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A Gift Beyond Compare

The Greeks come bearing a gift. A priceless gift which we need not beware, for it is beyond compare. While we debate in fear and waver in useless longing for peace, the Greeks have shown the world that men still die for freedom, for a cause, against hopeless odds knowing that death is inevitable yet preferring it, as Socrates accepted it, before dishonor.

The story of the futile battle of Greece was told even before it is ended, and in it can be found the reason and justification for what might have seemed the useless sacrifice of British units. Daniel De Luce, an Associated Press correspondent, told that story; a tale of men who accepted a German attack for what it meant—death. There was much talk of Thermopylae. But that was ancient history, a story of a pass which long since has been worn away to a broad highway by the inexorable elements. The story of our time is that of the Rupel Pass, of Monastir, of Mount Olympus and the hamlets and the villages and the rushing mountain rivers where Greeks fought, died for honor and glory.

It seems strange in this modern, cynical world of ours to hear of men dying for honor and glory. You have heard of men preferring to be live cowards than dead heroes—it is symptomatic of our civilization.

These Greeks of a more remote heritage without material wealth have proved richer than we thought, for they have kept alive the

sacred fire that through the years has burned its beacon to the wayfarer who sought freedom and dignity. It is hard to die with dignity. But the Greeks have, and the Aussies—those big, hulking, laughing, singing, fighting men from down under—and the precise Coldstream Guards and the braw Highlanders have, fighting as only true men can against an overwhelming foe. Beaten back, yes! Slain! But not defeated! There the vast difference.

What of the heritage of our land?

It is a fighting heritage. But many have been disillusioned. Many consciously or unconsciously have divided loyalties. However that may be, a grim reality confronts the land and the only honorable answer will be that of the call to service.

The times are harsh. The defeats seem endless. They did in the American Revolution. But America said "Don't Tread on Me!" and backed it with courage and a fighting heart. When that heart pulses anew, America will have regained her heritage, held her soul.

On that day, these Greeks, these Aussies, these English and Scotch will not have died in vain for it is they who will have kept the faith and held aloft the torch. Let it not be from failing hands that America takes it up. The flame still burns in Greek hearts, and of all England's fine hours, none has been finer. The heroes may be dead, but in their brief moment they lived as only men can live and die—with honor.