

to say nothing of Schliemann, Dörpfeld and Sir John Squire. We may wonder about the relevance of Dr. Johnson's remarks (pp. 65-66). Again the citation from Housman's *Shropshire Lad*, even if "it is impossible not to recall" (p. 37) seems grotesquely far-fetched.

Others before Braddock have written about Lesbos: Georgeakis and Pineau, M.M. Patrick and B. Roland. His book certainly fills a gap, for it covers much ground, provides a useful bibliography, and unmistakably conveys the enthusiasm of one who loves it especially because of Sappho. All the digressions and the scissors and paste technique help to make the study respectably comprehensive although disconcertingly rambling.

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Jane Aiken Hodge, *Greek Wedding*. London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1970. Pp. 251.

This is confessedly a novel which "has for its background the blood-stained muddle that came to be known as the "Greek War of Independence." Fiction and history are woven together with the result that the hero Brett Renshaw, presented as one who "despises the Greeks almost as much as he does women," and the American heroine Phyllida Vannick, witness the Battle of Navarino, interview Ibrahim Pasha and go as envoys to Codrington. Clearly success in writing such historical fiction demands close research. The author frankly acknowledges her debt to C.M. Woodhouse whose studies have helped her to steer her course "through the remarkable number of conflicting contemporary records of this war." Here, even the unscholarly reader may feel, is an exciting and convincing romance. Whatever we may think about the characterization of the Greek Alexandros, wooer of Phyllida, or the style of the dialogue here and there, or the Orthodox wedding in the cave (p. 212), Mrs. Hodge has been able to produce yet another adventure story "blending the historic and the private drama." With her experience she knows how to keep us waiting. We reach Navarino Bay, and the battle "which accidentally ensured Greek freedom," only in the last chapter of the book.

"The Greeks" we are told in the Historical Note which forms the

Preface, were "passionately united, immensely brave (and cruel) when danger threatened." Perhaps it is in the characterization of Alex that a certain degree of miso-hellenism can be detected. He rounds on Phyllida: "A Greek lady would be ashamed to appear in such a state" (p. 146). Yet, at a later stage of the story "with his ravishing smile" on meeting Phyllida after her escape from the castle where he had treacherously imprisoned her, Alex "showed no sense of shame whatever" (p. 248). All the same, the author does her best to be fair to the Greeks. Brett tells Phyllida to speak Greek: "It's more courteous to our hosts, who have saved your life" (p. 199). She herself too recognizes (p. 213) how horribly she has misjudged them, "basing her verdict, of course, on Alex." We feel that Alex, cruelly as he betrays her trust, is not meant to typify the Greeks of his day. Added to this is the fact that although the conduct of Alex, Phyllida's ardent wooer, is by her standards quite inexcusable yet they have both been caught upon the tide of war and (as she has to admit) the treachery of his brother Peter is infinitely worse (p. 178). As an American girl Phyllida can sum up the situation in which she changes her mind about marrying Alex by telling him "We come from different worlds, you and I." Indeed, the character study which the novelist presents to us both here and elsewhere reveals a shrewd insight into the problems of Greek mentality, such as we also observe at the moment when Alex declares his love for Phyllida and in the same breath talks about establishing "our kingdom, once more, at Constantinople" (p. 113).

The historical episodes are skilfully handled. For instance, the surrender by the French Fabvier of the heart of Greece, or the sketch of Codrington in full dress uniform. Sometimes a paragraph may seem fitter for the history textbook than a novel, e.g. at the bottom of p. 110. Mrs. Hodge, as an American novelist with a flair for early nineteenth century history is aware that steam-driven ships had been invented by then. But is the steam yacht *Helena* altogether credible, sailing swiftly and safely with good engines (p. 104) and coaling up at Smyrna (p. 75)? She is more convincing when she writes about the pirate boats, correctly termed *mystics* (p. 66), however odd it looks.

To write in the style of Jane Austen in order to bring the dialogue of the English-speaking characters to life is not categorically imperative. Some phrases, however, may strike the reader as inappropriate and even anachronistic. The following all smack of the twentieth century: their lingo, laughing fit to bust, in a jiffy, Oh, lawks, he's drawing it a bit strong, do let's go (pp. 48, 78, 82, 106, 138). The imprecation 'Good

God' (p. 250) would suit a Greek better than an American lady 150 years ago. *Petros mou* (158) would be better as *Petraki mou*. Occasionally a word or phrase could almost have emanated from the other Jane: darkling behind her (p. 83), the nereid (p. 85), She don't much like (p. 244). The Latin quotation *Timeo Danaos* falls pat from the lips of an educated lady of the period (p. 66).

Some particularly effective passages may be mentioned. We early encounter Brett's misogyny (p. 9), the sex he had left England to escape.... memories bitter as Acheron. We see the dried blood beneath Brett's Byronic curls (p. 133). The tale of the pursuit by the wolves grips our imagination. The tart humour on p. 217 is well in character.

Two misspellings have been noticed: Freindship (p. 68) and Tyrins (p. 124). The inset maps enhance the value of a novel which is well worth its price.

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REX WITT

Arthur Foss, *The Ionian Islands, Zakynthos to Corfu*. London: Faber and Faber, 1969. Pp. 272.

In this well-informed guide to the Ionian Islands the author draws much on his knowledge of history and on his own personal experiences. He takes us on a fascinating sea journey starting from Zakynthos and ending at Corfu. He shows us how the rival cultures of Byzantium and Venice became harmonized. He sees the Orthodox abbot as the living symbol of an ecclesiastical continuity which goes back further even than Papal authority (p. 139). He has obviously a discriminating palate for good wine (p. 145). The names of Charalambos Zois for Zakynthos and Marinos Cosmetatos for Argostoli clearly indicate to the present reviewer that the sources from which the author draws his material are trustworthy and indeed impeccable.

English readers ought to take a particular interest in the subject of the Ionian Heptanese. What the author calls the "Septinsular" Republic established by France in 1800 was followed by a British Protectorate which lasted for almost half a century. The Index discloses that rather more than a quarter of the total number of pages have references to Great Britain. The presence of the game of cricket (p. 193) as also