bad conduct of the Greeks. "I had the honour to receive your order of

the 7th, enjoining me to repair to your lordship without delay, if ready for sea," he wrote on the 9th, from Spetzas; "a variety of circumstances, unavoidable in a country deprived of even the shadow of organization, has prevented me from being yet ready to sail. The majority and best of my crew have left me, and I must look for others."

Hastings and all his other officers wrote over and over again to Lord Cochrane, asking for stores of all sorts, and for money with which to pay the wages of their crews. But Lord Cochrane was still almost without funds. Only from Konduriottes, and the other island primates, could he procure scanty supplies with which to carry on his work – or rather, to prevent that work from being altogether abandoned. "I have the honour," he wrote to the Government, "to represent to your excellencies that I find it impossible to realise the credit which you assigned to me on the revenues of the islands, and that insurmountable obstacles prevent my acting as affairs require. The *Hellas* even is idle for want of supplies. Each day, each event, increases my conviction that, without strong and special efforts, without a prompt and disinterested co-operation of all its citizens, Greece must of necessity be overcome. Isolated as I am, I am useless to them. Supported by their patriotism and zeal, I could fight for their independence. The islands of the Archipelago are willing to aid our efforts, but they claim from me in return a guarantee for the safety of their goods and for the regular administration of their imposts. I await your excellencies' instructions for promptly answering their demand; for the resources of the western nations are drained; European charity is wearied. The islands alone offer us the means of maintaining the naval forces, and of resisting, if it be possible – if it be not too late – the vigorous preparations of our enemy. We must act promptly or abandon everything." The Government only answered by urging its chief admiral to lose no time in securing the independence of Greece.

This, in spite of the difficulties thrown in his way, he set himself heartily to attempt. Two courses were now open to him. Reshid Pasha, having taken possession of the Acropolis, and thus completed the capture of Athens, had laid siege to Corinth; and Sir Richard Church, with a weak and vacillating body which went by the name of an army – the remnants of that which had proved so useless in the neighbourhood of the Piræus – was vainly trying to raise the siege. By him and by the Government Lord Cochrane was urged to muster as large a fleet as possible in the Bay of Corinth, and to co-operate with the land forces by blockading the besiegers, after the method that had failed at Athens. Experience convinced him that such action would be useless; whereas from modification of the plan which he had in the former instance been induced to abandon he hoped much. He knew that a large Egyptian force was being prepared at Alexandria, to be employed first in aiding the siege of Corinth, and afterwards in completing the conquest of all Greece. If only he could train the Greeks to act under his bold leadership, as he had trained the Chilians and Brazilians, he trusted that, by one daring movement, he could seize Alexandria as he had seized Valdivia and Maranham. And to this project he zealously addressed himself, deeming it sufficient to send a small force to blockade the gulfs of Patras and Corinth, and leaving Dr. Gosse as his agent in command of naval affairs at home, with special orders to visit the various islands, and, in accordance with authority received from the Government, to collect the revenues of each, in order that the necessary expenses of the fleet might be met.

He collected all the vessels he could muster in the neighbourhood of Cape Saint Angelo. His force consisted, besides the *Hellas*, of one corvette, the *Sauveur*, which he had brought from Marseilles, commanded by Captain Thomas, of fourteen Greek brigs and of eight brulôts or fireships. With these he started for Alexandria on the 11th of June, the *Hellas* having often to slacken speed in order that the slower Greek vessels might be kept in attendance. Candia was passed on the 13th, and Alexandria was sighted at five o'clock in the morning of the 15th. Lord Cochrane stood out to sea so that he might not be discovered, and spent the day in putting his fleet in order, preparing an explosion-vessel, and arranging for the work of the morrow. "Brave officers and seamen," he said, in an address to his followers, "one decisive blow, and Greece is free. The port of Alexandria, the centre of all the evil that has befallen you, now contains within its narrow bounds numerous ships of war

and a multitude of vessels laden with provisions, stores, and troops, intended to effect your total ruin. The wind is fair for us, and our enterprise unsuspected. Brave brulotteers, resolve by one moment of active exertion to annihilate the power of the satrap. Then shall the siege of Athens be raised in Egypt; then shall the armies of Ibrahim and Reshid be deprived of subsistence, and their garrisons perish of hunger, whilst the brave inhabitants of continental Greece and the islanders, freed from impending danger, will fly to arms, and, by one simultaneous movement, throw off the barbarian yoke. Date the return of happy days and the liberty and security of Greece from your present exhibition of valour. The emancipation of Egypt and the downfall of the satrap are also inevitable consequences; for the war is concentrated in one point of action and of time."

That spirited address was ineffectual, and Lord Cochrane's bold plan for seizing Alexandria was prevented by the cowardice and disorganization of the Greeks whom he was labouring to serve. They could hardly be persuaded on the 16th to follow the *Hellas* and the *Sauveur*, all bearing Austrian colours, as far as the entrance to Alexandria, and when twenty large Egyptian vessels were found to be there lying at harbour, they lost heart altogether. Lord Cochrane knew from past experience that, with proper support from his subordinates, he could easily capture or disperse the enemy's shipping. He had made arrangements for attacking them with the fireships and his explosion-vessel. But nearly all the crews refused to serve. Kanaris alone among the Greeks was brave. Having command of the fireships, he induced the sailors of two of them to bear down upon the enemy, and at about eight o'clock in the evening one man-of-war was burnt. So great was the effect of this small success that the other ships of the enemy prepared to escape, and great numbers of the inhabitants of Alexandria hurried out of the town and sought a hiding in the adjoining villages. Seeing the Egyptian ships making ready for flight, however, the Greeks supposed that they were coming out to attack them, and themselves immediately turned sail, heedless alike of their own honour and of Lord Cochrane's assurances that a splendid victory was easy to them. All the night was vainly spent by the *Hellas* and the *Sauveur* in futile efforts to collect them, and on the morning of the 18th they were found to be dispersed far out at sea over an area of more than twenty miles.

In despite of his feeble allies, Lord Cochrane would have gone boldly into port and attacked the enemy. But his own Greek sailors were as timid as their comrades; and after a whole day spent in reconnoitring the enemy, whose force of twenty-five sail dared not offer battle, but had gained courage enough to abstain from actual flight, he was compelled, on the 19th, also to put out to sea and to spend two other days in signalling the brigs and fireships to join him. Not till the afternoon of the 20th, by which time he had pursued his allies to a distance eighty miles from Alexandria, was he able to bring them into any sort of order, and then the bitter conviction was forced upon him that further prosecution of his plan, for the present at any rate, was useless.

The scanty store of provisions that had been sent with the fleet, moreover, was nearly exhausted, and thus a new difficulty arose. Lord Cochrane sent the most useless of his vessels back to Poros for a fresh supply, and with an earnest entreaty that some efficient reinforcements might also be forwarded to him, announcing his intention of waiting in the neighbourhood in hopes of achieving some better success. "Your excellencies may rest assured," he said in his letter to the Government, "that our visit to Alexandria will have a powerful effect in paralysing the equipment of an expedition, and I have every reason to conclude that the example made before their eyes of the brig-of-war will deter any of the numerous neutral vessels from engaging as transports in the expedition equipping by the Pasha. The sensation created must indeed have been powerful as two neutral vessels of war made the signal for pilots before we weighed anchor on the morning of the 17th, under the impression, no doubt, that a more effectual attack would shortly be attempted. I am going to make a short tour, with a view, as far as I am enabled with the inadequate means at my disposal, to distract and paralyse the enemy."

In accordance with that purpose, being already near Cyprus, Lord Cochrane conducted his fleet a little further north, and anchored, on the 23rd of June, off Phineka, in Asia Minor, where, after a brief fight with the Turks, he effected a landing, and received some much-needed food and water.

Thence he addressed letters, urging the prompt despatch of the necessary stores and vessels, to the Government, to the primates of Hydra, and to Dr. Gosse.

From this halting-place, also, he sent a noteworthy letter to Mahomet Ali, the Pasha of Egypt, a supplement to one which he had addressed to him nearly a year before, when he was on his way to enter the service of the Greeks.

"Your employing foreigners in your military and naval service," he had said in the former letter, which will be best quoted in this place, "the privilege which you claim and exercise of building and equipping ships-of-war in neutral states, and of purchasing steam-vessels and hiring transports under neutral flags, for hostile purposes, and to transport to slavery a people whom the Ottoman arms have never yet been able wholly to subdue, warrant a belief, whatever your sentiments may be, that the civilized, educated, and liberal portion of mankind will be gratified that succours similar to those which you, unfortunately, have hitherto obtained from these states are now about to be afforded to the brave, the oppressed, and suffering Greeks. Nor will the advantage derived be wholly theirs; for, until you shall cease or be forced to abandon your inhuman traffic in Christian slaves and the commission of cruelties which stain the character of man, your subjects must inevitably continue barbarians, – a state from which it would be a source of great gratification to contribute to release them. It is true that the Christian world has not of late contended in arms with those of your faith on points of religion. It has, however, not fallen into a state of apathy so great as to see unheeded the perpetration of those enormities which you are daily committing on Christians, – a sentiment with which no feeling of animosity towards you or towards your people is combined. On the contrary, it desires to render you every good service consistent with that duty paramount to all others, namely, to wipe out the stain from the civilized world of unfeelingly and inhumanly co-operating to exterminate, enslave, and transport to bondage a whole Christian people – and such a people – the descendants of those Greeks whose genius laid the chief foundation of literature, the sciences, and the arts; who reared those noble monuments and edifices which time and the more destructive barbarian hand have yet failed to destroy, and which, compared with the wretched hovels of your hordes, may better point out to you the elevation they attained, and the prostrate state in which your people are – owing, alas! to the baneful effects of bigotry and despotic sway. Surely, surely there is ample field for the exercise of your energies at home, in encouraging industry, the arts and sciences, in promoting the civilization of your people, and in enacting equitable laws for the security of persons and property – on which bases the national prosperity of all countries must rest. But should your ambition, not content with bestowing blessings like these on your native land, lead you to soar almost above mortal acts, distant oceans would unite, and the extremities of the globe approach at your command.⁹ Thus might your name be rendered immortal, and Egypt become again the emporium of commerce, and one of the richest and happiest nations upon earth. How infinitely great the glory from such acts! How despicable the fame of a tyrant conqueror, the ruler of slaves! It would be pleasing to support you as the author of great and good works, but it is shameful to permit your present proceedings, and dastardly to leave the unfeeling apostate sons of neutral and Christian nations unopposed, aiding to perpetuate barbarism for horrid gain, drawn from the price of Christians torn from their homes and sold as slaves in foreign lands. Against these atrocious men, my companions and myself, casting the gauntlet down, will contend, in the hope that they and you may perceive your true interests and your great error, and pursue a different course before it shall be too late. Quit the classic sacred soil of Greece, let the flayings, and burnings, and impalings of that people cease, and oh! shocking to humanity, the ripping up of pregnant women, and the hewing up of their infant babes, and other acts yet worse than these – too horrid to relate. Release the Christian slaves; pursue an honourable and enlightened path, and we become friends to aid you in your pursuits – but should the present course be continued, let the bands of cruel assassins in your employ count on our opposition; count, too, on

⁹ It is singular that at this early date Lord Cochrane should thus have advised and prognosticated the construction of the Suez Canal.

our neutralizing the effects of every vessel procured or bought from Christian states. 'Hear the voice of the Lord, ye rulers,' in the prophecy now to be fulfilled. 'Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help and stay.' 'When the Lord shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they shall all fall together.' Instead of filling brim full the cup of bitterness, of which you yourself must ultimately drink, how admirably might you not employ your people, and your treasure – the waste whereof is rearing to you a barbarian successor to prolong the bondage of Egypt. The Christian prayer of those called to rescue their suffering brethren is that, conforming yourself to the dictates of reason and humanity, you may live long to benefit mankind; and as you are more enlightened than your predecessors, so may you become more humane and just."

The second letter was more brief. "The discrimination of your Highness," Lord Cochrane now wrote, "enables you to judge between those who offer advice to promote personal objects and those who disinterestedly desire the welfare of mankind. Egypt may become great by the attention of her rulers to her internal concerns, but not by war and foreign conquest, and assuredly not by the conquest of that people with whom your Highness is now engaged in hostilities, not only on account of the impossibility of reducing them to subjection but because the whole of Europe is directly or indirectly engaged in their support. I beg your Highness to be assured that, if I present myself to your consideration in a more conspicuous point of view than others, it is only because the habits of my life have enabled me to be openly instrumental in the protection of a Christian people whom you attack, and not because I feel animosity against your Highness, nor because I desire the overthrow of the lawful power of your Highness. Should your Highness, however, listen to interested counsellors, or to those who hope to gain by adulation, and continue the present unjust and sanguinary contest, I take leave once more to warn you that the first visit I have had the honour of paying you shall not be the last, and that it is not in the power of your Highness to prevent the destruction of your ships destined for the invasion of Greece, nor to defeat my intention to block up the port of Alexandria. I had the honour to address your Highness twelve months ago; but have thought proper to repeat once more the honest advice I then expressed, in order that your Highness may acquit me when, in the hour of adversity, you have to regret that you have not listened to the voice of truth."

Lord Cochrane's threats could not be enforced. Off the coast of Asia Minor and among the southern islands of the Archipelago he waited for more than a week. But no adequate reinforcements or supplies of provisions arrived. The disorganised fleet became more and more unmanageable. One vessel after another deserted, and those that remained in nominal attendance on the flag-ship could not be brought under control. Lord Cochrane, who had made skilful sailors and brave warriors of enervated Chilians and Brazilians, found the Greeks utterly unmanageable. Up to the 2nd of July he tried vainly to bring them into order, and only succeeded in pursuing them from island to island until, on that day, they had drawn him back to the neighbourhood of Hydra. There they all dispersed, and with a heavy heart he anchored at Poros on the 4th. The *Hellas*

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

Текст предоставлен ООО «ЛитРес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, [купив полную легальную версию](#) на ЛитРес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.