

A SHORT HISTORY OF GREECE

FROM EARLY TIMES TO 1964

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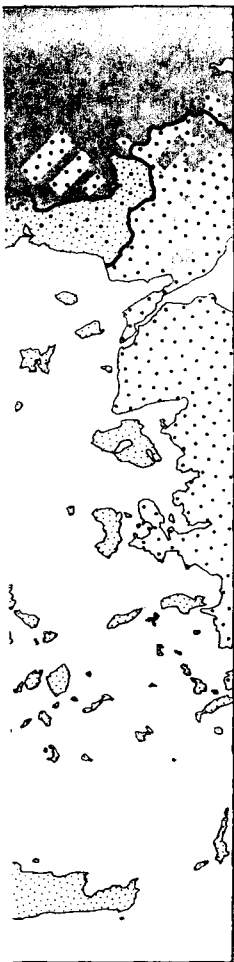
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THE CRISIS OF 1912-23

more) in case of oppression. Turkey ceded all the Aegean islands which had already been occupied, but the fate of some remained uncertain until 1923 (see p. 121).

The population of Venizelist Greece had swollen in eight years from under three to six and a half millions. But the triumph was short-lived. The country was exhausted by war and prolonged mobilization, and exasperated by the corruption of adventurers attached to Venizelos's party and profiting by his absorption in making war or peace. Six weeks after the Chamber had unanimously endorsed the treaties, the accidental death of King Alexander (25 October 1920) fatally revived the one issue that Venizelos most wished to avoid. His preference was for a constitutional monarchy, and he offered the Crown to Constantine's third son, Prince Paul; but Paul refused it, as properly belonging to his father or his elder brother George. Venizelos's opponents then all combined to defeat him by more than two to one at the elections (14 November), and, after his departure and the removal of his officials, arranged a plebiscite (5 December) in which the Venizelists abstained and all but a handful of over a million Greeks voted for the return of King Constantine. A fortnight later the king reached Athens after more than three years of exile. Probably the revival of Turkey and the jealousy of Italy would have deprived even a Venizelist Greece of the full harvest of the Treaty of Sèvres; in addition, the Allies now refused to recognize Constantine and withdrew their financial support. France made haste to secure herself in Syria by a reconciliation with Ankara (20 October 1921). In England, Mr Lloyd George's pro-Greek policy was feared, not only in official quarters as likely to offend Moslem sentiment in India, but also by the public as likely to delay complete demobilization.

Meanwhile the three Powers (England, France and Italy) which met in London (February-March 1921) to discuss a revision of the Treaty of Sèvres in Turkey's favour, were confirmed in their views by the failure of a preliminary Greek



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Geographical Section,
the Settlement (League of
Aliano, plate 16 (3rd ed.
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