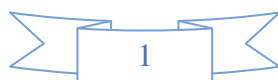


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EL VENCEDOR EDICIONES

HISTORY OF  
MEDIEVAL GREECE  
FROM  
ITS CONQUEST BY THE CRUSADERS  
TO  
ITS CONQUEST BY THE TURKS  
AND OF THE  
EMPIRE OF TREBIZOND  
(1204-1461)

GEORGE FINLAY



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## CHAPTER I

CHANGES OF THE POPULATION AFTER THE DECLINE OF THE  
ROMAN EMPIRE. A. D. 540-1460

## SECT. I.

## OBSERVATIONS ON THE EARLY POPULATION OF GREECE

The fate of the Greeks, after the loss of their liberty, continues to supply us with lessons of political experience that are to be found in no other portion of the annals of the human race. The Roman conquest first compressed the Hellenic race into a distinct nation. That union was effected by the destruction of the local patriotism that gives its greatest charm to ancient history. Fortunately, it had been fully accomplished before Greece was invaded by the northern nations; for though the Greeks repulsed the Goths and Huns, they could not prevent the Slavonians from creeping silently into the most secluded valleys of their primeval seats.

Two leading facts form the basis of Greek history at the commencement of the Byzantine Empire: the diminution in the numbers of the Hellenic race, and the settlement of Slavonian colonies throughout Greece. The Byzantine writers inform us, that for several centuries the Slavonians formed the bulk of the population in ancient Hellas. The precise extent to which this Slavonian colonisation was carried has been the subject of warm discussion. One party still maintains that the present inhabitants of Greece are Byzantinised Slavonians; another upholds them to be the lineal descendants of the men who were conquered by the Romans. This latter party generally selects an earlier genealogical era, and talks only of a descent from the subjects of Leonidas and the fellow-citizens of Pericles. Both seem equally far from the truth. But nations affect antiquity of blood and nobility of race as much as individuals; and surely the Greeks, who have been so long deprived of glory in their immediate progenitors, may be pardoned for displaying a zealous eagerness to participate directly in the fame of a past world, with which they alone can claim any national connection. It is not, therefore, surprising that the work of Professor Fallmerayer, who attempted, with great ability, to prove that the Hellenic race in Europe was exterminated by the Slavonians, deeply wounded both Greek patriotism and Philhellenic enthusiasm.

Before reviewing the various immigrations into Greece during the middle ages, it is necessary to notice two questions connected with the population in earlier times which still admit of doubt and discussion. Their importance in determining the extent to which the bulk of the population may have been of mixed race during the classic ages is great. The one relates to the proportion in which the Pelasgi, or original inhabitants, combined with the agricultural classes of the Hellenic race; the other, to the numbers of

the slave population, and to the manner in which slavery declined and disappeared. A doubt arises whether the agricultural slaves were exterminated by the barbarian invaders of the Hellenic soil, or were absorbed into the mass of the Sclavonian or Byzantine population. These questions prove how uncertain all inquiries into the direct affiliation of whole nations must be. Of what value is the oldest genealogic tree, if a single generation be omitted in the middle? Whether the Greeks themselves were not a foreign tribe that intruded themselves on a race of which the Pelasgi were the principal branch, is a question that will probably always remain doubtful. Whether the Greeks exterminated this older race, as our own historians represent the Saxons to have exterminated the Britons, or mingled with them to form one people, like the Saxons and Normans, or whether the difference between the Greeks and Pelasgi was not so great as to exclude all consanguinity, are questions that belong to the realm of conjecture, not of history. As the two ablest modern historians of Greece, Grote and Thirlwall, adopt different views on the Pelasgic question, it may be considered as one that is not likely ever to be decided.

The question concerning the numbers of the slave population hardly admits of a more satisfactory answer. Liberated slaves certainly engrafted themselves into the native blood of Greece, to some extent, in Roman times; but it is difficult to ascertain what proportion of the freedmen that filled Greece were of foreign origin. Slavery was for many ages the principal agent of productive industry in Greece; the soil was cultivated by slaves, and all manufactured articles were produced by their labour. Throughout the whole country, they formed at least one-half of the population. Now, although the freedmen and descendants of liberated foreign slaves never formed as important an element in the higher classes of the population of Greece as they did of Rome, still they must have exerted a considerable influence on society. And here a question forces itself on the attention,—Whether the singular corruption which the Greek language has undergone, according to one unvarying type, in every land where it was spoken, from Syracuse to Trebizond, must not be, in great part, attributed to the infusion of foreign elements, which slavery introduced into Hellenic society in numberless streams, all flowing from a similar source. The Thracians and Sclavonians were for centuries to the slave-trade of the Greeks what the Georgians and Circassians have been for ages to the Mohammedan nations, and the Negroes of the African coast to the European colonies in America.

Whatever may have been the operation of these causes in adulterating the purity of the Hellenic race and the I Greek language, we know that they did not display any effect until about the middle of the sixth century of our era. At that time, the population of Greece presented all the external signs of a homogeneous people. In the third century, the Greek language was spoken by the rural population with as much purity as by the inhabitants of the towns, and even the ancient peculiarities of dialect were often preserved. Nor did the condition of the mass of the population, greatly as it was diminished, undergo any material change until after the time of Justinian; for the invasions of the Goths in the third and fourth centuries were temporary evils, that only caused a permanent decrease in the population in so far as they destroyed the productive powers of the country.

The causes that transformed the ancient Greeks of Justinian's age into the modern Greeks who inhabited the soil of Hellas in the time of the Crusaders, seem, on the whole, to have been internal rather than external. Foreign invaders had less to do

with the change than slavery, ignorance, and social degradation. Time alone might claim some share in the transformation; but time ought to be an improver in every well-constituted community; and the Orthodox Church, which exercised a very powerful social influence on the Greek race during the period in question, must be supposed to have counteracted the progress of corruption. Among an illiterate people like the Greeks of the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries, each successive generation alters the language of oral communication, by neglecting inflexions and disregarding grammatical rules. A corrupted pronunciation confounds orthography, and obscures the comprehension of the grammatical changes which words undergo. Indeed, the whole process of transforming the Hellenic language into the Romaic, or modern Greek dialect, seems to have arisen out of a long neglect of the rules of grammar and orthography; and the pronunciation, though corrupted in the confusion it makes of vowels and diphthongs, is evidently based on the ancient, from the tenacity with which it has preserved the Hellenic accentuation, after the disappearance of every trace of quantity. The modern language, with its inflexions correctly written, might easily be mistaken for a colloquial dialect of some ancient Greek colony, were it possible for a scholar unacquainted with the existence of the nation in modern times to meet with a Romaic translation of Thucydides. There is as much difference between the language of Homer and the New Testament, as between that of the New Testament and a modern Greek review. Greek and Arabic seem to be the two spoken languages that have suffered the smallest change in the lapse of ages. The inference is plain, that these are the nations which have admitted the smallest infusion of extraneous social elements, and been the least under foreign compulsion in modifying their habits and ideas; or else, that the ties of blood and race are weaker than those of civilization and religion, and literature and religion have created Arabs and Greeks out of Syrians or Ethiopians, and Slavonians or Albanians.

Christianity opened the way for a great change in the Hellenic people. The principles of the gospel worked simultaneously with the oppressive administration of the Roman government, in breaking down the barriers of caste and pride of race that, in the days of Hellenic liberty, kept the free citizens of each state separated from the strangers who frequented the exchange, and the slaves who laboured in the workshops, tilled the fields, or cultivated art or literature for profit in the city. The laws of Justinian blended all classes of citizens into one mass, and facilitated the acquisition of the boon of freedom by every Christian slave. The pride of the Hellenic race was stifled, and the Greeks for centuries were proud of the name of Romans, and eager to be ranked with the freedmen and manumitted slaves of the masters of the world. The Greek church grew up; and the Greek church was neither Greek nor Roman, but it created to itself a separate power under the name of Orthodox, which, by forming a partnership with the imperial authority, acquired a more energetic existence than any nationality could have conferred: it controlled the actions and the intellects of the Greeks with despotic power. A system of laws at variance with all the prejudices of ancient, private, and political life was framed, and the consequence was that a new people arose out of the change. Such seems to be the origin of the modern Greeks, a people which displays many appearances of homogeneity in character, though it is widely dispersed in various insulated districts, from Corfu to Trebizond, and from Philippopolis to Cyprus. But to what, extent the original Hellenic race was mixed and adulterated with slaves and foreigners, is not very clear from the great patent facts of history.

SECT. II  
DEPOPULATION OF GREECE UNDER THE ROMAN GOVERNMENT.  
CAUSES OF THE INTRODUCTION OF SCLAVONIAN SETTLERS

The depopulation of Greece under the Roman government, as well as the political oppression to which the people was exposed, and the social demoralization that was its consequence, force themselves on the attention. This depopulation was increased and perpetuated by the immense landed estates which accumulated in the hands of individual proprietors. The expense of maintaining good roads and other adjuncts of civilization, necessary for bringing agricultural produce to market, is greater in Greece than in most other countries; and it would be considered by proprietors of whole provinces as an unprofitable sacrifice. Their neglect consequently produced the abandonment of the cultivation of the soil in a great part of the country, and its conversion into pasture land. From provinces in this condition the Byzantine government often derived very little revenue, for the large proprietors found facilities of gaining exemption from taxation, and the impoverished condition of the farmers or colons rendered the tribute insignificant. The defence of a province so situated became a matter of no interest to the central power at Constantinople, and it was abandoned to the invaders without a struggle. In Greece, the great proprietors seem to have been left to defend themselves against the intrusion or invasion of the Sclavonian nomads without assistance, and the progress of the first Sclavonian colonists may have been facilitated by the numbers of agricultural slaves of Sclavonian race whom they found established in the country. The Sclavonian lands were the great slave marts of the age. Such was the internal state of preparation in Greece to encounter the enemy when the Sclavonians attacked the Byzantine Empire as a warlike and conquering race.

The earliest steps by which the Sclavonians colonised the Hellenic soil are unnoticed in history. Like the subsequent increase in the number of the Greeks which expelled or absorbed them, its very causes pass unrecorded, and the greater part of what we know is learned by inferences drawn from incidental notices connected with other facts. Strange to say, this remarkable revolution in the population of Greece excited very little attention among modern historians until recently; and the great vicissitudes that took place in the numbers of the Greek population of the Byzantine Empire in Europe, during different periods of the middle ages, is a subject which has not yet been carefully investigated.

The fabric of the ancient world was broken in pieces during the reign of Justinian, and Greece presented the spectacle of ruined cities and desolate fields. Procopius, in recording one of the great irruptions of the Hunnish armies, whose course was followed by Sclavonian auxiliaries and subjects, mentions that the barbarians passed the fortifications at Thermopylae, and spread their ravages over all the continent inhabited by the Greeks, as far as the isthmus of Corinth. This notice places the commencement of the hostile incursions of the Sclavonians into Greece as early as the year 540. But the colonization of great part of the Hellenic soil by a foreign race is a fact first noticed long after its occurrence, and whose extent is proved more

convincingly by its consequences than by the testimony of historians. In the adulatory work of Procopius on the buildings of Justinian, the conversion of a large part of Greece into pasture lands, by the repeated ravages of the barbarians, is incidentally revealed; and the necessity of constructing forts, for the protection of the population engaged in the regular agricultural operations of husbandry, is distinctly stated. The fourth book is filled with an enumeration of forts and castles constructed and repaired for no other object. The care, too, which the emperor devoted to fortifying the isthmus of Corinth, when he found that the greater part of the Peloponnesian cities were not in a state of defence, affords strong proof of the danger of an irruption of barbarous tribes, even into that secluded citadel of the Hellenic race. The particular mention of the fortifications necessary to protect the fertile land on the river Rhechios, in Macedonia, and the construction of the city of Kastoria, to replace the ruined Diocletianopolis, while they prove the desertion of great part of Chalcidice and Upper Macedonia by the ancient inhabitants, prepare us for finding these districts occupied by a new race of emigrants. Now, it is precisely in these districts that we find the Sclavonians first forming the mass of the inhabitants within the limits once occupied by the Hellenic race. In these cases of colonisation, as in many others afterwards, it is possible that the Sclavonians occupied their new settlements without any opposition on the part of the Roman government; and though their countrymen continued to ravage and depopulate the provinces of the empire as enemies, these peaceable settlers may have been allowed to retain their establishments as subjects and tributaries. It is certain that the Goths, and other Teutonic people who invaded the Eastern Empire, were nothing more than tribes of warriors, who, like the Dorians, the Romans, and the Ottoman Turks, became great nations from the extent of their conquests, not from their original numerical strength. But the Sclavonian race, on the contrary, had for ages formed the bulk of the population in the wide-extended territories that spread from the shores of the Adriatic to the sources of the Dnieper and the Volga. In a considerable portion of the countries in which they subsequently appear as conquerors, a kindred race seems to have cultivated the soil, even under the Roman government; but at what period the Sclavonians began to force themselves southward into the territories once occupied by the Illyrians and the Thracians, is a question of too much obscurity to be examined in this sketch.

The successive decline of the Roman, Gothic, and Hunnish empires, in the provinces along the Danube, allowed the hitherto subject Sclavonians to assume independence, and form themselves into warlike bands, in imitation of their masters. The warlike and agricultural Sclavonians from that time became as distinct as if they belonged to two different nations. A contrast soon arose in their state of civilization; and this, added to the immense extent, and disconnected and diversified form of the territory over which the Sclavonian race was scattered, prevented it from ever uniting, so as to form one empire. The Sclavonians always make their appearance in the history of Greece as small independent hordes, or as the subjects of the Huns, Avars, or Bulgarians, and never, except in the Illyrian provinces, form independent states, with a permanent political existence. Their ravages as enemies are recorded, their peaceful immigrations as friends and clients pass unnoticed. No inconsiderable part of those provinces of the Eastern Empire that were desolated by the repeated inroads of the northern nations were nevertheless re-peopled by Sclavonian colonists, who, often fearing to devote themselves to husbandry, lest they should invite fresh incursions, confined their attention to pasturing cattle, and adopted a nomadic life as the only method of securing their property. In this way they became, according to the

vicissitudes of the times, the serfs or the enemies of their Greek neighbours in the walled towns. It was a characteristic of the Slavonian colonists, in the Byzantine empire, for a long period, that they had an aversion to agriculture, and followed it only on a small scale, deriving their principal support from cattle. The great extent of the Slavonian colonies in Macedonia, at the end of the seventh century, is testified by the number that the Emperor Justinian II was able to transport into Asia. On one occasion, a colony of upwards of a hundred and fifty thousand souls was settled on the shores of the Hellespont, collected from the tribes established in Thrace and the neighbourhood of Thessalonica.

In order to understand correctly how far the diminution of the Greek and Roman races might proceed in the countries between the Adriatic and the Danube, while a numerous population of subject people continued to inhabit the country, it is only necessary to compare it with the rapid extinction of the Goths in Italy, and of the Vandals in Africa, about the same period. In the Cis-Danubian provinces, neither the Greek nor the Roman element appears to have impregnated the whole mass of the inhabitants and both peoples, were always in the position of dominant races—liable consequently to that incessant diminution that sooner or later inevitably destroys all privileged orders. The progress of depopulation in the Roman Empire is, however, attested from an earlier period by numerous laws, many of which prove the rapid diminution, in the members of the municipalities forcing the government to adopt regulations for the purpose of keeping every class of society in its own sphere and place. The steady diminution of the Greek race, from the time of Justinian I to that of Leo III the Isaurian, is testified by the whole history of the period; and it is evident that this diminution was more immediately dependent on political causes, connected with a vicious administration of the government, and on moral ones arising out of a corrupt state of society, than on the desolation produced by foreign invaders. The utter extermination of the Illyrian and Thracian nations may have been completed by the repeated ravages of the northern barbarians; but it could not have been effected unless these people had been weakened and decimated by bad administration and social degradation, otherwise their assailants could not have so outnumbered them as to effect their extermination. The same causes which operated in exterminating the Thracian and Illyrian races were at work on the Greek population, though operating with less violence. The maritime cities and principal towns, both in Thrace and Illyria, were in great part inhabited by Greeks; and from these the rural population was repulsed, as a hostile band, when it appeared before their walls in a state of poverty, in order to seek refuge and food during the ravages of the barbarians. The citizens, in such cases, had always so many drains on their resources, to which interest compelled them to attend, that humanity only extended to the circle of their immediate neighbours. But when the Slavonians colonised the wasted lands, the new population proved better able to protect themselves against the evils of war, from their previous rude habits of life, and from the artless method in which they pursued their agricultural occupations. The Slavonians, therefore, soon became the sole and permanent possessors of the greater part of the territories once inhabited by the Illyrians and the Thracians. For some centuries, the Slavonians seem to have advanced into the Hellenic territory in the same manner in which they had possessed themselves of the country to the north; but the circumstances were somewhat changed by the greater number of towns they met with, and by the comparatively flourishing condition maintained by that large portion of the Greek population engaged in commerce and manufactures under the Byzantine



government. Though the Slavonians occupied extensive territories in Greece without apparently encountering much serious opposition, still their progress was arrested at many points by a dense population, living under the protection of walled towns and imperial officers. It is, however, quite impossible to trace the progress of the Slavonians on the Hellenic soil in any detail; and we learn only from a casual notice that it is probable their first great hostile irruptions into the Peloponnesus were made under the shelter of the Avar power, towards the end of the sixth century. Whether any colonies had previously settled in the peninsula as agriculturists, or whether they at that time formed populous settlements in northern Greece, is a mere matter of conjecture. The passage of the ecclesiastical historian Evagrius, in which the Avar invasion of Greece is mentioned, has been the object of much criticism.

### SECT. III

#### THE SCLAVONIANS IN THE PELOPONNESUS

It will assist our means of estimating the true extent of the Slavonian colonization of Greece, and the influence they were enabled to exercise in the country, if we pass in review the principal historical notices that have been preserved relating to their settlements, particularly in the Peloponnesus, the citadel of the Hellenic population. The ravages by which the barbarians prepared the way for the Slavonians to colonize Greece as early as the reign of Justinian have been noticed. The cotemporary Byzantine historian, Menander, records that about the year 581 the Slavonians had acquired so great a degree of power that they ravaged Thrace with an army of their own amounting to a hundred thousand men, and extended their devastations into Greece. About this time they were in hostile collision with the Chagan of the Avars, to whom they had formerly paid tribute. Many Slavonian tribes, however, continued to be subject to the Avar power, and to furnish auxiliaries to their armies. A few years afterwards another cotemporary historian, Evagrius, notices an invasion of the Avars into Greece in the following words: "The Avars penetrated twice as far as the long wall of Thrace. Singidon, Auchialos, all Greece, and many cities and fortresses, were taken and plundered; everything was laid waste with fire and sword, for the greater part of the imperial army was stationed at the time in Asia." These words, unsupported by other evidence, would certainly not lead us to infer that any part of Greece had been then settled by either Avars or Slavonians, even were we assured that the Slavonians composed the bulk of the Avar army. But this careless mention of Greece, by Evagrius, in connection with the plundering incursions of the Avars, receives some historical value, and becomes united with the annals of the Slavonian colonies in the Peloponnesus, by a passage in a synodal letter of the Patriarch Nikolaos to the Emperor Alexius I. The Patriarch mentions that the Emperor Nicephorus I, about the year 807, raised Patras to the rank of a Metropolitan see, on account of the miraculous interposition of the apostle St Andrew in destroying the Avars who then besieged it. "These Avars," says the Patriarch, "had held possession of the Peloponnesus for two hundred and eighteen years, and had so completely separated it from the Byzantine Empire that no Byzantine official dared to put his foot in the country". The Patriarch thus dates the establishment of the Avars in the Peloponnesus from the year 589; and

the accurate conformity of his statement with the passage quoted from Evagrius, allows it to be inferred that he had some official record of the same invasion before his eyes, which recorded that the Avar invasion of Greece, mentioned by the ecclesiastical historian, extended into the Peloponnesus, and described its consequences in some detail. The circumstance that the Patriarch speaks of Avars, who in his time had been long extinct, instead of Slavonians, who, at the time he wrote, continued to form a considerable portion of the population of Greece, seems to prove his chronology to have been drawn from Byzantine official documents, and not from any local records concerning the Slavonian settlements in the Peloponnesus. The Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus, who is an earlier authority, differs from the Patriarch Nikolaos, and places the completion of the colonization of the Peloponnesus by the Slavonians in the year 746. At all events these foreigners, who had invaded the peninsula at some period between the years 589 and 746, were sufficiently numerous to attempt the conquest of Patras, and to form the project of expelling the Greeks from the Peloponnesus in the year 807. Indeed, they came so near success in the first part of their plan that Patras appeared to have been saved only by a miracle, and it was deemed necessary for St Andrew to take the field in person, as the champion and saviour of the Hellenic race. The Slavonians must undoubtedly have become dangerous enemies, both to the Greek population and the Byzantine government, before it was the general opinion that they could only be defeated by miraculous interpositions.

Some considerable change took place in the state of the Peloponnesus about the end of the sixth century, though we are in the dark concerning the nature and extent of the revolution. During the reign of the Emperor Maurice, A.D. 582-602, the episcopal see of Monemvasia was separated from the diocese of Corinth, and raised to the rank of a metropolitan. Now, as the metropolitan bishops were at this period important agents of the central government for the civil administration of the provinces, this change indicates a necessity of furnishing the Greek population of the south-western part of the Peloponnesus with a resident chief of the highest administrative authority; and we may conjecture that this became necessary in consequence of some new impediments having arisen, rendering the communications with Corinth rarer and more difficult than in preceding times.

In the period between the reigns of Justinian I and Heraclius, a considerable portion of Macedonia was entirely colonized by Slavonians, who aspired at rendering themselves masters of the whole country, and repeatedly attacked the city of Thessalonica. In the reign of Heraclius other warlike tribes of Slavonian race, from the Carpathian Mountains, were invited by the Emperor to settle in the countries between the Save and the Adriatic, on condition of defending these provinces against the Avars, and acknowledging the supremacy of the Byzantine government. By this treaty the last remains of the Illyrian race were either reduced to the condition of serfs, or forced southward into Epirus. This emigration of the free and warlike Slavonians, within the limits of the empire, as allies of the government, is of importance in elucidating the history of the Greeks. Though it is impossible to trace any direct communication between these Slavonians, and those settled in Greece and the Peloponnesus, it is evident, that the new political position which a kindred people had thus acquired must have exerted a considerable influence on the character and movements of all the Slavonian colonists in the Byzantine Empire

The country between the Haemus and the Danube was also conquered by the Bulgarians, under their chief Asparuch, about the year 678. The greater part of the territory subdued by the Bulgarians had already been occupied by Sclavonian emigrants, who appear to have exterminated the last remains of the old Thracian race. These Sclavonians were called the Seven Tribes; and the Bulgarians, who conquered the country and became the dominant race, were so few in number that they were gradually absorbed into the mass of the Sclavonian population. Though they gave their name to the country and language, the present Bulgarians are of Sclavonian origin, and the language they speak is a dialect of the Sclavonian tongue. A few years after the loss of Moesia, the Emperor Justinian II established numerous colonies of the Sclavonians who acknowledged the Byzantine sovereignty in the valley of Strymon, for the purpose of defending the possessions of the Greeks against the incursions of their independent countrymen on the frontiers.

In the early part of the eighth century, it seems that the greater part of the Peloponnesus was occupied by Sclavonians, for the peninsula was then regarded by European navigators as Sclavonian land. In the account of St Willibald's pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 723, it is laid that, after quitting Sicily and crossing the Adriatic Sea, he touched at the city of Manafasia (Monemvasia) in the Sclavonian land. The name of Sclavinia at times obtained a widely extended, and at times a very confined, geographical application. We find it used in reference to particular districts and cantons in Macedonia and Thrace, but it does not appear to have been permanently applied to any considerable province within the territories of ancient Greece.

It is thus proved by sufficient authority that the Sclavonians had settled in the Peloponnesus in numbers at the very commencement of the eighth century. The completion of the colonization of the whole country of Greece and the Peloponnesus—for such is the phrase of the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus—is dated by the imperial writer from the time of the great pestilence that depopulated the East in the year 746. The events, if really synchronous, could not have been very immediately connected as cause and effect. The city population must have suffered with more severity from this calamity than the rural districts; and it is mentioned by the chronicles of the time, that Constantinople, Monemvasia, and the islands of the Archipelago, were principal sufferers; and, moreover, that the capital was repopled by additional drafts from the population of Greece and the islands. Even in ordinary circumstances, it is well known that an uninterrupted stream of external population is always flowing into large cities, to replace the rapid consumption of human life caused by increased activity, forced celibacy, luxury and vice, in dense masses of mankind. According to the usual and regular operation of the laws of population, the effects of the plague ought to have been to stimulate an increase of the Greek population in the rural districts which they still retained; unless we are to conclude, from the words of Constantine, that after the time of the plague all the Greeks were in the habit of dwelling within the walls of fortified towns; and the country was thus entirely abandoned to the Sclavonians, whose colonies, already established in Greece, found by this means an opportunity of extending their settlements. The fact seems to be so stated by the imperial writer, who declares that at this time “all the country became Sclavonian, and was occupied by foreigners.” And in confirmation of the predominance of the Sclavonian population in the Peloponnesus, he mentions an anecdote which does not redound to the honour of his own family. A Peloponnesian noble named Niketas, the husband of a daughter of his

own wife's brother, was extremely proud of his nobility, not to call it, as the emperor sarcastically observes, his ignoble blood. As he was evidently a Sclavonian in face and figure, he was ridiculed by a celebrated Byzantine grammarian in a popular verse which celebrated his wily Sclavonian visage.

The Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus dates the completion of the Sclavonian colonization of Greece in the reign of Constantine V (Copronymus) and yet it is evident, from Byzantine history, that a mighty social revolution in the Greek race had commenced during the reign of his father Leo III, (the Isaurian) and that the people then began to awake reinvigorated from a long lethargy. From this period all the Sclavonians within the bounds of the empire, who attempted to display any signs of political independence, not only began to meet with a determined resistance, but were repeatedly attacked in the districts they had occupied. Still, it required all the energy of the Iconoclast emperors, men in general of heroic mould and iron vigour, to break the Sclavonian power, which had formed itself an independent existence in the northern provinces of the empire. This, however, they at last effected. The Sclavonian emigrants who had completed the occupation of Greece and the Peloponnesus, after the great plague, were not long allowed to enjoy tranquil possession of the country. In the year 783, the Empress Irene, who was an Athenian by birth, and consequently more deeply interested in the condition of the Greek population than her immediate predecessors, sent an army into Greece, to reduce all the Sclavonians who had assumed independence to immediate dependence on the imperial administration. This force marched into the Peloponnesus, ravaged the lands of the Sclavonians, carried off an immense booty and many prisoners, and compelled all the independent tribes to acknowledge themselves tributary to the Byzantine empire. In spite of this check, the Sclavonians continued numerous and powerful; and fifteen years later, one of their princes in northern Greece, who ruled a province called Veletzia, engaged in a dangerous conspiracy against the imperial government, which had for its object to raise the sons of Constantine V to the throne of Constantinople.

The conviction that their affairs were beginning to decline induced the Sclavonians of the Peloponnesus to make a desperate effort to render themselves masters of the whole peninsula. In the year 807, they made the attack on Patras which has been already alluded to. The siege of that city was the first step towards political independence. It seems that they counted on deriving some assistance in their undertaking from a Saracen fleet, which was to cooperate in the attack on Patras by cutting off all connection between the peninsula and the western coast of continental Greece. The Sclavonian military power does not appear to have been very formidable, for the Greeks of Patras were able to defeat the attack on their city, before any aid reached them from the Byzantine troops stationed at Corinth. The policy of the Byzantine government, which viewed with great jealousy every indication of martial spirit among the native Greek population, and every trace of the influence of local institutions, willingly attributed all the honour of the victory to St Andrew, rather than allow the people to perceive that they were able to defend their own rights and liberties, by means of their own courage and municipal authorities.

The results of a great change in the condition of the Greek race began to be manifest soon after this event. The privileged position of the citizen in Hellenic society had disappeared; and now citizen, alien, freedman and serf were melting into the mass that composed the Romaioi, or Greeks of the Byzantine Empire, called contemptuously

by the abbot confessor and historian Theophanes, Helladikoi. Society suffered a deterioration in the purity of the blood of its nobler parts, but the mass of the population rose considerably in the scale of humanity. The first great wave of that irresistible river of democracy, which has ever since floated society onward with its stream, then rolled over the Eastern Empire, and it flowed majestically and slowly forward, unnoticed by philosophers, unheeded by the people, and undreaded by statesmen and sovereigns. Unfortunately on this occasion, as on too many others, the waters were allowed to wash away the productive soil of local institutions, and to leave only a few great central rocks insufficient to overlook the wide expanse occupied by despotic authority. The barbarism of the Sclavonians placed them beyond the sphere of this social revolution, but it crushed them in its progress. The Greek race, composed of a more popular society than formerly, felt all the invigorating influence of the change. The uncultivated fields to be won from the Sclavonian tribes, were a paradise compared to the richest gardens tilled by the labour of slaves. As soon as the Greek population began to increase sensibly under the new impulse given to society, the necessity was felt of recovering possession of the districts which had been occupied by the Sclavonians for six generations. The progress of society made the Greeks the encroaching party, and their encroachments produced hostilities.

In the reign of the Emperor Theophilus, the Sclavonians of the Peloponnesus broke out in a general rebellion, and remained masters of the open country for some years, committing fearful devastation on the property of the Greeks. But when his widow, Theodora, governed the empire during the minority of her son, Michael III, A.D. 842-852, she sent an army to reduce them to obedience. This Byzantine force, commanded by Theoktistos the Protospatharias, does not appear to have encountered any very obstinate resistance on the part of the rebels. Two tribes—the Melings, who occupied the slopes of Taygetus, which had already received its modern name Pentadaktylon, and the Ezerits, who dwelt in the lower part of the valley of the Eurotas, about Helos, which the Sclavonians translated Ezero—had exterminated the last remnants of the Spartan, Laconian, and Helot races in these districts, and long enjoyed complete independence. They were rendered tributary by this expedition, and were compelled to submit to the authority of chiefs selected by the Byzantine government. The Melings in the mountain were ordered to pay an annual tribute of sixty go Byzants, and the Ezerits in the rich plain three hundred. The insignificance of these sums must be considered as proof that they were imposed merely as a sign of vassalage, and not as a financial burden. Under an administration so essentially fiscal as that of the court of Constantinople, the Sclavonian tribes must have been exposed to various modes of oppression. Rebellion was a natural consequence; and accordingly, in the reign of Romanos I, A.D. 920-944, we find them again in arms. Krinites Arotas, the Byzantine governor of the Peloponnesus, received orders to exterminate the Melings and Ezerits, who had distinguished themselves by their activity. After a campaign of nine months, in which he laid waste their territory, carried off their cattle, and enslaved their children, he at last granted them peace on their engaging to pay an increased tribute. The subjection of the mountaineers of Taygetus was on this occasion so complete that they were compelled to pay annually the sum of six hundred gold Byzants, and the tribute of the Ezerits was fixed at the same amount. The successor of Krinites embroiled the affairs of his province; and a Sclavonian tribe, called the Slavesians, invading the Peloponnesus, threatened the whole peninsula with ruin. The Melings and Ezerits, taking advantage of the troubles, sent a deputation to the Emperor Romanos to petition

for a reduction of their tribute; and the Byzantine government, fearing lest they should join the new band of invaders, consented to reduce the tribute to its first amount, and to concede to the tributaries the right of electing their own chiefs.

From this period the Melings and the Ezerits were governed by self-elected chiefs, who administered the affairs of these Sclavonian tribes according to their native laws and usages. In this condition they were found by the Franks, when they invaded the Peloponnesus at the commencement of the thirteenth century. In the time of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, the whole of Mount Taygetus and its counterforts was occupied by the Sclavonians. The only district that remained in the possession of the Greeks was the fortress of Maina. In that retired corner of Laconia, a small remnant of the Greek race survived, living in a state of isolation, poverty, and barbarism. So completely had they been separated from all connection with the rest of the nation, and secluded from the influence of the Greek Church, that the rural population around the fortress had remained pagans until the reign of Basil I the Macedonian, A.D. 867-886. In the reign of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, these Maniates paid to the imperial treasury an annual tribute of four hundred gold Byzants.

The epitomiser of Strabo, who lived not long before the commencement of the eleventh century, speaks of the Sclavonians as forming almost the entire population of Macedonia, Epirus, continental Greece, and the Peloponnesus. He mentions the coast of Elis in particular, as a district where all memory of the ancient Hellenic names, and consequently of the Greek language, was then forgotten; the population consisting entirely of Sclavonians, or as he calls them Scythians.

The Sclavonian tribes in Elis and Laconia were found by the Franks in a state of partial independence, A.D. 1205. They still preserved their own laws and language; and though they acknowledged the supremacy of the Byzantine government, they collected the tribute they were compelled to pay among themselves, and regulated their local administration by their own national usages. The Melings had become the dominant tribe in Laconia, and were masters of all Mount Taygetus; but the Greeks had expelled the Sclavonians from the greater part of the plain of Elis, and driven them back into the mountainous districts of Elis and Arcadia. The country they occupied was called Skorta, and extended from the ruins of Olympia to the sources of the Ladon, and to the great Arcadian plain. The importance of the Sclavonian population was still so great that the Franks, in order to facilitate their conquest of the Peloponnesus, induced the Melings and the Skortans to separate their cause from that of the Greek nation, by granting them separate terms of capitulation, and guaranteeing to them the full enjoyment of every privilege they had possessed under the Byzantine government. Though the numbers of the Sclavonians diminished, after the reconquest of the eastern part of the Frank principality by the Greek emperors, still several districts of the Peloponnesus, and especially the tribes of Mount Taygetus, as far as Cape Taenarus, are stated by Laonicus Chalcocondylas, an Athenian personally acquainted with the state of the country, to have preserved their manners and language until the time of the Turkish conquest in 1460.

We have thus undoubted proof, from Greek writers, that the Sclavonian language was spoken in great part of Greece for a period of seven hundred years.

## SECT. IV

## SCLAVONIAN NAMES IN THE GEOGRAPHICAL NOMENCLATURE OF GREECE

The only durable monument of the Sclavonian colonisation of Greece, that has survived the lapse of ages, exists in the geographical names which they imposed, and which have been adopted by the Greeks and Albanians, on their gaining possession of the countries once occupied by the Sclavonians. It is natural that every year should diminish the number of these names, were it only by the corruption of Sclavonian into Greek words of similar sound or import; and it is at present a subject of fierce contention, to decide what proportion of the modern geographical nomenclature of Greece is of Sclavonian origin. There is no doubt that for some centuries this proportion has been daily lessened; for we now find many Turkish and Albanian names in those districts which were the peculiar seats of the Sclavonian population. Many names, too, are triumphantly claimed by both parties, one party asserting that a word is unquestionably Sclavonian, and the other that it is undoubtedly Greek. None, however, can contest that there was a period when Sclavonian influence succeeded in changing the name of the peninsular citadel of the Hellenic race from Peloponnesus to Morea, and in effacing all memory of the ancient Hellenic names over the greater part of the country. Indeed, ancient Hellenic names are the exception, and have only been preserved in a few districts, about the immediate vicinity of the cities that preserved a Greek population.

It may not be uninteresting, in this place, to notice the historical facts relating to the name Morea; leaving the whole of the philological questions concerning the modern Greek geographical nomenclature, and the surnames of many of the inhabitants, to the sagacity of the learned, when party zeal and national prejudice shall have cooled sufficiently to admit of the subject being investigated with calmness and impartiality. It would seem from the pilgrimage of St Willibald, which has been already quoted, that in the eighth century the Morea was not the name generally applied to the Peloponnesus, or the writer would probably have used it, instead of calling it the country of the Sclavonians. Among the Greeks certainly it could never have come into use until the country fell under a foreign domination, for the Peloponnesus continued to be the official designation of the province down to the time of the Turkish conquest. The Morea must, therefore, have come into general use, as the name of the peninsula among the Greeks, after the Latin conquest, even allowing that the term was used among foreigners before the arrival of the Franks. When the Crusaders had rendered themselves masters of Greece; when the whole of the East was filled with the fleets of the Italian republics, and the Sclavonian sailors of Venice and Ragusa covered the Grecian seas, it is not surprising that foreign names should become common on the coasts of the Levant. The name Morea was, however, at first applied only to the western coast of the Peloponnesus, or perhaps more particularly to Elis, which the epitome of Strabo points out as a district exclusively Sclavonian, and which, to this day, preserves a number of Sclavonian names. When the Crusaders first landed, the term Morea was the denomination used to indicate the whole western coast; for Villehardoin, in his *Chronicle*, makes his nephew speak of coming to Nauplia from the Morea, when he came from Modon: and the *Chronicles of the French Conquest* repeatedly give the

name a circumscribed sense, referring it to the plain of Elis, though at other times applying it to the whole peninsula. Originally the word appears to be the same geographical denomination which the Sclavonians of the north had given to a mountain district of Thrace in the chain of Mount Rhodope. In the fourteenth century the name of this province is written by the Emperor Cantacuzenos, who must have been well acquainted with it personally, Morra. Even as late as the fourteenth century, the Morea is mentioned in official documents relating to the Frank principality as a province of the Peloponnesus, though the name was then commonly applied to the whole peninsula.

With regard to the proportion between the Greek and Sclavonian names scattered over the whole surface of the Peloponnesus at the present day, the authority of Colonel Leake may be quoted with some confidence, as one of the most competent judges on account of his philological and personal knowledge, and as by far the most impartial witness who has given an opinion on the subject. He thinks there are now ten names of Greek origin in the Morea for every one of Sclavonian. Still, the fact that a mighty revolution was effected in the population of Greece, during the period between the seventh and the tenth centuries, is unquestionable; and that the revolution swept away almost every trace of preceding ages from Greek society, and nearly every memory of Hellenic names from the geography of the country, is indubitable. The Jews of the present day hardly differ more from the Jews of the time of Solomon, and the Arabs of today certainly differ less from the contemporaries of Mahomet, than the modern Greeks from the fellow-citizens of Pericles. When the Greek race began to increase in the ninth century, and to recover possession of the country occupied by the Sclavonians, they gave Greek names to many of the places they regained; but these names were modern, and not the old Hellenic denominations, for the people were too ignorant to make any attempt to revive the ancient geographical nomenclature of the country. Where the Albanians settled, a considerable number of Albanian names are found—a circumstance which would hardly have been the case had the Albanian colonists entered a country possessing fixed Greek names; for the Albanians certainly entered Greece gradually, and in comparatively small numbers at a time, and, moreover, their geographical nomenclature is so circumscribed that the same names reoccur wherever they settled. Even within the single province of Attica, we find the same name repeated in the case of several villages. So complete was the dislocation of the ancient inhabitants of the Peloponnesus that traces of the Sclavonian language are found among the Tzakones, a race which is supposed to have preserved more of the primeval Greeks than the other inhabitants of the peninsula.

## SECT. V

### COLONIES OF ASIATIC RACE SETTLED BY THE BYZANTINE EMPERORS IN THRACE AND MACEDONIA

The emperors of Constantinople attempted to remedy the depopulation of their empire, which was forced on their attention by the spectacle of desolate provinces and uninhabited cities, by forming colonies on a scale that excites our wonder even in this



age of colonisation. We have seen that the Emperor Justinian II transported nearly two hundred thousand Slavonians to Asia on one occasion. His removal of the Mardaite population of Mount Lebanon was on the same extensive scale. Future emperors encouraged emigration to as great an extent. A colony of Persians was established on the banks of the Vardar (Axios) as early as the reign of Theophilus, (A.D. 829-842,) and it long continued to flourish and supply recruits for a cohort of the imperial guard, which bore the name of the Vardariots. Various colonies of the different Asiatic nations who penetrated into Europe from the north of the Black Sea in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries, were also established in Macedonia and Thrace. In the year 1065 a colony of Uzes was settled in Macedonia; and this settlement acquired so much importance that some of its chiefs rose to the rank of senators, and filled high official situations at Constantinople. Anna Comnena mentions colonies of Turks established in the neighbourhood of Achrída before the reign of her father, (A.D. 1081.) A colony of Patzinaks was settled in the western part of Macedonia by John II in the year 1123; and colonies of Romans were also established both in Macedonia and Thrace, after the empire had been depopulated by the Crusaders and Bulgarians, by John III (Vatatzes) in the year 1243. All these different nations were often included under the general name of Turks; and, indeed, most of them were descended from Turkish tribes.

## SECT. VI

### BULGARIANS AND VALLACHIANS IN GREECE

The wars of the Byzantine emperors with the Bulgarian kings, from the time of the establishment of the monarchy, in the latter half of the seventh century, to its destruction by the Emperor Basil II in the early part of the eleventh, form an important and bloody portion of the annals of the Byzantine Empire. The wars of the Bulgarians with the Carolingian monarchs give them also some degree of importance in Frank history. After they had adopted the language of their Slavonian subjects, and embraced Christianity, they extended their dominion southward over the Slavonian tribes settled in Mount Pindus, and encroached far within the limits of the Byzantine Empire. In the year 933, the Bulgarians first formed permanent settlements to the south of Macedonia, and intruded into the territories occupied by those Slavonians who had settled in Greece. In that year they rendered themselves masters of Nicopolis, and colonised the fertile plains on the Ambracian Gulf. After this they more than once ravaged Greece, and penetrated into the Peloponnesus. Their colonies, scattered about in southern Epirus, continued to exist after the conquest of the Bulgarian kingdom by Basil II, and the defeat of a body of Byzantine troops sent against them in the year 1040 by Petros Deleanos, enabled them to assume a temporary independence. The city of Nicopolis was soon reconquered by the Byzantine armies; but the Bulgarians long continued to form a distinct class of the population of southern Epirus, though the similarity of their language to that of the Slavonians led ultimately to their becoming confounded with the mass of the Slavonian colonists.

The second Bulgarian kingdom, formed by the rebellion of the Bulgarians and Vallachians south of the Danube against the Emperor Isaac II, in 1116, took place after

the complete extinction of the old Bulgarian language, and this kingdom seems really more of a Vallachian than a Bulgarian or Sclavonian state. The court language, at least, appears to have been Vallachian, and the monarchs to have affected to regard themselves as descendants of the Romans.

Amidst the innumerable emigrations of different races, which characterise the history of Eastern Europe from the decline of the Roman empire to the conquest of Constantinople by the Ottoman Turks, the Vallachians formed to themselves a national existence and a peculiar language, in the seats they still occupy, by amalgamating a portion of the Dacian, Roman, and Sclavonian population of the country into one people. That they grew out of the Roman colonies, which spread the language and civilization of Italy in these regions, is generally admitted. They make their appearance in Byzantine history as inhabiting an immense tract of country, stretching in an irregular form from the banks of the Theis, in Hungary, to those of the Dniester, and from the Carpathian Mountains to the southern counterforts of the chain of Pindus, bordering the Thessalian plain. But in this great extent of country, they were mingled with other races in a manner that makes it extremely difficult for us to know which was the most numerous portion of the population at different epochs.

As early as the eleventh century, the Vallachian race had descended into the plains of Thessaly, and dwelt in several towns. In the twelfth, they had become the masters of a considerable part of the country, which had already acquired from their occupancy the name of Great Vallachia. The close affinity of their language to Latin is observed at this period by the Byzantine historian, John Kinnamos. Benjamin of Tudela, the famous Jew traveller, who visited Greece about the year 1161, records the great extent of their territorial possessions in Thessaly, and the independent position they held with regard to the imperial authorities. These Vallachians may have been descendants of a population introduced by the Emperor Basil II, to repeople the country which had been depopulated by his bloody war with the Bulgaro-Sclavonian monarchy of Achrida, recruited by new colonies from beyond the Danube, or increased by a natural augmentation arising out of the favourable circumstances in which they were placed in this peculiar locality. They seem, at all events, to have completely expelled the original Greek inhabitants within the limits of their dominions. Benjamin places the southern limit of Great Vallachia near Zeitouni. "Here are the confines of Vallachia, a country the inhabitants of which are called Vlachi. They are as nimble as deer, and descend from the mountains into the plains of Greece, committing robberies and making booty. Nobody ventures to make war upon them, nor can any king bring them to submission; and they do not profess the Christian faith. Their names are of Jewish origin, and some even say they have been Jews, which nation they call brethren. Whenever they meet an Israelite, they rob, but never kill him as they do the Greeks. They profess no religious creed". This account is evidently not to be relied on as authentic information, for the Vallachians, were undoubtedly Christians; and Benjamin felt naturally very little desire to form a personal acquaintance with people who were in the habit of robbing Jews, even though they murdered Greeks, and were named Daniel. He only reports the information he had picked up in the neighbouring Greek towns from Jews, who may have suffered from the plundering propensities of these nimble-footed brethren of Israel. This district long continued to bear the name of Vallachia or Vlaskia, both among the Greeks and the Frank conquerors of Greece.

A body of Vallachian population still exists in the mountains of southern Epirus and Thessaly. They are found in the upper valley of the Aspropotamos (Achelous) about Malakasa, Metzovo, and Zagora, in the districts of Neopatras and Karpenisi, and in the country about Moskopolis, twelve hours' journey to the east of Berat. Their whole number, however, in all these districts, does not appear to exceed 50,000 souls.

## SECT. VII.

### ALBANIAN COLONIES IN GREECE

The Albanian or Skipetar race, which at present occupies more than one quarter of the surface of the recently constituted kingdom of Greece, first makes its appearance in Byzantine history in the year 1079, as forming part of the army of the rebel Nicephorus Vasilakes, when he assumed the imperial title. The Albanians were then, as now, the inhabitants of the mountains near Dyrrachium. The existence of the Albanian name in these regions dates from a far earlier period. Albanopolis, which is the principal town of the northern district, bore that name in the time of Ptolemy, and continued to retain it under the Byzantine government. The Turks have corrupted the word in Elbassan. Reasonable doubts may nevertheless be entertained, whether the Albanians of the present day have any greater resemblance to the Albanians of the time of Ptolemy, than the Britons of the present day have to the Britons of the time of Caesar.

The history of no European race is more obscure than that of the Albanian, for it is impossible to fix with certainty whether they are the descendants of some ancient people, Epirots or Macedonians, or a new nation, formed, like the French and English, from an admixture of more than one dissimilar race. The basis of their language seems to indicate a closer affinity to the Latin than to the Greek, but whether their language be a corruption of the Pelasgic, or of one of the ancient dialects of Epirus, Macedonia, Illyria, or Thrace, or a tongue framed like our own, by foreign emigrants, requires to be determined by a more critical study of its elements than has hitherto been bestowed on the subject. It may then, perhaps, be determined whether the Skipetar race is entitled to boast of a descent from the mountaineers of Epirus, or whether it consists of northern tribes, forced into the seats they now occupy by the great emigrations that marked the fall of the Roman Empire.

Anna Comnena mentions the Albanians more than once. She indicates that they had acquired some political importance, though in her time they do not appear to have occupied a very extensive territory. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries they are mentioned by more than one Byzantine writer. Pachymeres and Nicephorus Gregoras call them Illyrians, but Chalcocondylas objects to that name, and thinks they were rather of Macedonian descent. In the fourteenth century they had rendered themselves masters of a considerable extent of territory in Acarnania, Epirus, Thessaly, and Macedonia, and their colonies began to be established in the Peloponnesus. But they first made their appearance in the peninsula at mercenary troops in the service of the Greek despots of Misithra, and shortly after they were settled in great numbers as colonists on the waste lands in the province. During the half century immediately preceding the conquest of the Morea by the Turks, the Albanian population more than once assumed a prominent

part in public affairs, and at one time they conceived the project of expelling the Greeks themselves from the Morea.

The Albanian population of the Greek kingdom amounts to about 200,000 souls, and the whole race in Europe is not supposed to number more than a million and a quarter. In continental Greece they occupy the whole of Attica and Megaris, with the exception of the capitals,—the greater part of Boeotia, and a portion of Locris. In the islands they possess the southern part of the island of Euboea, and about one-third of Andros; while the whole of the islands of Salamis, Poros, Hydra, and Spetza are exclusively peopled by a pure Albanian race, as well as a part of Aegina and the small island of Anghistri in its vicinity. In the Peloponnesus, they compose the bulk of the population in Argolis, Corinthia, and Sicyonia, and they occupy considerable districts in Arcadia, Laconia, Messenia, and Elis. In all this great extent of territory the prevailing language is Albanian; and in many parts Greek is only spoken by the men, and very imperfectly, if at all, understood by the women. The soldiers of Suli and the sailors of Hydra, the bravest warriors and most skillful mariners in the late struggle of Greece to regain her independence, were of the purest Albanian race, unaltered by any mixture of Hellenic blood.

## SECT. VIII

### TZAKONES OR LACONES

Of all the inhabitants who now dwell on the Hellenic soil, the Tzakones, or Laconians—for the two words are identical—seem to possess the best title to connect their genealogy with their geographical locality. Part of the country conquered by the Spartans was always peopled by a race that differed from the Dorian. When the Crusaders invaded Greece, they found the Tzakones occupying a much wider extent of country than they do at present. They are first mentioned by Constantine Porphyrogenitus as troops employed in garrison duty. Nicephorus Gregoras mentions them as furnishing a body of mariners to the imperial fleets in the time of the Emperor Michael VIII. Pachymeres notices that they visited Constantinople in such numbers as to form a Tzakonian colony in the city with their families, while the men served on board the fleet. *The Chronicle of the Conquest of the Morea by the Franks*, which appears to have been written towards the latter part of the fourteenth century, repeatedly mentions Tzakonia and its inhabitants as distinct from the rest of the Peloponnesus. In the fifteenth century Mazaris, in enumerating the various races then inhabiting the peninsula, places the Lakones or Tzakones first in his list. He then passes to the Italians, for, at the time he wrote, they were masters of the principality of Achaia. The Peloponnesians, or modern Greeks, appear only as third in his list. Crusius informs us that in the year 1573 the Tzakones inhabited fourteen villages between Monemvasia and Nauplia, and spoke a dialect different from the other Greeks. They now occupy only seven villages, and the whole population does not exceed fifteen hundred families, of whom nearly one thousand are collected in the town of Lenidhi.

The language of the Tzakones is marked by many peculiarities; but whether it be a relic of the dialect of the Kynourians, who, Herodotus informs us, were, like the

Arcadians, original inhabitants of the Peloponnesus, and consequently of the Pelasgic race, or of the Laconians called Oreatae—whose traditions, according to Pausanias, were different from those of the other Greeks—seems to be a question that admits of great doubt. While the rest of the modern Greeks, from Corfu to Trebizond, speak a language marked by the same grammatical corruptions in the most distant lands, the Tzakones alone retain grammatical forms of a distinct nature, and which prove that their dialect has been framed on a different type. It cannot, therefore, be doubted that they have a strong claim to be regarded as the most direct descendants of the ancient inhabitants of the Peloponnesus that now exist; and whatever may be the doubts of the learned concerning their ancestors, these very doubts establish a better claim to direct descent from the ancient inhabitants of the province they occupy, than can be pleaded by the rest of the modern Greeks, whose constant intercommunications have assimilated their dialects, and melted them into one language.

The district of Maina has frequently been supposed to have served as an inviolable retreat to the remains of the Laconian race; but the inhabitants of Maina have lost all memory of the very names of Laconia and of Sparta: they have adopted a foreign designation for their country and their tribe. Part of the district they now inhabit abounds in Slavonian names of localities, and their language does not vary more than several other dialects from the ordinary standard of modern Greek. On the other hand, the people of the eastern mountain range of Laconia have only corrupted the pronunciation of the name of their country by the modification in the sound of a single letter, Zakonia for Lakonia, and their language bears the impression of a more ancient type than any modern Greek dialect.

## SECTION IX

### SUMMARY

At the time Greece was conquered by the Ottoman Turks, it was inhabited by six different nations as cultivators of the soil. All these different people, consequently, formed permanent elements of the population, for the true test of national colonization is the cultivation of the soil by the settlers. It is the only way in which a nursery of the colony can be created. These national races were—the Greeks, who had then become the most numerous portion of the population both in the Peloponnesus and the continent; the Tzakones, who, though like the other Greeks they are the representatives of a Greek race, must still be considered a distinct people, since they speak a language unintelligible to the modern Greeks; the Slavonians, the Bulgarians, the Vallachians, and the Albanians. The whole civilization and literature of the country were in the hands of the Greeks, and whatever the others learned, it was from them the knowledge was acquired. Greek priests were the teachers of religion to all, and the rulers of the church that guided every inhabitant of the land. The Frank races and the Latin Church, though enjoying great power and wealth for two centuries and a half, were unable to destroy this influence, and were always regarded as strangers on the Hellenic soil. Nevertheless, we have seen that the traditions of ancient Hellas were so completely forgotten by the modern population, that the ancient geographical nomenclature of the country had

disappeared. The mountain-peaks visible to cultivators from valleys that rarely communicated with one another, and the rivers that fertilised distant plains, though their names must have been in daily use by thousands of tongues, lost their ancient names and received strange designations, which became as universally known as those which they supplanted. Yet in some continental districts, and in most of the islands, we find Hellenic names still preserved, so that this very circumstance of their partial preservation is used as an argument for the complete extinction of the Hellenic race in those districts where Hellenic names have been utterly effaced. Numerous names, unquestionably of foreign origin, are scattered over the surface of the country, and many Greek names in use are derived from circumstances that attest the establishment of foreign colonists in the country. It must, however, be observed, that this change from Hellenic to modern Greek appears almost as complete in some portions of Greece into which we have no evidence that the Slavonians ever penetrated, as in the heart of the Peloponnesus, where for ages they lived in a state of semi-independence. In Euboea, the change is almost as great as in the Morrha of Elis. By what process, therefore, the ancient Hellenic population were melted into Byzantine Greeks—or, as they long called themselves, Romans—may therefore, by many, be considered as an unsolved problem.

The vicissitudes which the great masses of the nations of the earth have undergone in past ages have hitherto received very little attention from historians, who have adorned their pages with the records of kings, and the personal exploits of princes and great men, or attached their narrative to the fortunes of the dominant classes, without noticing the fate of the people. History, however, continually repeats the lesson that power, numbers, and the highest civilization of an aristocracy, are, even when united, insufficient to insure national prosperity, and establish the power of the rulers on so firm and permanent a basis as shall guarantee the dominant class from annihilation. On the other hand, it teaches us that conquered tribes, destitute of all these advantages, may continue to perpetuate their existence in misery and contempt. It is that portion only of mankind which eats bread raised from the soil by the sweat of its brow, that can form the basis of a permanent national existence. The history of the Romans and of the Jews illustrates these facts. Yet even the cultivation of the soil cannot always insure a race from destruction, “for mutability is nature’s bane”. The Thracian race has disappeared. The great Celtic race has dwindled away, and seems hastening to complete absorption in the Anglo-Saxon. The Hellenic race, whose colonies extended from Marseille to Bactria, and from the Cimmerian Bosphorus to the coast of Cyrenaica, has become extinct in many countries where it once formed the bulk of the population, as in Magna Graecia and Sicily. On the other hand, mixed races have arisen, and, like the Albanians and Vallachians, have intruded themselves into the ancient seats of the Hellenes. But these revolutions and changes in the population of the globe imply no degradation of mankind, as some writers appear to think, for the Romans and the English afford examples that mixed races may attain as high a degree of physical power and mental superiority as has ever been reached by races of the purest blood in ancient or modern times.

CHAPTER II  
CAUSES OF HOSTILE FEELINGS BETWEEN THE BYZANTINE GREEKS  
AND THE WESTERN EUROPEAN NATIONS

SECT. I  
POLITICAL CONDITION OF THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE

The Byzantine Empire was brought into direct collision with the western Europeans towards the end of the eleventh century. As the representative of the Roman empire, it counted a longer political existence, free from radical revolution, than had ever been attained by any preceding government. Alexius V, whom the Crusaders hurled from the summit of the Theodosian column, was the lineal political representative of Constantine and Augustus.

The wide extent of territory over which the Greek race was dispersed, joined to its national tenacity of character, and the organisation of the Eastern Church, enabled the Roman administration in the Eastern Empire to quell the military anarchy that rendered the western provinces a prey to rebellious mercenaries and foreign invaders. The Goths, Huns, Avars, Persians, Saracens, and Bulgarians, in spite of their repeated victories, were all ultimately defeated. When Constantinople was apparently on the point of yielding to the united assaults of the Avars and Persians in the reign of Heraclius, the empire rose suddenly as if from inevitable ruin, and the imperial arms reaped a rich harvest of glory. Again, when assailed by the invincible Saracens in the first fervour of their religious enthusiasm, the administrative organisation of imperial Rome arrested the progress of their armies under the walls of Constantinople, and gradually rolled back the tide of conquest till Mount Taurus became the barrier of the empire. The Byzantine armies had stopped the full force of the torrent before Charles Martel encountered one of its minor rills. At a later period the Bulgarian kingdom was destroyed, and many of the lost provinces in Europe recovered, so that the Danube, in the eleventh century, became again the frontier of the Eastern Empire. Age succeeded age without witnessing any sensible decline in the fabric of this mighty empire; and while the successors of Haroun al Rashid and Charlemagne were humbled in the dust, and their power became as completely a vision of the past as the power of Alaric and Attila, the Byzantine government still displayed the vigour and energy of mature age.

The great concentration of power systematically exercised in the hands of the emperor, the necessity imposed by the organisation of the government of selecting Emperors of talent, the systematic form of the administration, the regular and scientific dispensation of justice, the subservient position of the Greek church, some remains of the municipal and local institutions of the population, and the tenacity of national habits in the Greek race—all exerted their influence in maintaining the longevity of the

Eastern Empire. The relations of these various elements to one another were, of course, like all things human, constantly undergoing change. The troubled government of the Iconoclast dynasties presents the imperial power striving to subject the church to the state, and to make the central government absolute in the local administrations. History boasts that the Iconoclasts failed to impose their pure religious forms of worship on their subjects, but it overlooks the fact that their policy was successful in as far as it subjected the church to the state, and annihilated the political importance of local institutions. The legislative and administrative system of the Basilian family consolidated the despotism planned by the Iconoclasts. Extensive reforms were effected in every branch of the government, and their fruits are visible in the vigorous administration which for a century and a half characterises the Byzantine annals. The warriors, the statesmen, and the legists of this period are worthy of a higher place in the world's history than they have attained; but their personal renown is obscured, and their individuality lost, in the monotonous movements of a mighty administrative machine, which shows its own power sufficient to command results that even valour and wisdom are sometimes incompetent to secure.

Yet even at the time the Byzantine empire exhibited the most striking evidence of its power, we perceive many marks of internal weakness. There was no popular energy in the inhabitants directed to their own improvement. But to solve the contradictions in the political and social condition of the Byzantine empire would require a review of the moral as well as the political civilisation of its varied population, extending far beyond the strict limits of historical research, into the field of analogy and conjecture. Some of the antagonistic principles at work in the Byzantine society must, however, be noticed. The government, the church, and the people were all three, for a long period, in constant opposition; their material interests were so different, that no tie of common faith or national feeling could incorporate them into one body. The Emperor as head of the administration, and the Patriarch as chief of the clergy, frequently acted in direct opposition to the interests and feelings of the Greek nation. Yet the want of all popular municipal organisation emanating directly from, and responsible to the people, prevented the Greeks from creating within themselves the moral power of public opinion, and hindered them from attaining definite practical views concerning the improvement of their condition. Local prejudices, growing out of restricted communications, produced a blind selfishness that nourished rivalry and hatred in the servile communities that were allowed to exist.

The Byzantine empire in the middle of the eleventh century embraced the richest and most civilised portion of the world; both in extent and population, it greatly surpassed any other European state. The Danube served as its northern boundary, but it included under its power the southern part of the Crimea. With the exception of Bosnia, it embraced all Turkey in Europe, Greece, and the Ionian Islands. In Asia its eastern frontier commenced on the shores of the Black Sea, beyond the mouth of the Phasis, and passing below the mighty peaks of the Iberian and Armenian mountains, by the summits of Ararat and the shores of the lake of van, it descended to the plains of Mesopotamia, gained the banks of the Euphrates, and joined the Mediterranean at the northern slopes of Mount Lebanon, including within its limits the populous city of Antioch and the rich island of Cyprus.

In judging the Byzantine government according to modern ideas, it is often necessary to regard the change of emperors and dynasties as something nearly



equivalent to a change of ministers and parties. The imperial power was generally not more endangered by the murder of an emperor, than the monarchical principle by a change of ministers. Revolutions at Constantinople assumed the character of supreme criminal tribunals, and pretended to punish national crimes. Society had not then learned to frame measures for guarding against abuses of the executive power, and it had sense enough to perceive that this power must be invested in government without direct control. The theory that the emperor concentrated in his person the whole legislative, as well as the executive power, was universally admitted; yet the people regarded his authority as a legal and constitutional sovereignty, and not an arbitrary sway, for he presented himself to their minds as a pledge for the impartial administration of that admirable system of law which regulated their civil rights. The emperors, however, claimed to be the selected agents of divine power, and to be placed above those laws which they could make and annul. Yet, absolute as their servants in the state and their flatterers in the church proclaimed them, many enlightened men repeated the truth that they were restrained in the exercise of their power by the promulgated laws of the empire, by the fixed order of the administration, by the immemorial privileges of the clergy, and by the established usages of local communities; and each successive emperor, at his coronation, was compelled to subscribe his submission to the decrees of the general councils and the canons of the Orthodox Church. Thus the regular administration of justice by fixed tribunals according to immutable rules of law, the order of the civil government based on well-defined arrangements, the limits on financial oppression by established usages, the restraint of military violence by systematic discipline, and the immunities secured by ecclesiastical privileges and local rights, became parts of the Byzantine constitution, and were guaranteed by the murder of emperors, and by those revolutions and rebellions which the absence of hereditary right to the throne made so frequent. Strictly speaking, it is true that the state consisted only of the imperial administration, of which the emperor was the absolute master. The rights of the people were comprised in the duty of supporting the state of political franchises, as members of the state, they were in theory utterly destitute. The power of rebellion was the guarantee against oppression.

No state ever possessed such a long succession of able rulers, competent to direct all branches of the administration, as the Byzantine Empire. The talents of the emperors, as well as the systematic order of the administration, held together their extensive dominions long after the tendencies of medieval society urged the provinces to separate. It was a constant object of the imperial attention to prevent too great an accumulation of power in the hands of any single official, and yet it was absolutely necessary to intrust the provincial governors with great authority, for they were called upon incessantly to resist foreign invaders and to quell internal insurrections. Never did sovereigns perform their complicated duties with such profound ability as the Byzantine emperors. No mayors of the palace ever circumscribed their power; nor were they reduced to be the slaves of their mercenaries, like the Caliphs of Bagdad.

When the Byzantine empire came in contact with the western nations, its military forces were strong and well disciplined, its navy numerous, its artillery, and the mechanical adjuncts of war, were very far superior to those possessed by the early Crusaders. But a great change took place in the position of the Greeks and Franks, before the commencement of the thirteenth century. In the interval between the first and fourth crusades, the navy of the Italian republics grew to be more powerful than that of

the Byzantine emperors, and the whole energies of feudal Europe were devoted to the study of the military art, as well as to its practice; while, after the death of Manuel I, the resources of the Byzantine empire were allowed to fall to decay, or were wasted by the incapacity and infatuation of the two brothers Isaac II and Alexius III.

The Byzantine army was organised to prevent its being able to dispose of the throne, as well as to make it efficient in defending the empire. The troops raised from the native provinces were formed into themes, or legions, of a thousand men. These themes were placed in permanent garrisons throughout the provinces, like the ancient legions. The most celebrated of the European themes were the Thracian, Macedonian, and Illyrian, whose ranks were filled with Slavonian, Vallachian, Bulgarian, and Albanian mountaineers. But the most esteemed portion of the Byzantine army consisted of standing corps of foreign mercenaries and federate soldiers. These last were recruited among the rude population of some districts, whose poverty was so great that they were unable to bear the burden of direct taxation; but they willingly supplied the emperor with a fixed contingent of recruits annually. The mercenaries consisted of Russian, Frank, Norwegian, Danish, and Anglo-Saxon volunteers. The Varangians, who about this time began to rank as the leading corps of the imperial guards, consisted of Anglo-Saxons and Danes.

The financial administration seems to have been the most complex and important branch of the public service. The emperors always reserved to themselves the immediate direction of this department. In civilised states, the finances must form the life of the government; and the emperors, feeling this, acted generally as their own first lords of the treasury, to borrow modern phraseology. One fact may be cited, which will give a better idea of the financial wisdom of the Byzantine emperors than any detail of the administrative forms they employed. From the extinction of the Western Roman Empire in 476, to the conquest of Constantinople by the Crusaders in 1204, the gold coinage of the empire was maintained constantly of the same weight and standard. The concave gold byzants of Isaac II are precisely of the same weight and value as the solidus of Leo the Great and Zeno the Isaurian. Gold was the circulating medium of the empire, and the purity of the Byzantine coinage rendered it for many centuries the only gold currency that circulated in Europe. In England, Sweden, and Russia, the byzant of Constantinople long enjoyed the same superiority as is now conceded to the British Funds. The few emperors who ventured to adulterate the coinage have been stigmatised by history, and their successors immediately restored the ancient standard. But the Byzantine financial system, though constructed with great scientific skill, was so rapacious that it appropriated to government almost the whole annual surplus of the people's industry, and thus deprived the population of the power of increasing their stock of wealth, and kept them on the verge of ruin from every accidental catastrophe.

## SECT. II.

### SOCIAL CONDITION OF THE GREEKS IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY

There is no more remarkable feature in the history of the Greek race than the constant opposition of its various communities to a close political union; yet the

portions of this singular people which were the most widely separated from the parent stock retained so great a similarity of habits, manners, and feelings, that they were instantly identified as one nation by all foreigners. This fact exemplifies the power of family education, which can to a considerable extent nullify the administrative despotism of sovereigns and legislators. Before the Demos rose into power, the family was the great element of Greek social organisation; and when the oppression of the Romans had extinguished the vitality of Demotic institutions, the family again resumed its social power. The destruction of municipal institutions by the emperors extinguished all patriotic feeling, and made selfishness the prominent social result of family education and prejudices.

But the greatest injury inflicted on the Greeks by the abolition of their municipalities by Leo VI (the Learned) was that the aqueducts, public buildings, schools, sewers, and sanitary police, were neglected by the deputed agents of the central government, in order to appropriate the money to purposes more gratifying to the pride of the emperor and the views of the ministers at the capital. The people lost all control over the conduct of their immediate rulers and their own immediate interests. The local magistrates, no longer selected by the will of the people, lost their former importance as conservators of the existing order of society, and became, according to circumstances, the servile agents of superior authority, or the tumultuous organs of a rebellious populace.

In the twelfth century the population of Greece was composed of many discordant elements, besides the difference of races who peopled the country. The city population was naturally liable to the ordinary vicissitudes of commercial and manufacturing industry; its prosperity and its numbers rose and fell with the accidents of trade and the events of war. But the agricultural population perpetuated its existence almost in a stationary condition: generation followed generation, treading in the same footsteps as their forefathers; family replaced family, cultivating the same field, paying the same burdens, and consuming the same proportion of the earth's fruits, without adding to the annual amount of the earth's produce. Each century brought its own measure of decay, but no era of improvement appeared. The distinction of rich and poor became the only recognised division of the people, and this division made its way into the administration as a legislative classification. The emperor was compelled to pass laws to protect the poorer class of landed proprietors from the encroachments of their wealthier neighbours. The middle class had always a tendency to diminish, from being more exposed than the others to fiscal oppression. Its members had not the influence necessary to make their complaints heard, or to get their interests considered, by the central authorities, while their property prevented all attempts at emigration. The decay of roads, bridges, aqueducts, ports, and quays caused a difficulty in the sale of agricultural produce, and made labour lose its value too rapidly, in the distant provinces, for any laws promulgated by the central government to arrest the accumulation of landed property in the hands of the rich. One of the social evils of old Roman society again demoralised the civilised world. A considerable portion of the empire was cultivated by Colons, who formed the bulk of the agricultural population on the extensive possessions of the rich. Like the serfs of the west, these colons were attached to the estates on which they were born, and even the proprietor could not expel them, nor transfer them to labour in any other place. They belonged to the land, not to the individual, and paid a fixed portion of the fruits of the soil as rent to the proprietor. As

long as this sum was regularly paid, they enjoyed very nearly the same position as the poor freemen. The colons formed a very important part of the population of the Byzantine Empire in the eyes of the treasury. The imperial revenues were so largely drawn from agriculture that the Byzantine legislation is filled with provision for their protection against their landlords, and with restrictions for fixing them irrevocably as tillers of the soils, in order to prevent any diminution in the production of those articles from which the state revenues were principally derived. They were protected against the avarice of the proprietor, who might wish to render them more profitable to himself, by employing their labour in manufactures. But the colons were prevented from acquiring the rights of freemen, lest they should abandon the cultivation of the land, and seek refuge in the cities, where labour was better paid.

A considerable number of free labourers existed in Greece, who were employed at a high rate of wages during short periods of the year by the citizens, to cultivate the olive grounds, vineyards, and orchards in the immediate vicinity of the towns. As the number of towns throughout the continent and islands of Greece was still comparatively great, the existence of this class of poor freemen had a considerable influence on the social condition of the Greek people, and must not be overlooked in the political history of the Byzantine Empire at the time of its conquest by the Crusaders.

There is one social feature in the Byzantine Empire which gives it a noble pre-eminence in European history, and contrasts it in a favourable light with the other governments in the middle ages, not excepting that of the Popes. The Emperors of Constantinople were the first sovereigns who regarded slavery as a disgrace to mankind, and a misfortune to the state in which it existed. A knowledge of the writings of the New Testament, and an acquaintance with the principles of Christianity, were far more generally diffused among the Greeks in what are called the dark ages than they have been in many western nations, in what are supposed to be more civilised times. Justinian I, in the sixth century, proclaimed it to be the glory of the Emperor to accelerate the emancipation of slaves; and Alexius I, in the eleventh, gave the most favourable interpretation to the claims of those who sought to establish their personal liberty. The clergy were ordered to celebrate the marriage of slaves, and if their masters attempted to deprive them of the nuptial benediction and of the rights of Christianity, then the slaves were to be proclaimed free. Alexius I declares that human society and laws have divided mankind into freemen and slaves; but, though the existing state of things must of necessity continue, it ought to be remembered that in the eye of God all men are equal, and that there is one Lord of all, and one faith in baptism for the slave as for the master.

The law had long prohibited freemen from selling themselves as slaves, and punished both the buyer and the seller. Slaves were allowed to enter the army, and by so doing, if they obtained the consent of their masters, they acquired their freedom. They were allowed to become ecclesiastics with the consent of their masters. Agricultural slavery was evidently verging towards extinction. The facilities that circumstances afforded to rural slaves for escaping into the Sclavonian and Bulgarian settlements, rendered it impossible to compel the slave to submit to as great privations as the colons, and his labour consequently became too expensive to be advantageously devoted to raising agricultural produce. Agricultural slavery could only be perpetuated with profit on those small and productive properties in the immediate vicinity of towns where free labour was dear, and where there was a great saving in the expense of transport.

Domestic slavery continued; but as domestic slavery can only be maintained under circumstances which would call for the employment of an equal number of hired menials, the numbers of such slaves, and their social influence, is not very different from that of domestic servants who supply their place when slavery ceases to exist. Indeed, when slaves are habitually purchased young, they occupy a position superior to that of hired servants, for they are bred up in some degree as members of the family into which they enter.

The progress of society among the Greek population, in the twelfth century, was thus evidently tending to enlarge the sphere of civil liberty, and to embody the principles of Christianity in the legislation of the empire. The progress of mankind seemed to require that such a political government should meet with a career of prosperity, the more so as it was surrounded on all sides by rude barbarians. It was not so. Political liberty is indispensable to man's progress in improvement. Human civilisation demanded that new ties, connecting social and political life, should be developed : elements of liberty, alien to the condition of the Greek race, were to become the agents employed by Providence in the improvement of man's condition; and the people of western Europe were called upon to take a prominent part in the world's history, to destroy the Byzantine empire and crush the Greek race.

### SECT. III

#### STATIONARY CONDITION OF AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY THROUGHOUT EUROPE DURING THE MIDDLE AGES

The leading feature in civil society, from the fall of the Western Roman Empire to the time of the Crusades, is the abject condition of the agricultural classes. No rival of Cincinnatus appears as a hero in medieval history. The labourers, who became warriors and princes, returned no more to their ploughs. Century after century, the ruling classes, kings, priests, nobles, and soldiers, seized the whole surplus wealth which the hand of nature annually bestows on agricultural labour. The cultivator of the soil was only left in possession of the scanty portion necessary to enable him to prolong his existence of hopeless toil, and to rear a progeny of labourers, to replace him in producing wealth with smallest possible consumption of the earth's fruits. Such was the condition of the greater part of Europe, from the commencement of the eighth to the end of the thirteenth century.

The general insecurity of property, and decay of commercial intercourse, consequent on the neglect of the old Roman roads, annihilated the middle classes of society, or reduced them to a few individuals, insulated in distant towns, where they belonged to the conquered race, and lived deprived of all political rights. They were despised by their conquerors as belonging to a dastard tribe, and envied by the common people, because they were the possessors of more wealth and knowledge than the rest of their countrymen. This vicious organisation of society produced a perpetual though covert conflict of feelings between the lower and higher classes. The ruling class, whether nobles, gentlemen, or soldiers, viewed the mass of the people with contempt, and treated them with cruelty. The people indulged in vague hopes of being able, by

some dispensation of heaven, to exterminate their tyrants, and reform society. There hardly exists any European history that is not filled with rebellions and civil wars, which can be traced to this source. But the people, where they have not been trained to order by local institutions, creating the sense of responsibility in public affairs, can never form any idea of administration; and, consequently, their political struggles generally end in establishing anarchy as a remedy for oppression. Still we must not forget, that the pictures we possess of popular struggles against governmental oppression have received their colouring from the aristocratic class; and, consequently, that we seek in vain in such records for any notice of the wiser aspirations and better feelings of the patient and thinking individuals among the people.

It is possible that the social and political evils which arrested the increase of the agricultural population, during the middle ages, was not entirely without beneficial effects. Cities must be recruited from the agricultural population around them. Now, had the rude peasants of the country increased at that time as rapidly as the agricultural population of Ireland during the last half century has done, there might have been some danger that all civilisation would have been overpowered, and either the ruling class would have been exterminated, or it would have reduced the people to a state of hopeless slavery.

A great benefit was, moreover, conferred on society in the west of Europe by the dispersion of the ruling classes over the whole surface of the countries they subdued. The social equality that existed among the conquerors made this dispersion extend its influence through every rank; and the military virtues, as well as the learning of the times, were brought into closer contact with the people than they had been in the days of the Roman domination. The enlightened priest and free-minded poet were oftener to be found in the society of a provincial baron than at the court of a royal Suzerain. The power and intelligence of these teachers invested them with a real authority over the rude multitude, so that, even as early as the eleventh century, some tendency to improvement may be traced in the rural society of Western Europe.

#### SECT. IV

#### CONDITION OF THE NORMANS WHEN THEY CONQUERED THE BYZANTINE POSSESSIONS IN ITALY

The Danes and Normans, following the same necessity of acquiring the means of subsistence by their sword, and incited to constant restlessness by the same unceasing songs about glory, which had impelled the Goths, Franks, and Saxons to become the founders of kingdoms and empires, rushed southward in their pirate boats to attack the conquerors of the Romans. Unable to assemble large armies, they found the sea more favourable to their plundering excursions than the land. For nearly two centuries, the Scandinavian nations carried on a series of piratical attacks on the Franks in Gaul, and on the Saxons in Britain. They wasted the open country, and circumscribed every trace of civilisation within the walls of fortified towns, or of secluded monasteries in inaccessible situations. The records of French and English history commence with details of cruelties committed by these pirates, so frightful that the poetry of their sagas

cannot efface the conviction that plunder was dearer to them than glory, and that their favourite exploits were the robbery of industrious villages, or the burning of peaceful monasteries. The daring of these ruthless plunderers was rarely exposed to very severe trials, for the mass of the agricultural population was prevented from bearing arms, lest they should employ them against the ruling classes, and begin their military career by attacking their permanent oppressors. The descendants of Charlemagne preferred paying thousands of pounds' weight of silver to the Normans, in order to purchase immunity from ravage for their own domains, rather than employ the money in arming and disciplining a subject population whose feelings they knew to be hostile. This is one of the causes of the facility the Normans found in effecting their conquests, yet it is hardly noticed by historians.

Many tales of the inexhaustible wealth and unbounded luxury of the Byzantine Empire were current in Scandinavia. Many warriors returned to their country enriched by the wealth they had amassed in the Byzantine service. These men repeated wondrous tales concerning the palaces and the gold of Constantinople, and the luxury and helplessness of the Greeks, to delighted crowds of listeners in their rude dwellings. Harald Hardrada, the gigantic warrior who lost his life at the battle of Stamford Bridge, acting as herald of the Norman conquest, had gained at Constantinople the treasures that enabled him to mount the throne of Norway. These traditions, constantly revived by the sight of the gold byzants which then formed the common circulation of Europe, nourished a longing to reach the Byzantine Empire in the breast of every Norman. The wish to see Constantinople, and its immeasurable wealth, mingled with religious ideas in urging the Normans to perform the pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

About the commencement of the eleventh century, the Normans established in France began to appear frequently in Italy as pilgrims and military adventurers; and, before the end of the century, they created a new political power at the expense of the Byzantine emperors. In their career from mercenary soldiers to independent chiefs, they advanced much in the same way, and nearly by the same steps, as the Goths and Lombards had done, when they founded kingdoms in the Western Roman Empire. Though some distinguished Normans visited Italy as pilgrims, the greater number wandered thither, impelled by the desire to better their condition, by entering into the military service of the Byzantine viceroys of southern Italy and Sicily. The changes that had occurred in northern Europe had put an end to piracy, and degraded the occupation of the brigand, so that adventurous young men were now driven to seek their fortunes in distant lands. The Normans, like the Goths of older times, considered no undertaking too arduous for their ambition; and they feared to tread no path, however dangerous, that promised to conduct them to wealth and fame.

The romantic narratives which connect the first appearance of the Normans in Italy immediately with the formation of the Norman principalities, must not be received as true according to the letter. The sudden arrival of a ship of Amalfi, with forty Norman pilgrims, on their return from a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, may certainly have saved Salerno from the Saracens; for these forty Normans, in complete panoply, may have rallied round them an army of pilgrims and mercenaries, on the great line of communication between the West and East. The meeting of Mel, the Byzantine rebel chief of Bari, with a few Norman gentlemen who were visiting the shrine of St Michael on Mount Gargano, may also have led to these Normans collecting an army to attack the imperial authorities. But the success of the Norman arms arose from the circumstance

that numerous bodies of Norman mercenaries were already serving in the south of Italy. We may reasonably conclude that few men wandered from Normandy to Italy to gain their fortune by the sword, who were not possessed of more than ordinary daring and skill in the use of arms. The Norman mercenaries must therefore have possessed some superiority over ordinary troops; and the physical superiority of the individual soldier, when the lance, the sword, and the mace determined the fate of a battle, was of more importance than it is in our day, when the fire of distant artillery, and the evolutions of unseen regiments, often decide the victory. The personal superiority of the Normans in moral character must also be taken into consideration, in estimating the causes of their surprising fortune in Italy and Sicily. In their own country they belonged to a higher class of society than that from which mercenary soldiers were generally drawn, and their education had taught them to aspire even above their birth. This nurture gave them a feeling of self-respect, and a high estimation of their individual responsibilities—qualities which form a firmer basis of national greatness than literary culture or refinement of taste. To this moral education, and to the manner in which it tempered their ambition, we must ascribe the facility displayed by the Norman soldiers in assuming the duties of captains and generals, and their prudence as leaders and princes. Brave, skilful, disciplined, rapacious, wary, unfeeling, and ambitious, they possessed every quality necessary for becoming conquerors, and all the talents required to rivet the bonds of their tyranny. Never, indeed, did any race of men fulfil their mission as conquerors and tyrants with a firmer hand or more energetic will, whether we regard them in their earlier state, as the devastators of France, and the colonists of Russia; or in their more mature fortunes, as the lords of Normandy, the conquerors of England, Naples, and Sicily, and the plunderers of Greece. Southern Italy, divided between the three Lombard principalities of Benevento, Capua, and Salerno, and the Byzantine province, was saved from anarchy, and delivered from the ravages of the Saracens, by the Norman conquest.

#### SECT. V

#### NORMANS INVADE BYZANTINE EMPIRE—THEIR RAVAGES IN GREECE

The wars of the Normans with the Byzantine emperors, and the facility with which they conquered the Greeks in Italy, induced them to aspire at the conquest of Greece itself. The rapidity with which they had subdued southern Italy, and the fame that attached to the Norman name from the recent conquest of England, raised their military reputation and their self-confidence to the highest elevation. No enterprise was regarded either by themselves or others as too difficult for their arms; and Robert Guiscard, when he found himself master of dominions in Italy which exceeded Normandy in wealth and population, aspired at eclipsing the achievements of William the Conqueror by subduing the Byzantine Empire.

In the month of June 1081 he sailed from the port of Brindisi, with an army of thirty thousand men and with one hundred and fifty ships, on this expedition. Corfu, which then yielded an annual revenue of fifteen hundred pounds of gold to the Byzantine treasury, surrendered to his arms, and he landed in Epirus without opposition. The glorious victories of the Normans, the prudent perseverance of the Emperor Alexius



I, the valour of Bohemund, the failure of the expedition, and the death of Robert Guiscard as he was about to renew his attack, are recorded with such details in the pompous pages of Anna Comnena, and in the gorgeous descriptions of Gibbon, that they are familiar to every reader of history.

Bohemund again invaded the Byzantine Empire in the year 1107 with a powerful army. He was then Duke of Antioch, and had recently married the daughter of the King of France. The army of Bohemund, like that of William the Conqueror, whose glory he expected to eclipse, was composed of warlike adventurers from Normandy, France, and Germany. The winter was consumed besieging Dyrrachium, whose ancient Hellenic walls still existed, and were so broad that four horsemen could ride abreast on their summit, while they were flanked at proper intervals by towers raised eleven feet above their battlements. The cities of Greece then preserved many classic monuments of art, and Bohemund encamped to the east of Dyrrachium, opposite a gate adorned with an equestrian statue of bronze. The Emperor Alexius had acquired more experience in the tactics of western warfare than he possessed when he encountered Robert Guiscard in the earlier invasion. Bohemund could neither take Dyrrachium nor force the emperor to fight; so that he was at last himself without resources, and compelled to sign a treaty, in September 1108, by which he acknowledged himself the liegeman of the Byzantine emperor. Such was the fate of an expedition under the haughty Bohemund, no way inferior to that which conquered England.

The third invasion of the Byzantine Empire took place in consequence of the Emperor Manuel rudely disavowing the conduct of his envoy, who had concluded a treaty with Roger, King of Sicily. But its real origin must be sought in the ambitious projects of the Sicilian king, and the warlike and haughty spirit of the young emperor. Roger, by the union of the Norman possessions in Sicily and southern Italy, was one of the wealthiest and most powerful princes of his time. The wealth in his hands, and the large fleet and well-disciplined army at his disposal, authorised him to aspire at new conquests; and he hoped to accomplish what his uncle, Robert Guiscard, and his cousin, Bohemund, had vainly attempted. But the Byzantine power in the interval had improved as rapidly as the Norman had increased. Manuel I, proud of the excellent army and well-filled treasury he received from his father, John II, was as eager for war as the Norman king, expecting to recover all his predecessors had lost in Italy, and even to reconquer Sicily. Indeed, had the emperor been able to direct all his forces against the Normans, such might possibly have been the result of a war; but the attention of Manuel was diverted by many enemies, and his forces were required to defend extensive frontiers; while Roger was enabled to commence hostilities by landing his troops at any point where least preparation appeared to have been made to encounter an enemy. The Normans invaded Greece, and their expedition inflicted a mortal wound on the prosperity of the country.

When the second crusade was on the eve of marching through the Byzantine Empire, Roger, who had collected a powerful fleet at Brindisi, either for attacking Manuel's dominions or for transporting the Crusaders to Palestine, as might turn out most advantageous to his interests, was put in possession of Corfu by an insurrection of the inhabitants. The weight of the taxes they paid to the distant central government at Constantinople, contrasted with the trifling advantages they received from the Byzantine connection, became intolerable. This occurred in the year 1146. From Corfu the Sicilian admiral sailed round the Peloponnesus to Monemvasia, at that time one of

the principal commercial cities in the Mediterranean; but the population of this impregnable rock boldly encountered the Sicilians, and repulsed their attacks. The Norman fleet then proceeded to plunder the island of Euboea, after which it again sailed back to the western coast, and laid waste the coasts of Acarnania and Etolia.

The whole of Greece was thrown into such a state of alarm, by these sudden and far distant attacks, that it was impossible to concentrate the troops in the province at any particular point. The Norman admiral decided on directing his whole force against Thebes, whose situation appeared to secure it from any sudden assault, but whose wealth, from this very circumstance, promised a larger amount of plunder than any city on the coast. Thebes was then a rich manufacturing town, but without any walls capable of defence. George Antiochenus, the Sicilian admiral, entered the Straits of Naupaktos with his whole force, and debarked his troops at the Scala of Salona—a spot since rendered memorable in the annals of naval warfare by the first display of the terrible effect of hot shot and shells when used by a single ship against a hostile squadron. The glory of Frank Abney Hastings may be eclipsed by future exploits at sea on a grander scale, but he will ever retain the merit of having been the first to make these destructive projectiles the habitual weapons of a crew on board ship, and of having shown that, with common prudence and such discipline as he could enforce in a ship maintained from his own private resources, and with a crew composed of different nations, their use is free from danger. From the Scala of Salona the Norman troops marched past Delphi and Livadea to Thebes.

Thebes was taken and plundered in the most barbarous manner. The inhabitants carried on an immense trade in cultivating, manufacturing, and dyeing silk, and their industry had rendered them extremely rich. Everything they possessed was carried away by their avaricious conquerors, who conveyed their gold, silver, jewels, bales of silk and household furniture of value, to the ships which had anchored at the port of Livadostro. The unfortunate Thebans were compelled to take an oath on the Holy Scriptures, that they had not concealed from their plunderers any portion of their property; nor was the city evacuated by the Normans until they had removed everything they considered worth transporting to the fleet. The principal inhabitants were dragged into captivity, in order to profit by their ransom; while the most skilful workmen in the silk manufactories were carried as slaves to Sicily, there to exercise their industry for the profit of their new masters.

From Livadostro the fleet transported the troops to Corinth. Nicephorus Kalouphe, the governor, retired with the chief men of the city into the Acrocorinth. That fortress was impregnable, but the cowardly governor basely surrendered the place on the first summons. The Sicilian admiral, on examining the magnificent fortress of which he had so unexpectedly become master, could not refrain from exclaiming, that the Normans certainly fought under the protection of heaven, for, if Nicephorus Kalouphe had not been more timid than a woman, all their attacks might have been repulsed with ease. Corinth was sacked with the same rapacious avidity as Thebes: all the men of rank, the most beautiful women, and the most skilful artisans, with their wives and families, were carried away, either to obtain a ransom or to keep them as slaves. Even the shrines of the saints were plundered, and the relics of St Theodore were torn from his church; and it was only when the fleet was fully laden with the spoils of Greece that it sailed for Sicily.

The highest point of material improvement attained by the inhabitants of Greece during the Middle Ages was at this period; and perhaps the decline and ruin of Greece may be more directly attributed to the loss of the silk trade than to any other single event connected with the Normans and Crusaders. The establishment of the silk manufacturers of Thebes and Corinth at Palermo transferred superior skill from Greece to Sicily. Roger took the greatest care of the artisans his admiral had brought him. He collected together their wives and children, and furnished them with dwellings, and the means of resuming their former industry under the most favourable circumstances. He perceived that their skill was the most valuable part of the plunder of the expedition, and treated them with the greatest kindness, in order to attach them to their new home and naturalise their industry in Sicily. His plans were aided by the Byzantine emperors, who ruined the trade of Greece by oppressive monopolies and ill-judged restrictions, and thus prepared the way for the conquests of the Franks and Venetians.

When the Emperor Manuel concluded a treaty of peace with William I of Sicily in 1159, he abandoned the manufacturers of Greece at Palermo to their fate. Thebes, however, still continued for some time to retain its importance by its silk manufactures. Benjamin of Tudela, who visited it about the year 1161, speaks of it as a large city with two thousand Jewish inhabitants, who were the most eminent silk-merchants and dyers of purple in Greece. The silks of Thebes continued to be celebrated throughout the East even at a later period. In 1195, Moieddin, Sultan of Iconium, required from the Emperor Alexius III forty pieces of the Theban silk that was woven expressly for the imperial family, among other presents, as the price of his alliance.

The last attempt of the Sicilian Normans to subdue the Byzantine empire was made in the year 1185. William II, hoping that the cruelty of the Emperor Andronicus I would prove a powerful ally to the Sicilian arms, invaded the empire under the pretext of aiding Alexius Comnenus, one of the nephews of Manuel I, to dethrone the tyrant; but his real object was to secure for himself some permanent possession in Greece. A powerful fleet under the command of Tancred, the king's cousin and successor, was sent to attack Dyrrachium, which was taken by assault after a siege of thirteen days. The army then marched by the Via Egnatia to Thessalonica, while the fleet with Tancred sailed round the Morea. The rich and populous city of Thessalonica fell into the hands of the Sicilians after a feeble defence; but the cruelty with which the inhabitants were treated roused a feeling of resistance in the unsubdued population of the empire, and the further progress of the Sicilians met with a firmer opposition. In the fury of conquest, neither age nor sex had been spared when Thessalonica was sacked, and the barbarity of the conquerors is described in frightful detail by Nicetas. Neither rich nor poor were safe from the most barbarous treatment. Similar horrors are the ordinary events of every war in which religious bigotry excites the passions of mercenary soldiers; and the Greeks and Latins now regarded one another both as heretics and as political enemies. Many of the wealthiest inhabitants of Thessalonica were driven from their splendid palaces without clothes; many were tortured, to compel them to reveal the place where they had concealed their treasures; and some, who had nothing to reveal, were hung up by the feet and suffocated with burning straw. Insult was added to cruelty. The altars of the Greek churches were defiled, the religious ceremonies were ridiculed; while the priests were chanting divine service in the nasal harmony admired by the Orientals, the Sicilian soldiers howled in chorus in imitation of beaten hounds. The celebrated Archbishop Eustathius, however, fortunately succeeded, by his prudence and dignified

conduct, in conciliating the Sicilian generals, and in persuading them to make some exertions to bridle the license of their troops, which they had tolerated too long. By his exhortations, Thessalonica was saved from utter ruin.

The Sicilian army at last put itself in march towards Constantinople. But the tyrant Andronicus was already dethroned and murdered; while the reports that had been spread far and wide concerning the infamous cruelties committed at Thessalonica had roused the indignation of the whole population of Thrace. In the meantime, the Sicilian fleet under Tancred had entered the Propontis, and advanced within sight of Constantinople, without being able to effect anything. The army continued to advance in two divisions in spite of all opposition; one of these divisions had reached Mosynopolis, while the other was engaged plundering the valley of the Strymon and country round Serres. Alexius Vranas, an experienced general, had now assumed the command of the Byzantine army. The new emperor, Isaac II, had secured the good-will of the troops by distributing among them four thousand pounds of gold, in payment of their arrears and to furnish a donative. The courage of the imperial forces was revived, and their success was insured by the carelessness and presumption of the Sicilian generals, whose contempt for the Greek army prevented them from concentrating their strength. Vranas, taking advantage of this confidence, suddenly drove in the advanced guard and offered battle to the division at Mosynopolis, which he defeated with considerable loss. The Sicilians retreated to the site of Amphipopolis, where they had collected their scattered detachments, and fought another battle at a place called Demerize, on the 7th November 1185. In this they were utterly defeated, and the victory of the Byzantine army decided the fate of the expedition. Count Aldoin and Richard Acerra, the generals, with about four thousand soldiers, were taken prisoners. The fugitives who could gain Thessalonica immediately embarked on board the vessels in the port, and put to sea. Tancred abandoned his station in the Propontis, and, collecting the shattered remnants of the army as well as he was able, returned to Sicily. Even Dyrrachium was soon after abandoned, for William found the expense of retaining the place far greater than its political importance to Sicily warranted. The prisoners sent by Vranas to the Emperor Isaac II were treated with great inhumanity. They were thrown into dungeons, and neglected to such a degree by the government, that they owed the preservation of their lives to private charity.

## SECT. VI

### SEPARATION OF THE GREEK AND LATIN CHURCHES

The Normans of Italy were the vassals of the Pope. Robert Guiscard, the first Norman invader of Greece, adopted the style of “Duke by the grace of God and St Peter”, and the animosity and cruelty of the Sicilian troops against the Greeks were increased by the ecclesiastical quarrels of the Popes of Rome and Patriarchs of Constantinople. The influence of the Latin and Greek clergy rapidly disseminated the hatred caused by these dissensions throughout the people. The ambition of the Patriarch Photius laid the foundation of the separation of the two churches in the ninth century. He objected to the addition of the words, “and the Son,” which the Latins had inserted

in the original creed of the Christian church, and to some variations in the discipline and usages of the church which they had adopted; and he made these a pretext for attacking the supremacy and orthodoxy of the Pope. The Christian world was astonished by the disgraceful spectacle of the Bishops of Rome and Constantinople mutually excommunicating one another, and each pointing out his rival as one who merited the reprobation of man and the wrath of God. These disputes were allayed by the prudence of a Slavonian groom, who mounted the throne of the Byzantine empire as Basil I; but Christian charity never again took up her abode with the heads either of the Papal or the Greek church.

The arrogance of the Patriarch, Michael Keroularios, induced him to revive the dormant quarrel in 1053. His character as a man condemns him as a Patriarch. When a layman, he plotted against his sovereign; when a priest, he rebelled against his superior. Whatever may have been his religious zeal, there is no doubt that the revival of the quarrel between the Eastern and Western churches was an unnecessary and impolitic act. A joint letter, in the name of the Patriarch Michael and Leo Archbishop of Achrida, was addressed to the Archbishop of Trani, then a Byzantine possession, in which all the accusations formerly brought forward by Photius against the Latins were repeated. The Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos attempted to appease the ardour of Michael; and, in the hope of averting a quarrel, prevailed on Pope Leo IX to send legates to Constantinople. Unfortunately the Papal legates were quite as arrogant as the Patriarch himself; and thus the slumbering animosity of the Greek clergy was roused by their imprudent conduct. The legates, finding their exorbitant pretensions were treated with contempt, completed the separation of the two churches, by excommunicating the Patriarch and all his adherents; and they inflicted a sensible wound on the feelings of the Greeks by their success in depositing a copy of the act of excommunication on the high altar of the church of St Sophia. The Patriarch immediately convoked a council of the Eastern clergy, and replied by excommunicating the Pope and all the Latins. The Papal act was ordered to be taken from the altar, and publicly burned. From the time of these mutual anathemas, the separation of the Greek and Latin churches has been attended with Antichristian animosity; and the members of the Eastern and Western hierarchies have viewed one another as condemned heretics. From this period, therefore, the conduct of the Byzantine government, and the actions of the Greeks, are judged by the Western nations under the influence of religious prejudices of great virulence, as well as of political and commercial jealousy.

The crimes of which the Patriarch accused the Pope, and on account of which the Greeks deemed the Latins worthy of eternal damnation, were these : the addition of the words "and the Son" to the clause of the primitive creed of the Christians, declaring the belief in the Holy Ghost, who proceedeth from the Father; the use of unleavened bread in the holy communion; the use in the kitchens of the Latins of things strangled, and of blood, in violation of the apostles' express commands the indulgence granted to monks to make use of lard in cooking, and to eat meat when sick; the use of rings by Latin bishops as a symbol of their marriage with the church, while, as the Greeks sagaciously observed, the marriage of bishops is altogether unlawful; and, to complete the folly of this disastrous quarrel, the Greek clergy even made it a crime that the Latin priests shaved their beards and baptised by a single immersion. Whatever may be the importance of these errors in a moral or religious point of view, it is certain that the

violence displayed by the clergy in irritating the religious hatred between the Greeks and Latins contributed to hasten the ruin of the Greek nation.

SECT. VII  
INCREASE OF THE PAPAL POWER DURING THE ELEVENTH AND  
TWELFTH CENTURIES

The eleventh century witnessed a wide extension both of the spiritual jurisdiction and the temporal power of the Popes. The conversions effected by the zeal of the Catholic clergy tended to augment the authority of the Papal throne, as much as the colonisation of new possessions does to increase the influence of the crown of Great Britain. It is true that the Normans, Danes, Norwegians, Hungarians, and Poles, embraced Christianity in the tenth century; but it was not until the eleventh that their conversion added sensibly to the numbers and wealth of the Latin clergy, and augmented the power and dignity of the Popes of Rome.

The events which particularly influenced the political relations of the Popes with the Byzantine Empire were, the conquest of Transylvania by the kings of Hungary, the establishment of the Normans in Italy as vassals of the papal see, and the expulsion of the Greeks and Saracens from Sicily. The first of these conquests carried forward the banner of the Popes into the east, and raised a strong bulwark against the progress of the Greek church to the westward, whether it attempted to advance from Constantinople or Russia; by the second, a number of rich benefices, which had been previously held by Greek ecclesiastics, were transferred to Latins; and by the Norman conquest of Sicily the clergy of that island, who, under the Saracens, had remained dependent on the Patriarch of Constantinople, became united to the Latin church. The commencement of the schism was thus marked by three important victories gained by the papal see. The Pope was also furnished with a numerous body of clergy from southern Italy and Sicily, who were familiar with the Greek language, then generally spoken in those countries. It was consequently in his power to carry the ecclesiastical contest into the heart of the Byzantine empire; while the Greek Patriarch, deprived by the emperor of all political authority, dependent on a synod, and subordinate to the civil power, offered but a faint representation of what was in that age conceived to be the true position of the head of the church.

The territorial acquisitions of the Western Church, great as they really were, bore no comparison to the augmentation of the power of the Pope within the church itself. The authority of the Popes, in Western Europe, was based on the firmest foundation on which power can rest: it was supported by public opinion, for both the laity and the clergy regarded them as the only impartial dispensers of justice on earth, as the antagonists of feudal oppression, and the champions of the people against royal tyranny. It is true that the general anarchy towards the end of the tenth century, and the social disorganisation incident to the early consolidation of the feudal system, produced a great revolution of discipline among the Latin clergy; and a series of disorders prevailed in the Western Church to which there is no parallel, until far later times, in the Eastern. But the exertions of the well-disposed—who are generally the most numerous, though

the least active portion of society—soon effected a reformation. This spirit of reform conferred on Gregory VII the extensive temporal power which he assumed for the good of society, but which was too great for an imperfect mortal to possess without abusing it. Thus, at the time when a variety of events invested the Popes with the rank of temporal princes of the highest order, numerous causes conspired to constitute them supreme judges of right and wrong, both in the eyes of kings and people; while their real power was also increased by a widespread superstition that the end of the world was approaching, and that the possession of the keys of St Peter conferred an immense power over all those without the portal of heaven. Such was the position of one of the enemies which the vanity and bigotry of the Greek clergy arrayed in hostility against their nation.

#### SECT. VIII.

#### PREDOMINANT POSITION OF THE FRENCH LANGUAGE IN THE TWELFTH AND THIRTEENTH CENTURIES

The progress of events, rather than any fault in the Byzantine government, ranged many of the nations of Western Europe as enemies of the Greeks. All the nations who spoke the French were regarded by the Greeks as one people, and all were treated as enemies in consequence of the wars with the Normans of Italy and Sicily. The name of Franks was given, in the Byzantine Empire, to all who spoke French; and, consequently, under this hated designation the Greeks included not only Normans and French, but also Flemings, English, and Scots. The Norman conquests on the shores of the Mediterranean, and their commercial relations with the Italian republics, began to place their interests in rivalry with those of the Byzantine Greeks. And when the East was invaded by the Crusaders, the prevalence of the French language, and the number of Normans in their ranks, tended to make the Greeks view the intruders as old enemies.

It is singular that the most numerous body of those who appeared in the East, making use of the French language, were neither French by race nor political allegiance. Normandy, Flanders, southern Italy, Sicily, England, and we may add Scotland, were then more French in language and manners, in the higher and military classes, than the southern provinces of what is now France. The foundation of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, and the smaller principalities of Syria, gave the French language and Norman manners a predominant influence in the East. Though the king of France really exercised no direct authority over the greater part of the states in which French was spoken, still the dependence of several of the most powerful princes on the French crown as feudatories, and the constant communications that arose from similarity of feelings, rendered the king of France, in the eyes of the Greeks, the real sovereign of all the French or Frank nations.

## CHAPTER III

## OVERTHROW OF THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE BY THE CRUSADERS

## SECTION I

## THE CRUSADES

The Crusades are among the great events, in the progress of European civilisation, from which it is usual to trace the new social combinations that changed the position of the mass of the people in relation to their sovereigns and the ruling classes. The feudal system was certainly so much modified by their consequences, that their history forms an important link in the chain of events connecting the aristocratic institutions of the conquerors of the Roman Empire with the democratic political laws of modern Europe. In the West, the Crusades were productive of much good; but they were the cause of unmixed evil, in the East, to the Christian population. During the early period, while the force of the Crusaders was greatest, and religious enthusiasm directed their conduct, they respected the Byzantine Empire as a Christian state, and treated the Greeks as a Christian people. The earlier armies passed through the empire like hurricanes, producing widespread but only temporary desolation. But in later times, when ambition, fashion, and the hope of gain made men Crusaders, avarice and intolerance exerted more influence over their conduct than religion and a sense of justice. The Crusades must, consequently, be examined under two different aspects in order to be correctly appreciated. In the East, they offer little beyond the records of military incursions of undisciplined invaders, seeking to conquer foreign lands by the sword, and to maintain possession of them by the singular combinations of the feudal system. To the Christians of Greece and Syria, the Latins appeared closely to resemble the Goths, Vandals, and Lombards. Viewed, therefore, as the actions of the Crusaders must have been by the Eastern nations, the results of their expeditions were so inadequate to the forces brought into the field, that the character of the Western nations suffered for ages after, and the Franks were long regarded with contempt as well as hatred both by Christians and Mussulmans.

With armies far exceeding in number those of the early Saracens who subdued Asia, Africa, and Spain, and much greater than those of the Seljouk Turks, who had recently made themselves masters of great part of Asia, the conquests of the Crusaders were comparatively insignificant and transitory. One striking difference between the Asiatic and European warriors deserves to be noticed, for it formed the main cause of the inefficiency of the latter as conquerors. The Asiatics left untouched the organisation of society among the Christians, Persians, and Hindoos, throughout their wide-extended



empires. The changes effected by their conquests in the relations of rich and poor, master and slave, resulted from altered habits gradually arising out of new social exigencies, and were rarely interposed by the direct agency of legislation. But the Crusaders immediately destroyed all the existing order of society, and revolutionised every institution connected with property and the cultivation of the soil. Mankind was forced back into a state of barbarism, which made predial servitude an element of feudal tenures. In the East, the progress of society had already introduced the cultivation of the soil by free agricultural labour before the arrival of the Crusaders in Palestine; the Franks brought back slavery and serfage in their train. The Saracens had considered agricultural labour as honourable; the Franks regarded every useful occupation as a degradation. The Saracens became agriculturists in all their conquests, and were, consequently, colonists who increased in number under certain social conditions. The Franks, on the contrary, were nothing but a feudal garrison in their Eastern possessions; so that, as soon as they had reduced the cultivators of the soil to the condition of serfs, they were themselves subjected to the operation of that law of population which, like an avenging Nemesis, is perpetually exterminating every class that dares to draw a line of separation between itself and the rest of mankind. Thus the system of government introduced by the Crusaders, in their Asiatic conquests, contained within itself the causes of its own destruction.

The Crusades are the last example of the effects of that mighty spirit of emigration and adventure that impelled the Goths, Franks, Saxons, and Normans to seek new possessions and conquer distant kingdoms. The old spirit of emigration in its military form, engrafted on the passion for pilgrimages in the Western church, was roused into religious enthusiasm by many coincident circumstances. The passion for pilgrimages, though of ancient date, received great extension in the eleventh century; but as early as the fourth, the conduct of the numerous pilgrims who, in the abundance of the ancient world, went on their way to Palestine feasting and revelling, had scandalised St Gregory of Nyssa. The great increase of pilgrimages in the eleventh century was connected with the idea then prevalent, that the thousand years of the imprisonment of Satan mentioned in the Apocalypse had expired; and, as the tempter was supposed to be raging over the face of the earth, no place was considered so safe from his intrusion as the holy city of Jerusalem.

The inhabitants of the Byzantine Empire were from early times familiarised with the passage of immense caravans of pilgrims, and due arrangements were made for this intercourse, which was a regular source of profit. Even the Saracens had generally treated the pilgrims with consideration, as men who were engaged in the performance of a sacred duty. The chronicles of the time relate that a band of pilgrims amounting to seven thousand, led by the archbishop of Mayence and four bishops, passed through Constantinople in the reign of Constantine X Ducas. Near Jerusalem they were attacked by wandering tribes, but were relieved by the Saracen emir of Ramla, who hastened to their assistance. The conquests of the Seljouk Turks had already thrown all Syria into a state of disorder, and the Bedouin Arabs began to push their plundering excursions far into the cultivated districts. This army of pilgrims was prevented from visiting the Jordan and the Dead Sea by the robbers of the desert, and it is reported that the caravan lost three thousand of its number before returning home. The misfortunes of so numerous a body of men resounded throughout the Christian world; and year after year bringing tidings of new disasters, the fermentation of the public mind continually

increased. No distinct project was formed for delivering the Holy Sepulchre, but a general desire was awakened to remedy the insecurity attending the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The conquest of Palestine by the Seljouk Turks, in 1076, increased the disorders. These nomads neglected to guard the roads, and augmented the exactions on the pilgrims. In the West, the passion for pilgrimages was increasing, while in the East, the dangers to which the pilgrims were exposed were augmenting still more rapidly. A cry for vengeance was the consequence. The Franks and Normans were men of action, more prompt to war than to complaint. The mine was already prepared, when Peter the Hermit applied the match to the inflammatory materials.

Commercial interests were not unconnected with the origin of the Crusades, for they tended at least to cement the unanimity in all classes of society. The commercial enterprise of the age was perhaps too confined for us to attribute to commerce a prominent part in producing these great expeditions; but if all notice of the facts that connect them with the progress of trade were to be overlooked, a very inaccurate idea would be formed of the various causes of their origin. Commerce exercised almost as much influence in producing the Crusades, as the Crusades did in improving and extending the relations of commerce. It must be observed that the early Crusaders followed the routes used by the commercial caravans which carried on the trade between Germany, Constantinople, and Syria. This had been very considerable in earlier times, and had enriched the Avars and the Bulgarians. From Constantinople to Antioch, the great road had always been much frequented, until the commercial communications in Asia Minor were deranged by the incursions of the Seljouk Turks. In the year 1035, before their arrival, Robert, Duke of Normandy, called Robert the Devil, the father of William the Conqueror, when on the pilgrimage to Jerusalem with a numerous suite, joined a caravan of merchants travelling to Antioch, in order to traverse Asia Minor under their guidance. The great losses of the Crusaders in their expeditions by land, are not therefore to be attributed so much to absolute ignorance of the nature of the country, as to utter inattention to the arrangements required by their numbers, and to incapacity for exercising habitual forethought and restraint. As early as the first Crusade, the fleets of the Italian republics would have sufficed to transport large armies direct to Palestine. The Venetians and Byzantines are said by Anna Comnena to have lost thirteen thousand men in a naval defeat they sustained from Robert Guiscard, near Corfu, in 1084; and the Byzantine princess can hardly be suspected of any wish to magnify the losses of her father's subjects and allies. Amalfi, Pisa, and Genoa were all able to send large fleets to Palestine as soon as they heard that the Crusaders had got possession of Jerusalem.

During the age immediately preceding the Crusades, society had received a great development, and commerce had both aided and profited by the movement. There is no greater anachronism than to suppose that the commercial greatness of the Italian republics arose out of these expeditions. Their commerce was already so extensive, that the commercial alarm caused by the conduct of the Seljouk Turks was really one of the causes of the Crusades. The caravans of pilgrims which repaired from personal vanity, or the pride of Byzantine etiquette, the Paphlagonian moneychanger, whom a turn of fortune had seated on the throne of Constantine, left the Duke standing. Robert made a sign to his companions to imitate his proceedings. All dropped their rich velvet cloaks and sate down on them. On quitting the audience chamber they left their cloaks on the ground. A chamberlain followed to remind them, but Robert replied, "It is not the usage of Norman gentlemen to carry away their chairs." As he was travelling through Asia

Minor, he was met by a Norman pilgrim, who asked him if he had any message to send home. The Duke was in a litter, carried by four negroes. "Tell them in Normandy that you saw me carried to heaven by four devils," was all he had to say. He was poisoned at Nicaea, on his return, by one of his attendants.

Thus we see that the Norman and Frank spirit of adventure, the ancient superstitions of the people, the interests of the Latin church, the cruelties of the Mahommedans, and the commercial necessities of the times, all conspired to awaken enthusiastic aspirations after something greater than the commonplace existence of ordinary life in the eleventh century; and every class of society found its peculiar passions gratified by the great cry for the deliverance of Christ's tomb from the hands of the infidels. The historians of the Crusades often endeavour to give a miraculous character to the effects of the preaching of Peter the Hermit; but we have seen in our own day Father Mathews in morals, and Daniel O'Connell in politics, produce almost as wonderful effects.

## SECT. II

### QUARRELS WITH THE BYZANTINE EMPERORS DURING THE FIRST AND SECOND CRUSADES. CONQUEST OF CYPRUS BY RICHARD I, KING OF ENGLAND

The disputes that occurred between the emperor Alexius I and the earliest Crusaders have been recounted by historians and novelists. The conduct of the Byzantine emperor was certainly deficient both in prudence and good faith; but it must not be forgotten that his enmity was justified by the rapacity of the Crusaders, who plundered his subjects, and the insolence of their leaders who insulted his authority and his person.

The Franks and Byzantine Greeks were in conditions of society too dissimilar for them to associate familiarly, without forming erroneous estimates of their respective characters. Political order and civil law were in the opinion of the Greeks the true bonds of society: the right of the individual to redress his own wrongs with his sword, was among the Franks the most valuable privilege of existence. The authority of the central government, in the well-organised administration of the Byzantine empire, reduced the greatest nobles to the rank of abject slaves in the opinion of the feudal barons; while the right of every private gentleman to decide questions of police and municipal law by an appeal to his sword, was a monstrous absurdity in the eyes of the Greeks, and rendered society among the Western nations little better than an assemblage of bandits. The conduct of the clergy did nothing to promote Christian charity. The contempt of the learned members of the Eastern Church for the ignorance of their Latin brethren, was changed into abhorrence when they beheld men calling themselves bishops galloping about the streets of Constantinople in coats of mail. The Latin priesthood, on the other hand, despised both the pastors and the flocks, when they saw men hoping by scholastic phrases to influence the conduct of soldiers; and they condemned the Christianity which suffered its priests to submit to the authority of the civil magistrate in the servile spirit of the Greek clergy. In addition to this discordance in the elements of society, it is

amusing to find the Greeks and Franks mutually accusing one another of precisely the same faults and vices. Both accuse their rivals of falsehood and treachery; and Anna Comnena remarks, with some warmth, that the Franks and Normans were the greatest babblers in the world: perhaps she was right, though our vanity induces us to smile at such an accusation made by a Greek. The evils, however, that arose from the debasement of the Byzantine money by Alexius, and from his endeavours to enrich the treasury by the creation of monopolies and the sale of provisions to the Crusaders, gave just cause of complaint to the Latins.

The conduct of the emperor Manuel I during the second Crusade increased the enmity to the Greeks which the behaviour of his grandfather Alexius had excited. In the violence of their national antipathies, the Franks overlook the fact that all the faults they attribute to the Greek emperor were committed by the contemporary Frank princes of Syria in a greater degree; and in their case, the conduct assumed a blacker dye, though it excited less hatred. The quarrels of the emperors Conrad and Manuel reflected no honour on either party. The Germans destroyed the splendid villas of the Greeks on the banks of the Bosphorus, and the Greeks adulterated the flour they sold to the Germans with chalk. False money was coined even by the Greek emperor to impose on the Crusaders, and every fraud committed by the people was tolerated by the Byzantine authorities. But still all the frauds in the camp of the Crusaders were not committed by Greeks, for it was found necessary to make severe laws to punish those Crusaders who cheated their brethren with false weights and measures. The failure of the second Crusade, and the disasters that destroyed the brilliant armies of Conrad and Louis VII, though caused rather by the folly of the Crusaders themselves, and by the perfidy of the Latin barons in Syria, than by the jealousy of the Byzantine emperor, nevertheless increased the outcry against the treachery of the Greeks throughout all the European nations.

The third Crusade appeared to threaten the Greeks with fewer evils than either of the preceding. The army of Frederic Barbarossa was better disciplined than any force which had previously passed through the empire, and its march was conducted with greater order; yet the conduct of the feeble emperor, Isaac II, was as unfriendly as that of Alexius and Manuel. Frederic, however, contented himself with repressing his hostilities, without punishing them. Nicetas mentions an anecdote, which is worthy of notice, since its authenticity is guaranteed by a Greek historian. The emperor Isaac detained ambassadors sent to him by Frederic, as hostages for the peaceable conduct of the Germans; and when he gave them audience, he compelled them to stand among the attendants of the court, though the Bishop of Munster and two Counts of high rank were the envoys. Isaac was subsequently compelled to send an embassy to Frederic, who repaid the insult by receiving the Greek ambassadors with the greatest politeness, but forcing masters and servants, nobles and grooms, all to sit down together; observing, that all Greeks were such wonderfully great men, that it was impossible to make any distinction between them.

The Greeks escaped unconquered from the numerous armies which marched through the heart of the Byzantine Empire, and encamped under the walls of Constantinople. Their subjection to the Franks was commenced by an English king, whom they gratuitously insulted at a time when he had no intention of visiting their territories. Richard Coeur-de-Lion, by conquering Cyprus and subjecting its inhabitants to the domination of the Latin Christians, struck the first serious blow at the national

independence of the Hellenic race on the part of the Crusaders. Isaac Komnenos rendered himself sovereign of Cyprus during the tyrannical administration of the emperor Andronicus I, and governed the island with the title of emperor, which he assumed as claiming to be the lawful sovereign of the Byzantine Empire. His own folly and injustice caused his dethronement by Richard, after he had occupied the throne seven years.

The island of Cyprus was at this time well cultivated; its population was numerous, and its trade flourishing. The extreme fertility of the soil secured to the inhabitants abundant harvests of corn, fruit, oil, and wine; the solid buildings erected in former ages afforded them extensive magazines for storing their produce; and the situation of their island supplied them with ready and profitable markets in the Frank possessions in Syria, in the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia, in Egypt, and on the African coast. Neutrality in the wars of the Christians and Mahommedans was the true basis of the wealth of Cyprus. Its pecuniary interests suffered seriously by the policy of the court of Constantinople, which was always engaged in disputes with the Franks, who were the best customers for the produce of Cyprus; and to this circumstance we must in some degree attribute the case with which Isaac Komnenos established himself in the island as an independent sovereign. The Greeks submitted to his tyranny with selfish indifference, because it secured to them a flourishing trade with nations who were enemies of the emperor of Constantinople. The marriage of Isaac of Cyprus with the sister of William II of Sicily was both a popular and a politic alliance; but the bad government of Isaac, and the commercial selfishness of his subjects, had destroyed every sentiment of patriotism in the breasts of the Cypriots, and prepared them to receive a foreign yoke.

In the year 1191, as the English fleet, under Richard Coeur-de-Lion, was proceeding from Messina to Ptolemais (Acre), it was assailed by a tempest, and three ships were wrecked near Amathus (Limisso) on the coast of Cyprus. Isaac, who possessed all the feelings of personal rancour against the Franks generally felt by the Greeks, and who had recently formed an alliance with Saladin, fancied that he might gratify his spleen against the English with impunity. He was ignorant of the power and energy of the English monarch, whom he considered only as the chief of a barbarous island. The Cypriots were allowed to plunder the shipwrecked vessels, and the unfortunate crews that escaped on shore were thrown into prison by the officers of government, though even the tyrant Andronicus had made a law which punished severely the plunderers of shipwrecked vessels. The ship that carried Berengaria of Navarre, the betrothed of Richard, and Joanna, queen of Sicily, his sister, attempted to seek shelter from the storm in the port near which the three vessels had gone on shore; but the entrance of the harbour was closed, and the vessel was compelled to run before the fury of the storm. The queen's ship joined Richard with the rest of the fleet at Rhodes.

The emperor of Cyprus had sadly miscalculated his own power, as well as the disposition of the English king. In a few days Richard appeared off Cyprus, and demanded the release of the prisoners, and indemnification for the property plundered. Isaac refused to deliver up the shipwrecked subjects of the crown of England without ransom, and disclaimed all responsibility for the pillage of the shipwrecked mariners. Richard immediately took measures to deliver the prisoners by force, and to levy an ample contribution. The English army was lauded, the city of Amathus taken by assault,

and the Greek troops defeated in battle. The nobles, proprietors, and citizens submitted to the conqueror, and took an oath of fidelity and allegiance to the English king on the first summons.

The emperor Isaac, alarmed at this defection, sued for peace; and Guy of Lusignan, king of Jerusalem, Bohemund, prince of Antioch, Raymond, count of Tripolis, and Leo, king of Cilician Armenia, having arrived in Cyprus to welcome Richard, interposed their good offices to negotiate a treaty. By the terms of this treaty of peace, Isaac received back the island of Cyprus as a fief to be held of the crown of England; and he engaged to deliver up all the prisoners still in his power; to pay twenty thousand marks of gold as an indemnity for his injustice, and for the expense of the expedition; to receive English garrisons into his fortresses; and to join the Crusaders in person with five hundred cavalry and five hundred infantry, serving as a vassal of Richard. As a security for the fulfilment of these conditions, he placed his only daughter in the hands of his new liege-lord. Isaac had expected to obtain more favourable terms of peace; and the moment he beheld the careless confidence of the English after the treaty was concluded, and he had taken the oath of fealty, he conceived the hope of overpowering their army and surprising the king by a treacherous attack. The attempt completed his ruin. His attack was repulsed, and Richard pursued him with vigour. The English fleet was sent to cruise round the island in order to occupy every point from which it seemed probable that he might endeavour to escape to the mainland. The king proceeded first to Keronia, (Cerines,) where the daughter of Isaac had been allowed to reside. The place made no resistance, and the princess threw herself at Richard's feet and implored pardon for her father; while Isaac, seeing the insufficiency of any military force he could assemble to carry on the war, surrendered himself a prisoner, asking only that he might not be confined in irons. Richard, who despised him, but could not trust his promises, granted his request only so far as to order him to be restrained by silver fetters.

The conquest of Cyprus was now complete. Richard celebrated his marriage with Berengaria at Amathus, and she was crowned Queen of Cyprus, as well as of England, which she was never destined to visit, in the capital of Venus. The English monarch converted Cyprus into a feudal kingdom, treating the property of the inhabitants very much as the Goths and Vandals had treated property in the provinces of the Roman Empire which they subdued. The Greeks were compelled to cede one half of their landed estates to the sovereign, who granted these lands to his vassals in order to create a feudal garrison, by investing a number of Crusaders with knight's fees over the whole surface of the island. After this act of spoliation, the inhabitants were guaranteed in the possession of the remainder of their landed property, and in all the privileges granted to them by the emperor Manuel I. Feudal society was thus introduced among the Hellenic race, and Richard Coeur-de-Lion, who remained in possession of his conquest only for a few months, established a domination that lasted several centuries, and transferred the government to various nations of aliens, who have treated the Greeks of Cyprus more as serfs than subjects from that time to the present hour.

On quitting the island, Richard intrusted the government to Richard Camville and Robert Turnham. The dethroned emperor Isaac was transported to Tripolis, to be kept imprisoned in the castle of Margat, under the wardship of the Knights Hospitallers. The Greeks soon considered their lot under the feudal regime much worse than it had been under the tyrant Isaac, and they took up arms to expel the English. Richard, who

wished to withdraw all his troops for the war in Palestine, sold the island to the Templars; but these knights found the internal affairs of Cyprus in so disturbed a state, that they surrendered back their purchase to Richard in a short time. The king of England then conferred the sovereignty on Guy of Lusignan, who had lost the kingdom of Jerusalem by the election of Henry Count of Champagne as successor to Conrad of Montferrat.

The domination of the English and the Templars had already caused the emigration of thousands of Greek families to the Byzantine provinces in Asia Minor, and to the Greek islands of the Archipelago. Guy of Lusignan repopled Cyprus with Latin Christians from Syria. Three hundred and fifty knights and barons of the kingdom of Jerusalem, whose lands had been occupied by the troops of Saladin, received fiefs in land, and two thousand sergeants at arms; besides, a number of burgesses were established in the fortified towns. Latin bishops and priests were intruded into all the benefices; and the Greeks accuse these new teachers of attempting to force the orthodox to adopt the rites and ceremonies of the Catholics by the cruellest persecutions.

From this period the history of Cyprus ceases to be connected with the records of the Greek nation, and belongs for about three centuries to the annals of the Frank domination in the East. At a later period Cyprus was nothing more than a dependency of the republic of Venice; and since its conquest by the Turks, the Greek population has been sinking, from age to age, into an inferior state of society, in consequence of the destruction of capital and property; and the island is probably at the present hour incapable of maintaining in wretchedness one-tenth of the population which it nourished in abundance at the time of its conquest by Richard, King of England.

### SECT. III

#### FOURTH CRUSADE—CONQUEST OF THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE

Religious enthusiasm and the pursuit of glory had less to do with the conduct of the fourth Crusade than with the preceding expeditions. Many of the leaders engaged in it to escape the punishment of their feudal delinquencies to the crown of France, and many were needy adventurers eager to better their condition abroad, as the prospect of improving it at home became daily more clouded. The chiefs of this Crusade concluded a treaty with the republic of Venice, which engaged to transport all who took the cross to Palestine by sea; but when the expedition assembled, the Crusaders were found to be so few, that they were unable to pay the stipulated price. Henry Dandolo, the blind old hero who was then doge, took the cross and joined them; but he appears hardly to have contemplated visiting the Holy Sepulchre, and only to have proposed guiding the operations of the Crusade in such a manner as to render it subservient to his country's interests. When the Crusaders declared their inability to pay the whole sum agreed on, Dandolo proposed that the republic should defer its claim for 34,000 marks of silver, and despatch the fleet immediately, on condition that the Crusaders should aid in reducing the city of Zara, which had lately rebelled and admitted a Hungarian garrison, again under the domination of Venice. The Crusaders consented. In vain Pope Innocent III, the greatest prince who ever sat on the papal throne, excommunicated both the

Crusaders and the republic of Venice, for turning the swords they had consecrated to the service of Christianity against Christians. Dandolo despised the excommunication, and took Zara.

While the expedition remained in Dalmatia, ambassadors from the emperor Philip of Germany solicited their assistance in behalf of his nephew, Alexius Angelos, the son of the dethroned emperor of Constantinople, Isaac II. In spite of the opposition of many French nobles, who were more pious and more amenable to papal censures than the Venetians and Italians, it was decided to attack the Byzantine empire. A treaty was signed at Zara, by which the Crusaders engaged to replace Isaac II and his son Alexius on the throne of Constantinople; and Alexius, in return, promised to pay them 200,000 marks of silver, and furnish them with provisions for a year. He further engaged to place the Eastern Church under the papal authority, to accompany the Crusaders in the holy war, or else to furnish them with a contingent of 10,000 men paid for a year, and to maintain constantly a corps of 500 cavalry for the defence of the Christian possessions in Palestine. Thus, as Nicetas says, the young Alexius quitted the ancient doctrines of the Orthodox Church to follow the novelties of the Popes of Rome.

On the 23d June 1203, the Venetian fleet, with the army of the Crusaders on board, appeared in sight of Constantinople. The Byzantine troops had been neglected both by Isaac II and Alexius III, and were now ill-disciplined and ill-officered; the citizens of Constantinople were void of patriotism, and the Greek fleet had been for some time utterly neglected. One of the heaviest of the Venetian transports, armed with an immense pair of shears, in order to bring the whole weight of the ship on the chain drawn across the entrance of the port, was impelled with all sail set against the middle of this chain, which was thus broken in two, and the whole fleet entered the Golden Horn. The Crusaders occupied Galata, and prepared to assault Constantinople. The army was divided into six divisions, and encamped on the hills above the modern suburb of Eyoub, for their numbers did not admit of their extending themselves beyond the gate of Adrianople. An attack directed against the portion of the wall opposite the centre of the camp was perseveringly carried on; and on the 17th July, a breach, caused by the fall of one of the towers, appeared practicable. A furious assault was made by the Flemish knights; but, after a long and bloody combat, they were all hewed down by the battle-axes of the English and Danes of the Varangian guard. The Greeks were less successful in defending their ramparts towards the port where they were assailed by the Venetians. High towers had been constructed over the decks of the transport ships, and the tops of the masts of the galleys were converted into little castles filled with bowmen. A number of vessels directed their attack against the same point. Showers of arrows, stones, and darts swept the defenders from the wall; the bridges were lowered from the floating towers; the Doge, in complete armour, gave the signal for the grand assault, and, ordering his own ship to press forward and secure its bridge to the ramparts, he walked himself steadily across it, and was among the first enemies who planted their feet on the pride of the city of Constantine. In an instant a dozen bridges rested on the walls, and the banner of St Mark waved on the loftiest towers that overlooked the port. Twenty-five towers were captured by the Venetians before they advanced to take possession of the city. But when they began to push onward through the narrow streets, the Greeks were enabled, by their situation, to make a vigorous defence, and often to cause their assailants severe loss by attacks on the flanks. To protect their advance, the Venetians set fire to the houses before them, and the fire soon extended from the foot of the hill of



Blachern to the monastery of Evergetes and to the Devteron. But the victory of the Byzantine forces over the Crusaders, on the land side, enabled the Greek army to follow up their advantage by attacking the Crusaders in their camp. Dandolo no sooner heard of the danger to which his allies were exposed than he nobly abandoned his own conquests, and repaired with all his force to their assistance. Night terminated the various battles of this eventful day, in which both parties had suffered great loss, without securing any decided advantage. The event was decided by the cowardice of the emperor, Alexius III, who abandoned Constantinople during the night. His brother Isaac was led from the prison in which he had been confined, and placed again on the throne, and negotiations were opened with the Crusaders. The treaty of Zara was ratified with fresh stipulations; and on the 1st of August, Alexius IV made his public entry into the city, riding between Count Baldwin of Flanders and the old Doge, Henry Dandolo, and was crowned as his father's colleague.

Isaac and Alexius soon became sensible that they had entered into engagements with the Crusaders which it was impossible for them to perform. Quarrels commenced. The disorderly conduct of the Frank soldiers, the rapacity of the feudal chiefs and of the Venetians, who deemed the wealth of the Greeks inexhaustible, and the strong feelings of religious bigotry which inflamed both parties, quickly threatened a renewal of hostilities. While things were in this state, a second conflagration, more destructive than the first, was caused by a wilful act of incendiarism committed by some Flemings. A party of soldiers, after drinking with their countrymen who were settled at Constantinople, proposed in a drunken frolic to burn the Turkish mosque, and plunder the warehouses of the Turkish merchants established in the neighbouring quarter. Their pillage was interrupted by the Greek police officers of the capital, who assembled a force to preserve order and compel the drunken Franks to respect the Byzantine laws. The Flemings, beaten back, set fire to some houses in their retreat in order to delay the pursuit; and the fire, aided by a strong wind, spread with frightful rapidity, and devastated the city during two days and nights. This conflagration traversed the whole breadth of Constantinople, from the port to the Propontis, passing close to the church of St Sophia, and laying everything in ashes for the breadth of about a mile and a half. The wealthiest quarter of the city, including the richest warehouses and the most splendid palaces of the Byzantine nobility, filled with works of ancient art, Oriental jewelery and classic manuscripts, were destroyed. Constantinople never recovered from the loss inflicted on it by this calamity. Much that was then lost could never be replaced even by the most favourable change in the circumstances of the Greeks; but the occasion was never again afforded to the inhabitants of the city to attempt the restoration of that small portion of the loss which wealth could have replaced.

The fury of the people after this dreadful misfortune knew no bounds, and all the Latins who had previously dwelt within the walls of Constantinople were compelled to emigrate, and seek safety with their wives and families at Galata, where they enjoyed the protection of the crusading army. Fifteen thousand souls are said to have quitted the capital at this time.

The Emperor Isaac II soon died. Alexius IV was dethroned and murdered by Alexius V, called Mourzouphlos. The Crusaders and Venetians, glad of a pretext for conquering the Byzantine Empire, laid siege to Constantinople, and it was taken by storm on the 12th April 1204. But before the Crusaders could make themselves masters of the immense circuit of the city, whose ramparts they had conquered, they thought it

necessary to clear their way through the heart of the dense buildings by a third conflagration, which, Villehardoin informs us, lasted through the night and all the next day. It destroyed the whole of the quarter extending from the monastery of Evergetes to the Droungarion. These three fires which the Franks had lighted in Constantinople destroyed more houses than were then contained in the three largest cities in France.

This conquest of Constantinople effected greater changes in the condition of the Greek race than any event that had occurred since the conquest of Greece by the Romans. It put an end to the reign of Roman law and civil order in the East; and to it we must trace all the subsequent evils and degradations of the Byzantine Empire, the Orthodox Church, and the Greek nation. Yet society only avenged its own wrongs. The calamities of the Greeks were caused more by the vices of the Byzantine government, and by the corruption of the Greek people, than by the superior valour and military skill of the Crusaders. The lesson is worthy of attentive study by all wealthy and highly civilised nations, who neglect moral education and military discipline as national institutions. No state, even though its civil organisation be excellent, its administration of justice impartial, and its political system popular, can escape the danger of a like fate, unless skill, discipline, and experience in military and naval tactics watch constantly over its wealth. Except men use the means which God has placed in their hands with prudence for their own defence, there can be no safety for any state, as long as kings and emperors employ themselves incessantly in drilling troops, and diverting men's minds from honest industry to ambitious projects of war.

(Universal peacemakers in the present state of society should inquire where lies the savour of truth in the Satanic observation of Voltaire, that the God of justice is always on the side of powerful armies. Divine Providence has ordained that order and science, united with a feeling of moral responsibility, give men additional force by increasing their powers of action and endurance. Military organisation has hitherto combined these qualities more completely than education has been able to infuse them into civil society. The self-respect of the individual soldier has prevented his falling so low, with reference to the military masses, as the citizen falls in the mass of mankind. Discipline and tactics have concentrated power in a higher degree than laws and education; consequently, until the political constitution of society educates the feeling of moral responsibility in the citizen as perfectly as in the soldier, and renders him as amenable to moral and political discipline as the soldier is to military, the destructive classes will look down on the productive. But when the maximum of civil education and discipline is obtained in the local communities of free governments, then the God of justice will invariably be found on the side of the citizen armed in defence of political order).

## CHAPTER IV

## LATIN EMPIRE OF ROMANIA

## SECT. I

ELECTION OF THE FIRST LATIN EMPEROR OF CONSTANTINOPLE BY  
THE CRUSADERS AND VENETIANS

Before the Crusaders made their last successful attack on Constantinople, they concluded a treaty partitioning the Byzantine Empire and dividing the plunder of the capital. This singular treaty is interesting to the general history of Europe, from the proof it affords of the facility with which the people of all the feudally constituted nations amalgamated into one political society, and formed a separate state; while it displays also in a strong point of view the marked difference that prevailed between feudal society, and the people subjected to the free institutions of the republic of Venice.

This treaty was entered into by the Frank Crusaders on the one part, and the citizens of the Venetian republic on the other, for the purpose of preventing disputes and preserving unity in the expedition.

Both Crusaders and Venetians engaged to obey the chiefs appointed by the council of the army, and to bring all the booty captured to one common stock, to be divided in the following manner. The Venetians were to receive three parts and the Franks one, until the debt originally due to the Venetian republic was discharged. After that, the surplus was to be equally divided. The provisions captured in the city of Constantinople were to form a common stock, and to be deposited in magazines, from which rations were to be issued according to the established practice as long as the expedition continued.

The Venetians were to enjoy all the honours, rights, and privileges, in the new conquests, which they possessed in their own country, and were to be allowed to constitute a community governed by the laws of Venice.

After the capture of Constantinople, twelve electors, six being Crusaders and six Venetians, were to be chosen for the purpose of electing the emperor of Romania; and these electors were to nominate the person whom they considered best able to govern the conquered country for the glory of God and of the holy Roman Church.

The emperor was to be put in possession of one quarter of the Byzantine Empire, and of the two palaces Bukoleon and Blachern, as the imperial domain. The remaining three parts of the empire were to be equally divided between the Crusaders and the Venetians.

The Patriarch was to be elected from the different party to the emperor, and the ecclesiastics were to have the same share in the church patronage as their respective parties had in the division of the empire.

All parties bound themselves to remain together for one year from the last day of March 1204; and all who established themselves permanently in any conquest made in the Byzantine Empire were bound to take the oath of fealty, and to do homage for their possessions, to the emperor of Romania.

Twelve commissioners were to be chosen by each party to divide the conquered territory into fiefs, and to determine the service due by each feudatory.

No person belonging to nations at war, either with the Crusaders or the Venetians, was to be received in the empire as long as the war lasted.

Both Crusaders and Venetians were to employ all their influence with the Pope to procure his ratification of the treaty, and to induce him to excommunicate any persons who refused to fulfil its stipulations.

The emperor elected was to bind himself by oath to execute these stipulations. In case it should be found necessary to make any addition to, or put any restriction on any clause of the treaty, the Doge of Venice, and the Marquis of Montferrat, as commander-in-chief of the Crusaders, each assisted by six councillors, were declared competent to make the necessary change. The Doge, Henry Dandolo, as a mark of personal honour and privilege, was dispensed from taking the oath of fealty to the emperor to be elected.

An act of partition of the empire was also prepared by the commissioners pointed out in this treaty; and a sketch of it appears to have been signed at the same time, or shortly after. But the copy of this draft, which has been preserved, is so unintelligible from the corrupted manner in which the names of places are written, and it underwent so many modifications and changes in the hands of the commissioners, as well as in carrying it into execution, that it is more curious as an illustration of feudal society and the spirit of the Crusaders, than valuable as a geographical document throwing light on the history of the transformation of the Byzantine empire into the feudal empire of Romania.

The conduct of the conquerors, after the capture of Constantinople, fixed an indelible stain on the name of the Franks throughout the East. They sacked the city with infamous barbarity; and the contrast afforded by the conduct of the Christians, who now took Constantinople, and the Mohammedans, who a few years before had conquered Jerusalem, may be received as an explanation of the success of the Mohammedan arms in the East at this period. When Saladin entered Jerusalem, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was respected, and the conquered Christians remained in possession of their property: no confiscations were made of the wealth of the non-combatants, nor were any driven into exile; the women were not insulted, and the poor were not enslaved. But the Christians, who had taken the cross to carry on war against the Infidel oppressors of their brethren—who had taken oaths of abstinence and chastity, and sworn to protect the innocent—plundered a Christian city without remorse, and treated its inhabitants in such a way that exile was the least evil its inhabitants had to suffer. The noblest church in Christendom, the cathedral of St Sophia, was stripped of all its rich ornaments, and then desecrated by the licentious orgies of the northern soldiers and their female companions. Nicetas recounts, with grief and indignation, that “one of these priestesses

of Satan” seated herself on the Patriarchal throne, sang ribald songs through her nose, in imitation of Greek sacred music, and then danced before the high altar. It is unnecessary to detail the sufferings of the wretched Greeks. Villehardoin, the Marshal of Romania, vouches for the extent of the disorder by saying that each soldier lodged himself in the house that pleased him best; and that many who before that day had lived in penury became suddenly wealthy, and passed the remainder of their lives in luxury. Pope Innocent III, as soon as he was informed of the disgraceful proceedings of the Crusaders, considered it his duty to express his disapprobation of their conduct in the strongest terms, and he has left us a fearful description of their wickedness. A few of the Catholic clergy endeavoured to moderate the fury which the bigoted prejudices of the papal church had instilled into the minds of the soldiery; but many priests eagerly joined in plundering relics from the altar, and made as little scruple in desecrating Greek churches and monasteries as the most licentious among the troops.

After several days spent in the wildest license, the chiefs of the Crusade at last published a severe proclamation, recalling the army to the salutary restraints of military discipline. But many soldiers were put to death; and a French knight was hung by order of the Count of St Pol, with his shield round his neck, before the authority of the leaders could be fully restored. The offence, however, which was punished with death, was not cruelty to the Greeks, and abuse of the rights of conquest towards the defenceless; it was the crime of defrauding their comrades, by embezzling part of the plunder, which excited the feelings of justice in a Christian army. Thanks were at length solemnly rendered to God for the conquest of a city containing upwards of three hundred thousand inhabitants, by an army of twenty thousand soldiers of Christ; and in the midst of their thanksgivings, the cry “God wills it” was the sincere exclamation of these pious brigands. The treasures collected from the sack of the city were deposited in three of the principal churches. Sacred plate, golden images of saints, silver candelabra from the altars, bronze statues of heathen idols and heroes, precious works of Hellenic art, crowns, coronets, and vessels of gold, thrones, and dishes of gold and silver, ornaments of diamonds, pearls, and precious stones from the imperial treasury and the palaces of the nobles; precious metals and jewellery from the shops of the goldsmiths; silks, velvets, and brocaded tissues from the warehouses of the merchants, were all heaped together with piles of coined money that had been yielded up to the exactions of personal robbery.

The whole booty amounted to three hundred thousand marks of silver, besides ten thousand horses and mules. Baldwin, count of Flanders and emperor of Romania, declares that the wealth thus placed at the disposal of the victorious army was equal to the accumulated riches of all Western Europe; and no prince then living was more competent to make a just estimate. This sum was divided into two equal parts. The Venetians then received fifty thousand marks out of the share of the Crusaders, in payment of the debt due to the republic; and the one hundred thousand marks which remained as the crusading portion was divided in the following manner: Each foot-soldier received five marks of silver, each horseman and priest ten, and each knight twenty.

This small difference between the shares of the knights and the private soldiers is a proof that the feudal militia of the time consisted of men occupying a higher social position than is generally attributed to this class. Noble or gentle birth was almost an indispensable requisite in a soldier; and when we reflect, moreover, that this required to

be united to great physical strength, and long practice in the use of arms, in order to acquire the activity necessary to move with perfect ease under the weight of heavy armour, it becomes evident that the power of recruiting armies was, at this time, restricted within such narrow limits as to make the difference between officers and privates rather one of rank than of class.

Much difficulty was found in coming to a decision on the election of the emperor. Three persons occupied so prominent a position in the Crusade that only one of these three could be appointed sovereign of the state the Crusaders were about to found; but as the new empire was to possess a feudal organisation, that very circumstance excluded Henry Dandolo, the brave old Doge of Venice, and the ablest statesman and most sagacious leader in the expedition, from the throne. The choice, therefore, remained between Boniface, marquis of Montferrat, who had hitherto acted as commander-in-chief of the land forces, and Baldwin, count of Flanders, who served with the most numerous and best appointed body of knights and soldiers under his own private banner. The military talents and experience of the marquis of Montferrat, and the wealth, liberality, valour, and virtues of the count of Flanders, made the choice between them difficult. There can be no doubt that Dandolo would have been the ablest monarch, but Venice had no power to maintain him on the throne without the support of the Crusaders; and the constitution of the Venetian republic rendered it impossible for the Doge to become a feudal sovereign, even if the Crusaders would have submitted to swear fealty to a merchant prince. The nature of the expedition, and the composition of the military force, rendered it necessary that the conquered territory should receive a feudal organisation, and it became consequently imperative to elect a feudal sovereign.

The election took place on the 9th of May, and Baldwin of Flanders was declared emperor. The character of Baldwin, his youth, power, chivalric accomplishments and civil virtues, made him the most popular prince among the Crusaders, and pointed him out to the electors as the person most likely to enjoy a long and prosperous reign. His piety and the purity of his personal conduct commanded universal respect, both among the laity and the clergy, and obtained for him the admiration even of the Greeks. He was one of the few Crusaders who paid strict attention to a part of his vows; and so rare was his virtue, and so necessary the influence of his example, that after he mounted the imperial throne he ordered it to be repeated twice every week, by a public proclamation, that all those who had been guilty of incontinency were prohibited from sleeping within the walls of his palace.

## SECT. II.

### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FEUDAL SYSTEM IN GREECE

The empire of Romania illustrates the history of feudal conquests in countries too far advanced in their social organisation to receive feudal ideas. The Greeks were far superior to the Franks in material civilisation; and the various ranks were united together more closely, and by more numerous ties, under the Byzantine laws than under the feudal system. The Manual of Armenopoulos, which presents us with a sketch of Byzantine jurisprudence in its last state of degradation, offers a picture of society far in

advance of that which is depicted in the Assize of Romania, where we are presented with the feudal code of the East in its highest state of perfection. But though the Greeks were considerably in advance of the Franks in their knowledge of law, theology, literature, arts and manufactures, they were greatly inferior to them in military science and moral discipline. The Greeks were at this period destitute of a system of education that had the power of creating and enforcing self-respect in the individual, and attachment to the principles of order in society; while the Franks, though born in political anarchy, and nurtured in warlike strife, were trained in a family discipline that nourished profound respect for a few fixed principles more valuable than learning and science, and prepared them to advance in a career of improvement as soon as circumstances modified their society into a fit scene of action for progressive amelioration. Yet, in spite of this, we find that the empire of Romania presents Frank society in a state of rapid decline and demoralisation; while the Greek empire, as soon as its capital was transferred to Asia, offers the aspect of steady improvement. The causes of this departure from the general progress of improvement among the Franks, and decline among the Greeks, were entirely political, and they are more closely connected with the administrative history of governments than the records of the nations. In order to trace their effects in connection with the government of the empire of Romania, it is necessary to review the peculiarities of the feudal system as it was now introduced among the Greeks.

The Byzantine Empire was a despotism based on the administration of the law. The sovereign was both the legislator and the judge, and was responsible only to heaven, to his own conscience, and to a rebellion of his subjects. His people had no political rights in opposition to his authority, except that of revolution.

On the other hand, the empire of Romania was a free government based on the feudal compact of copartnery in conquest. The sovereign gave lands and protection to the vassal in return for feudal services, and both parties were bound to a faithful execution of their mutual obligations. The sovereign was the superior of men who had rights which they were entitled to defend even against the emperor himself; and they were equitable judges of his conduct, for they themselves occupied a position similar to his with regard to their own inferiors. The Greeks were governed by the bonds of power; the Franks by the ties of duty. But it was impossible to transplant the feudal system into Greece exactly as it existed in Western Europe, for it became immediately separated from all the associations of ancestral dignity, family influence, personal attachments, and traditional respect, which, by interweaving moral feelings with its warlike propensities, conferred upon it some peculiar merit. In the East, the obligations of hereditary gratitude and affection, the local ties that connected homage and protection with social relations and all the best feelings of humanity and religion, were weakened, if not dissolved. In its native seats the feudal system was a system of moral and religious education, begun by the mother and the priest, and completed by practical discipline. In the Byzantine empire it became little more than a tie of personal interest, and partook of that inherent selfishness which has been the curse of Greece from the time of its autonomous cities until the present day, and which is the prominent feature of all Eastern political relations.

The nature of the army that conquered Constantinople was not calculated to replace the relaxation of feudal ties by a closer union of its members, derived from personal interests, military subordination, or the administration of justice. As Crusaders,

as Flemings, Venetians, French, Italians, and Germans, their tendency was towards separation; and even the treaty by which they engaged to effect the conquest of the Byzantine Empire only bound them to remain united until the end of March 1205. After that period, no Crusader who had not received a grant of lands in Romania owed any obedience to the emperor of Constantinople; and thus the Frank domination was left to subsist on such support as it could draw from feudal principles, from the spirit of adventure, and from the religious zeal of the Popes and the Latin Church.

In order to complete the feudal arrangements on which the strength of the empire was to repose, measures were immediately taken after the coronation of Baldwin, to carry into execution the act of partition as arranged by the joint consent of the Frank and Venetian commissioners. But their ignorance of geography, and the resistance offered by the Greeks in Asia Minor, and by the Vallachians and Albanians in Europe, threw innumerable difficulties in the way of the proposed distribution of fiefs.

The quarter of the empire that formed the portion of Baldwin consisted of the city of Constantinople, with the country in its immediate vicinity as far as Bizya and Tzouroulos in Europe, and Nicomedia in Asia. The Venetians, however, were put in possession of a quarter for themselves in the capital, within the gates of which they governed by their own magistrates and laws, living apart as if in a separate city. Beyond the territory around Constantinople, Baldwin possessed districts extending as far as the Strymon in Europe, and the Sangarius in Asia; but his possessions were intermingled with those of the Venetians and the vassals of the empire. Prokonnesos, Lesbos, Chios, Lemnos, Skyros, and several smaller islands, also fell to his share.

Boniface, marquis of Montferrat, in the first instance received a feudatory kingdom in the Asiatic provinces; but, in order to be nearer support from his hereditary principality in Italy, his share was transferred to the province of Macedonia, and he received Thessalonica as his capital, with the title of King of Saloniki. At the same time, taking advantage of a promise which he had received from Alexius IV to confer on him the island of Crete as a reward for special services rendered while commander-in-chief of the Crusaders, he assumed that he had thus obtained a legal title to that island before the signature of the treaty of partition, and he now enlarged his continental dominions by exchanging his title to Crete with the Venetians, for their title to several portions of Thessaly, besides receiving from them the sum of one thousand marks of silver.

The Venetian republic obtained three-eighths of the empire. Adrianople, and many inland towns, formed part of the territory assigned to the republic; but the Venetian senate never made any attempt to take possession of a considerable portion of its share. We have seen that the territory in Thessaly was ceded to Boniface, in exchange for Crete. Other portions were occupied by private adventurers before Venice had time to take possession of them; and many islands and maritime cities were conceded by the senate to private citizens, as fiefs of the republic, on condition that those to whom they were granted should conquer them at their own expense.

The remainder of the empire was parcelled out among a certain number of great vassals, many of whom never conquered the fiefs assigned to them; while some new adventurers, who arrived after the partition was arranged, succeeded in possessing themselves of larger shares of the spoil than most of the original conquerors. The most important of the Frank possessions in Greece was the principality of Achaia, which,



though conferred on William of Champlitte, soon passed into the hands of the younger Geoffrey Villehardoin, who had not been present at the siege of Constantinople.

### SECTION III

#### BALDWIN I

The reign of Baldwin was short and troubled. Though no braver knight, nor more loyal gentleman, ever occupied a throne, he was deficient in the prudence necessary to command success, either as a statesman or a general, and he even wanted the moderation required to secure tranquillity among his great vassals. In his first expedition to extend his territory and establish his immediate vassals in their fiefs, he involved himself in disputes with Boniface the king-marquis. The emperor announced his intention of visiting Thessalonica, in order to establish the imperial suzerainty, and confer the investiture of the kingdom of Saloniki on Boniface, whose oath of fealty he was naturally extremely anxious to receive as soon as possible. The king-marquis opposed this arrangement, as tending to exhaust the resources of his new dominions, by burdening them with the maintenance of Baldwin's army; but his real objection was that he had all along hoped to render his kingdom independent of the empire, and he wished to evade taking the oath. The mutual antipathy of the Flemings and the Lombards led them to espouse the quarrel of their princes with warmth. Baldwin marched with his army to Thessalonica; Boniface led his troops to Adrianople, and besieged the governor placed there by the emperor Baldwin. A civil war threatened to destroy the Frank empire of Romania before the Crusaders had effected the conquest of Greece; but the doge of Venice and the count of Blois succeeded, by their intervention, in re-establishing peace, and persuading Baldwin to agree to a convention, by which all disputes were arranged. Boniface did homage to the emperor for the kingdom of Saloniki, consisting of all the country from the valley of the Strymon to the southern frontier of Thessaly; and he was appointed commander-in-chief of the army of the Crusaders destined to march against Greece, in order to take possession of the fiefs appropriated to those who had been assigned their shares of the conquest in that part of the empire by the act of partition.

Next year (1205) one army, under the count of Blois and Henry of Flanders, the emperor's brother, attacked the Greeks in Asia; while another, under the king of Saloniki, invaded Greece. As soon as the Frank forces were thus dispersed, and engaged in distant operations, the Greeks of Adrianople rose in revolt, expelled the Frank garrison, and obtained assistance from Joannes, king of Bulgaria and Vallachia, who was deeply offended with the emperor Baldwin for having rejected his offers of alliance. Joannes had recently received the royal unction from a cardinal legate, deputed for the purpose by Pope Innocent III; and he conceived that, in virtue of this dignity as a Latin monarch, he was entitled to share with the Franks in dividing the Greek empire.

The emperor Baldwin, the old doge of Venice, and the count of Blois, no sooner heard of the revolt of Adrianople, than they hastened with all the troops they could collect to besiege the city. The king of Bulgaria soon arrived to relieve it, at the head of a powerful army. Baldwin rashly risked a battle with his small force, and the greater

part of his army was cut to pieces. The count of Blois and a host of knights perished on the field; the emperor was taken prisoner, and murdered by his conqueror during the first year of his captivity, though in the west of Europe his death was long doubted. The doge Dandolo, and the historian Villehardoin, marshal of the empire, were the only men of rank and military experience who survived in the camp. They hastily rallied the remains of the army, and by abandoning everything but the arms in their hands, succeeded, with great difficulty, in conducting the surviving soldiers safe to Rhedestos.

#### SECT. IV

#### HENRY OF FLANDERS. ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS. POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES. PARLIAMENT OF RAVENIKA

Henry of Flanders immediately took upon himself the direction of the administration, acting as regent until he was assured of his brother's death, when he assumed the title of emperor. But though certain tidings arrived at Constantinople of Baldwin's death, various romantic tales were long current that seemed to throw a doubt over his ultimate fate. On the 20th August 1206, Henry was crowned; and, during his whole reign, he devoted all his energy and talent to the difficult task of endeavouring to give a political as well as military organisation to the heterogeneous elements of his empire. The cruel ravages of the Bulgarian troops—who, after the battle of Adrianople, were allowed by Joannes to plunder the whole country, from Serres to Athyras—taught the Greeks to regret the more regular and moderate exactions of the Franks, and many voluntarily made their submission to Henry, who treated all his subjects with mildness. He possessed more military as well as civil capacity than his unfortunate brother, and carried on war successfully against the king of the Bulgarians, in Europe, and against Theodoric Laskaris, the Greek emperor of Nicaea, in Asia.

The internal organisation of the Frank Empire presented a series of obstacles to the introduction of order and regular government, that no genius could have removed in less than a generation. Henry effected wonders in his short reign; but all he did proved nugatory, from the incapacity of his successors. His great success was in part due to the popularity he acquired by his mild and conciliatory conduct, perhaps quite as much as to his political sagacity and brilliant courage. The situation of his empire was every way anomalous. Its foundation by Crusaders acting under papal authority, and serving avowedly as a means of carrying on holy wars, conferred on Innocent III a just pretext for interfering in its internal affairs. The emperor and barons also, standing constantly in need of new recruits in order to maintain and extend their conquests, could not fail to feel the necessity of conciliating the pontiff, by whose influence these recruits could be most easily obtained. Though the conquest of the Byzantine empire had been made in express violation of the commands of Innocent III, that Pope showed a determination to profit by the crime as soon as it was perpetrated, and displayed a willingness to promote the views of the Crusaders, on condition that the affairs of the church should be settled in a manner satisfactory to the papal see. There were, nevertheless, so many discordant interests and class rivalities at work in the ecclesiastical condition of the new empire, that it required all the talents of Innocent III, the greatest of the Popes, and all the

moderation and firmness of Henry of Flanders, the most conciliatory of emperors, to avoid open quarrels between the church and state. The Pope was determined to maintain the same control over the church in the East which he had laid claim to in the West. Without this authority, the union of the Greek and Latin churches had little signification at the papal court, where the union could only be regarded as consummated when the patriarch of Constantinople was reduced to the condition of a suffragan of the bishop of Rome. The habits of thought of the Greeks, the nature of the civil administration of the empire, and the power over ecclesiastical affairs which the emperor of Romania had inherited from his Byzantine predecessors, all opposed the papal pretensions. Even the Latin clergy were not united in a disposition to submit implicitly to the papal authority. The Venetian republic was still less so, for it directly attacked some of the prerogatives arrogated by the Popes, and alarmed by the terms of its opposition even the fearless Innocent. It secured the election of a Venetian as patriarch of Constantinople; and though the Pope annulled the election as illegal, still, in order to avoid a direct collision with the Venetians, who would probably not have allowed a patriarch selected by Innocent to put his foot in Constantinople, he appointed Thomas Morosini, who had already been elected to the dignity, to be the lawful patriarch by papal authority. The Venetians were indifferent by what subterfuges Innocent thought fit to salve his vanity and waive his pretensions.

It is always dangerous for a sovereign whose power rests directly on public opinion, to swerve from the cause of truth and justice. The spirit of temporisation displayed by Innocent with regard to the Crusaders, from the time they abandoned the real object for which they had assumed the cross, weakened his moral influence and now diminished his power. When he disapproved of the attack on Constantinople, and reprobated the array of a Christian army, with the cross shining on the breast of every soldier, against the largest city of Christendom, it was expected by the Crusaders that he would overlook their offence with the same facility with which he had pardoned the storming of Zara. Their anticipations were not false, for the Pope readily accepted their success as a proof that the will of Heaven had sanctified their act of injustice, and the Holy Father recommended the conquerors to retain possession of a country which God had delivered into their hands. He confirmed the relief from the excommunication under which he had himself placed the army, though it had taken place by his legate without his express order; and he thus gave a warrant even for churchmen to tamper with the papal authority in political matters. Innocent likewise tolerated the legate's absolution of the Crusaders from their vow to visit the Holy Land, on condition that they served an additional year against the Greeks; and he wrote to the archbishops of France, to recommend them to recruit the ranks, both of the clergy and the troops in the Latin empire, by promises of riches, and of absolution for their sins to the emigrants. These concessions of justice to policy, and the open deference shown by the head of the church to worldly success, were not unobserved by the conquerors. The Venetians viewed them as the time-serving policy of priestly ambition, while the more superstitious Franks received them as a guarantee that all their crimes were pardoned by heaven, on account of their zeal against the Greek heretics.

Under the guidance of such principles, the disorders in the church soon became intolerable. The Venetians endeavoured to bind the Patriarch to appoint only Venetian priests to the vacant sees; the Frank clergy refused to receive the Venetian patriarch as their superior; and Morosini, on his arrival at Constantinople, commenced his functions

by excommunicating half the clergy of the empire. Many priests, after receiving grants of fiefs, compelled the Greeks on these estates to purchase the rent or service due from the land, and, when they had collected the money, they abandoned the fief and returned to their native country with these dishonest gains. To these difficulties with the Pope, the Crusaders, the Venetians, and the Frank clergy, were added the embarrassments that arose in regulating the relations between the Latin clergy and the priests of the Greek church, who had united with the papal church, as well as the relations between the papal church and those Greeks who still denied the Pope's supremacy, and adhered to their national usages and to the doctrines of the orthodox church.

At length, in order to settle the ecclesiastical affairs of the empire, a convention was signed between the papal legate and the Latin patriarch on the one hand, and the emperor Henry and the barons, knights, and commons of the Crusaders on the other—for the Venetians took no part in the act—in the month of March 1206. By this arrangement, a fifteenth of all the conquered lands and possessions was to be ceded to the Latin church, excepting, however, the property within the walls of Constantinople, and the town-dues of that city. All the Greek monasteries were to be surrendered to the papal power without being regarded as included in the fifteenth.

Tithes were to be paid by the Catholics on all their revenues, whether derived from the fruits of the earth, cattle, bees, or wool; and if the Greeks could be induced to pay tithes to the Latin clergy, the civil power was to offer no resistance. The clergy, the religious orders, and all monks and nuns, whether Latins or Greeks, the households of ecclesiastics, the churches, church property, and monasteries, with all their tenants, and all persons who might seek refuge in the sanctuaries, were to be exempted from the civil jurisdiction, as in France; reserving, however, in such cases, the authority of the papal see, and of the patriarchate of Constantinople, and the honour of the emperor and the empire. Thus a nation of ecclesiastics, living under their own peculiar laws and usages, and amenable neither to the imperial legislation nor to feudal organisation, was established in the heart of the empire of Romania. The Venetians, who were not included in this convention, obstinately refused to pay tithes to the church; nor did Innocent venture to proceed with vigour either against them or against the refractory Greeks, from the dread of causing a close alliance between the two.

The civil affairs of the empire were in as great confusion as the ecclesiastical, and presented even greater difficulties in the way of their ultimate arrangement. The nature of the conquest divided the inhabitants into two distinct classes of Greeks and Latins, whose separation was rendered permanent by the feudal system, as well as by national divergences of manners and religious opinions. The Franks formed a small dominant class of foreign warriors, many of whom were constantly returning to the lands of their birth, where they held ancestral estates and honours, while many died without leaving posterity. Their numbers consequently required to be perpetually recruited by new bodies of immigrants. From the hour of the conquest, too, the conquerors began to diminish in number, even from the operation of that law of population which devotes all privileged classes to a gradual decay. The Greeks, on the other hand, composed a numerous, wealthy, and organised society, dwelling in their native seats, perpetuating their numbers by the natural social amalgamation of classes, and increasing their strength by being compelled to abandon their previous habits of luxury and idleness, and turn their attention to imitating the warlike manners of their new masters. Other causes of discord existed, equally irremediable except by the slow

progress of time, yet which called for immediate palliatives. The Crusaders and the Venetians had each their own political views and interests; while the Crusaders were incapable of complete union or harmonious action, from the variety of nations that brought their respective antipathies to the common stock. The Flemish, Italian, French, and German nobility had all their private grounds of alliance and offence. The position of the Greek landed proprietors, who were willing to become vassals of the empire, and to join the Latin church, and of the Greek citizens, cultivators, artisans, and labourers who adhered to their national church and usages, all required to be regulated by positive laws. The relations between the emperor of Romania, the king of Saloniki, the great feudatories and the lesser barons, though sufficiently defined by the feudal system, required to be strictly determined by express enactment; for the moral force of feudality, which prevented the progress of anarchy in Western Europe, was wanting in the Eastern Empire. It was necessary, therefore, to frame a list of all the fiefs in the empire, like the Domesday Book of England; and a code of feudal usages, like the Assize that had been framed for the kingdom of Jerusalem.

The Venetians, who possessed a large share of the empire, could not be subjected to the strict feudal regime of the Crusaders, nor to the precise rules of the Byzantine civil law. Yet, though living beyond the control of feudal usages, they arrogated to themselves the privileges of the dominant classes even while acting in professional rivalry with the conquered. Other trading communities from every country, both of the East and the West, had companies of merchants established at Constantinople; and, whether they were Pisans, Catalans, Genoese, Flemings, Germans, Syrians, or Armenians, they all claimed to regulate the administration of justice among themselves, according to their respective laws and usages.

The subject Greeks had their own code, and their own judicial establishments organised with a degree of completeness that must have impressed the more enlightened members of the Crusading army with astonishment and admiration. The conquerors immediately felt the necessity of respecting the superior civilisation of the conquered. The laws of Justinian, as modified in the Greek compilation, called the Basilika, remained in full force, and entailed on the Crusaders the necessity of leaving the administration of justice and of the municipal affairs, with a considerable portion of the fiscal business of government, in the hands of the Greeks, on nearly the same footing as they had been under the last Byzantine emperors. The citizens preserved some local privileges; they elected magistrates to perform some few duties, they took part in framing the regulations and local bye-laws under which they lived, and to a certain extent they controlled the administration of the municipal revenues and communal property. In short, the Frank emperors of Romania, as far as the majority of their Greek subjects were concerned, occupied the position and exercised the authority of the Byzantine emperors they had displaced.

The marriage of the emperor Henry with the daughter of Boniface, king of Saloniki, preserved union between these two sovereigns. But after Boniface was unfortunately killed in the war with the Bulgarians, discussions arose between the emperor and the guardians of the kingdom. Demetrius, the son of Boniface by his second marriage with the dowager-empress Margaret, widow of Isaac II, succeeded to the crown of Saloniki by his father's will. The empress Margaret (daughter of Bela III, king of Hungary) acted as regent for her son, who was only two years old; but count Biandrate, a Lombard noble connected with the family of Montferrat, was elected by the

nobles and the army as bailly and guardian, to carry on the feudal administration and lead the vassals of the crown. The policy of the bailly was directed to strengthening as far as possible the connection of the kingdom of Saloniki with Italy, and with the marquisate of Montferrat, and to dissolving the feudal ties that bound it to the empire of Romania. He was accused by the Flemings of endeavouring to transfer the crown of the young Demetrius to the head of the marquis William, his elder brother; but it does not appear that his plan really extended beyond effecting a close union between the power and dominions of the two brothers, and garrisoning all the fortresses of the kingdom of Saloniki with Lombard troops, whom he was compelled to recruit in Italy in great numbers.

The conduct of count Biandrate rendered it necessary for the emperor Henry to subdue the spirit of independence which manifested itself among the Lombards without loss of time, or the empire of Romania would have been soon dissolved. The count was accordingly summoned to do homage at the imperial court for the young king, and to deliver up the fortresses of the kingdom, to be guarded by the Suzerain according to the obligations of the feudal law; and the emperor marched with a body of troops towards Thessalonica, to hold a court for receiving the oath of fealty. But Biandrate replied to the summons, that the kingdom of Saloniki had been conquered by the arms of the Lombards; and he boldly refused to allow the emperor to enter Thessalonica, except on the condition of recognising the claim of the king of Saloniki to the immediate superiority over the country actually conquered by the Crusaders, as well as all the unconquered territory south of Thessalonica and Dyrrachium, including the great fiefs of Boudonitza, Salona, Thebes, Athens, Negrepont, and Achaia.

Henry now found himself sorely embarrassed; for, not contemplating any serious opposition, he had quitted Constantinople with few troops, and was encamped in the open country of Chalkidike, where the winter suddenly set in with intense severity. All his councillors advised him to consent to any terms that might be offered, in order to save the lives of his followers, by gaining immediate shelter within the walls of Thessalonica. The clergy who attended the expedition promised to absolve him from any sin he might commit, by subsequently violating the engagements that necessity compelled him to accept, if they should be contrary to the feudal constitution of the empire. Under these circumstances, the emperor promised everything that the Lombards demanded; but he soon found a pretext for violating his promises, after he had succeeded in establishing his troops in Thessalonica.

In order to determine definitively the feudal relations of all the subjects of the empire, in the month of May 1209 Henry convoked a high court of his vassals, or a parliament of Romania, to meet at the small town of Ravenika (ancient Chalkidike, fifty miles from Thessalonica). His principal object was to receive the homage and oath of fealty from all the tenants-in-chief in the country south of the kingdom of Saloniki, and to grant such investitures of fiefs and offices as might be required to put an end to all pretensions of superiority similar in nature to those advanced by count Biandrate. The claim of the bailly of the kingdom of Saloniki rendered this step absolutely necessary, for the Lombards had already made considerable encroachments on the possessions of the great feudatories who had received their portion of the spoils of the empire in Greece. Otho de la Roche, the signor of Athens, had been deprived of Thebes. The parliament of Ravenika was consequently viewed with favour by the barons of the south, who were not Lombards, and who naturally preferred to remain direct feudatories

of the emperor of Romania, in his distant capital at Constantinople, to being converted into subordinate vassals of a neighbouring Italian king. On this occasion the constable and marshal of the kingdom of Saloniki, the barons of Boudonitza, Negrepont, Athens, and Naxos, the bailly of Achaia, and other tenants-in-chief of the empire in Greece, whose names and possessions have not been preserved, made their appearance at the court of Henry, and fulfilled their feudal obligations. Everything was done by Henry that lay in his power, in order to attach the great vassals to the imperial crown. Thebes was restored to Otho de la Roche, who received the investiture both of it and Athens; Mark Sanudo was invested with his conquest of Naxos, and other islands, under the title of Duke of the Archipelago; and Geoffrey Villehardoin the younger, bailly of Achaia, in the absence of his prince, William de Champlitte, was appointed seneschal of Romania, that he might become a great feudatory in virtue of his office.

A determined effort was also made to restrain the ecclesiastical power. This became necessary, from the facility with which the Crusaders, who were on the point of returning home, lavished their possessions on the church. To such an extent was this liberality carried, that there seemed to be some danger of the ecclesiastics acquiring possession of the greater part of the fiefs throughout the empire, in which case the country would have been left without military defenders. Henry and the great barons now ratified an edict which had been already published, prohibiting all grants of land to the church or to monasteries, either by donation or testament; leaving sinners to purchase their peace with heaven, through the agency of the priesthood, out of the proceeds of their movable property alone. This regulation, as might be expected, was violently opposed by a Pope so ambitious as Innocent III, who immediately declared it null and void. But necessity compelled the emperor and the barons to adhere to their decision; and they enforced the edict, in spite of the Pope's dissatisfaction and threats. The ecclesiastical affairs of the kingdom of Saloniki, and of the great fiefs in Greece, as far as the Isthmus of Corinth, and the relations which the possessions of the church were to hold, with reference to those of the feudal lords, were also regulated by a convention with the patriarch Morosini, and the metropolitans of Larissa, Neopatras, and Athens. By this convention the signors engaged to put the church in possession of all its lands, and to acknowledge and support the rights of the Latin clergy and their dependants. This convention, being extremely favourable to the views of the papal see, was ratified with much pleasure by Innocent III.

Count Biandrate and the Lombard army continued nevertheless to resist the emperor and the parliament, and determined to defend their possessions with the sword. Henry, therefore, found himself compelled to take the field against them, in order to establish the imperial power in Greece on a proper feudal basis. He met with no resistance until he arrived at Thebes, in which count Biandrate had assembled the best portion of the Lombard troops. The army of Henry was repulsed in an attempt to take the place by assault; and it was not without great difficulty, and more by negotiation than force, that the imperial army at last entered Thebes. The emperor immediately restored it to Otho de la Roche, its rightful signor. Henry then visited the city of Negrepont, where the signor of the island, Ravan dalle Carcere, induced Biandrate to make his peace with Henry; and the Lombard count soon after retired to Italy, leaving the empress-queen Margaret regent for her son, under the usual restrictions in favour of the suzerain's rights over the fortresses of his vassal while a minor.

A treaty was also concluded about this time between Henry and Michael, the Greek sovereign of Epirus, Great Vallachia, Acarnania, and Etolia, who consented to do homage for his possessions to avoid war. The Greek naturally attached little importance to a ceremony which he regarded only as a public acknowledgment of the superior power of the Latin emperor

The remainder of Henry's reign was a scene of constant activity. At one time, he was engaged in defending the empire against foreign enemies; at another, he was forced to protect his Greek subjects against the tyranny of Pelagius, the papal legate, who made an attempt to compel all the orthodox Greeks to join the Latin rite, and by his own authority shut up the Greek churches and monasteries, and imprisoned the most active among the Greek clergy. A rebellion was on the point of breaking out, when the emperor ordered all the priests to be released, and the churches and monasteries to be reopened. The emperor Henry died, universally regretted, in the year 1216.

## SECT. V

### PETER OF COURTENAY. ROBERT. BALDWIN II. EXTINCTION OF THE EMPIRE OF ROMANIA

The eastern empire of Romania, like the western or Germanic Holy Roman empire, was considered elective; but feudal prejudices, and the feudal organisation of the thirteenth century, stamped its government with an hereditary form, and the law of succession adopted in practice was that established for the great fiefs in France. Yoland, sister of the emperors Baldwin and Henry, was the person having a prior claim to the heritage; but as her sex excluded her from the imperial crown, her husband, Peter of Courtenay, was elected emperor by the barons of Romania. Peter was detained in France for some time, collecting a military force strong enough to enable him to visit his new empire with becoming dignity. When his army was assembled he visited Rome, where he received the imperial crown from the hands of Pope Honorius III. He landed in Epirus, to the south of Dyrrachium, with the intention of marching through the territories of Theodore, despot of Epirus, who had succeeded Michael as sovereign of that country; but he had entered into no arrangements with Theodore, hoping to force his way through the mountains by the Via Egnatia without difficulty. He was attacked on his march by the troops of Theodore; his army was routed, and he perished in the prisons of the despot of Epirus.

The empress Yoland reached Constantinople by sea; and as soon as she heard of her husband's captivity and death, undertook the regency in the absence of her eldest son, Philip count of Namur, who was regarded as heir to the imperial crown. Yoland died in 1219; but before her death, she secured the tranquillity of the empire by renewing the treaty of peace with the Greek emperor at Nicaea, Theodore Laskaris.

Philip of Namur refused to quit his Belgian county for the dignity of the emperor of Romania, and his younger brother, Robert, was elected emperor in his stead. Conon of Bethune, who had been the principal councillor of the emperor Henry, and had acted



as regent in the period that elapsed between the death of Yoland and the arrival of Robert, unfortunately for the empire died shortly after the coronation of Robert.

The race of warriors who had founded the empire was now nearly extinct, and most of their successors possessed neither the military talents nor the warlike disposition of their fathers. The Crusaders had been soldiers by choice, and great barons by accident. They were men who felt the physical necessity of active exertion; their successors were only soldiers from necessity, and because their position compelled them to appear in arms to defend their sovereign's throne and their own fiefs. The training they received may have fitted them for the tilt-yard, but it did not furnish them with the military qualifications required for a campaign. There was also another difference still more injurious to their position. Their fathers had commanded enthusiastic and experienced soldiers; the sons were compelled to lead inexperienced vassals or hired mercenaries. Many of the new barons, too, were younger sons, who possessed no revenues except what they drew from their Eastern fiefs, and consequently no nursery to supply them with the hardy followers who had supported the power of their fathers. Unfortunately for the Latin power, only the weaker-minded portion of the western nobility considered Greece a country in which glory and wealth could be gained; the young barons of Romania, consequently, were generally persons who thought more of enjoying their position than of improving it for the advantage of their posterity. The wealth, both of the emperor Robert and his barons, was consumed in idle pomp, and in what was called upholding the dignity of the imperial court, instead of being devoted to the administrative and military necessities of their respective positions. The number of experienced soldiers daily decreased in the Frank Empire, while the Greeks, observing the change, pressed forward with augmented energy. The Frank army was defeated by the emperor John III Vatatzes, at the battle of Pemanon, in the year 1224, and shortly after Adrianople was captured by Theodore, the despot of Epirus. From these wounds the empire of Romania never recovered.

The emperor Robert possessed neither the valour required to defend his dominions, nor the prudence necessary to regulate his own conduct. A fearful tragedy, enacted in the imperial palace with the greatest publicity, revealed to the whole world his weakness, and called the attention of all to his vices. The daughter of the knight of Neuville, one of the veteran Crusaders, recently dead, was betrothed to a Burgundian knight, when the young emperor fell in love with the fair face of the lady. His suit, aided by the favour of the mother, won her heart, and he persuaded mother and daughter to take up their residence in the palace. The rejected Burgundian, as soon as he saw his betrothed bride established as the emperor's mistress, vowed to obtain a deep revenge. The unheard-of boldness and daring of his project secured it the most complete success in all its horrible details. He assembled his relatives, friends, and followers; and, with this small band of adherents in complete armour, walked into the palace, where no suspicion of any outrage was entertained. Guided by a friendly assistant, he forced his way into the women's apartments, where the young lady's mother was seized, carried off by his friends, and drowned in the Bosphorus. The daughter was at the same time mutilated by her rejected lover, who cut off her nose and lips, and then left her in this frightful condition filling the palace with her moans, to receive such consolation as her imperial lover could bring. The spirit of the age excused this inhuman vengeance of the Burgundian knight; but it would equally have excused Robert, had he seized him immediately, and ordered him to be hung in his armour before the palace gates, with his

shield round his neck. The emperor was so weak and contemptible that he was unable to punish this barbarous outrage and personal insult even by legal forms. He felt the insult, however, which he could not avenge, so deeply, that shame drove him from Constantinople to seek military assistance from the Pope, by which he hoped to make his power more feared. He died in the Morea on his way back from Rome in 1228.

Baldwin, the younger brother of Robert, was not ten years old when the succession opened to him. The situation of the empire required an experienced sovereign, and the barons proceeded to elect John de Brienne, titular king of Jerusalem, who at the time was acting as commander-in-chief of the Papal army, emperor-regent for life. The conditions on which the imperial throne was conferred on John de Brienne afford an instructive illustration of the political views and necessities of the period. Brienne was a warrior of great renown, and his election was warmly promoted by Pope Gregory IX; but he was already eighty years of age, and he had not retained the activity of his mind and the vigour of his body in the same degree as the doge Henry Dandolo. By the terms of the convention between John de Brienne and the barons of the empire of Romania, Brienne was declared emperor, and invested with the imperial power during his life. He was bound to furnish Baldwin with an establishment suitable to his rank as heir-apparent to the empire, until he attained the age of twenty, when he was to be invested with the government of the Asiatic provinces. Baldwin was to marry Mary the daughter of John de Brienne; and the heirs of John de Brienne were to receive, as a hereditary fief on the accession of Baldwin, either the possessions of the imperial crown in Asia beyond Nicomedia, or those in Europe beyond Adrianople. This act was concluded in 1229; but the valour and experience of John de Brienne were inadequate to restore the shattered fabric of the Latin power. The barons, knights, and soldiers seemed all to be rapidly dying out, and no vigorous and warlike youth arose to replace them. The enormous pay then required by knights and men-at-arms rendered it impossible for the declining revenues of the empire to purchase the services of any considerable number of mercenaries. The position of soldiers in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was, in one respect, like that of barristers in London at present. There were great prizes to be won, as Robert Guiscard and John de Brienne testify; but, on the whole, the number of amateurs was so great, that the whole pay received by the class was insufficient to cover the annual expenditure of its members. John de Brienne died in 1237, after living to witness his empire confined to a narrow circuit round the walls of Constantinople.

Baldwin II prolonged the existence of the empire by begging assistance from the Pope and the King of France; and he collected the money necessary for maintaining his household and enjoying his precarious position, by selling the holy relics preserved by the Eastern Church. He was fortunate in finding a liberal purchaser in St Louis. The fear of the Mongols, who were then ravaging all Asia, and the rivalry of the Greek empire and the Bulgarian kingdom, also tended to prolong the existence of the empire of Romania after it had lost all power and energy. But at length, in the year 1261, a division of the Greek army surprised Constantinople, expelled Baldwin, and put an end to the Latin power, without the change appearing to be a revolution of much importance beyond the walls of the city. The feudal nobility appeared to be extinct, and the Latin Church suddenly to have melted away. The clergy, indeed, had consumed the wealth of their benefices quite as disgracefully as the nobles had wasted their fortunes; for we learn, from the correspondence of Pope Innocent III, that they at times alienated their

revenues and retired to their native countries, carrying off even the communion plate and the relics from the churches in the East. There is nothing surprising in the pitiful end of a society so demoralised.

## CHAPTER V

## KINGDOM OF SALONIKI

Boniface, marquis of Montferrat, having held the office of commander-in-chief of the Crusaders before the establishment of the empire of Romania, affected to regard his kingdom as an independent monarchy. This plan failed through the prompt energy of Baldwin I, and he was compelled to do homage to the imperial crown; but when he obtained the command of the division of the Crusaders which marched to establish itself in Greece, he endeavoured to indemnify himself for his first failure, by inducing the barons, who received lands to the south of his own frontier in Thessaly, to accept investiture from and do homage for their possessions to him. Yet whether this homage was really accorded to him in any other capacity than as commander-in-chief of the army, and lieutenant-general of the empire of Romania, may be doubted. Indeed, it is very improbable that the grand feudatories could have been persuaded to swear fealty to the kingdom of Saloniki. The operations of Boniface against Greece were crowned with success. Leo Sgouros, the Byzantine governor of Nauplia and Argos, after taking possession of Corinth, Athens, and Thebes, had led a Greek army northward to the Sperchius, for the purpose of defending Greece against the Franks. But the Greek troops were unable to make a stand even at the pass of Thermopylae, where they were disgracefully routed, and fled, with Leo, to shelter themselves within the walls of the Acrocorinth, abandoning all the country north of the isthmus to the army of the Crusaders. Boniface established all those who had been assigned shares of the conquered district in their fiefs, and marched into the Peloponnesus, where he laid siege to Corinth and Argos at the same time, even with the reduced army under his command. At this juncture, he was suddenly recalled to the north by the news of a rebellion in Thessalonica. This he soon repressed; but not very long after, as has already been mentioned, he was slain in a skirmish with the Bulgarians, (A. D. 1207.) His death was the commencement of a series of misfortunes, that soon ruined the kingdom of Saloniki, which he had been so eager to extend.

This feudatory kingdom bore within itself the seeds of its own destruction. The Lombards, by whom it was founded, were not so much under the influence of feudal organisation as the other Crusaders, nor so commercial and intelligent as the Venetian. Their social position had been modified by their intercourse with the republics and free cities of Italy. Money was, therefore, necessary to a larger amount than in the other conquests of the Crusaders, and yet the Lombards were as incapable of creating wealth for their government as any of the Franks. Though Saloniki was regarded rather in the light of a colonial dependency than as a feudal kingdom, still the Lombards thought

only of profiting by the acquisition as military men paid to govern and garrison the fortresses and towns, and took no measures to occupy and cultivate the land.

The personal friendship and family alliance of Boniface and Henry preserved peace until the king's death. But we have seen that Count Biandrate, impelled either by his own ambition or by the grasping spirit of the Lombards, adopted a policy that involved the kingdom in hostilities with the empire, which ended in the fortresses of the kingdom being forced to receive Belgian garrisons, and, consequently, in greatly diminishing the number of Lombard troops in the kingdom. Yet an Italian colony at Thessalonica, though surrounded by powerful enemies, might have maintained its ground more easily than the Belgians at Constantinople, had the government been able and prudent. The minority of Demetrius, to whom Boniface had left his crown, completed the ruin of the state. His mother, the queen-empress Margaret, acted as regent; and, after the retreat of Count Biandrate, the military command of the fortresses was vested in officers named by the emperor Henry. Under such a partition of power, the resources of the country were naturally consumed in the most unprofitable manner, and the people became eager for any change, hoping that it could not fail to better their condition. While the emperor Henry lived, he protected the kingdom effectually, both against the king of Bulgaria and the despot of Epirus, its two most dangerous enemies. But after the defeat and death of Peter of Courtenay, it was left exposed to the attacks of Theodore, despot of Epirus, who invaded it with a powerful army.

In the year 1222, while the young king Demetrius, then only seventeen years old, was still in Italy, completing his military education at the court of his brother, the marquis of Montferrat, the despot Theodore took Thessalonica, and subdued the whole kingdom. In order to efface all memory of the Lombard royalty by the creation of a new and higher title, he was crowned emperor at Thessalonica by the archbishop of Achrida, patriarch of Macedonian Bulgaria.

William, marquis of Montferrat, had been invested with the guardianship of the kingdom of Saloniki by Peter of Courtenay while that emperor was at Rome, and the marquis no sooner heard of the loss of his brother's dominions, than he determined to make an expedition for their recovery. The conquest of Thessalonica by the Greeks had also excited lively indignation on the part of Pope Honorius III, who felt that the stability of the papal power throughout Greece was seriously compromised by this reaction in favour of the Greek Church. His holiness, therefore, willingly assisted the marquis of Montferrat with funds, to enable him to enrol a large body of troops for the recovery of his brother's heritage. The Pope even authorised a Crusade, to re-establish Demetrius as king of Saloniki. Great delays occurred before the marquis William was able to assemble an army but at length, in the year 1225, he quitted Italy, accompanied by his brother Demetrius, at the head of a well-organised force. Their expedition sailed from Brindisi, and the army, landing at the ports of Epirus, marched over the mountains into the plain of Thessaly, without sustaining any loss—so admirably had the young marquis combined the movement of his squadrons, and taken measures for securing them abundant supplies of provisions on the road. But just as the army was commencing its operations in the extensive plains, which offered ground best suited to the movements of the heavy cavalry of which it was composed, the marquis William was attacked by the autumnal fever of the country, and died in the course of a few days. The young Demetrius, finding himself unable to manage the vassals of his brother's marquisate, and the fierce mercenaries who formed the most efficient portion of the

army, was obliged to abandon this attempt to recover his kingdom, and retire to Italy. He died two years after, while engaged in endeavours to form a new expedition, A. D. 1227.

The death of Demetrius induced several European princes, under the guidance of feudal vanity, to assume the empty title of king of Saloniki, though none ever regained possession of any portion of the kingdom they pretended to claim. The family of Montferrat naturally considered the crown as descending to the male heirs of the last king, though Demetrius had appointed the emperor Frederic II his heir by testament. The emperor Frederic II, however, formally renounced all his right to the succession of Demetrius (A.D. 1239) in favour of Boniface III, marquis of Montferrat, who had already assumed the title of king of Saloniki. William dalle Carcere, baron of Negrepont, who married a niece of Demetrius, appears to have assumed the title after the death of marquis Boniface III; but it was also assumed at the same time by William V, marquis of Montferrat, called the Great or Long-sword, who ceded it, with all his claims to the territory of Thessalonica, as the dowry of his daughter Irene, on her marriage with the Greek emperor, Andronicus II, in the year 1284. Thus the title of the descendants of the founder of the kingdom became united with the sovereignty of the Byzantine Empire.

After Baldwin II was driven from Constantinople, he affected to consider the fief of the kingdom of Saloniki as having been reunited to the empire on the death of Demetrius; and in order to purchase the aid of the house of Burgundy for recovering his throne, he ceded the title of King of Saloniki, as a fief of his imaginary empire, to Hugh IV, duke of Burgundy, in the year 1266. Hugh transmitted the empty title, for which he never rendered any service, to his brother Robert, from whom it passed to his nephew Hugh V. Hugh V, duke of Burgundy, became party to a series of diplomatic arrangements connected with the lost empire of Romania and the valuable principality of Achaia, that took place at Paris in 1312; and he then ceded his title to the imaginary kingdom to his younger brother Louis, who became Prince of Achaia by his marriage with Maud of Hainault, the possessor of that principality. On the death of Louis, the title returned to Eudes IV, duke of Burgundy, his surviving brother, who sold all his claims to the imaginary possessions of his family in the East, to Philip of Tarentum, the titular emperor of Romania, in the year 1320. After this we find no further mention of a kingdom of Saloniki.

CHAPTER VI  
DESPOTAT OF EPIRUS—EMPIRE OF THESSALONICA.  
A.D. 1204-1469

SECTION I  
ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT GREEK PRINCIPALITY IN  
EPIRUS

That portion of the Byzantine empire situated to the west of the range of Pindus, was saved from feudal domination by Michael, a natural son of Constantine Angelos, the uncle of the Emperors Isaac II and Alexius III. After the conquest of Constantinople, he escaped into Epirus, where his marriage with a lady of the country gave him some influence; and assuming the direction of the administration of the whole country from Dyrrachium to Naupactus, he collected a considerable military force, and established the seat of his authority generally at Ioannina or Arta. The civil government of his principality was a continuation of the Byzantine forms; and there was no interruption in the territory over which he ruled of the ordinary dispensation of justice by the existing tribunals, nor of the regular payment of the usual taxes. The despotat of Epirus was merely a change in the name of the government, not a revolution in the condition of the people. But the political necessity in which Michael was placed, of preserving his power by the maintenance of a large and permanent military force, gave his administration a barbarous and rude character, more in accordance with the nature of his army, and of the mountaineers he ruled, than with the constitution of his civil government. The absence of all feudal organisation, and the employment of a large body of native militia, mingled with hired mercenaries, gave the despotat of Epirus a Byzantine type, and kept it perfectly distinct from the Frank principalities by which it was almost entirely surrounded.

The population of the territory of which Michael assumed the sovereignty, consisted of different races in various grades of civilisation. The Greeks were generally confined to the towns, and were in a flourishing condition; many were wealthy merchants and prosperous traders, as well as large proprietors of land in the richest districts round the towns, and particularly in the vicinity of Ioannina and Arta. The Vallachian population inhabited the country called Great Vlachia, which still acknowledged the authority of its own princes; but as it was pressed back on the great range of mountains to the south and west of the Thessalian plains, it readily united its force under the authority of a Byzantine leader like Michael, from whose ambition it had evidently less to fear than from the intrusion of the rapacious Franks. The Albanians, broken into tribes and engaged in local quarrels or predatory warfare with their wealthier neighbours, readily acknowledged the supremacy of a chief who offered liberal pay to all the native warriors who joined his standard. The despots of Epirus long

ruled their dominions by employing the various resources of the different classes of their subjects for the general good, and restraining their hostile jealousies more mildly, yet more effectually, than it would have been in the power of any one of the classes, if rendered dominant, to have done. The wealth of the Greeks furnished a considerable pecuniary revenue, which enabled the despots to maintain a respectable army of mercenaries; and round this force they could assemble the Albanian mountaineers without fear of seditious conduct on the part of that dangerous militia. The government thus acquired the power, rarely possessed by the masters of this wild country, of arresting the predatory habits of the native mountain tribes. The fear of the Franks rendered the Vallachians obedient subjects whenever a force was required to resist foreign invasion. The mountain brigands, who had wasted the country under the latter Byzantine emperors, were now paid to fight the common enemies; and military courage, instead of being denied official employment by rapacious courtiers from Constantinople, became a means of securing wealth and honour. The public taxes, no longer transmitted to a distant land to be lavished in idle pomp, were expended in the country, and the exigencies of the times insured their being employed in such a way as to produce a greater degree of order, and a more effectual protection for property, than the distant government at Constantinople had been able to afford. These circumstances explain how it happened that Michael succeeded in checking the progress of the warlike Franks, and in creating an independent principality with the discordant elements of the population of Epirus. It must not, moreover, be overlooked, that the geographical configuration of the country, and the rugged nature of the great mountain barriers by which it is intersected in numerous successive ridges, protected Michael from immediate attack, and allowed him time to complete his preparations for defence, and unite his subjects by a feeling of common interest, before the Crusaders were prepared to encounter him.

History has unfortunately preserved very little information concerning the organisation and social condition of the different classes and races which inhabited the dominions of the princes of Epirus. Almost the only facts that have been preserved, relate to the wars and alliances of the despots and their families with the Byzantine emperors and the Latin princes. These facts must be noticed as they occur. In this place it is only necessary to give a short chronological sketch of the princes who ruled Epirus. They all assumed the name of Angelos Komnenos Dukas; and the title of despot, by which they are generally distinguished, was a Byzantine honorary distinction, never borne by the earlier members of the family until it had been conferred on them by the Greek emperor.

Michael I, the founder of the despotat, distinguished himself by his talents as a soldier and a negotiator. He extended his authority over all Epirus, Acarnania, and Etolia, and a part of Macedonia and Thessaly. Though virtually independent, he acknowledged Theodore I, (Laskaris,) as the lawful emperor of the East. Michael was assassinated by one of his slaves in the year 1214.

## SECT. II.

### EMPIRE OF THESSALONICA



Theodore Angelos Komnenos Dukas, the legitimate brother of Michael I, escaped from Constantinople to Nicaea, and resided at the court of Theodore I Laskaris, where he received an invitation from his brother to visit Epirus, in order to assist in directing the administration. The emperor Theodore I, distrusting the restless and intriguing spirit of his namesake, would not allow him to depart until he had sworn fidelity to the throne of Nicaea, and to himself as the lawful emperor of the East. After the murder of Michael, Theodore was proclaimed his successor, and soon displayed the greatest ability and activity in his government, joined to an utter want of principle in the measures he adopted for extending his dominions. The suspicions of the emperor Theodore I were fully warranted by his conduct, for he made no distinction between Greek and Frank whenever he conceived that his interest could be advanced by attacking or assisting either the one or the other.

In the year 1217, as we have already seen, he defeated and captured the Latin emperor, Peter of Courtenay, in the defiles near Croia. After completing the conquest of Thessaly and Macedonia, and driving the Lombards out of Thessalonica, he assumed the title of emperor in direct violation of his oath to Theodore I, and was crowned in the city of Thessalonica, which he made his capital, by the archbishop of Achrida, patriarch of Bulgaria. Theodore Angelos then pushed his conquests northward with increased vigour, and in the year 1224, having gained possession of Adrianople, his dominions extended from the shores of the Adriatic to those of the Black Sea. The empire of Thessalonica then promised to become the heir of the Byzantine Empire in Europe. Theodore was already forming his plans for the attack of Constantinople, when his restless ambition involved him in an unnecessary war with John Asan, king of Bulgaria, by whom he was defeated and taken prisoner in 1230. His treacherous intrigues while in captivity alarmed the Bulgarian monarch, who ordered his eyes to be put out.

Theodore had two brothers, Manuel and Constantine, both holding high commands in his empire. Manuel was present at the time of his defeat, but escaped from the field of battle to Thessalonica, where he assumed the direction of the government and the imperial title. His reign as emperor was short, for John Asan, the king of Bulgaria, falling in love with the daughter of his blind prisoner, married her and released his father-in-law. Theodore returned to Thessalonica, where he kept himself concealed for some time; but his talents for intrigue enabled him to form so powerful a party of secret partisans, before his brother Manuel was aware of his designs, that the usurper was driven into exile. It was impossible for Theodore, on account of his blindness, to reascend the throne: the imperial crown was therefore placed on the head of his son John; but the father continued to direct the administration, with the title of Despot. In the meantime Manuel, who had escaped to Asia, obtained military aid from the emperor John III Vatatzes, and landing at Demetriades Volo made himself master of Pharsala, Larissa, and Platamona. Constantine, his younger brother, who governed a part of Thessaly, joined the invaders, and the country was threatened with a destructive civil war. But the spirit of the politic Theodore averted this catastrophe. He succeeded in inducing his two brothers who were in arms against him to hold a conference, in which, acting as prime minister of his son's empire, he employed so many powerful arguments in favour of family union, and agreed to such concessions, that Manuel and Constantine

joined in a family compact for supporting the empire of Thessalonica, and abandoned the cause of the emperor John III of Nicaea. The three brothers then concluded an alliance with the Franks in Greece, for their mutual defence against the emperor of Nicaea.

John, the young emperor of Thessalonica, was a virtuous prince, by no means destitute of talent, though he submitted with reverence to his father, who governed his empire. But neither his own virtues nor his father's talents were able to save Thessalonica from the attacks of the emperor of Nicaea, who was determined that no Greek should share the honours of the imperial title. The emperor of Nicaea took Thessalonica, and compelled John to lay aside the imperial title, but allowed him to retain the direction of the government on his accepting the rank of despot, as a public recognition of his submission to the emperor of Nicaea as the lawful emperor of the East. The short-lived empire of Thessalonica ceased to exist in the year 1234.

### SECT. III.

#### DESPOTAT OF EPIRUS. PRINCIPALITY OF VALLACHIAN THESSALY. FAMILY OF TOCCO.

John continued to govern Thessalonica as despot until his death in 1244. He was succeeded by his brother Demetrius, a weak prince, whose authority never extended far beyond the walls of the city. His misconduct drove his politic father from his counsels, and involved himself in disputes with the Greek emperor, John III, who soon drove him from office, and united Thessalonica directly to the Greek empire in 1246.

In the meantime Michael II, a natural son of Michael I, had acquired great influence in Epirus, where he gradually gained possession of the power and dominions occupied by his father. The fall of Thessalonica, and the weakness of his uncles in their Thessalian principalities, enabled him to gain possession of Pelagonia, Achrida, and Prilapos, while the blind old Theodore maintained himself as an independent prince in Vodhena, Ostrovos, and Staridola. The emperor John III, in order to secure the friendship of Michael II, and induce him to acknowledge the supremacy of the throne of Nicaea, conferred on him the title of despot, and promised him Maria, the daughter of his son, the emperor Theodore II, as bride for Michael's son Nicephorus. The restless and intriguing old Theodore succeeded, however, in involving Michael II in war with the emperor. Michael was unsuccessful, and his reverses compelled him to purchase peace by delivering up his blind uncle Theodore as a prisoner, and by ceding Kastoria, Achrida, Deabolis, Albanopolis, and Prilapos to the Greek empire. The wars of Michael II, and his treaties with the Greek emperors John III, Theodore II, and Michael VIII, belong, however, to the history of the empires of Nicaea and Constantinople, rather than to the history of Epirus. For a time, after the loss of the battle of Pelagonia, Michael was expelled from his dominions; but the inhabitants of Epirus appear to have found the Constantinopolitan administration more oppressive than that of Michael, whom they

regarded as their native prince, and he was enabled to recover possession of the southern part of his despotat. He died about the year 1267.

His son, Nicephorus, received the title of despot when he celebrated his marriage with Maria the daughter of the emperor Theodore II. He succeeded his father in the sovereignty of Epirus, and extended his authority over Acarnania and part of Etolia. About the year 1290 he was attacked by a Byzantine army, sent by the emperor Andronicus II to attempt the conquest of Joannina, while a Genoese fleet assailed Arta. Both expeditions were repulsed with loss by the despot, who received important succours on the occasion from Florenz of Hainault prince of Achaia, and Richard count of Cephalonia, whom he had subsidised. Nicephorus died in the year 1293, leaving a son named Thomas, who succeeded to his continental possessions. He left also two daughters, one married to John, count of Cephalonia; the other, named Ithamar, was the first wife of Philip of Tarentum.

Thomas, the last Greek despot of Epirus of the family of Angelos, was murdered by his nephew, the count of Cephalonia, in 1318, and his dominions were then divided, the greater part falling to the share of the murderer. Thomas, count of Cephalonia, was himself murdered by his own brother John; and John was again murdered by his wife Anne, the daughter of Andronicus Paleologos, Protovestiaris of the Byzantine empire, who was the guardian of her son, Nicephorus II, a child of twelve years of age at the time the emperor Andronicus III invaded the despotat in the year 1337. The possessions of the young Nicephorus were then conquered, and he himself received an appanage in Thrace, and married a daughter of John Cantacuzenos, the usurper of the throne of Constantinople. Nicephorus was slain in a battle with the Albanians, on the banks of the Achelous, as he was attempting to recover possession of the despotat in the year 1358. As early, however, as the year 1350, the civil wars in the Byzantine Empire, produced by the unprincipled ambition of Cantacuzenos, had enabled Stephen, king of Servia, to conquer all Epirus and the greater part of Thessaly.

A principality distinct from that of Epirus was founded by John Dukas, the natural son of the despot Michael II, who married the heiress of Taron, hereditary chieftain of the Vallachians of Thessaly. He received the title of Sebastokrator from the emperor Michael VIII, as a reward for deserting his father before the battle of Pelagonia, in 1259. He acted an important part in the history of his time, and displayed all the restless activity and daring spirit of his family, occupying an independent possession in Thessaly at the head of his Vallachians, and carrying on war or forming alliances with the emperor of Constantinople, the despot of Epirus, and the Frank princes of Greece, according to the dictates of his own personal interest. He was generally called by the Franks duke of Neopatras, (Hypata), from his having made that town his capital; but his country was usually called Great Vlachia. He died about the year 1290.

The name of the second prince of Vlachia, the son of John, is not known, but he reigned about ten years. His sister was married to William de la Roche, duke of Athens. The third prince was John Dukas II, who was left by his father under the guardianship of Guy II, duke of Athens, his cousin. The possessions of the young prince were attacked by the troops of Epirus, but the duke of Athens hastened to the assistance of his ward, and quickly carried the war into the territory of the despotat, forcing the government to conclude an advantageous peace. John Dukas II married Irene, a

daughter of the emperor Andronicus II, in the year 1305, and died three years after, without leaving issue. The line of the princes of Vallachian Thessaly then became extinct, and their territories were divided among the frontier states. The Catalans conquered the valley of the Sperchius, with the city of Neopatras; and they were so proud of this exploit that they styled their Grecian dominions the duchy of Athens and Neopatras. But the greater part of the rich plain of Thessaly was annexed to the Byzantine Empire, and was governed by officers sent from Constantinople, who were often honoured with the title of despot. Cantacuzenos conferred the government of Thessalian Vlachia, in the year 1343, on John Angelos for life, by a golden bull.

The history of Epirus after its conquest by Stephen Duscian, king of Servia, in 1350, becomes mixed up with the wars of the Servians, Albanians, Franks, and Greeks in the neighbouring provinces, until the whole country fell under the domination of the Turks. Stephen committed the government of Epirus, Thessaly, Acarnania, and Etolia, to his brother Simeon, who was involved in constant wars to defend those conquests against the Albanians, the Franks, and the Greeks. In the year 1367 he recognised Thomas Prelubos as prince of Joannina and Arta. Prelubos was assassinated, on account of his horrid cruelties, in 1385; and his widow, who was the sister of Simeon, married Esau Buondelmonte, a Florentine connected with the family of Acciaiuoli. Esau was engaged in incessant wars with the Albanians, by whom he was taken prisoner in the year 1399, and compelled to pay a large ransom.

In the meantime, Leonard Tocco of Beneventum had been invested with the county-palatine of Cephalonia by Robert of Tarentum, the titular emperor of Romania, when that county had reverted to the imperial crown by the death of the despot Nicephorus II, in 1357. Leonard Tocco also received the title of duke of Leucadia, to give additional dignity to his fief. Charles Tocco, who was apparently his grandson, invaded Epirus about the year 1390, and by gradual encroachments rendered himself master of the whole country south of Joannina, including Acarnania and part of Etolia, after which he assumed the title of despot of Romania. His second wife was Francesca, daughter of Nerio I Acciaiuoli, duke of Athens; and his niece Theodora was the wife of Constantine, the last emperor of Constantinople, to whom Clarentza, and all the possessions of the counts of Cephalonia in the Morea, were ceded as her dowry. Theodora died before Constantine ascended the throne of Constantinople. Charles Tocco died in 1429. He was succeeded by his nephew, Charles II, from whom the Turks took Joannina and Etolia in 1431. Charles II, in order to obtain the protection of the republic of Venice for the towns he still retained in Epirus and Acarnania, became a citizen of the republic in the year 1433, during the reign of the doge Francis Foscari. It would seem, from the letters of Cyriakos of Ancona, that he assumed the title of king of Epirus, in addition to his previous titles of duke of Leucadia and despot of Romania. He was succeeded by his son, Leonard II, in 1452, who was driven from Leucadia and Cephalonia by the Turks in 1469.

CHAPTER VII  
HISTORY OF THE DUKES OF ATHENS—1205-1456.

SECT. I  
ATHENS BECOMES A FIEF OF THE EMPIRE OF ROMANIA

The portion of Greece lying to the south of the kingdom of Saloniki was divided by the Crusaders among several great feudatories of the empire of Romania. According to the feudal code of the time, each of these great barons possessed the right of constructing fortresses, coining money, establishing supreme courts of justice, and waging war with his neighbours; consequently, their number could not be great in so small an extent of country. The lords of Boudonitza, Salona, Negrepont, and Athens are alone mentioned as existing to the north of the Isthmus of Corinth, and the history of the petty sovereigns of Athens can alone be traced in any detail. The slightest record of a city which has acted so important a part in the history of human civilisation must command some attention; and fortunately her feudal annals, though very imperfect, furnish matter for study and instruction. Athens and Thebes—for the fate of these ancient enemies was linked together—were then cities of considerable wealth, with a numerous and flourishing population.

Otho de la Roche, a Burgundian nobleman, who had distinguished himself during the siege of Constantinople, marched southward with the army of Boniface the king-marquis, and gained possession of Athens in 1205. Thebes and Athens had probably fallen to his share in the partition of the empire, but it is possible that the king of Saloniki may have found means to increase his portion, in order to induce him to do homage to the crown of Saloniki for this addition. At all events, it appears that Otho de la Roche did homage to Boniface, either as his immediate superior, or as viceroy for the emperor of Romania.

We possess some interesting information concerning the events that occurred at Athens immediately previous to its conquest by Otho de la Roche, though unfortunately this information does not give us any minute insight into the condition of the population. Still, it allows us to perceive that the social as well as the political condition of the people was peculiarly favourable to the enterprise of the Crusaders. The people of Athens and Thebes were living in the enjoyment of wealth and tranquillity when the news reached them that Constantinople was besieged by the Franks and Venetians. The greatest grievance then endured in the cities where no regular garrisons were maintained arose out of fiscal extortion and judicial corruption, both of which certainly increased to an alarming degree under the emperors of the house of Angelos. But these abuses were palliated, and prevented from assuming a highly oppressive form, whenever the bishop

of the place exerted his influence to restrain injustice within the strict bounds of the established laws. The direct judicial authority of the bishops, and their acknowledged political influence as protectors of the municipal magistracy, gave them virtually a superintending control over the agents of the central administration in the distant provinces of the empire. The authority of the central administration had been greatly weakened by the usurpation and misgovernment of Alexius III, and the power of the local governors and great landed proprietors had been proportionally increased. The support of many wealthy and influential individuals had been purchased by Alexius at a ruinous price. Some had been entrusted with civil and military commands; and others, particularly in Greece, had been allowed to assume the authority of imperial officers without any legal warrant.

Leo Sguros, a Peloponnesian noble, who held the office of imperial governor of Nauplia, took advantage of the general disorder, and assumed the administration over the cities and fortresses of Argos and Corinth. As soon as he heard of the arrival of the Crusaders before Constantinople, he collected a considerable army and fleet, and proceeded to extend his authority beyond the isthmus, apparently with the intention of forming an independent principality in Greece. His first expedition was directed against Athens, of which he hoped to render himself master without difficulty, as it was defended by no regular garrison. The Athenians, however, were not disposed to submit tamely to the usurpation of the Peloponnesian chief. They perhaps flattered themselves with the hope that, in existing circumstances, they might recover the privileges of a free city; and they were fortunate enough to find a prudent, disinterested, and energetic chief in their archbishop, Michael Akominatos, the elder brother of the historian Nicetas. When Sguros made his appearance in the plain of Athens, descending by the pass communicating with the Elensinian plain, through which the remains of the Sacred Way may still be traced, the archbishop went out to dissuade him from attacking Athens, since the attempt would infallibly lead to a civil war which must prove ruinous to Greece, exposed as it then was to immediate danger of a hostile invasion. Sguros treated the solicitations of the archbishop with contempt, and, persisting in his design, forced his way into the city, which was not fortified in such a way as to enable it to offer any opposition. But the archbishop animated his flock to defend their independence. The inhabitants, on the first report that Sguros meditated attacking them, had transported all their most valuable effects into the Acropolis, where they soon showed their enemy that they were both able and willing to make a long defence. Sguros, seeing there was no immediate prospect of taking the citadel, raised the siege and marched northward. On retiring, he barbarously set fire to the city in several places, plundered the surrounding country, and, after collecting a large supply of cattle and provisions, proceeded to invest Thebes, which surrendered without giving him many trouble. All eastern Greece, as far as the frontier of Thessaly, then submitted to his authority; and he prepared to meet the Crusaders at Thermopylae, when he heard that they were marching to invade Greece. His inexperienced soldiers were, however, ill qualified to encounter the veteran warriors under the banners of Boniface. The memory of Leonidas was insufficient to inspire the Greeks with courage, and their army suffered a disgraceful defeat. Leo Sguros fled to Corinth, where he shut himself up in the Acrocorinth with the relics of his force.

Thebes, Chalcis, and Athens opened their gates, and received the Franks as their deliverers from the tyranny of Sguros and the Peloponnesians. There appears to be no doubt that the Greeks generally obtained very favourable capitulations from their

conquerors: the inhabitants were secured in the possession of their private property, local institutions, established laws, and national religion. Under the protection of the Franks, therefore, they hoped to enjoy a degree of personal security to which the anarchical condition of the Byzantine empire, since the death of Manuel I in 1180, had rendered them strangers. The Athenians were not disappointed in their expectations; for, though the Byzantine aristocracy and dignified clergy were severe sufferers by the transference of the government into the hands of the Franks, the middle classes long enjoyed peace and security. The noble archbishop Michael, who for thirty years had ruled the see of Athens as a spiritual father and political protector, was compelled to seek refuge at Keos, where he spent his declining years lamenting the forced apostasy of many of his flock, and the desecration of the glorious temple of the Panaghia in the Acropolis, by the rude priests of the haughty Franks, who compelled the subject Greeks to celebrate divine service according to the rites of the orthodox in the humbler churches in the city below.

The conquest of Athens rendered Otho de la Roche master of all Attica and Boeotia; but immediately after the death of Boniface, the Lombards of the kingdom of Saloniki, under the orders of count Biandrate, deprived him of Thebes, but on what pretext is not known. This city was again restored to its rightful master by the emperor Henry, when he reduced the Lombard kingdom of Saloniki to its lawful state of vassalage to the imperial crown of Romania; and Otho de la Roche did homage at the parliament of Ravenika, for both Athens and Thebes, as one of the great feudatories of the empire. Otho, like the emperor Henry and the principal vassals of the empire, forbade all donations of land to the papal church, and appropriated to his own use, or at least to temporal purposes, a greater share of the spoils of the Greek church, and surrendered a smaller portion to the Latin clergy than met with the approbation of Innocent III. Even threats of excommunication could not compel him to alter his policy, and the Pope was induced to accept the explanations he offered for his proceedings, founded on the political exigencies of his position, and the deep contrition he expressed for having offended the head of the church. It seems that the wealth of the Greek church, the monastery lands, and the imperial domains of the Byzantine emperors in Attica and Boeotia, were sufficient to satisfy Otho's wants and ambition, for his administration, judging from the tranquillity of his Greek subjects and the increased importance acquired by his principality, must have been less rapacious than the previous government of the emperors of Constantinople. Otho de la Roche nevertheless, in the decline of life, preferred his modest fief in France to his principality in Greece, and about the year 1225 resigned the government of Athens and Thebes to his nephew Guy, son of his brother Pons de Ray.

Athens has been supposed to have lost its position as a direct fief of the empire of Romania by the homage which Otho de la Roche paid to Boniface, king of Saloniki; and it was pretended that the king of Saloniki had transferred the immediate superiority over all the country to the south of his own frontier, in Thessaly, to William de Champlitte, prince of Achaia. The pretended vassalage of Athens to Achaia at this early period rests only on the authority of the Book of the Conquest of the Morea, a Frank chronicle, of which a metrical translation in Greek was known long before the French text, which appears to be the original, was discovered. The work contains an inaccurate and far from poetical narration of the prominent events relating to the affairs of the Peloponnesus, from the time of its conquest by the Franks until the commencement of

the fourteenth century. On all occasions it exalts the importance of the house of Villehardoin. This Chronicle asserts that Boniface, on quitting the army of the Crusaders in the Morea, to return to Thessalonica, placed all the great feudatories of the empire, including the duke of the Archipelago or Naxos, under the immediate superiority of William de Champlitte, prince of Achaia. There can be no doubt that this is a mere fable. Indeed the chronicler soon refutes his own story, by omitting to mention that the consent of these great feudatories was given to the trick by which he pretends that Geoffrey Villehardoin defrauded the family of Champlitte of the principality of Achaia—a trick which could never have transferred to Villehardoin the feudal superiority over the fiefs of Athens, Negrepont, Boudonitza, and Naxos, without the express consent of these feudatories and the formal ratification of the emperor Henry. The earliest claim of the princes of Achaia to any superiority over the princes of Athens really took place in the time of Guy de la Roche, about the year 1246. The Grand-sire of Athens and Thebes had assisted William Villehardoin to conquer Corinth and Nauplia as an ally, and not as a vassal, and received as a reward for this assistance the free possession of Argos and Nauplia, for which the prince of Achaia did not even claim personal homage, as long as his wars with the Greeks in Laconia rendered the alliance of the prince of Athens a matter of importance. This, as far as can be ascertained from authentic evidence, is the only feudal connection that existed between Athens and Achaia previous to the conquest of the empire of Romania by the Greeks, and the transference of the feudal superiority over Achaia to the house of Anjou of Naples.

When William, prince of Achaia, had completed the conquest of the Peloponnesus, his ambition led him to form projects for extending his power to the north of the isthmus at the expense of the Latin allies, who had aided him against the Greeks. In the year 1254 he called on Guy, Grand-sire of Athens, to do personal homage for his possessions in the Morea. To this demand the prince of Athens replied, that he was ready to pay the feudal service that was due for his fiefs of Argos and Nauplia, but he asserted that he owed no personal homage to William. Both parties prepared to decide the question by arms, for it seemed emphatically one of those that authorised a private war according to the feudal system. The Grand-sire of Athens was supported by the count of Soula, (Salona,) the lords of Euboea, and even by the baron of Karitena, a relation and vassal of the prince of Achaia. But the army of the confederates was defeated by Villehardoin at the pass of Karidhi, on the road from Megara to Thebes. The vanquished were besieged in Thebes, and compelled to enter into a capitulation, by which Guy de la Roche engaged to present himself at the court of William Villehardoin, at Nikli, in order that the question concerning the homage due to the prince of Achaia might be decided in a parliament of the principality. Guy made his appearance, and William was unable to persuade his own vassals that the Grand-sire of Athens was deserving of any punishment according to the letter of the feudal law. The case was referred to king Louis IX of France, whose reputation as an able and impartial judge was already so great in the whole Christian world that all parties willingly consented to abide by his decision. Guy de la Roche hastened to the court of France, confident in the justice of his cause; and Villehardoin was satisfied to secure the temporary absence of a powerful opponent at a critical moment. The king of France considered the delinquency of the Grand-sire of Athens to be of so trifling a nature, that it was more than adequately punished by the trouble and expense of a journey to Paris; and in order to indemnify Guy in some measure for the inconvenience which he had suffered in presenting himself at the court of France, Louis authorised him to adopt the



title of Duke of Athens, instead of that of Grand-sire, by which he had been hitherto distinguished. From subsequent events, it seems possible that William Villehardoin really made a claim at this time to the direct homage of the duke of Athens; but whether he based his claim on a pretended grant of the king of Saloniki to Champlitte, or on some charter of the emperors Robert, or Baldwin II, to his elder brother Geoffrey II, prince of Achaia, who had married the sister of these emperors cannot be determined. The claim, whether well or ill founded, was made a pretext by the kings of Naples for assuming that the cession of the suzerainty of Achaia, by the emperor Baldwin II, at the treaty of Viterbo in 1267, conveyed also to the crown of Naples a paramount superiority over the duchy of Athens.

When Guy de la Roche returned to Greece, he found the emperor Baldwin II a fugitive from Constantinople, and his own conqueror, William, prince of Achaia, a prisoner in the hands of the Greek emperor, Michael VIII, the conqueror of Constantinople. In order to regain his freedom, the prince of Achaia was compelled to cede to the Greek emperor the fortresses of Monemvasia, Misithra, and Maina, as the price of his deliverance. This cession was warmly opposed by the duke of Athens, as highly injurious to the stability of the Frank possessions in Greece; but it was ratified by a parliament of the vassals of the principality, and carried into effect. Guy de la Roche died about the year 1264, and was succeeded by his eldest son, John.

John de la Roche maintained with honour the high position his duchy had acquired in the East. John Dukas, while besieged in Neopatras, his capital, by a Byzantine army commanded by the brother of the emperor Michael, succeeded in escaping through the hostile camp in the disguise of a groom. He hastened to Athens, and solicited aid from the duke to save his capital. John immediately supplied him with a body of Latin cavalry, with which the adventurous prince surprised the imperial army, and compelled the emperor's brother to save the defeated remnants of the besiegers on board the Byzantine fleet. About a year after this victory, the duke of Athens, who had formed a close alliance with the prince of Vallachian Thessaly, placed himself at the head of a body of troops, to defend the north of Euboea against a Byzantine force under the command of Jaqueria, or Zacharia, the Genoese signor of the island of Thasos. A battle was fought in the plain of Oreos, in which the Franks were completely defeated; and the duke of Athens, who, though suffering severely from the gout, had rushed into the midst of the combat in order to rally his knights, was dashed from his horse and made prisoner. The emperor Michael VIII, whose position was at this time extremely critical, gave the captive duke an honourable reception, and did everything in his power to detach him from the interests of Charles of Anjou, king of Naples, who then threatened to invade the Greek empire. A treaty was concluded between the emperor and the duke, which allowed John to return to Athens without paying any ransom. John died unmarried in the year 1275.

William, the second son of Guy I, succeeded his brother John. He had married Helena, daughter of John Dukas, prince of Vallachian Thessaly, shortly after the victory of Neopatras, and obtained Zeituni and Gardhiki as his wife's dowry. When the people of Thebes heard that his brother had been taken prisoner at Oreos, they proclaimed William lord of Thebes, evidently more with the intention of defending their own rights and privileges, and of securing the power of the house of de la Roche against any encroachments of the powerful and wealthy family of Saint-Omer, than from dissatisfaction with the government of duke John. William was a man highly esteemed

both for his valour and prudence. He was selected by Charles of Anjou to administer the government of Achaia during the minority of Isabella Villehardoin; and he held this charge from 1280 to the time of his death, in 1290.

His son, Guy II, was only eighteen years of age when he succeeded to the dukedom. The despot of Vlachia died shortly after Guy attained his majority, and left him guardian of an infant prince. The nobles of Vlachia ratified the provisions of their sovereign's testament, and invited the duke of Athens to assume the direction of the administration in his nephew's dominions. The moment appeared favourable for the enemies of Vallachian Thessaly to attack the country. An infant prince and a young foreign regent did not seem likely to be able to offer any serious resistance to a well-combined attack. Anna, the widow of Nicephorus, despot of Epirus, acted at the time as regent for her son Thomas, the last Greek despot of Epirus. She commenced hostilities by ordering the Epirot troops to seize the castle of Phanari. Guy was at Thebes, his favourite residence, when he heard that his nephew's territories were invaded. Eager to prove himself worthy of the high trust confided to his care, he summoned all his friends and vassals to join his banner, and marched to avenge the injury offered to his helpless pupil. Boniface of Verona, lord of Karystos, Francis de la Carcere, lord of Negrepont, the count of Soula, and Nicholas of Saint-Omer, marshal of Achaia, and a feudatory of the duchy of Athens for one half of the lordship of Thebes, all joined the duke's camp, each at the head of more than one hundred knights and esquires. The whole army, when drawn up in the plain of Vlachia at Domokos, amounted to nine hundred Latin knights and horsemen in complete armour, six thousand Vallachian and Greek cavalry, and thirty thousand infantry, if we can rely on the Chronicles. The chief command was entrusted to Saint-Omer, and the army advanced to Trikala Stagous and Sirako, from which it could have reached Joannina in three easy marches. But the rapidity of the young duke's movements alarmed Anna and her counsellors, and she was glad to purchase peace by delivering up the castle of Phanari, and paying ten thousand perpers or gold byzants for the expenses of the expedition.

In 1304, Guy II married Maud of Hainault, daughter of Isabella Villehardoin, princess of Achaia. Maud was then only eleven years old. Guy received Kalamata, the hereditary fief of the Villehardoins in the Morea, as his wife's dowry; but he soon advanced a claim to the government of the whole principality, of which he pretended that Philip of Savoy, the third husband of Isabella, held possession illegally. In order to make good his claim by force of arms, Guy enrolled in his service Fernand Ximenes and a part of the Catalans who had quitted the Grand Company at Cyzikos. The projects of Guy were frustrated by his early death in 1308. As he left no children, the male line of de la Roche became extinct, and his cousin, Walter de Brienne, succeeded to the duchy of Athens and Thebes.

## SECT. II.

### STATE OF ATHENS UNDER THE HOUSE OF DE LA ROCHE

It is usual to suppose that Athens was a miserable and decayed town during the whole period of the middle ages, and that Attica then offered the same barren, treeless,

and unimprovable aspect which it now does as a European kingdom. Such, however, was not the case. The social civilisation of the inhabitants, and their ample command of the necessaries and many of the luxuries of life, were in those days as much superior to the condition of the citizens of Paris and London as they are now inferior. When Walter de Brienne succeeded to the duchy, it occupied a much higher position in the scale of European states than is at present occupied by the kingdom of Greece. The Spaniard Muntaner, who was well acquainted with all the rich countries around the Mediterranean, then the most flourishing portion of the globe, and who was familiar with the most magnificent courts of Europe, says that the dukes of Athens were among the greatest princes who did not possess the title of king. He has left us a description of the court of Athens, which gives us a high idea of its magnificence; and he declares that the nobles of the duchy then spoke as good French as the Parisians themselves. The city was large and wealthy, the country thickly covered with villages, of which the ruins may still be traced in spots affording no indications of Hellenic sites. Aqueducts and cisterns then gave fertility to land now unproductive; olive, almond, and fig-trees were intermingled with vineyards, and orchards covered ground now reduced, by the want of irrigation, to yield only scanty pasturage to the flocks of nomad shepherds. The valonia, the cotton, the silk, and the leather of Attica then supplied native manufactories, and the surplus commanded a high price in the European markets. The trade of Athens was considerable, and the luxury of the Athenian ducal court was celebrated in all the regions of the West where chivalry flourished.

Nor was the position of the Greek subjects of the dukes at this period one of severe oppression. Civilisation had penetrated deeper into the social relations of men in Greece than in the rest of Europe, and its effects were displayed in the existence of a middle class, living in ease, and by the decay of slavery and serfdom. Though the Greeks of Athens were a conquered race, the terms of capitulation granted by Otho de la Roche secured to them all the privileges, as individual citizens, which they had enjoyed under the Byzantine government, with much greater freedom from financial oppression. The feudal conquerors of Greece soon perceived that it was greatly for their interest to respect the terms of the capitulations concluded with their Greek subjects, and to gain their good-will. Each grand feudatory soon became aware that the Greeks, from their wealth and numbers, might be rendered useful allies in opposing the exorbitant pretensions of their own immediate vassals and military followers, and in restraining the avarice of the Latin clergy, the ambition of the Pope, or the pretensions of the emperor of Romania. The peculiar condition of the Greek landed proprietors, who were in some degree both capitalists and merchants, taught their princes the necessity of alleviating the natural severity of the feudal system, and modifying the contempt it inculcated for the industrious and unwarlike classes of society. The high value of some of the productions of Greece, before the discovery of America and the route to India by the Cape of Good Hope, placed the landed proprietors on the coasts of Greece, and particularly those of Attica and Boeotia, in the receipt of considerable money-revenues. They were thus enabled to pay to their dukes an amount of taxation which many monarchs in Western Europe were unable to extract from numerous cities and burghs, whose trade depended on slow and expensive land-communications, and from cultivators without capital, who raised little but corn and hay. An alliance of interest was thus formed between the Frank princes and their Greek subjects. The taxes paid by the Greeks supplied their sovereign with the means of hiring more obedient military followers than the array of the vassals of the fief. It became consequently an object of

importance to the Frank barons in Greece to protect the natives as allodial proprietors, or, at least, as holding their lands directly from the prince, on payment of a money-rent, corresponding to the amount of taxation they had previously paid to the Byzantine empire, instead of distributing the land among the invaders as military fiefs. Interest, therefore, preserved to the Greek proprietors the richest portions of the conquered territory in the immediate vicinity of the towns; while the Crusaders generally received the territorial domains, for which they were bound to pay personal military service, in the more distant valleys and retired districts—a fact which is still proved by the existing divisions of property, and by the ruins of feudal strongholds. Out of this state of things there can be no doubt that a constant struggle arose between the dukes, who desired to extend their authority and increase their revenues—the Frank military vassals, who demanded the complete division of the whole conquered country, in order to increase the numbers and power of their own class—and the Greeks, who laboured and intrigued to defend their possessions and maintain the capitulations. To the existence of this struggle for a long period, without any party venturing openly to disregard the principles of justice and the force of public opinion, we must in a great measure attribute the prosperous state of Athens and Thebes, under the government of the house of de la Roche, and the long duration of the Frank domination in Attica. The security enjoyed by the Greeks attached them to their dukes, and they obtained the privilege of bearing arms. Their wealth enabled them to purchase the best defensive armour and the finest horses; and their leisure allowed them to acquire the skill, without which the defensive armour of the time, from its great weight, became an incumbrance rather than an advantage. Though they never became a match for the Frank chivalry in a pitched battle, they often bore a prominent part, and performed good service, in the wars of the period.

### SECT. III.

#### WALTER DE BRIENNE—THE CATALAN GRAND COMPANY

Walter de Brienne was the son of Isabella de la Roche, sister of the dukes John and William. She married Hugh de Brienne, count of Lecce, in the kingdom of Naples. The family of Brienne was preeminent for brilliant actions in the brightest age of chivalry; but the fortunes of this celebrated house were more splendid and glorious than solid, and the character of its members bore a strong resemblance to the gorgeous edifice of their renown. The life of Walter, duke of Athens, was like that of many other members of his illustrious family, in its bright career and bloody end. His grandfather, Walter de Brienne, count of Jaffa, was that gallant freebooter of the Syrian desert whom the Saracens long regarded with intense fear and hatred, but whom they at last captured, and hanged before the walls of his own castle. His great-grandfather was Walter de Brienne, who assumed the title of king of Sicily, and died in prison. John de Brienne, king of Jerusalem and emperor of Romania, was his great-grand-uncle; and his father, Hugh, had not degenerated from the valour of the house, or allowed its glory to

diminish in his person. He was one of the band of three hundred French knights who called themselves the Knights of Death, and who perished at the battle of Gagliano, in Sicily. Hugh de Brienne, after performing prodigies of valour, and keeping his banner flying on the field of battle 'with his own hand, after every one of his followers and companions had fallen, was himself slain, refusing quarter.

The death of Guy II had no sooner put Walter in possession of the duchy of Athens, than he found his dominions threatened with invasion by his neighbours, the despot of Epirus and the prince of Vlachia. His territories were exposed to attack, for Guy II had extended his authority as far as Armyros on the gulf of Volo, so that their geographical configuration left them open to invasion at many points. In order to punish his enemies, and revenge himself by conquering some portion of their dominions, Walter concluded a treaty of alliance with the Catalan Grand Company, which had established its winter quarters at Cassandra in the year 1308.

The expedition of the Catalans in the East is a wonderful instance of the success which sometimes attends a career of rapacity and crime, in opposition to all the ordinary maxims of human prudence. Had their military executions and inhuman devastations been the only prominent features in their history, we might regret that all the military virtues can exist in union with most of the crimes that disgrace human nature, but we should feel no astonishment at their great success. But when we find that internal dissensions and civil anarchy frequently reigned in their camp, their victorious military career and their steady discipline under arms becomes a strange historical phenomenon. The leaders quarrelled among themselves, the chiefs assassinated one another, the troops murdered or banished their generals, and yet victory remained faithful to a standard under which every crime was committed with impunity: while the most terrific anarchy prevailed in the councils of the leaders, the strictest discipline was observed whenever the ranks were formed for service in the field. Their great leader, Roger de Florez, was assassinated by the Greeks. D'Entenza, one of their most distinguished chiefs, was murdered, with many knights of rank and renown, by the troops themselves, on the march from Gallipoli to Cassandra. Fernand Ximenes only saved himself by a precipitate flight. The infant Don Fernand of Majorca, and his friend Muntaner, the delightful historian of their singular exploits, were compelled to quit the expedition, seeing that all regular authority was treated with contempt. The royal and aristocratic feelings of the prince and the warrior were too deeply wounded to permit them to live in a republican army. Rocafort, the oldest general in the Grand Company, the chief demagogue and inciter of many of the previous acts of violence, was at last treacherously seized by his own officers, and delivered up a prisoner to a French admiral, who carried him to Naples, where he perished in a prison, starved to death by the mean revenge and inexorable cruelty of the house of Anjou. The soldiers revenged their veteran leader by murdering the fourteen chiefs of the army who had delivered him to the French. Two knights, an Adalil, and a colonel of Almogavars, were then elected by the troops to perform the duties of commander-in-chief; and a council of twelve officers was added, in accordance with a usage already established in the republican government of the Grand Company. After this bloody revolution, the Catalans marched forward to new conquests, and to the establishment of a permanent territorial dominion in Greece.

The treaty by which they hired their services to Walter de Brienne required that they should effect a junction with his troops. To do this, it was necessary to traverse

Macedonia and Thessaly. On their march they encountered serious opposition from the officers of the Byzantine emperor in the mountains of Macedonia, and from the forces of the prince of Vallachian Thessaly. The hardy mountaineers of these districts, Slavonians, Vallachians, and Greeks, were found to be a very different class of men from the Greeks of the Thracian cities whom the Catalans had so often vanquished. The campaign in 1309 was consumed in these contests, and the Grand Company found itself compelled to take up its winter quarters in Thessaly. It suffered many hardships before it could force its way through the Vallachian district, which was then one of the most redoubtable countries in the world. In the year 1310 it effected its junction with the army of the duke of Athens, and from the time of its entry into his dominions Walter became bound to pay each horseman in complete heavy armour four gold ounces a-month, each light-armed horseman two, and each Almogavar or foot-soldier one ounce. As the Grand Company then counted in its ranks thirty-five hundred cavalry and three thousand infantry, while the army of the duke of Athens was still more numerous, these facts afford some data for estimating the wealth and population of the dominions of Walter de Brienne at this time.

The duke of Athens was at first highly popular with the Catalans, whose language he spoke with facility. The campaign of 1310 was very successful. Walter defeated all his enemies, and compelled them to purchase peace by ceding to him thirty castles, which he added to his dominions. The war was now terminated. Walter felt strong in the numbers of the knights he had assembled under his banner, and in the impregnable nature of the fortresses and castles that commanded every road and valley in his territory. Relying on these resources, he determined to get rid of his Spanish allies, whose high pay exhausted his treasury, and whose rapacity and licentious habits oppressed his subjects. The Catalans, on the other hand, were too well satisfied with the rich appearance of the Boeotian and Phocian plains, which had long enjoyed immunity from the ravages of war, to be easily induced to quit a land so alluring to their avarice. When the duke proposed to dismiss them, however, they contented themselves with demanding payment of the arrears due for their services, and liberty to march forward into the Morea. Both demands were refused; and Walter de Brienne, who, as an adherent of the house of Anjou, was inclined to quarrel with them as soon as he no longer stood in need of their services, replied to their propositions that he would give them the gibbet.

In the month of March 1311, the Grand Company marched down into the plain of Boeotia and took up a position on the banks of the Cephissus near Skripon, the ancient Orchomenos. The level plain appeared to offer great advantages to the party that possessed the most numerous cavalry, and the duke of Athens, confident in numbers, felt assured of victory, and hastened forward to attack them at the head of the army he had assembled at Thebes. His forces consisted of six thousand cavalry and eight thousand infantry, partly raised in the Morea, but principally composed of the Frank knights of his own duchy, their feudal retainers, and the Greeks of his dominions. Walter placed himself at the head of a band of two hundred nobles in the richest armour; and seven hundred feudal chiefs, who had received the honour of knighthood, fought under his standard. It required all the experience of the Spanish veterans, and their firm conviction of the superiority of military discipline over numbers and individual valour, to preserve their confidence of success in a contest with a force so superior to their own

on a level plain. But the Spaniards were the first people, in modern times, who knew the full value of a well-disciplined and steady corps of infantry.

In spring, all the rich plains of Greece are covered with green corn. The Catalan leaders carefully conducted the waters of the Cephissus into the fields immediately in front of the ground on which they had drawn up their army. The soil was allowed to drink in the moisture until it became so soft that a man in armour could only traverse the few narrow dykes that intersected the fields of wheat and barley; yet the verdure effectually concealed every appearance of recent irrigation. The duke of Athens, who expected with his splendid army to drive the Spaniards back into Thessaly without much trouble, advanced with all the arrogance of a prince secure of victory. Reserving the whole glory of the triumph which he contemplated to himself, he drew up his army in order of battle; and then, placing himself at the head of the nine hundred knights and nobles who attended his banner, he rushed forward to overwhelm the ranks of the Grand Company with the irresistible charge of the Frank chivalry. Everything promised the duke victory as he moved rapidly over the plain to the attack, and the shafts of the archers were already beginning to recoil from the strong panoply of the knights, when Walter de Brienne shouted his war-cry, and charged with all his chivalry in full career. Their course was soon arrested. The whole body plunged simultaneously into the concealed and new-formed marsh, where there was as little possibility of retreat as there was thought of flight. Every knight, in the belief that he had only some ditch to cross, spurred forward, expecting that another step would place him on the firm ground, where he saw the Catalan army drawn up almost within reach of his lance. Every exertion was vain: no Frank knight ever crossed the muddy fields: horse and man floundered about until both fell; and as none that fell could rise again, the confusion soon became inextricable. The Catalan light troops were at last ordered to rush in, and slay knights and nobles without mercy. Never did the knife of Aragon do more unsparing execution, for mercy would have been folly while the Spanish army still remained exposed to the attack of a superior force ranged before it in battle array, and which could easily have effected its retreat in unbroken order to the fortresses in its rear. It is reported that, of all the nobles present with Walter de Brienne, two only escaped alive and were kept as prisoners—Boniface of Verona, and Roger Deslau of Roussillon. The duke of Athens was among the first who perished. The Athenian forces had witnessed the total defeat of their choicest band of cavalry; the news that the duke was slain spread quickly through their ranks; and, without waiting for any orders, the whole army broke its order, and each man endeavoured to save himself, leaving the camp and all the baggage to the Grand Company.

This victory put an end to the power of the French families in northern Greece; but the house of Brienne continued to possess the fiefs of Nauplia and Argos in the principality of Achaia. Walter de Brienne, son of the slain duke, assumed his father's title, and was remarkable for more than his father's pride. After an unsuccessful attempt to recover possession of the duchy of Athens in 1331, in which he landed near Arta with a force of eight hundred French cavalry and five hundred Tuscan infantry, he became general of Florence, but was expelled from that city for his tyrannical conduct. He was subsequently appointed constable of France, and perished at the battle of Poitiers.

The Catalans followed up their victory with vigour: Thebes, Athens, and every fortified place within the duchy, quickly submitted to their authority. But their conquest, in spite of its facility, was stained with their usual violence. The magnificent palace at

Thebes, built by Nicholas Saint-Omer, which was the admiration of the minstrels of that age, was burned to the ground, lest it should serve as a stronghold for some of the French barons. A portion of the olive grove in the Athenian plain, in the classic environs of Colonos and the Academy, was reduced to ashes either from carelessness or wantonness.

#### SECT. IV

#### DUKES OF ATHENS AND NEOPATRAS OF THE SICILIAN BRANCH OF THE HOUSE OF ARAGON

The Spaniards at last took measures for enjoying the fruits of the conquest, and the Grand Company assumed the position of a sovereign prince, though there never existed an army worse adapted for administering the affairs of civil government. Its first act was to share the fiefs of the nobles who had fallen, and to bestow their widows and heiresses in marriage on the best officers, who thus became possessed not only of well-fortified castles and rich estates, but also of suitable and splendid household establishments. The descendants of the French now felt all the miseries their forefathers had inflicted on the Greeks. Muntaner, the former associate of the Spanish soldiers, observes that on this occasion many stout Catalan warriors received as wives noble ladies, for whom, the day before their victory, they would have counted it an honour to be allowed to hold the wash-hand basin.

No sooner did the Catalan warriors become lords and barons, than they felt the necessity of living under civil as well as military law; and so satisfied were they of the incompetency of all their own generals to act as civilians, that they appointed Roger Deslau to act as duke of Athens until they could arrange their differences with the house of Aragon, to which the majority still looked as to their lawful sovereign. Under Roger Deslau the Grand Company pursued its career of conquest, and extended its dominion both to the north and west. Neopatras and Soula, or Salona, were annexed to the duchy; and their incursions into the territories of the despot of Epirus on one side, and of the prince of Achaia on the other, alarmed the French barons of the Morea to such a degree that they solicited assistance from the spiritual arms of the Pope, whom they persuaded to threaten the Spaniards with excommunication, unless they restored their conquests to the rightful owners; though probably, in most cases, it would have puzzled even his holiness himself to determine where the legal claimants were to be found. The archbishops of Corinth, Patras, and Otranto were authorised to preach a crusade against the Catalans in their dioceses. Neopatras, from its strong position, important military situation, and delightful climate, divided with Athens the honour of being the capital of the Catalan principality, a. d. which was styled the duchy of Athens and Neopatras.

After the death of Roger Deslau, in 1326, the Catalans sent a deputation to Sicily, begging Frederick II to invest his second son, Manfred, with the dukedom of Athens, and praying him to send a regent to govern the country during his son's minority. From that time the duchy of Athens and Neopatras became an appanage to the house of



Aragon. Manfred, William, and John, the younger sons of king Frederick II of Sicily, held it in succession. Frederick, marquis of Randazzo, son of John, succeeded his father in the year 1348, and died childless in 1355, without having ever visited Athens. The duchy then reverted to Frederick III of Sicily, whose daughter Maria inherited it in 1377. From Maria the title passed to Alphonso V, king of Aragon, and was retained by the kings of Spain after the union of the crowns of Aragon and Castille.

During the period the duchy of Athens was possessed by the Sicilian branch of the house of Aragon, the Catalans were incessantly engaged in wars with all their neighbours. The despots of Epirus, the Venetians in Euboea, and the French in Achaia, were in turn attacked; but it was only in the earlier years of their power, while the veterans of the Grand Company still retained their military habits and passion for war, that their operations were attended with success. As happens with all conquering armies, the numbers of those who were fitted by their physical and mental qualities to make good soldiers was considerably diminished in the second generation. Some families became extinct, some fell into opposition by attaching themselves to their maternal race, while many of the best soldiers were constantly engaged in watching and defending their own private possessions against foreign invaders or internal brigandage. The lieutenants-general of the dukes, who arrived from Sicily, were always compelled to bring with them fresh supplies of mercenary troops. The lieutenants of the Sicilian dukes mentioned in history are Berengar d'Estanol, and Alphonso, the natural son of king Frederic II, who governed in succession during the life of Manfred. Roger de Lauria, son of the renowned admiral, represented Frederic of Randazzo. Afterwards, Francis George, marquis of Bodonitza, Philip of Dalmas, and Roger and Antonio de Lauria, sons of the preceding Roger, ruled the duchy. During the government of Roger and Antonio de Lauria, Louis, count of Salona, son of the regent Alphonso, died, leaving an only daughter as his heiress. Louis was proprietor of a very large portion of the duchy, and the disputes that arose concerning the marriage of his daughter caused the ruin of the Catalan power, and the conquest of Athens by Nerio Acciaiuoli, the governor of Corinth.

The Catalans were the constant rivals of the Franks of Achaia, and Nerio Acciaiuoli, as governor of Corinth, was the guardian of the principality against their hostile projects. The marriage of the young countess of Salona involved the two parties in war. The mother of the bride was a Greek lady : she betrothed her daughter to Simeon, son of the prince of Vallachian Thessaly; and the Catalans, with the two Laurias at their head, supported this arrangement. But the barons of Achaia, headed by Nerio Acciaiuoli, pretended that the feudal suzerain of Athens and Achaia was entitled to dispose of the hand of the countess, though the race of Baldwin II was extinct; for Jacques de Baux, the last titular emperor of Romania, died before the war between the Catalans and the governor of Corinth commenced. Nerio was nevertheless determined to bestow the young countess with all her immense possessions, on a relation of the Acciaiuoli family, named Peter Sarrasin. The war concerning the countess of Salona and her heritage appears to have commenced about the year 1386. The Catalans were defeated, and Nerio gained possession of Athens, Thebes, and Livadea; but a few of the Spanish proprietors, and the remains of the military force attached to the viceroys, continued for some years to offer a determined resistance in other parts of the duchy, and rallied round them a body of Navarrese troops in the service of the last Spanish governors.

During the war, a quarrel broke out between the dowager countess of Salona and the bishop of Phocis. The Athenian historian Chalcocondylas narrates that the bishop accused the lady, whose name was Helena Kantakuzena, of adultery with a priest, and that this conscientious bishop hastened to the court of the sultan Bayezid I, (Ilderim,) who was then in Thessaly, and begged him to remove the scandal from Greek society by conquering the country. In order to attract the sultan, who was passionately fond of the chase, the reverend bishop vaunted the extent of the marshes of Boeotia filled with herons and cranes, and the numerous advantages the country offered for hunting and hawking. Bayezid made his interference a pretext for occupying the northern part of the duchy around Neopatras; but, being soon after engaged with other projects, the Turks do not appear to have retained permanent possession of the district then seized. Chalcocondylas affirms that the dowager countess delivered up her daughter to Bayezid to be placed in his harem, which would imply that her marriage with the prince of Vlachia had not yet been celebrated.

The Laurias, pressed by the Turks on the north, and by Nerio Acciaiuoli and the Franks of Achaia on the south, abandoned the duchy, in which only a few small bands of troops continued to defend themselves almost in the capacity of brigands.

## SECT. V

### DUKES OF THE FAMILY OF ACCIAIUOLI OF FLORENCE. TERMINATION OF THE FRANK DOMINATION IN ATHENS

The decline of medieval Athens commences with the Catalan conquest. The ties of interest which had hitherto connected the prosperity of the Greek landed proprietors with the power of the sovereign were then broken, and every Greek was exposed to the oppression and avarice of a thousand mercenary soldiers suddenly converted into petty princes, and to the exactions of the rapacious agents of absent sovereigns. The feudal system was everywhere giving way; the authority of the prince and the money of the commons were rapidly gaining power, as the new elements of political government. Several members of the family of Acciaiuoli, which formed a distinguished commercial company at Florence in the thirteenth century, settled in the Peloponnesus about the middle of the fourteenth, under the protection of Robert, king of Naples. Nicholas Acciaiuoli was invested, in the year 1334, with the administration of the lands which the company had acquired in payment or in security of the loans it had made to the royal house of Anjou; and he acquired additional possessions in the principality of Achaia, both by purchase and by grant, from Catherine of Valois, titular empress of Romania, and regent of Achaia for her son prince Robert. The encroachments of the mercantile spirit on the feudal system are displayed in the concessions obtained by Nicholas Acciaiuoli, in the grants he received from Catherine of Valois. He was invested with the power of mortgaging, exchanging, and selling his fiefs, without any previous authorisation from his suzerain. Nicholas acted as principal minister of Catherine, during a residence of three years in the Morea; and he made use of his position, like a prudent banker, to obtain considerable grants of territory. He returned to Italy in 1341,

and never again visited Greece; but his estates in Achaia were administered by his relations and other members of the banking house at Florence, many of whom obtained considerable fiefs for themselves through his influence.

Nicholas Acciaiuoli was appointed hereditary grand seneschal of the kingdom of Naples by queen Jeanne, whom he accompanied in her flight to Provence when she was driven from her kingdom by Louis of Hungary. On her return, he received the rich county of Amalfi, as a reward for his fidelity, and subsequently Malta was added to his possessions. He was an able statesman, and a keen political intriguer; and he was almost the first example of the superior position the purse of the moneyed citizen was destined to assume over the sword of the feudal baron, and the learning of the politic churchman. Nicholas deserved to have his life written by a man of genius; but his superciliousness and assumption of princely state, even in his intercourse with the friends of his youth, disgusted Boccaccio, who alone of his Florentine contemporaries could have left a vivid sketch of the career which raised him from the partner of a banking-house to the rank of a great feudal baron, and to live in the companionship of kings. Boccaccio, offended by his insolence, seems not to have appreciated his true importance, as the type of a coming age and a new state of society; and the indignant and satirical record he has left us of the pride and presumption of the mercantile noble is by no means a correct portrait of the Neapolitan minister. Yet even Boccaccio records, in his usual truthful manner, that Nicholas had dispersed powerful armies, though he unjustly depreciates the merit of the success, because the victory was gained by combinations effected by gold, and not by the headlong charge of a line of lances.

Nicholas Acciaiuoli obtained a grant of the barony and hereditary governorship of the fortress of Corinth in the year 1358. He was already in possession of the castles of Vulcano, (Messene), Piadha, near Epidaurus, and large estates in other parts of the Peloponnesus. He died in 1365; and his sons, Angelo and Robert, succeeded in turn to the barony and government of Corinth. Angelo mortgaged Corinth to his relation, Nerio Acciaiuoli, who already possessed fiefs in Achaia, and who took up his residence at Corinth, on account of the political and military importance of the fortress, as well as to enable him to administer the revenues of the barony in the most profitable manner.

Nerio Acciaiuoli, though he held the governorship of Corinth only as the deputy of his relation, and the barony only in security of a debt, was nevertheless, from his ability, enterprising character, great wealth, and extensive connections, one of the most influential barons of Achaia; and, from the disorderly state of the principality, he was enabled to act as an independent prince. We have already seen under what pretext he succeeded in gaining possession of the greater part of the Catalan possessions in Attica and Boeotia. About the commencement of the year 1394, Ladislas, king of Naples, conferred on him by patent the title of duke of Athens—Athens forming, as the king pretended, part of the principality of Achaia. But almost about the same time the new duke had the misfortune to be taken prisoner by a band of Navarrese troops, which still maintained itself in eastern Greece, and with which he was holding a conference, trusting to the safe conduct of a Catalan chief, who also continued to preserve his independence. Nerio was compelled to purchase his liberty by paying a large ransom, part of which he raised by seizing the treasures and jewels in all the churches throughout his territories, and selling all the ornaments of value, even to the silver plates on the door, of the church of St Mary at Athens. He died shortly after. By his will he placed all his possessions under the protection of the republic of Venice, supplicating it

to defend the rights of his daughter Francesca, wife of Charles Tocco, count of Cephalonia and despot of Arta, or Romania. Nerio left the castle and district of Livadea to his natural son Antonio, as well as the administration of the city of Thebes, with the right to redeem it, on payment of the sum for which it had been pledged on account of his ransom.

The first bequest in the will of Nerio Acciaiuoli is a very singular one. It bequeaths the city of Athens to the church of St Mary. The bequest implied the acquisition of municipal liberty, under the protection of the clergy; and thus, after fourteen centuries of slavery, Athens regained for a moment a halo of liberty, under the shadow of papal influence, through the superstition or piety of a Florentine merchant prince. The archbishop was the true defender of the commons in the East, but, unfortunately, the archbishop of Athens was of the Catholic Church, and the people were orthodox; so that, even if he could have succeeded in maintaining his authority, he must have done so as a feudal prince. But the bequest of Nerio was a delusion, by which the dying sinner calmed the reproaches of a conscience troubled with the memory of the plundered ornaments of many churches, and, above all, of the silver plates of the doors of St Mary, with which he had paid his own ransom. The archbishop of Athens, and the administrators of church property belonging to the papal church, being hated by the majority of the inhabitants of Athens, who were orthodox Greeks, it is probable that a revolution would have soon followed the assumption of power by the chapter of St Mary had the Venetian republic not been called in to protect their government, in virtue of the general superintendence over the execution of the testament confided to Venice.

In the meantime, Antonio, the son of Nerio, who was master of Livadea and Thebes, trusting to his popularity, and counting on the active support of the Greeks, to whose nation his mother belonged, advanced to attack Athens. He besieged the city before the Venetians had placed a garrison in the Acropolis. In order to create a diversion that might save the city, by calling off the attention of Antonio for a time, the Venetian governor of Negrepont marched to attack Thebes at the head of six thousand troops. Antonio hastened to meet them before they could intrench themselves; and, by a skilful disposition of a very inferior numerical force, he completely routed this army, and captured many of the Latin feudal chiefs who had joined the Venetians. On his return to his camp before Athens, he was immediately admitted within the walls by his partisans. The Acropolis soon surrendered, and Antonio assumed the government of the duchy, adopting the title of Lord of the duchy of Athens. As soon as his power was firmly established in all the country, from Livadea to Athens, he visited the court of sultan Bayezid I, whose impetuous character rendered him the terror of the Christian princes in his neighbourhood. From this restless enemy of the Christian name, he succeeded in obtaining a recognition of his sovereignty over Attica and Boeotia.

Under the government of Antonio Acciaiuoli, Athens enjoyed uninterrupted tranquillity for forty years. Its wealth and commercial importance, though in a state of decline, were still considerable, for it required many generations of misfortune and bad government to reduce Attica to the miserable condition in which we see it at the present time—languishing under what is called the protection of the great powers of Europe. The republic of Florence deemed it an object worthy of its especial attention to obtain a commercial treaty with the duchy, for the purpose of securing to the citizens of the republic all the privileges enjoyed by the Venetians, Catalans, and Genoese. The conclusion of this treaty is almost the only event recorded concerning the external

relations of Athens during the long reign of Antonio. The Athenians appear to have lived happily under his government; and he himself seems to have spent his time in a joyous manner, inviting his Florentine relations to Greece, and entertaining them with festivals and hunting parties. Yet he was neither a spendthrift nor a tyrant; for Chalcocondylas, whose father lived at his court, records that he accumulated great wealth with prudent economy, and ornamented the city of Athens with many new buildings. Phrantzes, who visited the court of Athens, at a subsequent period, on a mission from Constantine, the last emperor of Constantinople, then despot in the Morea, says that Antonio married Maria Melissenos, and received several towns in the district of Tzakonia as her dowry. Antonio died of apoplexy in 1435.

Nerio II, the grandson of Donato Acciaiuoli, brother of the first duke, was now the legal heir to the dukedom. He and his brother Antonio had been invited to Athens, and treated as heirs to the principality by Antonio; but Antonio dying without a will, his widow succeeded in gaining possession of the Acropolis, through the favour of the Greek population, who desired the expulsion of their Latin rulers. Phrantzes was sent by the despot Constantine, as envoy, to treat with her for the cession of Athens and Thebes to the Greek empire, on condition of her receiving an increase of her paternal heritage in the Peloponnesus; but her power proved of too short duration to enable the envoy to conclude anything. Military assistance, not diplomatic negotiation, was what the widow required, in order to enable her to maintain the position she had occupied. As she could not procure this from the Greeks, she endeavoured to obtain it from the Turks. For this purpose she sent the father of the historian Chalcocondylas as ambassador to sultan Murad II, with rich presents, in order to purchase the ratification or recognition of her authority at the Porte. The principal men at Athens were then of the papal church, and they were consequently averse to the government of a Greek lady, whose administration could not fail to terminate by the sale of her authority to the Greek despot of the Peloponnesus, or by her conceding a portion of her power to the lower order of citizens, who adhered to the Greek rites. The long prosperity of Antonio's government had attached the majority, in some degree, to the family of Acciaiuoli. The Latin aristocracy, therefore, contrived to put an end to the power of his widow by enticing her to quit the Acropolis, seizing on that fortress, and expelling her most active partisans from the city. Chalcocondylas was driven into banishment, and Nerio II was established on the ducal throne, with the approbation of the sultan, whose troops had advanced as far as Thebes, and who felt a natural prejudice, as a Mussulman, to the reign of a female sovereign.

The new duke was a man of weak character, and the direction of the administration fell into the hands of his brother Antonio. Nerio visited Florence, in order to regulate the affairs of his father's succession; and it was generally reported in Greece, and perhaps not entirely without foundation, that he had been compelled to surrender the government of the duchy to his brother. Still there does not appear to have been any feeling of personal animosity between the brothers, for Nerio II left his wife and son to the care of Antonio during his absence. On his return he found his brother dead. Nothing more is recorded of Nerio, except that he was compelled to pay tribute to Constantine, despot of the Morea, in the year 1443, when the victorious campaign of John Hunniades in Bulgaria enabled the Moreotes to make a temporary incursion into northern Greece. But as soon as Murad II had restored the superiority of the Turkish arms by his victory at Varna, Nerio abandoned the cause of the Greeks, and hastened to join his forces to those of the Othoman general Turakhan, at Thebes, as he advanced to

invade the Peloponnesus. Nerio was allowed to retain possession of Athens as a vassal and tributary of the Ottoman empire; but he was obliged to remain a tame spectator while part of his dominions was plundered by a detachment of the Turkish army. His death happened about the time Constantinople was taken by Mohammed II.

Nerio II left an infant son, and his widow acted as regent during the minority. She fell in love with Pietro Almerio, the Venetian governor of Nauplia, and promised to marry him if he could obtain a divorce from his wife. Almerio thought that he could remove all obstacles to the marriage most readily by murdering his wife, a crime which he doubtless expected to be able to conceal. He was so far successful that he married the duchess, and obtained the direction of the government of Athens. But his crime became known, and the principal Athenians, both Latins and Greeks, fearing to fall under the severe authority of the Venetian senate, and indignant at the conduct of the duchess, complained to sultan Mohammed II of the crimes of her Venetian lover. The principal men, or Archonts, of Athens, had acquired a recognised right to interfere in the affairs of the administration from the moment the duchy became tributary to the Ottoman Porte; and their complaints now met with immediate attention, for it did not suit the sultan's policy to permit Venice to find a pretext for extending her influence in Greece. Almerio was summoned to the Ottoman court, to defend himself against the accusation of the Athenians; and in his position as guardian of a tributary prince, he could not venture to dispute the order without resigning the charge to obtain which he had committed his crime. On his arrival, he found Franco Acciaiuoli, the son of Antonio and cousin of the young duke, already in high favour at the Porte. Sultan Mohammed II no sooner heard the weak defence which Almerio could make, in reply to the accusations of the Athenians, than he ordered that the government of Athens should be conferred on Franco, who was received by the inhabitants with great demonstrations of joy.

The first act of Franco Acciaiuoli proved that his residence at the Turkish court had utterly corrupted his morals. He sent his aunt to Megara, where, after keeping her a short time in prison, he ordered her to be secretly put to death. Almerio accused him of this murder at the Porte, and solicited the government of Athens as the guardian of the young duke, whose person, it was evident, could not be safe in the custody of an heir so unprincipled. Mohammed II, finding that the Athenians were now equally disgusted with both the pretenders to their government, ordered Omar the son of Turakhan to take possession of the city and Acropolis, and annexed Attica to the Ottoman empire. Franco held out the Acropolis against the Turkish army for a short time, but surrendered it on receiving a promise that he should be allowed to remove his treasures to Thebes, and be acknowledged as prince of that city. This conquest put an end to the domination of the Latins, in the year 1456.

Two years after the conquest, sultan Mohammed II visited Athens in person, on his return from the Morea. The magnificence of the ancient buildings in the city and Acropolis, and the splendid aspect of the Piraeus, with its quays and moles recently adorned by the duke Antonio, struck the sultan with admiration, who exclaimed with delight, "Islam is in truth deeply indebted to the son of Turakhan". Mohammed visited Athens a second time in the year 1460, after he had put an end to the power of the Greek despots in the Morea; and on this occasion some of the Athenian archonts were accused of having formed a plot to place Franco again in possession of the city. In order to remove all chance of disorder after his own departure, Mohammed carried away ten of the principal inhabitants as hostages; and Saganos Pasha, who commanded the division

of the army that had marched to Thebes, was ordered to put Franco to death. Saganos, as an especial favour to Franco, who had been his intimate friend, permitted the criminal to be privately strangled in his own tent. The government of the last sovereigns of Athens and the bigotry of the papal church had become intolerable to the Greek population, who hailed the establishment of the Ottoman power with delight. For some time the administration of the Turks was considered mild and liberal: they invested Greek local magistrates with a greater degree of authority than they had previously possessed; they allowed the orthodox clergy to dispense justice to the Greek population, and the local authorities to collect the tribute which the province was compelled to remit to Constantinople. The arrival of the Turks appeared like the dawn of liberty to those who could forget that they always compelled their Christian subjects to pay a tribute of children to recruit the ranks of the Janissaries. It appears that the idea of slavery, and the demoralising effect of the religious quarrels of the Greeks and Latins, had so deadened the feelings of the people to this calamity that, to all outward appearance, they seemed long contented with their lot, and by no means inclined to participate in the schemes formed by the Christians of the West for their deliverance from the Turkish yoke, which they considered preferable to that of the Catholics.

## SECT. VI

### CONDITION OF THE GREEK POPULATION UNDER THE DUKES OF ATHENS

Chronicles and official documents replace in some degree the want of a Thucydides or a Xenophon, and enable us to reconstruct at least an outline of the political history of medieval Athens. But the blank left by the want of an Aristophanes is irreparable, and we are unfortunately completely ignorant of the condition of those whom Shakespeare calls—

The rude mechanicals,  
That worked for bread upon Athenian stalls.

Still, in order to mark the peculiarities of the period that witnessed the almost total extinction of rural slavery, it is necessary to pass in review the few facts that are recorded concerning the condition of the labouring classes during the Frank domination in Attica. There is no doubt that the conquest of the Byzantine Empire by the Latins, and the division of the territory among several independent princes, must have tended to ameliorate the condition of the cultivators of the soil who were still slaves or serfs. The Slavonian or Albanian slave found a protector against his Greek master in the Frank feudal chief; and whenever his condition became insupportable, he could without much difficulty escape into the territories of some neighbouring and generally hostile prince.

It has been supposed, from the tendency of Justinian's legislation, compared with subsequent laws of the Byzantine emperors, that Christians were not retained in slavery by the Greeks in the thirteenth century; and that rural slavery had been long extinguished, and replaced by the labour of serfs or colons, who made fixed payments in produce and labour for the land to which they were attached. Two laws are frequently quoted as showing an extremely favourable disposition on the part of the Byzantine government towards slaves, and as indicating a desire to see slavery extinguished. One of these laws, dated at the end of the eleventh century, declares, that if any person be claimed as a slave, and can produce two witnesses of character to prove that he has been known as a freeman, the process must be terminated by his own oath. The same law declares, also, that even slaves shall be entitled to claim their liberty, if their masters refuse to permit the religious celebration of their marriages. The other law, which belongs to the middle of the twelfth century, gives freedom to all persons who have been reduced to slavery by the sale of their property, by the necessity of cultivating the lands of others in a servile capacity, or by poverty which had compelled them to sell themselves in order to obtain the necessaries of life. The enactment of these laws must not be attributed entirely to feelings of humanity or Christian charity, caused by the advanced state of moral civilisation in Byzantine society, or to the powerful influence exercised on the religious feelings of Eastern Christians by the Greek Church. They had their origin partly in political motives; and when these motives ceased to operate, we find, from subsequent history, that they were forgotten or neglected. As late as the year 1344, imperial selfishness extinguished every sentiment of humanity and religion in the Byzantine government and the Greek people on the subject of slavery. During the civil war between the empress Anne of Savoy, guardian of John V, and the usurper Cantacuzenos, the empress concluded a treaty with the Ottoman sultan Orkhan, by which the Mahomedan auxiliaries in the imperial armies were allowed to export as slaves into Asia any Christians they might take prisoners belonging to the adverse party; and this treaty even permitted the slave-merchants, who purchased these slaves, to convey them from the markets held in the Turkish camp through Constantinople and Scutari to their destination in the Mussulman countries. The provisions of this treaty were ratified by Cantacuzenos when he gained over the sultan to his party by making him his son-in-law; yet this unprincipled hypocrite gravely records that it was forbidden by the Roman law to reduce prisoners of war to the condition of slaves, unless they were barbarians who did not believe in the doctrines of Christianity. The hypocrisy of princes sometimes succeeds in falsifying history.

A few documents have been preserved which prove the existence both of domestic and rural slavery in Athens, down to the latest period of the ducal government. A letter of pope Innocent III to the archbishop of Patras, in the year 1209, shows that the soil was very generally cultivated by serfs throughout Greece at the time of the Frank conquest. A charter of the titular Latin emperor Robert, in 1358, mentions the loss of slaves as one of the greatest misfortunes to which landed proprietors could be exposed. In the will of Nerio I, duke of Athens, there is a clause conferring liberty on a slave named Maria Rendi, and declaring that all her property, whether movable or immovable, must be given up to her. This clause affords conclusive proof of the existence both of domestic and rural servitude, for the idea of a domestic slave possessing immovable property indicates that the legal position of rural serfs had modified the condition of domestic slaves. There is still a more decisive proof of the generality of domestic slavery in an act of donation of a female slave, by Francesca,



countess of Cephalonia, daughter of Nerio I, to her cousin Nerio, by which she gives him one of her female slaves or serfs from the despotat of Arta, in absolute property, with full power to sell or emancipate her. The last official act relating to slavery during the government of the Frank dukes is dated in 1437. It mentions numerous personal services as due by serfs in Attica, corresponding to those to which the villeins were subjected in western Europe; and it liberates a slave of duke Antonio, named Gregorios Chamaches, and his posterity, from the servitudes of transporting agricultural produce to the city, of transporting new wine from the vats, of collecting and making offerings of oil and olives, and from all other obligations of rural servitude, making him as free as a Frank.

Even rural slavery did not become completely extinct in Greece until the country was conquered by the Turks. The fact is, that in no country where it prevailed has rural slavery ceased, until the price of the productions raised by slave-labour has fallen so low as to leave no profit to the slave-owner. When some change in the condition of the population admits of land being let for a greater share of the produce than can be reserved by the proprietor while cultivating it with the labour of his slaves, then it will be impossible to perpetuate slavery; but it will prove nearly as impossible to abolish it in any society where the labour of the slave gives fertility to the soil and wealth to the slave-owner, in circumstances when, on the other hand, land not cultivated by slaves can find no tenants willing to pay a corresponding profit to the landowner. History affords its testimony that neither the doctrines of Christianity, nor the sentiments of humanity, have ever yet succeeded in extinguishing slavery where the soil could be cultivated with profit by slave-labour. No Christian community of slaveholders has yet voluntarily abolished slavery. Philanthropy is the late production of an advanced state of civilisation, operating on society when free from external danger, removed from the necessity of its members rendering personal military service, and where the majority remain ignorant of the sufferings of actual warfare.

It may not be uninteresting to notice here some proofs of the wealth and importance of Athens during the government of the dukes. Muntaner, a valuable testimony, since he was long engaged in war with the French along the whole shores of the Mediterranean, declares that the Frank chivalry of Greece was in nobility and deeds of arms second to none in Europe; that they spoke as good French as the nobles of Paris; that the title of prince of the Morea was, after that of king, one of the highest and noblest in the world; and that the duke of Athens was one of the greatest princes of the empire of Romania, and among the noblest of those sovereigns who did not bear the kingly title.

The palace of the dukes of Athens was built over the columns of the Propylaea of the Acropolis, and the great tower which still exists was the keep of that edifice. Though perhaps it may disfigure the classic elegance of the spot, it is a grand historical landmark, and testifies, by the solidity of its construction, both the wealth of the dukes and their firm confidence in the stability of their power, now that every other trace of their palaces and their buildings has disappeared. The Turks only whitewashed the fortresses which the Franks strengthened. There was a building erected by the Franks at Thebes, which was far more celebrated in the days of its splendour than their buildings in the Acropolis of Athens. A single ruined tower is now all that remains of this renowned construction, and it still retains the name of Santomeri, in memory of Nicholas Saint-Omer, who became proprietor of one half of the barony of Thebes, in

consequence of his grandfather's marriage with the sister of Guy I, duke of Athens. Nicholas married the princess of Antioch, who brought him an immense dowry. His fortified palace at Thebes was built with a strength and solidity of which the ruined tower affords us some evidence; and the jealousy of the Catalans who destroyed it gives us additional testimony; while of its magnificence the Greek Chronicle of the Conquest of the Morea speaks in terms of great admiration, celebrating its apartments as worthy of royalty, and its walls as works of wonderful art, adorned with paintings of the chivalric exploits of the Crusaders in the Holy Land. A few lines in rude Greek verse, and a ruined tower, are all that remains of the pride of Saint-Omer. The Acropolis and city of Athens, even to the present day, contain many rude but laborious sculptures executed during the period of the Frank domination; and their number was much greater before the recent reconstruction of the town, and the destruction of numerous medieval churches, which formed a valuable link in the records of Athens, and an interesting feature in Athenian topography, while they illustrated the history of art by their curious and sometimes precious paintings. But in the space of a few years, the greater and most valuable part of the paintings has disappeared; and hundreds of sculptured monuments of Byzantine and Frank pride and piety have been broken in pieces, and converted into building materials or paving-stones.

But though the marble monuments of the dukes and archbishops, their charters and their archives, have all disappeared, the renown of the dukedom lives, and will live for ever, in many imperishable works of European literature. The Catalan chronicle of Ramon Muntaner, a work considerably older and not less delightful than the brightest pages of Froissart, gives us an account of the chivalric pomp and magnificent tournaments of the ducal court. Muntaner bore a prominent part in many of the scenes he so vividly describes. He had fought in numerous bloody battles with the Turks and Greeks; he had visited the court of Guy II, the last duke of the family of De la Roche; he had viewed the magnificent halls of the castle of Santomeri at Thebes, where his friend and master, the Infant Don Fernand, of Majorca, was detained a prisoner. What can be more touching than the stout old warrior's tale of how his heart swelled in his breast as he took leave of his king's son in prison; and how he gave his own rich habit to the cook of the castle, and made him swear on the Holy Scriptures that he would rather allow his own head to be cut off, than permit anything hurtful to be put in the food of the Infant of Majorca?

Gibbon tells us that "from the Latin princes of the fourteenth century, Boccaccio, Chaucer, and Shakespeare have borrowed their 'Theseus, duke of Athens;'" and the great historian adds, "An ignorant age transfers its own language and manners to the most distant times." The fact is, that every age does the same thing. The name of Dante must be added to those enumerated by Gibbon. Dante was a contemporary of Guy II and Walter de Brienne, and in his day the fame of the dukes of Athens was a familiar theme in the mouths of the Italians of all the commercial republics, as well as of the statesmen at Naples and the priests at Rome. It was natural, therefore, that the "great poet-sire of Italy" should think that he gave his readers a not unapt idea of the grandeur of Pisistratus, by calling him

" Sire della villa

Del cui nome ne' Dei fu tanta lito,

Ed onde ogni scienza disfavilla.”

Surely this is at least as correct as our established phrase, which styles him tyrant of Athens. Dante also calls Theseus *duca d'Atene*—and he did so, doubtless, because the title appeared to him more appropriate than that of king, and he was compelled to choose between them.

Boccaccio, whose relations with Nicholas Acciaiuoli have been already noticed, and who was familiar with the state of Athens from many sources, has left us a charming picture of the Athenian court.

Chaucer and his contemporary readers must have been well acquainted with the fame of Walter de Brienne, titular duke of Athens, who, as constable of France, perished on the field of Poitiers; and the history of his father, whom the Catalans had deprived of life and duchy in the battle of the Cephissus, must have been the theme of many a tale in every country in Europe. Chaucer may therefore have considered that he adorned the name of Theseus by lending it the title of a great and wealthy prince, instead of leaving it with that of a paltry king.

Shakespeare, on the contrary, very probably never bestowed a thought either on the history of Theseus or the chronology of the Athenian duchy. Little did he care for that literary fastidiousness which allows the attention to be diverted from a true picture of human nature by historical anachronisms. To such critics it is possible that the *Midsummer Night's Dream* would appear more perfect if Theseus had been inventoried in the *dramatis personae* as a member of the house of De la Roche, and Hippolyta as a princess of Achaia; but the defect is in the critics, who can allow their minds to go wandering into history, and thinking of Doric temples or feudal towers, when they ought to be following Shakespeare into the fairy-land he creates.

## CHAPTER VIII

## PRINCIPALITY OF ACHAIA, OR THE MOREA

## SECT. I

CONQUEST OF ACHAIA BY WILLIAM OF CHAMPLITTE. FEUDAL  
ORGANISATION OF THE PRINCIPALITY

The conquest of the Peloponnesus by the French differs considerably from the other military operations of the Crusaders in the Byzantine Empire, and bears a closer resemblance to the conquest of England by the Normans. The conquering force was small—the conquest was quickly yet gradually effected—the opposition did not become a national struggle that interested the great mass of the population, and the conquerors perpetuated their power and kept their race, for some generations, distinct from the conquered people; so that the enterprise unites in some degree the character of a military conquest with that of a colonial establishment. The number of the Frank troops that invaded the Peloponnesus, or at least that began its conquest after the retreat of the king, of Saloniki from Corinth, was numerically inadequate to the undertaking; nor could any degree of military skill and discipline have compensated for this inferiority, had the Byzantine provincial government possessed the means of organising any efficient union among the local authorities, or had the native Greek population felt a patriotic determination to defend their country, and avail themselves of the many strong positions scattered over the surface of a land filled with defiles and mountain-passes. But the high state of material civilisation—the wealth of a large portion of the inhabitants, who generally lived collected together in towns—their love of ease, and their indifference to the fate of the Byzantine empire, which was viewed as a foreign domination—made the people both careless of any change in their rulers, and unfit to offer any serious resistance to a determined enemy. The inhabitants of Greece were habitually viewed with jealousy by the Byzantine government, which feared to see them in possession of arms, lest they should avail themselves of the singular advantages their country presents for asserting their independence. The Peloponnesians were, consequently, little exercised in the use of offensive weapons, unaccustomed to bear the weight of defensive armour, and unacquainted with military discipline; they were, therefore, absolutely ignorant of the simplest dispositions necessary to render their numbers of any practical advantage in the occupation of posts and the defence of towns. The Frank invaders found that they had little else to do but to drive them together into masses, in order to insure their defeat and submission. Under such circumstances, it need not surprise us to learn that the little army of Champlitte subdued the Greeks with as much ease as the band of Cortes conquered the Mexicans; for the bravest men, not habituated

to the use of arms, and ignorant how to range themselves on the field of battle or behind the leaguered rampart, can do little to avert the catastrophe of their country's ruin. Like the virtuous priest who, ignorant of theological lore, plunges boldly into public controversy with a learned and eloquent heretic, they can only injure the cause they are anxious to defend.

William de Champlitte and his brother Eudes are frequently mentioned by Geoffrey de Villehardoin, in his *Chronicle*, as distinguished leaders of the Crusaders during the siege of Constantinople. Eudes, the elder brother, died before the conquest of the Byzantine Empire, but William received his portion of territory in the Peloponnesus, and accompanied Boniface, king of Saloniki, in his expedition into Greece. The Crusaders, after defeating Leo Sguros at Thermopylae, and installing Otho de la Roche in his possessions at Thebes and Athens, pursued the Greeks into the Peloponnesus, and laid siege to Corinth and Nauplia. James d'Avesnes commanded the force which held Sguros himself blockaded in the Acrocorinth, while Boniface and William de Champlitte advanced with the main body, and invested Nauplia.

In the meantime, Geoffrey Villehardoin the younger arrived in the camp. He was nephew of the celebrated marshal of Romania, whose inimitable history of the expedition to Constantinople is one of the most interesting literary monuments of the middle ages; but instead of accompanying his uncle and the members of the fourth Crusade who attacked the Byzantine Empire, he had sailed direct from Marseilles to Syria. Like most of the Crusaders who visited the Holy Land on this occasion, he performed no exploit worthy of notice; and as soon as he had completed the years' service to which he was bound by his vow, he hastened to return to France. On his voyage he was assailed by a tempest, which drove his ships into the harbour of Modon, where he found himself compelled to pass the winter. It was already known in Greece that the Crusaders had taken Constantinople, and that the central government of the Byzantine Empire was destroyed. One of the principal Greek nobles of the Peloponnesus, who possessed extensive property and influence in Messenia, deemed the moment favourable for increasing his power. For this purpose he hired the military services of Villehardoin and his followers, who were passing the winter at Modon in idleness, and by their assistance subdued all the neighbouring towns. The city of Modon was conceded to Villehardoin as the reward of his alliance; but the Greek dying in a short time, hostilities commenced between his successor and the Franks. At this conjuncture, the French at Modon heard of the arrival of the army of Boniface before Nauplia. Geoffrey Villehardoin, who had made up his mind to seek his fortune in Greece, (the flourishing condition of which contrasted in his imagination with the squalid poverty of France and the wretched disorder in Palestine,) boldly resolved to march through the centre of the Peloponnesus and join the camp of the Crusaders. This enterprise he accomplished in six days, without encountering any opposition on his way. Geoffrey was probably already aware that William of Champlitte had received his share of the spoils of the empire in the Peloponnesus; at all events, he offered to serve under his banner, and persuaded him that it would be more advantageous to turn their arms against the western coast of Greece, then called the Morea, than to persist in besieging the impregnable fortresses of Acrocorinth, Argos, and Nauplia. Champlitte quitted the main army with one hundred knights and a considerable body of men-at-arms, and, marching westward, entered the land of the Morea, to unite his forces with those left by Villehardoin at Modon. The news of an insurrection in Thessalonica

compelled Boniface to hasten back to his own dominions; but before the Franks quitted the Peloponnesus, the force besieging Corinth was roughly handled by the Greeks in a sortie, and James d'Avesnes, one of their bravest leaders, severely wounded.

By the act of partition—which William de Champlitte doubtless felt every disposition to carry into execution, as one of those who profited in the highest degree by its provisions—Modon was assigned to the Venetians. It seems probable, from the words of the Chronicle of the marshal, that the first operation of Champlitte was to effect a junction of his forces with those of Villehardoin left to guard the ships at Modon. This was done by marching along the southern coast of the Gulf of Corinth, and ordering the ships of Villehardoin to join the expedition at Patras, which was thus blockaded by land and sea. The city of Patras, and the castle of Katakolo, which commands a small port to the north-west of the mouth of the Alpheus, were taken almost as soon as they were invested; and the inhabitants of the populous but open town of Andravida, in the plain of Elis, voluntarily submitted to Champlitte, who then led his troops southward along the coast. Coron and Kalamata were soon after attacked and captured, without serious resistance. As Modon belonged of right to the Venetian republic, Champlitte conferred on Geoffrey Villehardoin the fief of Kalamata, as a reward for his assistance, and it long continued to be the family estate of the house of Villehardoin. The Greeks at last collected an army to resist the further progress of the French. It consisted of the few Byzantine troops in the garrisons, the armed citizens of the towns of Lacedaemon, Veligosti, and Nikli, and the Sclavonian mountaineers of the canton of Melingon, on mount Taygetus, the whole amounting to about four thousand men, under the command of a Greek named Michael. The French had not more than seven hundred cavalry to oppose to this force; but the battle was fought in the Lakkos, or north-eastern portion of the Messenian plain, where the Franks could turn their superior discipline and heavy armour to the greatest advantage. The victory was not long doubtful. The Greeks were utterly routed; and this insignificant engagement was the only battle the invaders were obliged to fight in order to secure a firm footing in the country and render themselves masters of three-fourths of the peninsula. The city of Arkadia, on the western coast, attempted to make some resistance, but ended by submitting to the victorious army.

The terms on which Champlitte effected the conquest of the Greek population were by no means unfavourable to the inhabitants. They prove that the feudal barons of the West already understood something of the art of government as well as of war. The citizens of the towns were guaranteed in the unmolested enjoyment of their private property, and of all the municipal privileges they had possessed under the Byzantine government. The Sclavonian cantons of Skorta and Melingon were allowed to retain all the privileges which had been conceded to them by imperial charters. The idea of local administrations and privileged corporations had been rendered familiar to all feudal Europe by the glorious exploits of the Italian cities against the German emperors, and by the charters which had already been granted to several communes in France; so that the feudal prejudices of Champlitte and his followers were by no means adverse to the concession of such capitulations as secured a considerable degree of liberty to the Greek city population. The principle adopted by the Crusaders, in all these political arrangements, was extremely simple and well defined. The Greeks were allowed to retain their personal property, and individual rights and privileges, and were allowed to preserve the use of the Byzantine law; while the victors entered into possession of all

the power and authority of the Byzantine emperors, of all the imperial domains, and of the private estates of the nobles and clergy who had emigrated, to follow the fortunes of the emperor and patriarch. The powers of government, and the property thus acquired, were divided and administered according to the feudal system. Patras, Andravida, Coron, Kalamata, and Arkadia, which surrendered in succession to Champlitte, all received the same terms, guaranteed by the oath of their conqueror.

Champlitte employed persuasion as well as arms to assist his progress; and the picture which Villehardoin, his most active agent, was enabled to present to the Greeks of their own political condition must have made a deep impression on their minds, and proved a powerful argument for their immediate submission. The conquest of Constantinople, and of all eastern Greece, had left them with little hope of forming a national government. Leo Sguros, even if he had been popular in the Peloponnesus, had been completely defeated in the field, and could not dispute the sovereignty with the Franks who remained in the province after the retreat of the king of Saloniki. Anarchy and civil war had commenced. Champlitte assured the inhabitants of the Peloponnesus that he came among them as a prince determined to occupy the vacant sovereignty, and not as a passing conqueror bent on pillage. He offered terms of peace that put an end to all grounds of hostility; while the continuance of the war would expose them to certain ruin, as the invading army must then be maintained by plunder. The Greek people, destitute of military leaders, freed from alarm by the small number of the French troops, and confiding in the strict military discipline that prevailed in their camp, submitted, without violent opposition, to a domination which did not appear likely to become very burdensome. The French, for their part, sought rather to obtain possession of estates in the rural districts, and to establish themselves in castles at a distance from the towns, than to reside in the cities, and become embroiled in the political business of the town population. The two nations quickly perceived that their interests and habits of life would allow them to live together in greater harmony than they had supposed possible at first sight, from the strong contrast produced by their different states of civilisation, and the adverse prejudices of their religious feelings.

William de Champlitte seems to have remained about three years in the Peloponnesus, and during that time he completed the conquest of more than one-half of the peninsula. He organised the invading army into a feudal society, completed a register of the territory partitioned among his knights and soldiers, in the style of the famous Doomesday-book of England, and regulated the terms and the nature of the service which the different vassals were bound to perform. The arrangements adopted afford us an interesting insight into the manner of life of the dominant class in this feudal colony, and throw considerable light on an interesting but dark period of medieval history.

The feudal organization of Achaia is now a dream of the past, and a record of men who have left no inheritors; but every dream or tradition that enters the domain of literature, must have exercised sufficient influence on the minds of men to make it deserving of calm investigation. Enthusiasts, by means of a few well-known phrases of sacred writ cunningly misapplied, have authorised deeds of rapine and murder by recollections of Jewish history. The songs of the Scandinavians encouraged the piracies of the Vikings of the north. The romances concerning Charlemagne and his twelve peers formed the political repertory of the French nobles during the middle ages, and from this strange magazine of the art of government they drew many of their rules of conduct

in state affairs. One of these rules was, that in every well organised state the sovereign ought to be surrounded by twelve peers. It was necessary, therefore, for Champlitte, as prince of Achaia, to form his court of twelve peers, if he intended to arrogate to himself the position of a sovereign; and it appears that such a court was really constituted, though it is difficult to ascertain at what precise period the arrangement was made. The Chronicle of the Conquest pretends that the complete distribution of the fiefs was effected by a commission consisting of Geoffrey Villehardoin, two knights, two Latin prelates, and four Greek archonts, on the same basis as that which had been adopted in the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, whose assize or code of laws had been adopted as the guide for the legislation of the new empire of Romania. The Greek archonts were evidently admitted as members of the commission only as representatives of the city population, to secure the observance of the capitulations, and to see that no encroachments were made on private property. The scheme of partition, when completed, was formally adopted by Champlitte and the army, with various general laws concerning the internal government of the principality. In short, what in modern language would be called the constitution of Achaia was then promulgated. The slight sketch of the institutions adopted at this time that has been transmitted to us is unfortunately interpolated with additions of a more modern date, added after the house of Anjou of Naples had acquired a claim to the suzerainty of the principality. In its principal features, however, if not in all its details, we can easily trace the spirit of an earlier age.

A domain was marked out for the prince; and Andravida, where probably a great confiscation of imperial property had taken place, was fixed upon as the capital of the principality and the residence of the sovereign. Twelve baronies were formed, and every baron possessing more than four knight's-fees was bound to serve in person with two banners, one accompanying his own person and the other with his contingent, which consisted of a knight and two sergeants for each fief he possessed. The baronets who possessed only four fiefs, without having a town under their guardianship, had only a single banner, and, in addition to their own personal service, were bound to appear accompanied by a knight and twelve sergeants. A number of single knight's-fees and sergeant's-lands were likewise distributed among the troops, and all were bound to personal service. The archbishop of Patras was recognised as primate of the principality, and received eight fiefs to maintain the dignity of his position; while his six suffragan bishops and the three military orders of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem, the Temple, and the Teutonic Order, each received four.

Military service in this feudal colony was declared to be permanently due by the vassals. Four months' duty in garrison and four months' service in the field compelled the vassal to be generally absent from his fief. Even during the four months which he was entitled to spend on his property, he was bound to hold himself in constant readiness to brace on his armour, and defend both his own possessions and those of his absent companions, in case of revolt or invasion. It was the duty of the prince and the parliament to arrange the various terms of service of the different vassals in such a manner as to insure a sufficient defence for the lands of those who happened to be absent on military service, and the nature of this duty greatly increased the authority of the prince. The prelates and the military orders were exempt from garrison-duty, but in other respects they were bound to furnish the military service due from the fiefs they held like the other vassals of the principality. The courts of justice were modelled on the



institutions of France; but the assize of Jerusalem, which was adopted at Constantinople as the code of the Latin empire, under the title of the Assize of Romania, was received as the legal code of the principality. Indeed, the principality of Achaia presented a miniature copy of the empire, which proved more durable than the original.

The geographical division of the baronies of the principality throws considerable light on the early history of the conquest. The first vassal in rank and importance was unquestionably Geoffrey Villehardoin, on whom Champlitte had conferred the fief of Kalamata immediately after its conquest, and who was elected bailly by the vassals on the death of Hugh, who had been left in that capacity when William was obliged to quit the principality to visit France. But the list of the baronies as we now possess it dates after Villehardoin had gained possession of the principality, and in it the most important barony in a military point of view, and the largest in extent, was that of Akova. This barony embraced the valley of the Ladon, and the district that still retains the name of Achoves. It protected the rich valley of the Alpheus and the plains of Elis from the attacks of the Sclavonians, who occupied the mountains to the north of the upper valley of the Alpheus, immediately to the east of the possessions of the baron of Akova. The country inhabited by the Sclavonians was called Skorta, and the French had found it for their interest to detach these Sclavonians from the Greek cause by a separate treaty, concluded soon after the taking of Patras, which left them in possession of their local independence, with all the privileges they had enjoyed under the Byzantine emperors. The Sclavonians of Skorta, or the Gortynian district, and of Melingon, or the slopes of Mount Taygetus, were at this period the only survivors of the great immigration that had threatened to exterminate the Hellenic race in the eighth and ninth centuries. The barony of Akova, established to watch these independent mountaineers, was endowed with twenty-four knight's-fees; and the fortress which its barons constructed as a bulwark of the French power was called Mategrifon, or Stop-Greek.

The barony next in importance was that of Karitena or Skorta, placed within the limits of the territory once held by the Sclavonian Skortioti, and commanding the ordinary line of communication between the central plains of the Peloponnesus and the western coast. The castle of Karitena, which the French constructed, was well selected as a post for maintaining the command of the upper valley of the Alpheus, while it secured the passes into the maritime plain. This barony consisted of twenty-two knight's-fees. The two great baronies of Akova and Karitena formed the barrier of the French possessions both against the Sclavonians of Skorta and the Greeks of Argolis, and the Byzantine garrisons of Corinth, Argos, and Nauplia.

The other important military positions in which baronies were established, but which are now deserted and almost unknown, were Veligosti, Gritzena, Passava, Geraki, and Nikli. Veligosti was a considerable Greek town at the epoch of the invasion, but, like Andravida, it had grown up in a time of general security, and was without fortifications. It was situated on a low hill near the point of intersection of the ancient roads from Sparta to Megalopolis, and from Messene to Tegea, where they quit the mountains to enter the upper valley of the Alpheus. Its site is not far from the modern town of Leondari, which rose out of its ruins about the end of the fourteenth century. The barony of Veligosti consisted of only four knight's-fees, but the city lying within the baron's military jurisdiction gave him baronial rank. Gritzena was the barony created to watch the Sclavonian mountaineers on Mount Taygetus—the Melings of Byzantine history—and to defend the valley of the Pamisas against their incursions.

Passava was an advanced post established in the heart of Maina, to tame the Greek mountaineers of the savage peaks that run out into the sea to the south of the great summits of Taygetus, and to protect the Greek maritime community in the city of Maina, at the extreme southern point of the Peloponnesus. It was situated on the eastern coast of the promontory, about four miles to the south of Gythium, where the ruins of a castle destroyed by the Venetians under Morosini may still be seen rising over the foundations of a city of the heroic age. Passava was rather a frontier garrison than a mere fief; and as, from its situation, it was exposed to have its regular communications with the rest of the principality frequently interrupted, it required to be occupied by a permanent body of troops. The baron of Passava was consequently named hereditary marshal of Achaia, as being the head of what might be looked upon as the standing army and military establishment of the principality. His office gave him full baronial power in his territory, as well as peculiar judicial authority in the army, though his fief consisted of only four knight's-fees. The selection of this singular position for a French fortress, where the garrison could neither assist in protecting their own possessions from invasion nor attack the flank or rear of the enemy to advantage, and which was placed in a district where cavalry was utterly useless, leads us irresistibly to the conclusion that it was connected principally with trade or naval warfare, and that its object was to protect the commerce of the Greek subjects of the principality, or perhaps the privateers which from the ports of Maina issued out to plunder any flag that was viewed with hostile feelings, or which promised profit and impunity to the corsairs. Geraki was built on the lower slope of the mountains that rise to the east of the valley of the Eurotas, near the site of Gerouthrae, and was well situated for covering the lower plains from the forays of the mountaineers of Tzakonia, and the incursions of the Byzantine garrison of Monemvasia. Nikli was a walled town of considerable importance, occupying the site of Tegea, and commanding the lines of communication between the southern provinces of Lacedaemonia and Messenia, and the northern of Corinthia and Argolis.

Only a portion of the territory allotted to several of the feudatories had been subdued in the time of William de Champlitte, whom the news of his elder brother's death compelled to return suddenly to France, in order to secure his rank in the nobility of Europe by receiving investiture of his paternal inheritance, and taking the oath of fealty to his suzerain within a year.

## SECT. II

### ACQUISITION OF THE PRINCIPALITY BY GEFREY VILLEHARDOIN— GEOFFREY I; GEOFFREY II

William de Champlitte left his relation Hugh to act as his bailly in the principality during his absence; but, Hugh dying soon after the prince's departure, Geoffrey Villehardoin was elected by the feudatories to act as bailly, on account of the high reputation he enjoyed for ability and warlike skill, for his influence over the Greek population, and for his intimate connection with the family of Champlitte. The election was in strict conformity with the feudal usages established in the empire of Romania. Geoffrey availed himself of his position to increase his popularity with the feudatories

and subjects of the principality, and did everything in his power to gain the friendship and favour of Henry, emperor of Romania, and the great vassals of the empire. He obtained from the emperor Henry a grant of the office of seneschal of Romania, which raised him to the rank of great feudatory of the empire at the parliament of Ravenika, where he had appeared previously only as the bailly of William de Champlitte. The manner in which he possessed himself of the principality of Achaia is extremely obscure, but it seems to have been done in an unjust and fraudulent way. From the terms in which the acquisition is stigmatised in the assize of Jerusalem, it is implied that William of Champlitte died while Villehardoin was acting as his bailly, and that the bailly basely availed himself of the defenceless condition of his patron's infant children in France, to rob the absent orphans of their heritage.

The Chronicle of the Conquest of the Morea gives a different account of the method by which Geoffrey Villehardoin gained possession of the principality. The character of the bailly gains very little by the altered circumstances. He is represented as having retained possession of the principality by a dishonourable fraud, instead of seizing it by a bold crime. It was known in the Peloponnesus that Champlitte proposed sending Robert de Champlitte, a young member of his own family, to replace his relation Hugh. The nomination was displeasing both to Villehardoin, and to the barons and troops who had undergone all the fatigues of the conquest, and who feared to behold a crowd of young nobles arrive from France to share the spoils of war without having shared its dangers. A plot was formed to reject the title of the new bailly. It is said that Geoffrey sent envoys to Venice, who induced the doge to retard as much as possible the arrival of Robert de Champlitte, and that the Venetian ship in which he had engaged a passage to the Morea treacherously left him on shore at Corfu. At last Robert arrived in the Morea, and then Geoffrey avoided meeting him for some time, and led him into the interior of the province, where a meeting at length took place at Lacedaemon. An assembly of the barons, knights, and clergy, favourable to the projects of Villehardoin had already assembled, and in this parliament Robert claimed to be received as bailly of Achaia in virtue of his cousin's act of investiture, which he produced. The assembly, however, had already concerted with Villehardoin the manner in which the claim was to be disallowed. It was pretended that William de Champlitte had engaged to cede the principality to Villehardoin in case he failed to return, or send a bailly to govern it on his own account within a year from the day of his departure. The parliament now declared that, the year having expired, they were bound to acknowledge Villehardoin as prince of Achaia. In vain Robert de Champlitte argued that, even according to this compact, he was entitled to be received as bailly, for he had landed in the principality before the expiry of the year. The parliament replied that of that circumstance they were incompetent to judge, as the public act of his appearance in the parliament of the principality could alone be taken into consideration. Robert, seeing that it was vain to resist, demanded a certificate of the decision and returned to France, while Geoffrey Villehardoin was acknowledged prince of Achaia. Such is the story of the Chronicles—a story evidently false, but which proves that Villehardoin had really been guilty of something worse.

Geoffrey had conducted himself with great prudence and talent during the time he ruled as bailly. He had successively conquered the cities of Veligosti, Nikli, and Lacedaemon, though the two last were fortified with strong walls; and he had granted favourable terms of capitulation to the Greek inhabitants. He then laid siege to Corinth,

which on the death of Leo Sguros had placed itself under the protection of Michael, despot of Epirus. The conquest of Corinth was of vital importance to all the Frank establishments in Greece, for, so long as it remained in the hands of the despot of Epirus, the communications of Achaia with the great feudatories in northern Greece were exposed to be constantly interrupted, and their armies to be attacked on the flank and rear. In the spring of 1209, Geoffrey Villehardoin and Otho de la Roche united their forces before the walls of Corinth, but they had hardly commenced the siege when they were summoned to attend the parliament of Ravenika, where Villehardoin was raised to the office of seneschal or high steward of Romania. The peace concluded shortly after between the emperor Henry and the despot Michael prevented the Franks from renewing their attack on Corinth. That fortress, with Argos, Nauplia, Monemvasia, and the whole of Argolis and Tzakonia, remained in the possession of the Greeks.

The conduct of the Latin clergy, at this time, was far less charitable than that of the French nobles and knights; and it required all the prudence and firmness of Geoffrey to prevent their avarice and bigotry from interrupting the friendly relations established with the Greek population under the Frank government. Even pope Innocent III, the most zealous of pontiffs in the acquisition of temporal power, was compelled to rebuke the Latin archbishops for the violence with which they treated the Greek bishops who had recognised the papal supremacy. The Pope, satisfied with the acknowledgment of his own authority, was not inclined to allow the Latin prelates to drive the Greeks from their episcopal sees, in order to confer the vacant benefices on the herd of clerical emigrants and poor relations of the barons, who flocked to the East to profit by the conquest. The violent conduct of these ecclesiastical fortune-hunters compelled Geoffrey to become the defender of the Greeks, and the enemy of clerical abuses. As the clergy of Achaia frequently sold the fiefs they had acquired, and returned home with the profit, Geoffrey steadily enforced the law of the emperor Henry, prohibiting all donations of immovable property to the church, either in life or by testament; and, even though the all-powerful Innocent III threatened him with excommunication, he persisted in his course. At the same time, he sent envoys to Rome to explain to his holiness the peculiar difficulties and exigencies of his situation. After the death of Innocent, Gervais the patriarch of Constantinople excommunicated both Geoffrey and Otho de la Roche, for their conduct to the clergy; but they were both relieved from this interdict by the order of Honorius III.

Geoffrey I strengthened his family influence and increased his political importance by the marriage of his son and successor Geoffrey, with Agnes, daughter of the emperor Peter of Courtenay, and sister of the emperors Robert and Baldwin II. In the year 1217, the empress Yoland sailed from Brindisi to proceed to Constantinople by sea, when her husband undertook the unfortunate expedition through Epirus in which he perished. On the voyage the fleet of Yoland stopped at the port of Katakolo, then protected by a castle called by the French Beauvoir, of which the ruins, still existing, are distinguished by the degraded name of Pondikokastron, or the Castle of Rats. Geoffrey Villehardoin immediately presented himself to the empress as her seneschal, and invited her to repose a few days at the castle of Vlisiri, in the neighbourhood, while the fleet revictualled. During this visit the marriage of young Geoffrey with Agnes Courtenay was celebrated with due pomp, in presence of the empress Yoland.

Geoffrey I appears to have died about the year 1218. The commencement of the reign of Geoffrey II was troubled by a serious quarrel with the Church. The young prince

proposed to assemble the whole military force of Achaia, in order to drive the Greeks from the fortresses they still possessed in the Peloponnesus, and complete the conquest of the peninsula. But when he summoned the clergy and military orders to send their contingents to the camp, they refused to obey his orders. In spite of all the opposition his father had offered to the aggrandisement of the church, the clergy and the military orders had acquired possession of almost one-third of the conquered territory; and they now, in defiance of the constitution of the principality, refused to send their contingents into the field, declaring that the clergy held their fiefs from the Pope, and owed no military service, except at his command and for holy wars. Had Geoffrey II permitted these pretensions to pass unpunished, there would have been a speedy end of the principality of Achaia. Without a moment's hesitation, therefore, he seized all the fiefs held by the clergy on the tenure of military service; and when it happened that a clerical vassal had no other revenue, he assigned him a pension sufficient for his subsistence from the public treasury. This statesmanlike conduct threw the Latin Church in the East into a state of frenzy, and Geoffrey II was immediately excommunicated. But excommunication was not a very terrific weapon where the majority of the population was of the Greek Church, so that the prince of Achaia was enabled to pursue his scheme of compelling the church to submit to the civil power without much danger. In order to prove to the world that his conduct was not influenced by avarice, he proposed, in the parliament of the principality, that all profits resulting from the ecclesiastical fiefs placed under sequestration should be employed in constructing a strong fortress, commanding the whole western promontory of Elis, as well as the port of Clarentza, which was then the principal seat of the trade of the principality with the rest of Europe. The walls of this fortress, called Chlomoutzi, and sometimes Castel Tornesi, by the Greeks, still exist, situated at the distance of about three miles from the remains of Clarentza; and during the revolution against the Turks, it was defended for some time against the troops of Ibrahim Pasha. Three years were employed in its construction. When it was terminated, the declining state of the Latin empire induced Geoffrey II to send an embassy to the Pope, to prevail on his holiness to interpose his authority in such a manner as to put an end to the quarrel with the church in Achaia. The prince expressed his readiness to restore all the fiefs that had been placed under sequestration; but he required that the possessors should engage to perform military service; for without this service, he pointed out that it would be impossible to defend the country against the Greeks, who were emboldened, by the successes of Theodore, despot of Epirus, and Theodore Laskaris, emperor of Nice, to contemplate the expulsion of the Franks from the Peloponnesus. Honorius III was so satisfied that the pretensions of Geoffrey II were just and reasonable, that he ordered his legate at Constantinople, John Colonna, to absolve him from excommunication.

The vigour displayed by Geoffrey extended his power, by gaining the voluntary submission of a powerful vassal. The count of Zante and Cephalonia, though brother-in-law of Theodore, despot of Epirus, became a vassal of the principality of Achaia, in order to secure the support and alliance of Geoffrey II.

In the year 1236, Constantinople was threatened by the united forces of the Greek emperor, John III Vatatzes and the Bulgarian king John Asan. On this occasion Geoffrey hastened to its relief with one hundred knights, three hundred crossbowmen, and five hundred archers, and with a considerable sum of money, raised by a tax which he had been authorised by Pope Gregory IX to levy on the clergy of the principality, for

the purpose of succouring the Latin empire. All these supplies were embarked in a fleet of ten war galleys. The Greeks attempted in vain to intercept the Achaian squadron; their fleet was defeated, and Geoffrey entered the port of Constantinople in triumph. He again visited Constantinople in the year 1239, to honour the coronation of his brother-in-law, the emperor Baldwin II, by doing homage for his principality and for the office of seneschal. On this occasion he lent the young emperor a considerable sum of money; and as he was a prudent prince rather than a generous relation, he exacted from the imprudent Baldwin the cession of the lordship of Courtenay, the hereditary fief of the imperial family in France, as the price of his assistance. This hard bargain was doubly usurious, since part of the money advanced consisted of the funds Geoffrey had been authorised by the Pope to levy on the ecclesiastics of Achaia for the service of the empire. The cession of Courtenay, extorted from the young Baldwin by his brother-in-law, vassal and grand seneschal, under these circumstances, appeared to the equitable mind of Louis IX of France so gross an act of rapacity, that as feudal suzerain he refused to ratify the act, and compelled the parties to annul the transaction. It seems, however, not improbable that Geoffrey received a compensation in the East in lieu of the lordship of Courtenay, for he continued to maintain a hundred knights and crossbowmen at Constantinople for the service of the empire—a contingent which, though he might have been bound to maintain it as a great feudatory, and in consequence of the tax levied under the papal grant, he would perhaps have found the means of eluding, had it not been particularly his interest to please and cajole the emperor. It seems, therefore, that these events may be connected with the claim of suzerainty subsequently advanced by the principality of Achaia over the other great fiefs of Romania in Greece, though it must be remembered that there is no evidence of the circumstance in history. Geoffrey may, indeed, only have wished to gain such a suzerainty in lieu of the lordship of Courtenay, without having succeeded; which, indeed, appears to be the most probable conjecture.

Geoffrey II died about the year 1246, without leaving any children, and was succeeded in the principality of Achaia by his brother William.

### SECT. III

#### WILLIAM VILLEHARDOIN COMPLETES THE CONQUEST OF THE MOREA. CEDES MONEMVASIA, MISITHRA, AND MAINA TO THE EMPEROR MICHAEL VIII

William Villehardoin was born in the castle of Kalamata, and was therefore the first prince of Achaia who had some pretensions to be regarded as a native of Greece. In the eyes of the Greek Catholics, at least, he was a countryman, and as he spoke the language of the country, and entered into the prejudices and political views of the Eastern princes, he gave the principality of Achaia a more prominent position in the eyes of the Greeks than it had hitherto occupied. Even the Frank nobility of his dominions had now acquired something of an Eastern character, and become weaned from their attachment to France, where the rank and fortune of their ancestors had

generally been much inferior to that which they themselves held in Greece; and they began to drop their family designations, and adopt the titles of their Eastern possessions.

The first act of William was to take measures for completing the conquest of the Peloponnesus. But the Greek empire of Nicaea had now grown so powerful that he could not expect to besiege the maritime cities of Nauplia and Monemvasia with any prospect of success, unless he could secure the aid of one of the Italian commercial states. Policy pointed out the Venetian republic, which was in possession of Modon, as his natural ally; and he concluded a treaty with the Venetians, by which they engaged to maintain the blockade of Nauplia and Monemvasia with four war galleys, in consideration of the cession of Coron, to which they laid claim, as a portion of their territory under the original partition treaty of the Byzantine empire. The prince of Achaia considered it necessary, also, to increase his land forces, by obtaining the assistance of Guy de la Roche, the Grand-sire of Athens and Thebes; and it would appear that this was purchased by a promise of the cession of Argos and Nauplia to the Athenian prince, to be held by the freest holding known to the feudal system. Guy joined the Achaian army with a considerable force, and the first operations of the Franks were directed against Corinth. The city was soon taken, and the Acrocorinth closely blockaded by the construction of two forts; one to the south, on a peaked rock which was called Montesquiou, now corrupted into Penteskouphia; the other to the north-east. The citadel was thus cut off from receiving any supplies. The impregnable fortress, well supplied with water and provisions, might have defied all the efforts of its besiegers, had its garrison not consisted in great part of the proprietors of the lands around. These men, when they saw their houses ruined by the Frank soldiers, their olive-trees cut down for fuel, their orchards and vineyards destroyed, their grain reaped by the enemy, and their own supplies gradually diminishing, began to think of submission; and they soon consented to surrender the mighty bulwark of the Peloponnesus to the Franks, on condition of being allowed to retain possession of their private property and local privileges, like the other Greeks under the Frank domination. To these terms William Villehardoin consented, and took possession of the Acrocorinth.

Nauplia was then invested, for Argos seems to have offered no serious resistance. The siege of a strong maritime fortress offered many difficulties to the Franks. On the land side Nauplia was quite as impregnable as the Acrocorinth, while the position of its citadel, Palamedi afforded greater advantages for sorties, and its port was sure to receive frequent supplies, in defiance of the effort of the Venetians to keep up a strict blockade. The inhabitants of the neighbouring provinces of Argolis and Tzakonia were a warlike race of mountaineers, exercised in skirmishes with the Latins, and whose activity and knowledge of the country rendered it a matter of difficulty to the besiegers to prevent convoys of provisions and foraging parties, from being cut off by the enemy. These circumstances sustained the courage of the besieged so that very little progress was made towards reducing the place by military operations, when Guy de la Roche succeeded in disposing the minds of the Greeks to a capitulation, by his success in cutting off all supplies on the land side, and driving back the mountaineers into their own districts, while, at the same time, he negotiated with the Greek proprietors in the fortress; and by contrasting the fiscal rapacity of the Byzantine government with the more moderate pecuniary demands of the French princes, he succeeded in persuading them to agree to terms of surrender. The terms of capitulation were such as to place the Greeks of Nauplia in much more favourable circumstances than the rest of their

countrymen. They, as well as the free mountaineers of Argolis, submitted to the Frank domination under the same financial and municipal arrangements which were applied to the subject Greeks; but, as a guarantee for the strict preservation of their commercial privileges, the citizens of Nauplia were allowed to keep possession of the fortifications of the town and the port, while the Franks only placed a permanent garrison in the citadel on Palamedi. The Greeks considered it an additional security for the observance of the treaty, that Guy de la Roche was invested with the fiefs of Nauplia and Argos.

Monemvasia was now the only fortress in the hands of the Greeks, and Tzakonia the only province that preserved its independence. The town of Monemvasia, situated on a rock rising out of the sea, so near the mainland as to be joined to it by a long bridge, was quite impregnable; but the insecurity of its port, or rather, its want of a port capable of protecting ships from the enemy, exposed it to suffer every evil that could be inflicted by a naval blockade. The activity of the Venetian and Achaian squadrons, which had safe ports of retreat at Epidaurus, Limera, and Zarax, from whence they could watch the sea around, effectually excluded all supplies; yet the place was defended until the third year. At last the inhabitants, seeing no prospect of relief from the Greek emperor, John III, who was then occupied with the war in Thrace, and having suffered all the miseries of famine, made an offer to capitulate. They were allowed to retain possession of their private property; and, instead of being bound to furnish a contingent of armed men for the military service, they engaged to supply a certain number of experienced sailors to man the galleys of the prince of Achaia, for the same rate of pay as they had hitherto been in the habit of receiving from the Byzantine emperors. The surrender of Monemvasia was followed by the complete submission of the Tzakonian mountaineers, who then occupied all the country from Argolis to Cape Malea.

William, having completed the conquest of the eastern coast, turned his arms against the Sclavonians of Mount Taygetus and the Greeks of Maina, whom he now resolved to reduce to the same state of immediate dependence on his government as the other inhabitants of the peninsula. The richest possessions of the Sclavonians were situated in the plain of the Eurotas, near the lowest slopes of the mountain. In order to cut them off from the resources they derived from this property, the prince of Achaia determined to build a fortress that should command their communications with these rich possessions. For this purpose he selected a rocky hill that bore the name of Misithra, about three miles from the city of Lacedaemon, and five from Sklavochorion, the chief town of the Sclavonian population of the district. On this hill William erected a strong castle, and at its base his Frank followers constructed a fortified town, that they might live as much as possible separate from their Greek and Sclavonian subjects. Misithra soon became the capital of the district, and it still remains the most considerable place in the valley of the Eurotas. The residence of the prince was established within its walls, and the medieval Lacedaemon soon sank into the same state of desolation as the ancient Sparta, over whose ruins it had risen; nor have the ill-judged royal ordinances promulgated in the modern kingdom of Greece, to revive classic names and create imaginary cities by destroying existing towns, succeeded in rendering Sparta a rival to Villehardoin's city. The Sclavonians, overawed by the proceeding of the prince, which they did not dare to interrupt, sent envoys offering to submit to the Frank domination, to pay a fixed tribute, and to furnish a contingent of armed men on the same terms as they had formerly acknowledged the supremacy of the Byzantine



government; but they demanded, and obtained, exemption from direct taxation and feudal services, and it was stipulated that no Frank barony was to be established within their limits. About the same time William likewise completed the conquest of the Mainiates, and ordered two castles to be constructed in their territory, to keep them in subjection. One of these castles was situated at Maina, in the vicinity of the Tsenarian promontory, and the other at Leftro, on the west coast near Kisternes. The Mainiates, intimidated by the garrisons of these fortresses, and by the galleys of the prince, which interrupted their communications, and cut them off from receiving supplies from the Greek empire, submitted to the same terms as had been imposed on the rest of their countrymen. It seems that the operations against the Tzakonians, Sclavonians, and Mainiates, were carried on simultaneously, and they were thus prevented from concentrating their forces and affording one another aid. The whole of the Peloponnesus was thus reduced under the Frank domination by William Villehardoin, before the end of the year 1248.

The prosperity of the Franks of Achaia had now attained its highest point of elevation. Their prince was the recognised sovereign of the whole peninsula. His revenues were so considerable, that he was enabled to build a cathedral at Andravida, and several fortresses in his principality, without oppressing his subjects by any additional taxes. The barons also constructed many well-fortified castles and impregnable towers throughout the country, of which numerous ruins still exist. The wealth of all sought frequent opportunities of display, in festivals and tournaments that rivalled the most brilliant in Western Europe, and their splendour was the theme of many minstrels.

While the principality was in this flourishing condition, William took the cross and joined the crusade of St Louis, who invaded Egypt, after passing the winter in the island of Cyprus. The prince of Achaia, and Hugh, duke of Burgundy, sailed from the Morea in the spring of 1249, to join the king of France. On their way they stopped at Rhodes, to assist the Genoese in defending that island against the Greek emperor, John III. The Achaian and Burgundian forces soon compelled the Greeks to abandon the siege of Rhodes, and the two princes continued their voyage. They fell in with the fleet of St Louis off the coast of Cyprus, and the united force landed at Damietta on the 4th of June. As Louis remained several months at Damietta without advancing, William Villehardoin demanded permission to return to his principality, from which he did not consider it prudent to be long absent.

William's ambition increased with his wealth and power, and he began to regret the liberality with which he had rewarded the services of his ally, Guy de la Roche. He sought a quarrel with his former friend, and called on the prince of Athens to do personal homage for the fiefs of Argos and Nauplia; and, if we can credit the Chronicles, he even pretended to the suzerainty over the lordships of Athens and Thebes, on the plea that this superiority had been vested in the princes of Achaia by the king of Saloniki. The claim to a right of suzerainty may possibly have been made, but there can be doubt that it was never based by William Villehardoin on a grant to Champlitte. It could only have arisen out of something that had happened since the parliament of Ravenika. Guy de la Roche was now an old man; he had arrived in Greece in the year 1208, and may have attended his uncle Otho, at the parliament of Ravenika, when the relations of all the grand feudatories of the empire of Romania were definitively arranged. Whatever claim Villehardoin may have really made, it excited the

indignation of de la Roche, as an insulting and unjust demand. He replied, that he was willing to acquit himself of the feudal obligations due for the fiefs of Argos and Nauplia, by furnishing the military service they owed to the prince of Achaia; but he refused to pay any personal service, or to swear fealty, for he declared the fiefs were conferred free of personal homage. War followed. The Athenian army was defeated at Karidhi, and the dispute was referred to the decision of king Louis of France, as has been already mentioned. The king of France evidently thought William the party most to blame in this transaction, as he had considered his brother, Geoffrey II, deeply culpable in the matter of the lordship of Courtenay. The Villehardoins seem to have been rather too rapacious, and too sordidly addicted to seek profit in chicanery. Louis absolved the sovereign of Athens from all criminality, and considered that the question at issue, whatever its precise terms may have been, was one that justified private war between two great feudatories.

William Villehardoin married a daughter of Michael II, despot of Epirus. This alliance, joined to his own enterprising and warlike disposition, led the prince of Achaia to join his father-in-law in a war against the Greek empire. The disturbed state of the court of Nicaea, after the death of the emperor Theodore II, held out great hopes to the despot and his allies, of gaining both honour and an extension of territory by the war. William joined Michael with all the forces of Achaia; but the united army was defeated, in the plains of Pelagonia, by the Byzantine troops, though inferior in number, in consequence of the skilful military combinations of John Paleologos, the brother of the emperor Michael VIII. Prince William of Achaia, after fighting bravely with the Frank cavalry, until he saw it all destroyed, fled from the field of battle. He gained the neighbourhood of Kastoria in safety; but he was there discovered by his pursuers concealed under a heap of straw, and his front teeth, which projected in a remarkable manner, enabled them to identify their prize. He was sent prisoner to the emperor Michael VIII who retained him in captivity for three years.

The conditions on which William at length regained his liberty inflicted an irremediable injury on the principality of Achaia. He was compelled to cede to the Greek emperor, as the price of his deliverance, the fortresses of Monemvasia, Misithra, and Maina, the very cities which were especially connected with his own glory; and he engaged, besides, with solemn oaths and the direst imprecations, never to make war on the Greek emperor—ratifying his assurances of perpetual amity by standing godfather to the emperor's youngest son, which was considered a sacred family tie amongst the Greeks. Yet the Chronicles, speaking in the spirit of the times, declare that he resolved to pay no attention to these engagements, as soon as he could obtain the authority of the Pope and the Latin Church to violate his oath, trusting that his Holiness would readily release him from obligations entered into with a heretic and extorted by force. The ecclesiastical morality of the age viewed the violations of the most sacred promises as lawful whenever they interfered with the interests of the papal church. But the emperor Michael VIII respected his own promises too little, to place any confidence in the good faith of the prince of Achaia, with whatever oaths it might appear to be guaranteed, and he would not release his prisoner until the three fortresses were consigned to Byzantine garrisons.

From this period the history of the Morea assumes a new aspect. It now becomes divided into two provinces—one held by the Franks, and the other immediately dependent on the Greek emperor of Constantinople. The Greek population began to

aspire at expelling their heterodox masters, and a long series of national wars was the consequence; but as the numbers, both of the Franks and Greeks who bore arms, continually diminished, these wars were principally carried on by foreign mercenaries. The country was hourly exposed to be laid waste by rival rulers, and the people pillaged by foreign soldiers, and the numerous unfortified towns and villages scattered over the face of the peninsula began from this epoch to disappear. The garrisons placed by the Greek emperor in the fortresses of Monemvasia, Misithra, and Maina, gave him the command over the whole coast of Laconia. The mountaineers of Tzakonia, Vatika, and Taygetus hastened to throw off the yoke of the Franks, who were soon compelled to abandon the fortresses of Passava and Leftro, in consequence of the rebellion of the inhabitants of Kisterna or Exo-Mani. The Slavonians of Skorta, roused by the success of their countrymen, the Melings of Taygetus, who had established themselves in virtual independence between the two contending parties, made a desperate effort to expel the Franks; and though they were assailed on all sides by the barons of Akova and Karitena, and by the whole army of Achaia, they were not reduced to obedience until a body of Turkish troops, who had deserted from the Greeks, joined the Franks. The savage cruelty and fearful devastations of these mercenaries paralysed the resistance of the Slavonians, and mined their country.

There may be some difficulty in pronouncing whether the prince of Achaia, the Pope, or the Greek emperor was most to blame for commencing the war in the Morea. The Pope authorised the commencement of hostilities by relieving prince William from the obligations of his oath, and absolving him from all penalties incurred by the violation of his promises to the emperor Michael. His Holiness was alarmed at the blow the papal church had received in the East by the loss of Constantinople, and the decline of the Latin power in the Peloponnesus, where the Frank clergy began to be excluded from a considerable part of the peninsula; and, in order to recover the ground lost, he sanctioned the preaching of a crusade for the deliverance of the Morea from the Greek emperor. The Venetians joined their solicitations to the papal exhortations; and the rebellion of the mountaineers, who voluntarily placed themselves under the Byzantine protection, gave the prince of Achaia a legitimate pretext for assembling an army to watch the Greek forces in Misithra. Michael VIII was as much determined to avail himself of the territory he had acquired, to extend his dominions at the expense of the Franks, as William was resolved to make every exertion for its recovery.

For many years a war of mutual invasions was carried on, which degenerated into a system of rapine. The whole Peloponnesus, from Monemvasia to Andravida, was wasted by the hostile armies, the resources of the land were ruined, its population diminished, and its civilisation deteriorated.

The Franks laboured under many disadvantages in the prosecution of this war. Their best troops had been annihilated at the battle of Pelagonia, which had thrown many fiefs into the hands of females; nor was it easy to recruit their armies by emigrants from western Europe, since the fortune of war had changed, and there was an end of the hopes previously entertained, of acquiring fiefs in the Greek territory as a reward of valour. The Greeks, who formed the majority of the population even in the districts still under the Frank domination, were secretly attached to the cause of the emperor; and most of those of the higher orders, who were able to effect it, emigrated into the Byzantine fortresses. When the prince of Achaia visited the city of Lacedaemon, of which he retained possession after the cession of Misithra, and which he was anxious to

hold as a bulwark against the Byzantine troops, he found it deserted by all its Greek inhabitants, who had abandoned their houses and taken up their residence within the fortifications of Misithra. The mutual weakness of the two contending parties, and the rude nature of the military operations of the age, are depicted by the fact that the prince of Achaia continued to retain possession of Lacedaemon for several years after the war had broken out, though it was only three miles distant from Misithra, which served as the headquarters of the Byzantine army. Under every disadvantage, the Franks displayed their usual warlike spirit and indomitable courage, and the Greeks were no match for them on the field of battle. The first tide of success, however, ran strongly in favour of the Byzantine forces, and the insurrection of the native population drove the Frank army back into the plain of Elis. Andravida the capital of the principality was attacked, and William Villehardoin was compelled to construct retrenchments, in order to place his forces in a condition to defend the open town. Had Andravida fallen, it is probable the Franks would have been expelled from the Morea; but the imperial forces were repulsed, and subsequently defeated in two battles. Their first defeat was at Prinitza, in the lower valley of the Alpheus; the other at the defile of Makryplagia, between the plains of Veligosti and Lakkos. In this last engagement the imperial generals, Philes and Makrinos, were taken prisoners, and the whole open country, as far as Helos and Monemvasia, was ravaged by the victorious army. But the valour of the Franks would have been insufficient to defend every corner of their territory from the incessant attacks of the large bodies of light troops which the Byzantine emperor was able to direct against every exposed point, had the prince of Achaia not found a new and powerful ally in Charles of Anjou, the conqueror of the kingdom of Naples.

#### SECT. IV

##### ALLIANCE AND FEUDAL CONNECTION BETWEEN THE PRINCIPALITY OF ACHAIA AND THE KINGDOM OF NAPLES

In the year 1266, Charles of Anjou, the brother of St Louis, rendered himself master of the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily by the defeat and death of king Manfred; and in the following year, though Manfred had been the brother-in-law of William Villehardoin, the prince of Achaia purchased the alliance of the new king by betrothing his infant daughter Isabella, the heiress of his principality, to Philip, the second son of Charles of Anjou. This alliance exerted a powerful effect in modifying the condition of the Frank establishments in Greece, and infused new vigour not only into the French chivalry in Achaia, but also gave a new direction to the political projects of the Latins throughout the East, by involving them in the mortal quarrel between the houses of Anjou and Aragon. The general advance of society in Western Europe was daily diminishing the proportion of the population that lived constantly with arms in their hands, and the inadequacy of feudal institutions to meet the new exigencies of social life was becoming gradually more apparent. In this state of things the Franks of Achaia, if they had not been supported by a powerful prince, and a numerous military population in their immediate neighbourhood, to whom they could apply in every sudden and pressing emergency, would have been unable to keep up a force sufficient to resist the

vigorous assaults of the Byzantine Greeks on the one hand, and the secret encroachments of the republics of Venice and Genoa on the other.

The dethroned emperor, Baldwin II, had concluded a treaty with Charles of Anjou at Viterbo, the professed object of which was to purchase the assistance of the king of Naples for recovering the empire of Romania, and re-establishing his throne at Constantinople. Among other stipulations in this treaty, Baldwin ceded to Charles the suzerainty of the principality of Achaia and the Morea, which he separated entirely from the empire of Romania, and vested in the crown of Sicily and Naples. The betrothal of Philip, the second son of Charles, to Isabella Villehardoin took place at the same time, and the king of Naples invested his son, who was still a child, with the suzerainty over his wife's future heritage. This alliance rendered William the liegeman of his son-in-law; but it also enabled him to claim succours from the king of Naples, to aid in the wars with the emperor Michael VIII. William repaid the assistance he received at a very critical moment. He joined the French army with a chosen band of knights, long exercised in the wars of the East, on the eve of the contest with Conradin; and their brilliant valour contributed materially to the success of Charles of Anjou at the decisive battle of Tagliacozzo. After the death of Conradin, William received from the king of Naples a strong auxiliary force, which enabled him to conclude peace with the Greek emperor on favourable terms, and for several years the Peloponnesus enjoyed tranquillity.

The condition of the Greek population in the peninsula underwent a considerable change at this period, though it is impossible for us to trace in detail the connection of the causes with the effects produced. The commerce of the East was rapidly passing out of the hands of the Greeks, and centring itself in those of the citizens of the Italian republics, and of the Spanish coast; besides this, many of the productions of which the Greeks had long enjoyed a monopoly, were now raised more abundantly and of better quality in Sicily, Italy, and Spain. The men of Tzakonia and Maina, no longer able to find constant employment in the merchant ships of the Byzantine empire, and cut off from continuing their forays into the Frank territory, sought service in the fleet at Constantinople, and aided in ravaging the islands of the Archipelago which were in the possession of the Franks, or the coasts of Asia Minor that had been conquered by the Turks. The women, old men, and children, were left as the principal inhabitants of the mountain districts in the Peloponnesus, because their labour was sufficient for the collection of the olives, valonia, dye-stuffs, and mulberry-leaves, and for weaving cloth and rearing silk-worms, which were the only occupations of any profit in their country. Many entire families, however, quitted their native mountains and settled at Constantinople.

The eventful reign of William Villehardoin at last drew to a close. The only act recorded of his latter years proves that rapacity was the characteristic feature of his mind, as it had been both of his brother and his father. Under the pretext of executing the strict letter of the feudal laws of Romania, which he had shown himself so ready to infringe in the case of the duchy of Athens, he perpetrated a most disgraceful violation of every principle of equity, and for which he had no apology to offer. Ambition might be urged as a plea in excuse for his attack on the independence of Guy de la Roche, but avarice and ingratitude darkened the infamous rapacity he displayed in seizing the property of Margaret de Neuilly. When William had been released from his captivity by the Greek emperor, he had been forced to give hostages for his faithful execution of all

the stipulations in the treaty. One of these hostages was a child, the daughter of his friend John de Neuilly, baron of Passava, and hereditary marshal of Achaia. The young lady was willingly allowed to reside at the court of Constantinople; for at that time there was no better school for female education in Europe than the household of the princesses of the Byzantine empire; and as Margaret would be received under the sacred character of a hostage, her parents knew that she would be treated with every care, and receive such an education as could hardly be obtained by a king's daughter in any feudal court. The young lady remained a prisoner until peace was concluded between the prince of Achaia and the emperor of Constantinople. She then returned to Greece to find her father, the marshal, dead, and her paternal castle of Passava in the hands of the Greeks. Her fortune, however, was still brilliant, for she was heiress of her maternal uncle, Walter de Rosières, baron of Akova, the lord of four-and-twenty knight's-fees, who had died a short time before her father. When Margaret de Neuilly presented herself at the court of the principality of Achaia to claim the investiture of her father's empty title, and of her uncle's large estates, she met with an answer worthy of the pettifogging spirit of Villehardoin. The worthless investiture of the barony of Passava, and the empty honour of the hereditary title of marshal, were readily conferred on her, as her father had died within a year. But her claim to the barony of Akova was rejected on the plea that her uncle had been dead more than a year; and in consequence of her not having demanded the investiture in person within a year and day after his decease, the fief was forfeited according to the provisions of the feudal code. To her allegation, that she had only been prevented from appearing to claim the investiture of her heritage by the act of the prince of Achaia himself, who had placed her person in pledge as a hostage, William replied, that the terms of the law made no exception for such a case; and as every vassal was bound to become hostage for his lord, he was equally bound to suffer every loss which might be entailed on him in consequence of fulfilling this obligation. The barony of Akova was, therefore, declared to have reverted to the prince of Achaia as its immediate lord-paramount. By this mean subterfuge William Villehardoin obtained possession of the most extensive barony in his principality, and defrauded the orphan daughter of his friend of her inheritance. Margaret de Neuilly married John de Saint-Omer; and her brother-in-law, Nicholas de Saint-Omer of Thebes, came to Andravida with great pomp to plead her cause before the high court of Achaia. The appeal, however, proved fruitless. The influence of the prince secured a confirmation of the previous decision, legalising his meanness and ingratitude. Prudence, some slight respect for public opinion, and, perhaps, some fear of the great power of the family of Saint-Omer, induced the prince of Achaia to grant eight knight's-fees out of the barony to Margaret and her husband; but he retained the others, which he bestowed on his younger daughter, Margaret, who was called the Lady of Akova, or more commonly the Lady of Mategrifon; and on her the sins of her father were visited.

William Villehardoin died at Kalamata, the place of his birth, in the year 1277. He left two daughters, Isabella and Margaret. Misfortune soon extinguished his race. Matilda of Hainault, the daughter of Isabella, was deprived of the principality of Achaia, and died childless, a prisoner in the Castel del Uovo at Naples; Margaret, the lady of Akova, died a prisoner in the hands of the barons of Achaia, who were displeased at her sanctioning her daughter's alliance with the house of Aragon; and her daughter Elizabeth, after marrying Fernand of Majorca, the enemy of the French, died in childbed at Catania.

## SECT. V.

## ISABELLA DE VILLEHARDOIN. FLORENZ OF HAINAULT. PHILIP OF SAVOY

Isabella de Villehardoin lost her betrothed husband, Philip of Anjou, while both were children. During her minority the administration of the principality of Achaia was carried on by baillies appointed by Charles, king of Naples, in virtue of his rights as lord-paramount of the principality acquired by the treaty of Viterbo. Under these baillies, war was renewed with the Byzantine governors of Misithra; and the Peloponnesus was wasted by the continual forays of the Franks and Greeks, until it fell into a state of anarchy, during which all the landed proprietors, but especially the Greek population of Achaia, suffered severely from the extortions of the political and military adventurers, who made the war a pretext for amassing wealth in the principality. William de la Roche, duke of Athens, governed the principality for ten years, and his administration seems to have been temperate and not unpopular: but after his death, the state of things became intolerable; and at last the barons became so impatient of their sufferings, that they petitioned Charles II, king of Naples, to send them a prince, who, as the husband of Isabella, would take up his residence among them. Charles selected Florenz of Hainault, a cadet of one of the noblest houses of Belgium, who had visited Naples to seek his fortune in the military service of the house of Anjou, as a prince worthy to receive the hand of Isabella and the government of the principality of Achaia, in the critical condition to which it was reduced. After the celebration of the marriage, the king of Naples invested Florenz with sovereign power, as regent for his wife, and renounced for himself the use of the title of the prince of Achaia, which was to be borne by the actual sovereigns of the country, and not by the lords-paramount, who had begun to assume it; but he reserved the homage due to the crown of Naples, and he added a provision, that in case Isabella should become a widow, without having a male heir, it should neither be lawful for her, nor for any female heir to the principality, to marry without the consent of the kings of Naples, as their feudal suzerains.

The reign of Isabella and Florenz lasted about five years. It was afterwards looked back to by the population of the Morea with regret, as the last prosperous epoch in the Frank domination. Florenz of Hainault showed that he really wished to remedy the evils under which the country was suffering. His first measure was to conclude a treaty of peace with the Greek emperor Andronicus II; and as soon as he was relieved from the necessity of keeping large bands of military retainers in constant movement, he occupied himself seriously in reforming the internal government. But though his administration was subsequently regretted, because succeeding times were worse, still his government was marked by many scenes of violence, of a nature that prove the general state of society in the Morea to have been very little removed from the confines of intestine war. Men who had it not in their power to revenge the injuries they sustained with their own strength, had very little chance of obtaining justice. A few anecdotes, illustrative of the social state of Greece at this period, taken from the chronicles written during the next generation, will afford a more correct delineation of

the nature of the government, and the condition of the people, than any narrative founded on the scanty official documents that have been preserved.

Florenz named one of his Flemish relations, Walter de Luidekerke, governor of Corinth. Walter maintained a gallant establishment; but the revenues of his barony being insufficient to support his magnificent style of housekeeping, he supplied the deficiency in his budget by various acts of pillage and extortion. In those days it was not easy for the prodigal to run into debt unless they possessed large landed estates; the luxurious and extravagant military chieftains could only repair their finances by robbing strangers and waylaying and ransoming travellers: it was reserved for a chivalry of a later age to preserve its social pre-eminence, by defrauding tradesmen or cheating friends. At a moment when Walter de Luidekerke was in want of money, it happened that a wealthy Greek, named Photes, visited some property he possessed within the limits of the province of Corinth. The governor, immediately on hearing of his presence, sent a party of his men-at-arms to seize Photes, pretending that he was violating the treaty with the Byzantine authorities, by living at free quarters within the limits of the Frank territory. When the prisoner was secured, the peasants of the district were incited to make a demand for damage done by Photes, to the amount of ten thousand perpers; and Walter insisted that this sum should be paid to him by his prisoner. Photes, who knew the accusation was got up as a pretext to extort money, treated the demand with contempt; and though he was imprisoned and treated with great severity, resisted the demands of Walter with constancy, not thinking that the governor would dare to make use of any personal violence, which might become a ground of war with the Byzantine government. But the governor of Corinth was determined to obtain money, even at the most desperate risk; and in order to compel Photes to agree to his demands, he ordered two of the Greek's teeth to be extracted. As it was now clear that William was ready to proceed to extremities, Photes consented to purchase his liberty, by paying one thousand perpers.

As soon as Photes was released from confinement, he applied for justice to the Byzantine governor of Misithra, who represented the matter to the prince of Achaia; but Florenz, who was anxious to protect his relation, and not inclined to regard his extorting money from a Greek as a very serious offence, affected to believe that the accusation brought by the peasants was well founded, and rejected the claim for satisfaction. The Byzantine authorities did not consider the moment favourable for taking any measures that might lead to a renewal of hostilities; so that Photes, disgusted with his ineffectual attempt to obtain justice, resolved to seek revenge. Hearing that his enemy was returning to Corinth from Patras, he assembled some armed men, and placed himself in ambush near the road along the southern shore of the Corinthian gulf. While he was thus on the watch, a galley was perceived coming from the entrance of the gulf, and bearing the pennon of a Frank knight. It approached the shore, and a young noble, with light hair and a fair complexion, landed to dine near a fountain shaded with plane-trees, not far from the ambush. The Greeks cautiously crept up to the spot; and Photes, seeing a man the picture of Walter de Luidekerke seated on a carpet, as his attendants prepared his meal, became inflamed with rage at the sight of his oppressor; and rushing forward, with his drawn sword struck the knight several blows, exclaiming, "There, my lord Walter, take your quittance." The attendants of the prostrate noble recognised the assailant, and shouted "Photy, Photy! what are you doing? It is the lord of Vostitza, not lord Walter." But the information came too late: the blond hair and handsome



countenance of the lord of Vostitza had made him the sacrifice for Walter's vices. Both parties raised the wounded knight from the ground, with feelings of deep regret; for the lord of Vostitza was as much beloved as he of Corinth was disliked. He was conveyed in his galley to Corinth, where he expired next day. The prince of Achaia now called on the Byzantine governor to deliver up Photes, but he met with the same denial of justice he had formerly used. The Byzantine authorities declared that the crime committed was accidental, and originated in a mistake while Photes was in search of a legitimate revenge. In spite of the high rank of the young baron of Vostitza, the affair was allowed to drop; for it was evident that Florenz could obtain no satisfaction without war, and he did not think it prudent to renew hostilities on account of a private injury.

The Slavonians of Mount Taygetus were still governed by their own local magistrates. They were tributary to the Byzantine government, but not subject to the Byzantine administration. Two Slavonian chiefs, who resided at Ghianitza, about three miles from Kalamata, formed a plan to surprise that fortress. This design was carried into execution by scaling a tower that commanded the internal defences of the citadel, during a stormy night, with a band of fifty followers. At daybreak, the assailants were joined by 600 of their countrymen, in good hauberks, who drove the Franks out of the citadel, and garrisoned Kalamata. The moment prince Florenz heard of this disaster, he hastened to Kalamata, and formed the siege of the place in person; but the Slavonians had sufficient time to augment the garrison, and the citadel contained ample magazines of provisions and military stores. The surprisal of Kalamata was an open infraction of the treaty, and Florenz called on the Byzantine governor of Misithra to compel the Slavonians to surrender the place they had so treacherously seized; but the governor replied that the Slavonians were a people who lived according to their own customs, and paid no obedience to the laws of the Byzantine empire. Nothing, therefore, remained for the prince but to send an embassy to Constantinople, to demand justice from the emperor Andronicus II; and, in the meantime, he prosecuted the siege with the greatest vigour. His ambassadors received very much the same reply from the emperor as the prince had received from the imperial authorities in Greece. At last, however, they succeeded in obtaining the nomination of a Greek commissioner to examine into the facts on the spot, with full powers to terminate the business. This commissioner, whose name, Sguros-Mailly, indicates a family connection with the Latins, was bribed by the Achaian ambassadors, and through his treachery Florenz succeeded in recovering possession of Kalamata, merely on paying the traitor three hundred gold florins, and making him a present of a valuable horse.

At this period the Peloponnesus was rich in that accumulation of capital on landed property which forms the surest mark of a long period of civilisation, and which it often takes ages of barbarism and bad government to annihilate. Roads, wells, cisterns, aqueducts, and plantations, with commodious houses, barns, and magazines, enable a numerous population to live in ease and plenty, where, without this accumulation of capital, only a few ploughmen and shepherds could drag out a laborious and scanty existence. Abundance creates markets where the difficulties of communication are not insurmountable.

In a fine meadow, near the town of Vervena, a fair of some importance was held, during the thirteenth century, in the month of June. Vervena was subject to the Franks, and was still included in the district of Skorta, once inhabited exclusively by Slavonians. A rich Greek, named Chalkokondylas, from Great Arachova, on the

western side of the Tzakonian mountains, had visited this fair to sell his silk. In consequence of some dispute in the public square, a Frank knight struck him with the stave of a lance. There was no hope of redress for the insult at Vervena, so Chalkokondylas returned home, and laid plans for revenging himself on the Franks by expelling them from the castle of St George, the frontier fortress on the eastern limits of their territory, situated not far from Great Arachova. He succeeded in his project, by gaining over the Greeks employed in the castle to act as cellarer and butler; and with the aid of a few troops, lent by the Byzantine governor of Misithra, who considered the prize of sufficient value to warrant the treachery, and risk a renewal of hostilities with the prince of Achaia, he made himself master of the strong castle of St George.

Florenz, who was never wanting in activity and energy, hastened to besiege the castle in person, hoping to recover possession of it before the Greeks were able to lay in a store of provisions. Its situation, however, rendered it almost impregnable, so that a very small force sufficed for its defence, and there seemed little chance of taking it, except by famine. In order, therefore, to prevent the Byzantine garrison which occupied it from commanding the roads leading to Nikli and Veligosti, Florenz found it necessary to construct a new castle, called Beaufort, in which he stationed a strong body of men. In the meantime, he sent agents to Italy to enrol veteran troops, experienced in the operations of sieges, and hired the services of Spany, the Sclavonian lord of the district of Kisterna, who joined the Achaian army with two hundred infantry, pikemen, and archers, accustomed to mountain warfare, and habituated to besiege their neighbours in the rock forts of their native province. Spany received from the prince of Achaia two fiefs in the plain near Kalamata, and in return engaged to maintain an armed vessel at the command of the prince. But before all the necessary preparations for making a vigorous attack on the castle of St George were completed, Florenz of Hainault died in the year 1297.

During the reign of Isabella and Florenz, the suzerainty of Achaia was transferred from the crown of Naples by king Charles II, and conferred on Philip of Tarentum, his second son, on the occasion of his marriage with Ithamar, daughter of Nicephorus, despot of Epirus. Philip received from his father-in-law the cities of Naupaktos, Vrachori, Angelokastron, and Vomitza, as the dowry of his wife; and his father bestowed on him Corfu, and all the lands possessed by the crown of Naples in Epirus, in actual sovereignty. These possessions, united to the suzerainty of Achaia, were intended to form the foundations of a Greco-Latin kingdom. The death of Ithamar, and the subsequent marriage of Philip of Tarentum with Catherine of Valois, the titular empress of Romania, opened new prospects of ambition to the house of Anjou.

Isabella, princess of Achaia, after a widowhood of four years, married Philip of Savoy. The marriage was ratified by Charles II of Naples, who invested Philip of Savoy with the actual sovereignty of the principality of Achaia, in the name of his son Philip of Tarentum, the real suzerain. Philip of Savoy, on arriving in the Morea, was compelled by the feudatories of the principality to take an oath to respect the usages and privileges of the state before they would consent to offer him their homage as vassals. He was considerably younger than his wife; and his fear of losing the government of the principality after her death, and of sinking into the rank of a titular prince on his Italian lands, induced him to employ his time in amassing money, in violation of all the usages he had sworn to respect. In order to avoid awakening the opposition of the Frank knights and barons, he directed his first attacks against the purses of the Sclavonians

and Greeks who inhabited the privileged territory of Skorta, on whom he imposed a tax. This was a direct violation of the charter under which these people had long lived in tranquillity, and they determined to resist it. The Byzantine authorities at Misithra were invited to assist the insurrection; and the population of Skorta, with the auxiliary force sent to aid them from the Byzantine province, succeeded, by a sudden attack, in capturing the two castles of St Helena and Crevecoeur, in the passes between Karitena and the lower plain of the Alpheus, both of which they levelled with the ground. The vigour of Philip, who collected all the military force of the principality, and hastened to the scene of action, arrested the progress of the rebellion, and recovered the ground lost by the Franks; but the country was laid waste, the wealth of the knights in the district was diminished, two strong castles were utterly destroyed, and there seemed little probability that means would be found to rebuild them. The ruinous effects of the avarice of the prince became evident to all, and it was made too apparent that the tenure on which the Franks continued to hold their possessions in the centre of the Peloponnesus would, by a repetition of such conduct, become extremely precarious. The Greeks and Sclavonians henceforward made common cause; and whenever an opportunity was afforded them, they threw off the yoke of the Franks, in order to place themselves under the protection of their Byzantine coreligionaries, who gradually gained ground on the Latins, and year after year expelled them from some new district. To this union of the Greeks and Sclavonians for a common object, we must attribute the complete amalgamation of the two races in the Peloponnesus, and the creation of social feelings, which soon led to the utter extinction of the Sclavonian language, and the abolition of all the distinctive privileges still retained by the Sclavonian population.

Isabella and Philip of Savoy quitted Greece in the year 1304. They appear to have taken this step in consequence of differences with their vassals in the principality, and of disputes with Philip of Tarentum, their lord-paramount, who, after the death of Boniface VIII, seems to have called in question the legality of the investiture granted by his father to Philip of Savoy. Isabella died at her husband's Italian possessions in the year 1311, and Philip of Savoy then became merely titular prince of Achaia, without having subsequently any direct connection with the political affairs in the principality.

## SECT. VI

### MAUD OF HAINAULT AND LOUIS OF BURGUNDY

Maud or Matilda, the daughter of Isabella Villehardoin and Florenz of Hainault, though only eighteen years of age when she succeeded to the principality of Achaia, was already widow of Guy II, duke of Athens. In the year 1313, two years after her accession, she was married to Louis of Burgundy, a treaty having been concluded between the king of France, the duke of Burgundy, and Philip of Tarentum, in which her rights were most shamefully trafficked to serve the private interests of these princes. Hugh, duke of Burgundy, had been already engaged to Catherine of Valois, the titular empress of Romania; but it now suited the interests of all parties that Philip of Tarentum, who was a widower, should marry Catherine of Valois; and in order to bribe

the duke of Burgundy to consent, Maud of Hainault was forced to cede her principality to her husband, Louis of Burgundy, the duke's brother, and to his collateral heirs, even to the exclusion of her own children by any future marriage. Pope Clement V, the royal houses of France and Naples, and the proud dukes of Burgundy, all conspired to advance their political schemes, by defrauding a young girl of nineteen of her inheritance.

About the end of the year 1315, Maud and Louis set out from Venice with a small army, to take possession of their principality, which was governed by the Count of Cephalonia as bailly for Maud. In the meantime, however, Fernand, son of Don Jayme I, king of Majorca, had married Elizabeth, only daughter of Margaret de Villehardoin, the lady of Akova, or Mategrifon, and he advanced a claim to the principality on the pretext that William Villehardoin had by will declared that the survivor of his daughters was to inherit his dominions. The French barons of Achaia, however, were not inclined to favour the pretensions of a Spanish prince, who might easily deprive them of all their privileges by uniting with the Grand Company which had already conquered eastern Greece. As a precautionary measure they imprisoned the lady of Akova on her return from Messina, where the marriage of her daughter was celebrated, and sequestered her estates while waiting anxiously to hear from Louis of Burgundy. The lady of Akova died shortly after her arrest. Her daughter Elizabeth only survived a few weeks, dying after she gave birth to Jayme II, king of Majorca, one of the most unfortunate princes that ever bore the royal title. Fernand was a widower before he quitted Sicily to invade Achaia, and he counted far more on the valour of his Almogavars, than on the validity of his son's title to render him master of Achaia. Taking advantage of the war that had broken out between Robert, king of Naples, and Frederic, king of Sicily, he collected a fleet on the Sicilian coast, and sailed from Catania with a corps of five hundred cavalry, and a strong body of the redoubtable infantry of Spain, in 1315. Clarentza and Pondikokastron surrendered on his arrival, and the greater part of the western coast of the Morea was soon subdued; but Fernand, though a gallant knight, was no general, and his wilfulness ruined the enterprise, and cost him his life, at a moment when it seemed probable that he might have completed the conquest of Achaia, and expelled the French from the Peloponnesus as effectually as his countrymen had driven them out of Athens.

Early in the year 1316, Louis of Burgundy, who had just arrived in Achaia, led out his army against Fernand, who was slain in a petty skirmish where he had no business to be present. After his death, his Spanish followers abandoned all idea of conquering the principality. Their force was inadequate to the undertaking; and what was worse, they had no expectation of finding another leader who was likely to possess the influence necessary to procure the supplies of men and money required to prosecute the war in such a manner as might bring it to a profitable termination. The Spaniards were, however, very generally accused of treachery in yielding up the fortified places in their possession to the French party, who were considerably their inferiors in warlike energy. Louis of Burgundy survived his rival only about two months. It was said that he was poisoned by the Count of Cephalonia, who was one of a family in which poisoning appears to have been a common practice. The death of Louis rendered his widow Maud merely a life-renter in her own hereditary dominions, since, by her contract of marriage and the will of her deceased husband, it now descended in fee after her death to Eudes IV, duke of Burgundy; while even her own personal rights were exposed to

confiscation, in case she should marry again without the consent of Philip of Tarentum, the lord-paramount of the principality.

The Neapolitan house of Anjou was as famous for relentless cruelty as for unprincipled ambition and boundless rapacity. The object of Robert, king of Naples, and Philip of Tarentum, was to unite the sovereignty as well as the suzerainty of the principality in their own family. They expected to do this, and to find a pretext for frustrating the claims of the duke of Burgundy, by marrying the princess Maud to their brother John, count of Gravina; but to this marriage the young widow refused to consent. In vain entreaties and threats were employed to make her yield; at last the king of Naples carried her before the pope, John XXII, when she declared that she was already secretly married to Hugh de la Palisse, a French knight. The princes of Anjou determined that this secret marriage should not prove a bar to their ambitious projects. The king of Naples declared the marriage null, and ordered the marriage ceremony to be celebrated between Maud and his brother, the count of Gravina, in defiance of the determined opposition of the young princess. Immediately after this infamous ceremony, the unfortunate Maud was immured in the prisons of the Castel del Uovo, which she was never allowed to quit, and where she is supposed to have died about the year 1324. She was the last of the line of Villehardoin who possessed the principality of Achaia. The frauds of Geoffrey I, and of William his son, seem to have been punished in the third and fourth generation of his house, on every member of which they appear to have brought misfortune.

## SECT. VII

### ACHAIA UNDER THE NEAPOLITAN PRINCES. RUIN OF THE PRINCIPALITY

John of Gravina assumed the title of Prince of Achaia immediately after his pretended marriage with the princess Maud, in 1317, and gained possession of part of the principality; but his brother, Philip of Tarentum, reclaimed her life-rent, as lord-paramount, in virtue of her forfeiture; and the eventual right to the sovereignty was vested in the duke of Burgundy. Eudes IV, however, sold his claim to Philip of Tarentum, in the year 1320, for the sum of forty thousand livres; and, Maud dying soon after, he became the real sovereign as well as the lord-paramount of Achaia. Philip died in 1322, and was succeeded by his son Robert, whose real sovereignty was disputed by his uncle, John of Gravina. Catherine of Valois, who acted as regent for her son Robert, in order to terminate this family dispute, ceded to John of Gravina the duchy of Durazzo, thereby obtaining a complete renunciation of all his claims on Achaia.

During this period of confusion in the claims to the principality, the barons of the Morea endeavoured to extend their privileges, and to acquire virtual independence, by forming amongst themselves associations to support that claimant whose interests seemed most likely to coincide with their own; while in some cases new claimants were invited to enter the field, merely to embarrass the proceedings of those who might

otherwise become too powerful. All patriotism was lost by the French of Achaia; and in the year 1341, immediately after the death of the Greek emperor Andronicus III, a party of nobles sent a deputation to Constantinople to offer their fealty to the Byzantine empire. The rebellion of Cantacuzenos put an end to this intrigue, by depriving them of all hope of obtaining any effectual aid from this quarter. The same party then turned their attention to Don Jayme II, king of Majorca, as the representative of the family of Villehardoin, and they invited him to invade the Morea in the year 1344; but Jayme, who was an exile from Spain, was more intent on recovering possession of his hereditary kingdom than on acquiring a distant principality.

Philip of Tarentum bequeathed the suzerainty of Achaia to his wife, Catherine of Valois, titular empress of Romania. At her death, in 1346, her son Robert reunited in his person the suzerainty with the actual sovereignty of the principality; and, as titular emperor of Romania, he became lord-paramount of the duchies of Athens and of the Archipelago, as well as of the other fiefs of the empire still in the possession of the Franks. It is needless to say that the Catalans, the Venetians, and the Genoese, attached very little importance to this remnant of feudal pretensions. Still the position of the emperor Robert might, in the hands of a man of talent and energy, have been converted into a station of great power and eminence; but he was of a very feeble character, and in his hands the feudal suzerainty sank into an insignificant title. He died in the year 1364, leaving the real sovereignty of Achaia to his wife, Mary de Bourbon; while the direct suzerainty passed, with the title of emperor, to his brother Philip III. Mary de Bourbon established herself in Greece, but her authority as circumscribed by the power of the barons, and by the claims which others advanced to the princely title; while the ravages of the Turkish pirates, who now began to infest all the coasts of Greece, and the increasing power of the Byzantine governors in the Morea, rendered the administration in that portion of the peninsula still in the possession of the Franks a task of daily increasing difficulty. Disgusted with her position, Mary de Bourbon retired to Naples, where she died about the year 1387. She was the last sovereign whose title was recognised in the whole of the principality.

The barons of the Morea had succeeded in defending their privileges and local independence even against the power of the house of Anjou. The configuration of the country, in which the richest valleys are encircled by stupendous and rugged mountains, rising to a height that prevents all communication between contiguous districts except through a few narrow and defensible passes, must always enable the people of the Peloponnesus, when they are moved by a strong feeling of patriotism, to secure their local independence. The lord of every little valley in the Frank principality of Achaia was thus enabled to live in as complete a state of exemption from direct control as the greatest prince of the Germanic empire. The spirit of separation inherent in the feudal system was assisted by the same physical and geographical causes which had secured the existence of the little republics of Pellene, Trite a, and Methydrium, in ancient Greece, and which now enabled the barons of Chalandritza, Akova, and Karitena to hold a share in the political sovereignty of the Peloponnesus along with the princes of Achaia, the dukes of Argos and Nauplia, and the Greek despots of Misithra.

Whenever the power and wealth of their sovereign appeared to threaten any encroachment on their privileges, the Moreote barons united to resist his measures; but after the death of Robert of Tarentum left the succession divided between his wife and brother, the barons began separately to form projects for their individual

aggrandisement, at the expense of their sovereigns. Various confederacies were constituted for organising a new constitution of things in Greece. John de Heredia, grand-master of the order of the Hospital at Rhodes, claimed the principality in virtue of a grant from Jeanne I, queen of Naples, confirmed by pope Clement VII. The grand-master stormed Patras sword in hand, and for a short time stood at the head of a powerful confederacy, which threatened to place the whole of Achaia under his dominion; but difficulties presented themselves, and the power of the order soon melted away. Subsequently, in the year 1391, Amadeus of Savoy, titular prince of Achaia, was invited by another confederacy to assume the government of the principality; but he died in the midst of his preparations. In the meantime, the predominant influence in the country was exercised by Peter San Superano, bailly of the titular emperor of Romania, Jacques de Baux (Balza); by Asan Zacharias Centurione, baron of Chalandritza and Arcadia; and by Nerio Acciaiuoli, governor of Corinth. It is unnecessary to record the names of any more pretenders to the title of Prince of Achaia. This portion of history belongs to the family annals of the houses of Anjou, Aragon, and Savoy; but has hardly any connection with the progress of events in Greece, or any influence on the fate of the population of the country.

It would be an unprofitable task to trace the intrigues and negotiations of the barons, their civil broils and petty wars with the Catalans, Greeks, and Turkish pirates, in detail. Achaia was a scene of anarchy; but we should err greatly if we concluded that such a state of things was considered by contemporaries as one of intolerable suffering. It is unquestionably the source of much trouble and confusion to the historian, who must wade through torrents of wearisome phrases before he can form any classification of the records of the time, or understand the spirit of the age in a society which carefully avoided expressing its thoughts with truth. We may, however, form a not incorrect estimate of the general feeling, if we reflect that the men of that age, whether nobles, gentlemen, burghers, or peasants, were obliged to choose between two evils. On the one hand, the sovereign, whether emperor, king, prince, or duke, was always engaged in extorting as much money as possible from his subjects, both by taxes, monopolies, and forced contributions; and this treasure was expended for distant objects in distant lands, so that those who paid it rarely derived the smallest benefit from their sacrifices. On the other hand, the local signors, whatever might be the evils caused by their warlike propensities, were compelled to cultivate the good-will of those among whom they passed their lives : their quarrelsome nature was restrained by habits of military fellowship, and their insolence to inferiors softened by personal intercourse. The Greeks could not be oppressed with impunity, for they could easily make their escape into the Byzantine province. Thus prudence placed a salutary restraint on the conduct of the local nobles. To guard against hostile forays and piratical incursions were necessities of existence; and, as far as personal position was concerned, it must not be forgotten that what the historian feels himself compelled to call anarchy, cotemporaries usually dignified with the name of liberty.

While the possession of the principality was disputed by rival princes, and the country governed by the baillies of absent sovereigns, the Franks were compelled to devote all their attention to plans for mutual defence. Their position was one of serious danger: they were a foreign caste, incapable of perpetuating their numbers without fresh immigrations, for they were cut off by national and religious barriers from recruiting their ranks by the enrolment of individuals from the native Greek population. They were

consequently obliged to watch carefully every sign of domestic discontent, for rebellion was always likely to prove more dangerous than hostile attacks from abroad. In a society living in such a state of insecurity, it is natural that the wealth of the country should decline. But the slow decay wrought by these causes was suddenly converted into a general destruction of property, and ruin of industry, by the piratical expeditions of the Seljouk Turks of Asia Minor, who about the latter half of the fourteenth century filled the Grecian seas with their squadrons, and laid waste every coast and island inhabited by Greeks. Amour the son of Aidin, the friend of the usurper Cantacuzenos, was the bloodiest pirate of the Eastern seas; and, under the name of Morbassan, he has obtained a detestable celebrity in the pages of European writers. His power was great, and his insolence even greater. While he depopulated the shores of Greece by his piracies, without occupying a single town, he assumed the title of Sovereign master of Achaia; and he gloried in the appellation of the Scourge of the Christians. Large bodies of the Seljouk pirates repeatedly landed in the Morea, under the guidance of their countrymen who had served as mercenaries in the Byzantine province, and acquired an accurate knowledge of the topography of the peninsula. These plunderers destroyed everything that was spared in Christian warfare: other enemies only carried off movable wealth; they left the peasant and his family to renew their toil, and be plundered on a future occasion. The Turks, on the contrary, burned down the wretched habitations of the labourer, destroyed the olive and fruit trees, in order to depopulate the country and prepare it for becoming a fit residence for their own nomadic tribes; and they carried off the young women and children, as the article of commerce that found the readiest sale in the slave-markets of the Asiatic cities. Indeed, for several generations the Seljouk Turks recruited their city population, throughout the greater part of their wide-extended empire, not by the natural influx of the rural population of the neighbourhood, but by foreign slaves, obtained by their warlike expeditions by land and sea. This accumulation of ills diminished the Greek population to such a degree that the country was prepared for the immigration of the Albanian colonists who soon after entered it : the wealth and power of the Frank lords of the soil was undermined, and the principality was ready to yield to the first vigorous assailant.

Other causes of decay were also at work, which of themselves were adequate to effect the ruin of any political establishment. The princes of Achaia possessed the right of coining money, and, like all avaricious and needy sovereigns who possess the power of cheating their subjects by issuing a debased coinage, they availed themselves of the privilege to an infamous extent. They were also masters of several commercial ports of some importance, and possessed the power of levying taxes on the foreign trade of the Peloponnesus. This power they abused to such a degree, that the whole trade of the principality was gradually transferred to the ports of the Peninsula in possession of the Venetians. As a consequence of the change, much of the internal trade of the country was annihilated. The value of produce in the interior was depreciated, on account of the increased cost of its transport to the point of exportation; the sale in some distant provinces became impossible; roads, bridges, and other material requisites of civilisation, fell to ruin; property ceased to yield any rent to the signors; many castles in the poorer districts were abandoned, and a few foot-soldiers guarded the walls of others, from which, in former days, bands of horsemen in complete panoply might be seen to issue at the slightest alarm. The extent of the change which a single century had produced in the state of Greece became apparent when the Ottoman Turks invaded the country. These barbarians found the Morea peopled by a scanty and impoverished



population, ruled by a few wealthy and luxurious nobles—both classes equally unfit to oppose the attacks of brave and active invaders. The condition of the Frank portion of the Morea was even more degraded, morally, than it was financially impoverished and politically weakened. The whole wealth of the country flowed into a few hands, and was wasted in idle enjoyments; while the vested capital that supplied a considerable portion of this wealth was sensibly diminishing from year to year. The surplus revenue which the principality of Achaia, even in its latter days, contributed to the treasury of its princes, after deducting the sums required for payment of the permanent garrisons maintained in the fortresses of the state, and the expenses of the civil administration, amounted to one hundred thousand gold florins. This, therefore, was what we term, in modern language, the civil list of the sovereign of Achaia towards the end of the fourteenth century; and it is more than Otho, the present king of Greece, succeeds in extracting from the whole Hellenic soil south of the Ambracian and Malian gulfs, though, with reference to the revenues of the country he governs, king Otho has the largest civil list of any European monarch.

The Franks had now ruled the greater part of the Peloponnesus for two centuries; and the feudal system which they introduced was maintained in full vigour for sufficient time to admit of its effects on civilised communities living under the simpler system of personal rights, traced out in the Roman law, being fully developed. The result was that the Franks were demoralised, the Greeks impoverished, and Greece ruined.

The study of the feudal government in Greece offers much that is peculiarly worthy of an Englishman's attention, since it supplies an illustration of a state of things resembling, in many points, the condition of society that resulted from the Norman Conquest. The fate of England and Greece proved very different. No inconsiderable share in the causes that produced the discordant results are to be attributed to the discipline of the private family, and to the domestic and parish life of the two countries. Order and liberty grew up in the secluded districts of England, as well as in the towns and cities; self-respect in the individual gradually gained the reverence of his fellow-citizens; society moved forward simultaneously, and bore down gradually the tyranny of the Norman master, the rapacity of the monarch, and the jobbing of the aristocracy. The spirit of liberty never separated from the spirit of order, so that in the end it achieved the most difficult task in the circle of politics—it converted the rulers of the country to liberal views. In Greece, on the other hand, anarchy and slavery demoralised all classes of society, and involved the ruling class and their subjects in common destruction.

Both in England and Greece, the conquest was effected as much by the apathy of the natives as by the military superiority of the conquerors, and in both the feudal system was forced upon the conquered in spite of their efforts to resist it, and their detestation of its principles. Unfortunately we cannot contrast the effects of the system on the very different social condition of the two countries, for the records of the Frank domination in Greece are almost entirely confined to the political history of the country, and afford us but scanty glimpses into the ordinary life of the people. We see few traces of anything but war and violence; and we are led to the lamentable conclusion that the great result of the power of the Franks in Greece was to extirpate that portion of Byzantine civilisation which existed at its commencement, and to root out all the institutions of Roman law, and the principles of Roman administration, which had so long protected it. The higher and educated classes of Greek society very naturally

vanished, as might be expected, where their masters made use of the French language and revered the Latin Church. In England, the conflict of the Normans and the Saxons prepared the way for the submission of both to the law; while in Greece the wars of the French and Greeks only prepared the country to seek repose under the shade of Turkish despotism. The Norman Conquest proved the forerunner of English liberty, the French domination the herald of Turkish tyranny. The explanation of the varied course of events must be sought in the family, the parish, the borough, and the county; not in the parliament, the exchequer, and the central government.

## CHAPTER IX

BYZANTINE PROVINCE IN THE PELOPONNESUS RECONQUERED  
FROM THE FRENCH.

## SECT. I

EARLY STATE OF THE BYZANTINE PROVINCE. GOVERNMENT OF  
THE DESPOT THEODORE I

The emperor Michael VIII no sooner took possession of Misithra, Monemvasia, and Maina, which had been surrendered to him as the ransom for William Villehardoin, then he sent able officers into the Peloponnesus to command these fortresses, with instructions to spare no exertions or intrigues for recovering possession of the whole peninsula—for he hoped with ease to raise such a rebellion of the Greeks as would expel the French from the territory they retained. The Sclavonians of Mount Taygetus, covered by the Byzantine garrison of Misithra, which was made the residence of the principal officers from Constantinople; the Tzakones, finding their communications with the rest of the empire opened by sea, in consequence of the possession of Monemvasia; and the Mainiates, assisted by the imperial troops in their country—all flew to arms, and drove the French from their territories. The Sclavonians of Skorta were less fortunate, for they were surrounded on every side by French barons, and all the avenues into their mountains were guarded by strong feudal fortresses. Indeed, Akova and Karitena, two of the impregnable holds of the feudal lords of the soil, commanded the very heart of their country. After a vain resistance their power was completely broken. But the Greeks, though they swept over nearly the whole peninsula in the first tide of national enthusiasm, and displayed the imperial eagle before the palace of the princes of Achaia, at Andravida, were still unable to encounter the French on the field of battle. They received two overthrows—the first at Prinitza, where a small body of French knights and men-at-arms, under John de Katavas, defeated the Byzantine army with great loss. But this disaster did not prevent the advance of the Greeks into the plain of Elis. The second defeat of the imperial troops was more decisive. The armies met at the defile of Makryplagi, and the Byzantine troops were routed with great slaughter. Their generals were taken prisoners, and the commander-in-chief, the grand-domestikos Alexis Philes, died in prison; while Makrinos, the second in command, on being ransomed by his suspicious master, who suspected him of secretly

plotting with the prince of Achaia, was deprived of his eyesight as soon as he returned to Constantinople. For five years, (1264 to 1268) the war was prosecuted with varied success; but at length the exhaustion of both parties induced them to conclude a truce, which was subsequently converted into a permanent treaty of peace. These events have been already noticed in reviewing the history of the reign of William Villehardoin, prince of Achaia.

It has also been mentioned that, in the year 1341, a number of the French barons offered the sovereignty of Achaia to the Greek emperor. The Byzantine throne was at that time occupied by John V Paleologos, and the regency was in the hands of his mother, Anne of Savoy: but John Cantacuzenos, the grand-domestikos, acted as prime-minister. This treason of a portion of the French nobility would probably have proved the forerunner of the speedy subjection of the whole principality to the Greek empire, had the rebellion of Cantacuzenos not prevented the Byzantine administration from paying any attention to the affairs of this distant province. The Byzantine strategos at Misithra, who governed the Greek portion of the peninsula, was unable to show much activity, for he was watched with as much jealousy by the primates and archonts of the province, to prevent an increase of his administrative power, as the Frank princes and baillies at Andravida were by the barons and knights of the principality of Achaia. At last the success of the rebellion of Cantacuzenos enabled that emperor to send his son Manuel to the Peloponnesus as imperial viceroy, with the title of Despot, in the year 1349.

The despot Manuel Cantacuzenos found the country suffering severely from the incessant forays of the Franks of Achaia, the Catalans of Attica, and the Seljouk pirates. Each district was exclusively occupied with its own separate measures of defence; each archont and landlord pursued his own private interest as his only rule of action, without any reference to the national cause. The open country was everywhere left exposed to be plundered by foreign enemies, while the walled cities were weakened by intestine factions. Manuel, however, arriving in the peninsula with a strong body of troops, succeeded in concluding a peace with the principality of Achaia; and this circumstance left at his disposal a force sufficient to repulse the attacks of the Turkish pirates, and to put an end to the civil dissensions that prevailed among the Greek archonts themselves, so that the Peloponnesus enjoyed more security under his government than it had known for many years. The despot had, nevertheless, his own personal views to serve, for patriotism was not an active principle in any class of the Byzantine Greeks. The position of his family at Constantinople was by no means secure, and he resolved to take measures for maintaining his own authority as despot in the Peloponnesus, no matter what might happen elsewhere. Under the pretext that it was necessary to keep a fleet cruising off the eastern and southern coasts of the peninsula, to protect the country from the ravages of the Seljouk pirates, he imposed a tax on the Byzantine province. The collection of this tax was intrusted to a Moreot noble, named Lampoudios, whose previous intrigues had caused him to be exiled, but whose talents induced Manuel to recall him to office. The arbitrary imposition of a tax by the despot was considered an illegal act of power, and the Greeks everywhere flew to arms. Lampoudios, considering the popular cause as the one in which he was most likely to advance his own fortunes, deserted his patron and joined his insurgent countrymen. For a moment all the intestine broils and municipal quarrels, which even time rarely assuaged in the rancorous hearts of the Peloponnesian Greeks, were suddenly suspended. The mutual hatred which the

archonts cherished to the hour of death, and the feuds which were regularly transmitted as a deathbed legacy to children and to heirs, as an inalienable family inheritance, were for once suspended. The Moreots, if we may believe the perfidious Cantacuzenos, in this record of his son's fortunes, were on this single occasion sincerely united, and made a bold attempt to surprise the despot in the fortress of Misithra; but Manuel was a soldier of some experience, trained in the arduous school of a treacherous civil war, and with a guard of three hundred chosen men-at-arms, and a body of Albanian mercenaries, who now for the first time make their appearance in the affairs of the Morea, he sallied out from the fortress, and completely defeated the Moreot army. The patriotic confederacy was dissolved by the loss of this one battle. Some of the archonts submitted to the terms imposed on them by the despot, some attempted to defend themselves in the fortified towns, while others endeavoured to secure their independence by retiring into the mountains, and carrying on a desultory warfare. But the landlords, as soon as they saw their property ravaged by the Byzantine mercenaries, quickly made their peace with the despot.

The fall of the emperor Cantacuzenos induced the people of the Peloponnesus to take up arms a second time, in the hope of expelling Manuel; and they welcomed Asan, the governor deputed by the emperor John V to supersede the despot, with every demonstration of devotion. Manuel was compelled to abandon the whole province, and shut himself up in the fortress of Monemvasia with the troops that remained faithful to his standard. His administration had been marked by great prudence, and his unusual moderation, in pardoning all those concerned in the insurrection against his plans of taxation, had produced a general feeling in his favour. When the first storm of the new outbreak was in some degree calmed, the archonts came to the conclusion that it would be more advantageous to their interests to be ruled by a governor who was viewed with little favour by the central power at Constantinople, than to be exposed to the commands of one who was sure of energetic support. The consequence of their intrigues was, that Manuel Cantacuzenos received an invitation to return to Misithra, and soon succeeded in regaining all his former power, and more, perhaps, than his former influence. He contrived, also, to obtain the recognition of his title from the feeble court at Constantinople, and he continued to rule the Byzantine possessions in the Peloponnesus, until the time of his death, in 1380. His administration was only troubled by partial hostilities on the part of the Franks of Achaia, with whom he usually succeeded in maintaining a close alliance, in order that both might be able to employ their whole military force in protecting their territories against the incursions of the Catalans and the Turkish pirates. On one occasion, a joint expedition of the Greek and Frank troops invaded Boeotia, to punish the Grand Company for plundering in the Morea. This expedition took place while the duchy of Athens and Neopatras was governed by Roger Lauria, as viceroy for Frederic, duke of Randazzo.

In the year 1388, Theodore Paleologos, the son of the emperor John V, arrived at Misithra, as governor of the Byzantine possessions in the Peloponnesus; and from that time, until the final conquest of the country by the Ottoman Turks, it was always governed by members of the imperial family of Paleologos, bearing the title of Despot. In latter years, when the territory of the Byzantine Empire became circumscribed to the vicinity of Constantinople, several despots were often quartered on the revenues of the Morea at the same time. Theodore I, however, reigned without a colleague. But the archonts having taken measures to prevent his governing with the degree of absolute

power which he considered to be the inherent right of a viceroy of the emperors of the East, he brought to support his despotic authority a corps of Turkish auxiliaries under the command of Evrenos, whose name became subsequently celebrated in ottoman history as one of the ablest generals of sultan Murad I. This was the first introduction of the ottoman Turks into the Peloponnesus. But the incapacity of the Byzantine despots, and the selfishness of the Greek archonts, soon rendered them the arbiters of its fate. In the year 1391, hostilities broke out with the Franks, and Evrenos, who had quitted the Morea, was invited to return, for no Greek could be found fit to be intrusted with the command of the army. The Ottomans displayed their usual military energy and talent, and in the first campaign they captured the celebrated fortress of Akova, or Mategrifon. About the same time, a corps of Albanian and Byzantine troops, issuing from Leondari, which had now risen up as a Greek town on the decline of the Frank city of Veligosti, defeated a body of the Franks, and took the prince who commanded them prisoner. This prince, however, redeemed himself before the end of the year, by paying a ransom.

Incessant hostilities had now destroyed all the farmhouses of the better class, and the people were either crowded into the walled towns and fortified castles, or lodged in wretched huts concealed in the valleys, so that the destruction of these temporary habitations might be a matter of little importance. The great plains were almost depopulated; the Greeks had generally entirely abandoned the occupation of agriculture, restricting themselves to the cultivation of their olive-groves, orchards, mulberry trees, and vineyards. A new race of labourers was required to till the soil for the production of grain, and to guard the cattle that were becoming wild in the mountains: such a race was required to endure greater hardships and perpetuate its existence on coarser food, and with less clothing, than could be done by either the Greeks or the Sclavonians who previously pursued the occupation of agriculturists. This class was found among the rude peasantry of Albania, who began about this time to emigrate into the Peloponnesus as colonists and labourers, as well as in the capacity of mercenary soldiers. An immigration of about ten thousand souls is mentioned as having taken place at one time; and from year to year the Albanian population of the peninsula acquired increased importance, while the Sclavonians rapidly diminished, or became confounded in the greater numbers of the Greeks.

In the year 1397, sultan Bayezid I sent his generals Iakoub and Evrenos into the Peloponnesus, to punish the despot Theodore for having taken part in the confederacy of the Christian princes that was broken up by the defeat of Sigismund, king of Hungary, at the battle of Nicopolis on the Danube. On this occasion a powerful ottoman army entered the peninsula by the isthmus of Corinth, and extended its ravages as far as the walls of Modon. Argos at this time belonged to the Venetian republic, which had purchased it from Mary d'Enghien, the last heir of the fief granted by William Villehardoin to Guy de la Roche. Though it was defended by a Venetian garrison, the ottoman troops stormed the place, and the inhabitants were either massacred or carried away as slaves and sold in the Asiatic markets. The sultan's object in this invasion was merely to punish the despot and to employ and enrich his troops, not to take permanent possession of the country. His army therefore retired in autumn, carrying with it an immense booty and about thirty thousand slaves. The destruction of the crops and cattle, and the depopulation and to which his territory was reduced, in his eagerness to procure some ready money sold the city of Misithra to the grand-master of the knights of the Hospital at Rhodes, as if the Morea had been his own private domain. This unwarranted

exercise of power met with so determined an opposition from the Greek inhabitants, who refused to transfer their allegiance to a society of Latin military monks, that it was impossible to complete the transaction, and by the advice and intercession of the archbishop of Lacedaemon, the Greek archonts consented to receive the despot Theodore again as their prince, on his taking a solemn oath not to take any important step in the government of the province without convoking an assembly of the Greek aristocracy, and receiving their consent to the proposed measure. Had the Greek archonts of the Morea possessed any capacity for government, or any patriotism, they might from this time have conducted the public administration; but their mutual jealousies and family feuds soon enabled the despot to make their own selfishness and malicious passions the instruments for regaining all the authority he had lost. Theodore died in the year 1407, and was succeeded by his nephew, Theodore Paleologos II, son of his brother the emperor Manuel II. At the time of his death, the Byzantine possessions had increased so much in extent that they embraced fully two-thirds of the peninsula. He had annexed Corinth to the despotat in the year 1404. The Frank principality of Achaia was divided among several barons. The counts of Cephalonia, of the family of Tocco, who had risen to power by the favour of the house of Anjou, were in possession of Clarentza, and divided the sovereignty of the rich plain of Elis with the family of Centurione, who held Chalandritza, the city of Arcadia, and a part of Messenia. The Pope was the possessor of Patras, which was governed by its Latin archbishop; and the Venetian republic kept garrisons in Modon, Coron, Nauplia, Argos, and Thermisi, which were their only possessions in the Peloponnesus.

## SECT. II

### THE EMPEROR MANUEL II ATTEMPTS TO AMELIORATE THE BYZANTINE GOVERNMENT IN THE PELOPONNESUS

In the year 1415 the emperor Manuel II visited the Peloponnesus, in order to strengthen the position of his son Theodore II by reorganising the province, which, in consequence of the rapid conquests of the ottoman Turks, had now become the most valuable possession of the Byzantine empire beyond the Hellespont, and began to excite an attention it had never before received from the statesmen of Constantinople. As it was the native seat of the Greek race, and the only country that offered profitable posts, these Byzantine politicians at last made the discovery that they were themselves Greeks, and not Romans. To the Peloponnesus, therefore, the imperial government turned its regards, in the hope that this most important part of ancient Greece might prove the means of restoring the Greek name to some share of its former glory. Manuel II devoted himself to the task he had undertaken both with zeal and judgment. He regulated the amount of taxes to be paid by the inhabitants with justice, and with what he conceived to be great moderation; and he introduced so many administrative reforms that he destroyed the local domination of the archonts, and restored the executive power to the central administration of the despotat at Misithra. But it was far beyond the genius of Manuel, or of any man then living, to infuse a spirit of unity into the discordant

elements of Greek society in the fifteenth century. The vices of the Greeks were nourished by the constitution of their social life more than by the defects of their political institutions. This insuperable barrier to their improvement could not be removed by financial and administrative reforms; the moral regeneration of every class would have been necessary, to remove the prohibition which Greek society then imposed on all national progress. Had the demoralised, rapacious, and intriguing aristocrats of the Morea been all suddenly destroyed, they would immediately have been replaced by men equally vicious, for no healthier social elements existed in the classes below. Under the most favourable possible circumstances, one generation would have been necessary even for a good system of education to produce any effect; and there was no time to lose, for the avengers of the moral degradation of Greece were at the gate. The armies of the ottoman sultan waited only for a word to destroy the troops, fortresses, government, and people of Greece.

There is no doubt that the emperor Manuel, and many statesmen of the time, were fully aware of the evil state of things. The depopulation of the country was a fact apparent from the remains that were everywhere visible of recently abandoned habitations, and it was justly connected with the disorganisation of society as cause and effect. But still no one was able to point out the precise method by which the cause produced its effect, and consequently doubt and hesitation prevailed concerning the application of the necessary remedy. All perceived that it was the increasing weakness of the country that invited the ravages of the Franks, Catalans, and Turks, and not the incursions of these invaders that was the original cause of the weakness. But how to infuse new strength into society was a problem none could solve. The emperor Manuel, in a funeral oration he delivered at Misithra, in memory of his deceased brother the despot Theodore I, praised him for the great care he had devoted to establishing Albanian colonies on the waste lands in the Peloponnesus; but it does not appear to have struck the emperor's mind that Greeks ought to have been able, under a proper system of government, to multiply in a country into which foreigners could immigrate with advantage. In the United States of America at present we see an immense annual immigration, but we see at the same time a greater proportional increase of the native population. The Greek emperor, however, could see no means of preventing the native seats of the Greek race from becoming an uninhabited waste, except by repeopling them with Albanian colonists.

The defence of the peninsula was not neglected. The plan adopted by Manuel for completing the fortifications at the Isthmus of Corinth, where he believed a Greek army might effectually resist the ottoman forces, affords us a curious illustration of the state of society at the time. Either the Byzantine government must have been unwilling to pay for labour, or it must have found that money alone, in the condition to which the Morea was then reduced, would not have sufficed to procure a competent supply. It was therefore determined to construct the wall across the isthmus by forced labour. The archonts and landed proprietors, the local magistrates and government officials were ordered to collect a certain number of labourers in their respective districts, and the fortifications from the shore of the Saronic Gulf to that of the Gulf of Corinth were divided into suitable portions, according to the numerical strength or masonic skill of the different contingents, and each was intrusted with the construction of a fixed portion of the wall or of the ditch. The emperor and the imperial engineers directed the progress of the works, which were carried across the narrowest part of the isthmus, on the



remains of the earlier fortifications constructed by Justinian on still older foundations, and just behind the Diolkos, or railroad, by which vessels were dragged over the isthmus from sea to sea. The distance was estimated at about seven thousand six hundred yards, or forty-two stades, and the wall was strengthened by one hundred and fifty-three towers. Remains of the work are still visible, but it proved utterly useless for the defence of the Peloponnesus; yet, had a well-disciplined army, and a general inspired by patriotism, been found to guard these fortifications, they might have done as good service as the lines of Torres Vedras.

When the emperor Manuel had completed his plans for the reorganisation and defence of the Peloponnesus, he returned to Constantinople, carrying with him the most turbulent of the Moreot archonts, who had attempted to thwart his designs. He left his son, the despot Theodore II, to govern the province under the most favourable circumstances; but the attempt of the emperor to infuse vigour into the Byzantine administration proved unsuccessful. His plans, indeed, never received a fair trial, for the government of the Morea was after his death divided among his sons, two or three of whom were generally established in different parts of the province, living at the expense of the inhabitants, and each maintaining a princely retinue and assuming the authority of a sovereign. Yet we see some good effects resulting from the emperor's labours: the Byzantine government gradually gained ground on the Franks of Achaia, and the progress was made more by the favourable disposition of the Greek people than by the military force employed by the Byzantine authorities. Manuel also succeeded in giving to the Peloponnesus a greater degree of security from foreign attacks than it had experienced for many years. Towards the end of his reign, he was unfortunately involved in hostilities with the ottoman Turks, and the Peloponnesus suffered severely in the quarrel. In 1423, sultan Murad II, after having been compelled to raise the siege of Constantinople, sought to revenge himself by ruining the Byzantine possessions in the Morea. An ottoman army under Turakhan invaded the Peloponnesus, and, meeting with no resistance from the despot Theodore, plundered the whole country. The Albanians established at Gardiki and Tavia alone had courage to oppose the Turks. Their courage was vain; they were completely defeated, and all the prisoners that fell into the hands of Turakhan were massacred without mercy, in order to intimidate the rest of the Christians from offering such a resistance as would have deprived the Mussulmans of the profits of their expedition. Pyramids of human heads were erected by the Turks, in commemoration of this victory over the Christians; but the sultan, not thinking that the hour had yet arrived for taking possession of all Greece, ordered Turakhan to evacuate the Morea and return to his post in Thessaly. The despot Theodore was a weak and injudicious man, utterly incapable of directing the government: he took no measures either to circumscribe the extent of the Turkish ravages, or to alleviate the evils they had produced, after the retreat of the ottoman army.

Every thinking man then began to feel that nothing but a radical change in the government and administrative arrangements of the province, as well as a great reform in the social condition of the inhabitants, could save the country from ruin. Mazaris, a Byzantine satirist, describes the inhabitants of the Peloponnesus as a barbarous and demoralised rabble, consisting of a mixture of Tzakones, Franks, Greeks, Slavonians, Albanians, Gipsies, and Jews, of whose improvement there was no hope. A political moralist of the time, Gemistos Plethon, with the boldness that characterises speculative

politicians, proposed schemes for the regeneration of the people as daringly opposed to existing rights, and as impracticable in their execution, as the wildest projects of any modern socialist. Plethon's project was to divide the population into three distinct classes, cultivators of the soil, capitalists or landlords—for he unites land, buildings, and stock under one head, on account of the profits they yield in the shape of rent—and defenders of society, whether soldiers, administrators, lawyers, or princes. It is not necessary to review the details of his scheme, for, though they frequently display much acuteness and profound observation, their practical introduction was impossible. The evils that appear to have struck him most forcibly in the social condition of the peninsula were,—the wretched state of the military force; the oppressive nature of the system of taxation, which ruined the people with numerous imposts of different natures; the imperfect administration of justice, and the debased state of the metallic currency, which filled the country with foreign coin of base alloy. Plethon thought that all wealth resulted from the cultivation of the soil, and he supposed that society could prosper if the former received one third of its produce, the landlord and capitalist another third, and the government, including every branch of public expenditure, the remaining third. The soldiers were to be quartered in the families of the peasantry to consume the produce appropriated to the government. All money taxes, according to Plethon, were to be abolished; and the revenue which was necessary for the court of the prince, and some higher officials, was to be raised alone by the export of the surplus produce of the country. It is evident that the project of Gemistos Plethon would have rendered society even more barbarous than he found it, but it would be a waste of time to expose its theoretical errors. The test by which we can decide on the impracticability of his scheme is very simple, and very generally applicable to many other schemes, which have a good practical as well as theoretical aspect. Though he boldly offered himself to the emperor Manuel as the agent for carrying his plans into immediate execution, he fails to indicate the primary step which it would be necessary to take, to prevent the administrative powers already in existence from opposing the gradual introduction of measures which, from their very nature, required a certain lapse of time before they could be brought into operation. He ranges one class of men against the existing order of things, and leaves another with an interest to support it, without indicating any predominant influence that could prevent anarchy and civil war. Now it is evident that no project of gradual reform can ever be carried through, unless the first step in the change creates a strong feeling in favour of the ulterior scheme, in addition to a powerful body of partisans interested in pushing it forward; for unless the opposition of those inclined to oppose the scheme be paralysed, and their interests be rendered subordinate to the general interest of the society, a perpetual struggle may ensue, which may lead in the end to something very different from what was proposed by the reformer, though equally removed from the state of things overthrown. The difficulty of describing a better state of society than that in which we are living is never great, and most men believe that, if they could lay all mankind asleep, and only awaken each individual when his place in a new scheme of political government would be ready to receive him, then they could create a better state of things. The fact, however, that all men are moving on, while the politician can only guide a very small number, deranges general calculations. The wisest practical statesmen have taught, by their conduct, that it is only possible to point out with certainty the first step that ought to be taken in the path of improvement. That single step can be taken without preparation, and without delay; but that step, when taken, may reveal unseen impediments, and open new paths, which require fresh measures and

additional resources for further progress. The statesman concentrates all his powers on the first step; the theoretical political philosopher undertakes to arrange all society, with the exception of this first step.

### SECT. III

#### DIVISION OF THE MOREA AMONG THE BROTHERS OF THE EMPEROR JOHN VI. WAR OF THE DESPOTS CONSTANTINE AND THOMAS WITH THE OTTOMAN TURKS, IN 1446

The emperor John VI succeeded his father Manuel II in the year 1426, and in the autumn of 1427 he visited the Peloponnesus, in order to create for his brothers Constantine and Thomas suitable establishments in the province. The despot Theodore had announced his intention of retiring into a monastery, and the emperor proposed conferring the most important part of the province, with the general direction of the administration, on his favourite brother Constantine. Thomas had already received an appanage in the peninsula by his father's will. Before the emperor reached Misithra the melancholy and discontented Theodore had changed his mind, and announced his intention to retain possession of his government. For some years, therefore, the three brothers governed different portions of the Byzantine province simultaneously, almost with the power of independent princes. None of them were well adapted for the times. Theodore, as has been already noticed, was fanciful and weak; Constantine, the last unfortunate emperor of Constantinople, was brave but imprudent; while Thomas was a cruel and unprincipled tyrant.

During the remaining years of the Byzantine domination in the Peloponnesus, the great historical event which concentrates attention is the progress of the ottoman power; and the fortunes of the despot Constantine acquire a prominent interest, from his fate being linked with the conquest of Constantinople and the ruin of the Greek race. His bold and restless character renders his personal history often the means of presenting a correct picture of the condition of the whole Morea. When the emperor John VI found that Theodore was no longer inclined to resign his authority, he made arrangements for effecting the territorial establishment of Constantine at the expense of the Franks. Charles Tocco, count-palatine of Cephalonia, was threatened with war; and as the wealth of the Byzantine empire, even in its impoverished condition, would have enabled it to range under the imperial standards an overwhelming mercenary force, he was glad to purchase peace by marrying his niece Theodore to the despot Constantine, and ceding the city of Clarentza, and all his possessions in the Peloponnesus, as her dowry. After the celebration of this marriage, the emperor conferred the government of Vostitza and Messenia on Constantine, and that of Kalavryta on Thomas, and then returned to Constantinople.

Constantine established himself at Clarentza, where he possessed the feudal jurisdiction of a Frank prince over the Latin inhabitants, whom he endeavoured to conciliate; while at the same time he entered into plots with the Greeks who resided in

Patras, to gain possession of that place by treachery. The Latin archbishop, Pandolfo Malatesta, who governed as the temporal no less than spiritual deputy of the Pope, was at the moment absent in Rome. The attempt to surprise Patras failed, and a skirmish ensued, in which the historian Phrantzes was taken prisoner while bravely covering the retreat of Constantine, to whom he was attached as chamberlain. The despot, undismayed by his failure to surprise the city, soon returned with a sufficient force to form the siege in regular order; and though he received an order from sultan Murad II, who had constituted himself the arbiter of all the Christian princes in Greece, to suspend hostilities, he prosecuted his undertaking, and succeeded in persuading both the inhabitants of Patras to submit to his authority, and the sultan to acknowledge the validity of the acquisition. The Latin archbishop arrived at Naupaktos with succours a few days after the Byzantine troops had entered the place; but it was found impossible to introduce any supplies into the citadel, which still held out, and whose garrison continued to defend themselves for a year. Phrantzes, who had been released by the Latins after forty days' imprisonment, was the envoy employed by Constantine to negotiate with the Turks. In the meantime a papal fleet, consisting of ten Catalan galleys, finding it impossible to open any communication with the besieged garrison in the citadel of Patras, left their anchorage, and, sailing to Clarentza, suddenly stormed that city during the absence of Constantine. The Catalans threatened to destroy the town, unless they received immediately the sum of twelve thousand sequins as its ransom; and this sum the despot consented to pay, in order to obtain liberty for all the prisoners who had been captured in the place.

The despot knew that the fortifications of Clarentza were so strong that the Catalans might have kept possession of this position for some time, and he feared lest some other Frank power might, by seizing the place, become master of a port in his dominions. To prevent this, he no sooner recovered possession of the city than he ordered the walls to be destroyed, and intrusted the defence of the whole coast to the garrison of the neighbouring fortress of Chlomoutzi, or Castel Tornese, which is only about three miles distant. From this time Clarentza gradually declined. The Catalans continued to cruise in the Ionian seas, and they subsequently captured the unlucky Phrantzes, who appears to have been as severely persecuted by fortune as his unlucky master, without being so directly the cause of his own misfortunes. He had on this occasion been sent to the Ionian Islands to arrange some differences in the family of Tocco, and he was now compelled by the Spaniards to ransom himself, and the other Greek prisoners who had fallen into their hands, by paying five thousand sequins. War was at that time an honourable mode of plundering; it had not even assumed the pretext of being prosecuted as a means of obtaining justice.

The only Frank sovereign who now possessed any part of the principality of Achaia in which the feudal system might be still considered as the established law of the land, was Azan Zacharias Centurione, baron of Chalandritza and Arkadia, who had assumed the title of Prince of Achaia. During the siege of Patras, Thomas Paleologos had invested Chalandritza; and after its capture, Centurione, cut off from all hope of receiving succour from Italy, or from the Catalan fleet, found himself compelled to make the best terms he was able with the Greeks. It was agreed that Thomas should marry Katherine his daughter, who was declared the heir of all his territorial possessions, and on this condition her father was allowed to enjoy a life-rent of his baronies. This act virtually extinguished the last trace of the principality of Achaia, after

it had existed two hundred and twenty-five years. In consequence of his exploits on this occasion, Thomas was honoured by his brother the emperor with the title of despot (A.D. 1430.) The whole of the Peloponnesus, with the exception of the five maritime fortresses held by the Venetians, was now reunited to the Byzantine empire, and its government administered by the three despots, Theodore, Constantine, and Thomas.

The demon of discord had so long established his court in the Peloponnesus, and hatred, envy, and avarice had so thoroughly transfused themselves into Greek society, that it is not surprising to find the three brothers who ruled the province soon involved in disputes. The nature of society, the configuration of the country, and the corruption of the Byzantine financial administration, invested the archonts and chieftains with considerable local power, while it debarred them from all participation in the legislation of their country, and all control over the abuses that might take place in the general government. They were consequently excluded from direct authority in the public affairs of their own districts, except what arose out of their becoming the financial or administrative agents of the central power. The consequence was, that the attention of every man in the country was directed to the courts of the despots, where every intrigue was employed to secure the favour of those individuals whose position as ministers or courtiers enabled them to influence the prince in the nomination of officials, and in decisions concerning local affairs, which it would be infinitely better, in every government, to leave entirely to the decision of municipalities and provincial councils. The fraternal discord which disgraces the last period of the Byzantine domination was produced as much by Moreot intrigue as by Constantinopolitan immorality; for, though the house of Paleologos knew nothing of brotherly love, no violent personal hatred inflamed the passions of the brothers in their quarrels for power. There was more of meanness than of wickedness in their conduct; their very vices partook of the weakness of the empire, and the degradation of the Greek race.

In the year 1436 the despots Theodore and Constantine visited Constantinople, and John VI showed a disposition to select Constantine, though the younger of the two, to be his heir on the imperial throne. He knew that Theodore was utterly incapable of preserving the city of Constantinople from falling into the hands of the Turks; while, if it were possible to prolong the existence of the Byzantine empire, the courage and popularity of Constantine alone held out a hope that he might be successful in the task. Prudence, however, was no part of Constantine's character; and, in order to make sure of the imperial succession, he resolved to take measures for immediately ejecting his brother Theodore from the government of Misithra, hoping that the blow would induce the melancholy despot to retire into a monastery, to which he often expressed an inclination. Leaving Constantinople secretly, he hastened to Clarentza, where he assembled a band of soldiers, composed in great part of the Frank military adventurers who still lingered in the western part of the Peloponnesus. He persuaded his brother Thomas to join in his plans, and marched forward to invade the territories of Theodore, where he expected to meet with little opposition; but his project had transpired in time to allow Theodore to reach Misithra before Constantine arrived to besiege it. A civil war was now kindled in the peninsula, which soon spread over the whole country; and by this unprincipled act of Constantine a pretext was afforded to the Moreot chiefs to gratify private revenge, under the colour of serving the hostile despots. While the quarrel of the brothers was languidly prosecuted, the personal vengeance of individuals wasted the country and deluged it with blood. Constantine on this occasion displayed an

utter want of patriotism, and showed that, in order to reign, he was ready to become a vassal of the Turks. Phrantzes was sent as envoy to sultan Murad II, to solicit his interference; and it was with difficulty that the emperor John VI could prevail on his infatuated brothers to conclude a peace, without making the sultan the arbiter of their differences. Constantine at last consented to return to Constantinople, and to cede his government in the Peloponnesus to the despot Thomas, who continued to live in discord with Theodore until the year 1443. In that year Theodore finally quitted the Morea, and received in exchange the city of Selymbria as an appanage. He, however, soon resigned his power, and retired into a monastery, where he died, before witnessing the final ruin of his country. On the retreat of Theodore from the Peloponnesus, Constantine was invested with the government of Misithra, including Laconia, Argolis, Corinthia, and the coast of Achaia as far as Patras. Thomas continued to rule the whole of Elis and Messenia, with part of the ancient Arcadia, and of Achaia.

About this time the ottoman power was threatened with serious embarrassments; and the despot Constantine immediately forgot the friendship he had professed for sultan Murad II, when he was soliciting Turkish assistance to drive his own brother from Misithra. The news that the Hungarians had overthrown the ottoman army at Isladi, and that George Castriot, or Scanderbeg, had re-established a Christian principality in Albania, induced Constantine to strengthen the wall at the isthmus of Corinth, and repair the breeches made in it by Turakhan when he invaded the Peloponnesus in 1423. As many troops as it was possible to collect were assembled at Corinth; and Constantine advanced into northern Greece with a considerable force, in order to invade the pashalik of Thessaly, and distract the operations of the Turks by attacking their rear. Nerio II, duke of Athens, was compelled to join the league against the sultan; and the Albanians of Epirus and the Vallachians of Pindus were incited, as Christians, to commence hostilities with the Mohammedans. The military operations of Constantine were soon brought to a conclusion by the approach of an ottoman army, under Omar, the son of Turakhan, who without difficulty dispersed the Greek troops assembled to invade Thessaly, and, advancing to Thebes, gave the duke of Athens an opportunity of separating from the Greek alliance, to which he had entered in order to avert an attack on his own dominions. Constantine, finding that his troops were unable to face the well-disciplined army of Omar, abandoned all the conquests he had made beyond the isthmus, and thought only of defending himself in the Peloponnesus. Circumstances seemed to promise him success.

Sultan Murad II, after destroying the Christian army at the battle of Varna, hastened to bury himself again in his beloved retirement at Magnesia, and left the direction of the Ottoman government in the hands of his son Mohammed II. The young sultan, able as he proved himself to be a very few years afterwards, could not then preserve order in the mass of armed men who formed the nucleus of the ottoman empire, and the janissaries broke out into open rebellion. It was necessary for Murad to quit his Asiatic retreat a second time, to occupy the throne. The victory at Varna had put to flight the dreams of independence and national regeneration which were floating in the minds of a few enthusiastic Greeks; the return of Murad II threatened the nation with immediate destruction: for nothing but foreign wars could insure obedience in the ottoman armies. Murad's first resolution was to punish Constantine for what he considered his ungrateful and rebellious conduct.

Late in the year 1445, Murad II marched from Adrianople into Thessaly; and taking with him the veteran pasha Turakhan, whose long acquaintance with Greece and its inhabitants rendered him an invaluable counsellor, he pushed forward to Thebes, where he was joined by Nerio II, duke of Athens, a willing vassal in any enterprise against the Greeks. The Turkish army was accompanied by a number of waggons laden with bronze, to cast cannon. In order to prepare the artillery necessary for attacking the fortifications of the isthmus, the army halted for a few days at Minzies, and the sultan advanced to reconnoitre the wall in person. The imposing appearance of its well-constructed battlements, manned by a numerous army of defenders, under the personal orders of the despots Constantine and Thomas, astonished Murad by a military display he had not expected to behold, and he reproached Turakhan for having persuaded him to engage in the attack of these impregnable lines at the commencement of winter. Turakhan assured his master that many years' acquaintance with the Greeks enabled him to despise their military array; and he declared that the army, even though covered by fortifications, would not long resist a vigorous assault.

The conduct of the Christians verified his opinion. The Greek officer sent by Constantine to reconnoitre the Turkish preparations returned with alarming accounts of the ottoman force, and declared to the despots that it would be impossible to resist its attack. He advised them to abandon the lines at the isthmus without delay, and seek refuge in the impregnable fortresses in the interior of the Peloponnesus. Either from cowardice or treachery, he behaved so disgracefully that Constantine found it necessary to imprison him, in order to prevent his report from spreading a panic among the soldiery. The sultan soon established his camp before the Greek fortifications. Constantine then deputed Chalcocondylas, an Athenian in his service, to propose terms of peace. The Greek leaders must have been singularly ignorant of the true grounds of military success, and possessed with extraordinary confidence in their own talents, for we have seen that they could not repose much in the courage of their troops. Chalcocondylas was instructed to demand that the sultan should acknowledge Constantine as independent sovereign of the Peloponnesus, and all the territory beyond the isthmus which still recognised the Byzantine government. On this condition, he offered to abstain from all future hostilities against the ottoman dominions. The proposition appeared to Murad a much greater insult than the previous invasion of Thessaly. Chalcocondylas was thrown into prison, and the military operations were pursued with vigour. The ottoman camp was established before the middle of the wall, on the last slopes of Mount Geranion, overlooking the whole isthmus and the two seas, with the Acrocorinth and the long range of the rugged mountains of the Morea in the background. The excellent police observed in the Turkish army, the plentiful supply of provisions that everywhere attended its march, the regular lines of shops that formed a market at every halt, the crowd of sutlers, with their well-laden mules, accompanying the troops in perfect security, and the regularity with which the soldiers received a daily advance on their monthly pay, calls forth, on this occasion, the admiration of the Greek historian. Chalcocondylas must often have been witness himself of the influence of the Turkish system in creating plenty, even while the army was marching through the most barren districts; but the order and discipline which were preserved among the soldiery may have been more deeply impressed on his memory on this occasion, in consequence of his having heard his father often dwell with wonder on the arrangements he had witnessed, while detained as a prisoner. This description of the ottoman commissariat explains to us the cause of that long series of success that attended the Turkish arms,

better even than a description of the field tactics of the generals, or the manual exercise of the troops. The valour of the janissaries was a consequence of their discipline; the talents of the ottoman generals a result of the superior system, moral as well as military, in which they were trained.

On the fourth morning after the Turkish batteries had opened on the wall, the troops mounted to the assault. In the centre of the lines, opposite to the principal battery, the sultan himself overlooked the storming party; and under his eye a young Servian janissary first gained the summit of the rampart, and planted the crescent firmly in sight of the two armies from sea to sea. His followers mastered the central towers, broke open the gates of the great road into the Peloponnesus, and admitted the whole ottoman army. The Greek troops abandoned the whole line of the wall the moment they heard that the breach had been stormed. Constantine and Thomas, unable to rally a single battalion, fled with precipitation to Misithra. Their imprudence had been so great that the Acrocorinth was destitute of all means of affording a cover for the defeated army. It had been left without provisions and without a garrison, so that it surrendered to the first party of the Turks that approached it. Three hundred Greeks alone attempted to resist the enemy. Entrenching themselves in Mount Oxi, above Kenchries, they allowed themselves to be besieged by the Turks. Cut off from all supplies, they were soon compelled to surrender at discretion. They were fettered with six hundred prisoners the sultan had purchased from his janissaries, and orders were given to lead out the whole to execution. They were beheaded without mercy; yet Murad II, according to the testimony of historians, was one of the mildest and most humane of the ottoman sovereigns.

Constantine, the author of the war, was so alarmed at the sultan's vigour and cruelty, that he thought of quitting the Peloponnesus and abandoning the Greeks to their fate. The movements of the ottoman army saved him from this disgrace. The main body of the Turks was directed along the coast of Achaia to Patras; while Turakhan, at the head of a light division, was sent into the interior of the Peninsula, merely for the purpose of laying waste the country and collecting booty. The greater part of the inhabitants of Patras escaped over the gulf into the Venetian territory in Aetolia; but about four thousand Greeks who remained in the city, and threw themselves on the mercy of the sultan, were all reduced to slavery. The citadel made a brave defence, and though the Turks succeeded at last in making a breach in the walls, they were repulsed in the assault, and the besieged gained time to erect a second line of defence. In the meantime Turakhan joined the sultan, bringing with him an immense amount of spoil; and Murad, who was not inclined to waste any more time so far from the centre of the Ottoman power, gave orders to the army to resume its march, and led it back to Thebes. He is said to have carried away about sixty thousand Greeks into slavery, who were distributed throughout the slave-markets in every part of the ottoman dominions. Constantine had now received so severe a lesson that he was glad to accept peace on the terms the sultan dictated, and to acknowledge himself a tributary of the Porte.



SECT. IV  
 DISORDERS IN THE MOREA DURING THE GOVERNMENT OF THE  
 DESPOTS THOMAS AND DEMETRIUS.  
 ALBANIAN REVOLUTION

The death of the emperor John VI called Constantine from Misithra to fill the imperial throne at Constantinople, and the government of the Peloponnesus was divided between his brothers Thomas and Demetrius. Thomas received Patras and a considerable portion of Achaia in addition to his former possessions; while Demetrius was established as despot in Laconia, Argolis, and the eastern parts of Arcadia and Achaia. Both were at Constantinople when the partition was made, and, before quitting the capital to assume the administration of their respective provinces, they swore in the most solemn manner, with all the fearful imprecations of which the Greek Church makes liberal use, not to invade one another's possessions, but to live together in constant harmony. These oaths were disregarded the moment they set foot in the Peloponnesus. Thomas was a cruel tyrant, who assassinated his enemies and put out the eyes of his captives without remorse. Demetrius was an idle, luxurious, and worthless prince, who neglected all the business of his station. Both had more than an ordinary share of Byzantine avidity for money, and a princely contempt for the feelings and interests of their subjects. Strictly speaking, the despots who ruled in Morea were nothing more than viceroys of the emperor of Constantinople; but the circumstances in which the empire was placed had, for a long time, rendered them in point of fact absolute and independent sovereigns. The administration both of Thomas and Demetrius, nevertheless, afforded an example of that peculiar system of government, by means of courtly dependents imported from Constantinople in the train of the prince, which, in modern times, has produced the ruin and demoralisation of Vallachia and Moldavia. It is a system creating, wherever it exists, the deepest execration in the hearts of those submitted to its tyranny. In modern times, the race of Byzantine officials, who have been the agents of this system of rapacity and oppression, have been called Phanariotes, from the name of the quarter of Constantinople in which they usually resided; and this class of men has been one cause of the general detestation with which the Greeks are regarded by all other races in the East. Before the conquest of the Byzantine Empire by the Turks, the officials at Constantinople were a powerful class, too much honoured to have any nickname. The two despots were naturally inclined to quarrel; the Byzantine officials who composed their courts expected new places and additional profits from their hostilities, so that their passions were pandered to by these adventurers. Their disputes were so violent that nothing but the fear of the Turks prevented the more energetic Thomas from attacking his brother Demetrius.

When Mahommed II prepared to attack Constantinople, he deemed it prudent to give the two despots in the Morea sufficient employment at home to prevent them from sending any assistance to their brother Constantine in the capital of the empire. In October 1452, a Turkish army under Turakhan and his two sons, Achmet and Omar, passed the isthmus, where a Greek corps stationed to guard the wall was cut to pieces. Leaving Corinth unattacked, Turakhan divided his army, and extended his ravages over the whole of the great Arcadian plain, from whence he marched by Leondari into the

rich valleys of Messenia. He took Neochorion on the way; but on reaching Siderokastron he vainly endeavoured to storm that place, and was in the end compelled to abandon the attempt. The ottoman troops passed the winter in the soft climate of Messenia. After collecting an ample supply of plunder and slaves, they were ordered in the spring to evacuate the Morea, having fulfilled the object of their winter campaign. As the last division of the Turkish army under Achmet was retiring by the narrow pass on the road from Argos to Corinth, called by the ancients Tretos, and celebrated in modern times for the defeat of a Turkish army under Dramali Pasha in 1822, the Ottomans were vigorously assailed by a Greek corps, commanded by Matthew Asan, a noble who possessed both valour and military talents. The Turks were routed with severe loss, and Achmet their general was taken prisoner and delivered up to the despot Demetrius at Misithra. Demetrius received his captive with the greatest attention, and released him without ransom as a mark of gratitude to Turakhan for the services he had received from that pasha during his quarrels with his brother Thomas. The fall of Constantinople, and the conviction that the great bulk of the inhabitants of the Peloponnesus feared Turkish cruelty less than Byzantine rapacity, induced the despots to solicit peace on any terms Mohammed II might be pleased to dictate. The sultan received them as vassals of the Porte on their engaging to pay a yearly tribute of twelve thousand gold ducats; yet these miserable princes were so blinded by aridity, the master passion of their existence, as to neglect remitting this tribute until the sultan sent them an order either to send the tribute or quit the Morea. This message was delivered in a tone that met with implicit obedience.

At this unfortunate epoch in the history of the Greek nation, the people, oppressed by rulers who were aliens in every moral and political feeling, began to lose all wish to defend their national independence; while the Albanian colonists in the Morea had increased so much in numbers and wealth that they aspired at complete political liberty. The extent of land thrown out of cultivation by the depopulating ravages of the Turks had enabled the Albanian population to increase considerably, by spreading their flocks and herds over the districts left desolate. The reports that daily reached the Morea of the great exploits of their countryman, Scanderbeg, or George Castriot, inspired the Albanians with aspirations after liberty; and their only idea of liberty was to become absolute masters of the soil they occupied, and to refuse paying their Greek landlords the rent that had hitherto been exacted for the pasturage of their cattle. The Albanians lived in so rude a condition, that the plenty they enjoyed enabled them to increase in numbers, amidst the general desolation that afflicted every other class of the population in the Morea. The Greeks, on the other hand, were too civilised, and nurtured among too many artificial wants, to be able to perpetuate their numbers in the state of privation in which they were now compelled to live. The peasantry, crowded into the towns, were daily perishing from want; the artisans and traders, deprived of their occupations, were rapidly emigrating to other countries. This inauspicious moment was selected by the Moreot archonts, and the Byzantine officials, as a fit conjuncture for demanding from the Albanians an additional rent for the land they occupied. The exaction roused the people to resist; and the leaders, considering the moment favourable for a general insurrection, boldly proclaimed their project of expelling the Greek population from the Morea. The Greek race was quite as near extinction in the Morea, from the Albanians on this occasion, as it had ever been from the Sclavonians in preceding ages, and Turkish interference perhaps alone saved the peninsula from becoming an Albanian land. A number of discontented political adventurers deserted

their Greek countrymen, and became the most active leaders in this revolution—which was, on the whole, much more a movement of Albanian cupidity and Greek intrigue, than a contest of national ambition and patriotic feeling. Manuel Cantacuzenos, a Byzantine noble who had acquired great influence among the semi-independent mountaineers of Taygetus and Maina, placed himself at the head of the principal body of the insurgents. By assuming an Albanian name, he expected that the rebels would be persuaded to elect him Prince of the Morea. Instead of Manuel, he adopted the Albanian appellation Ghin; and his wife, instead of Maria, called herself Cuchia. The Albanian insurgents, with Ghin at their head, besieged the despot Demetrius in Misithra. Centurione, the brother of the wife of the despot Thomas, was at this time confined in the castle of Chlomoutzi along with a Greek named Loukanos, who possessed considerable influence in the affairs of the Peloponnesus. The two prisoners succeeded in making their escape at this critical moment. Centurione, who styled himself Prince of Achaia, collected all the remains of the Latins and Greeks in communion with the papal church, and advanced to besiege Patras with a considerable body of armed men. Loukanos became an Albanian patriot, and, assembling all the discontented of every class and nation in the west of the Morea, united his forces with those of Centurione, before Patras, into which they had driven the furious Thomas, who had been as unable to make head against the insurgents as his weaker brother Demetrius. Neither Patras nor Misithra could have offered any prolonged resistance, so that the fate of the Peloponnesus depended on the Turkish sultan. Both parties sent deputations to Mohammed, to gain his favour. The Albanian chiefs offered to pay the same tribute that had been imposed on the Greek despots, begging to be allowed to occupy the whole peninsula as vassals of the Porte. On the other hand, however, Matthew Asan, who commanded the Greek garrison in Corinth, assured the sultan that any party would readily pay the tribute; and he solicited assistance from the Turk to subdue the Albanian rebels, whose projects, he persuaded Mohammed, were partly directed to conquest and partly to plunder. The hatred the sultan entertained against Scanderbeg made him feel no inclination to countenance the movement of the Albanians, who had commenced conquering and plundering the Greeks, whom he considered as his vassals, without any authority. It suited his policy for the moment to maintain the two rival races in joint possession of the country, but it now seemed that, unless he immediately interfered, the Greeks might be completely subdued. To prevent such a catastrophe, Turakhan was again ordered to march into the Peloponnesus, and deliver the despots from their Albanian besiegers. The popular fury of the rebellion was exhausted before the ottoman army entered the peninsula; for as soon as the Greek adventurers succeeded in intruding themselves into the principal commands over the insurgent army, the Albanian population perceived that they were engaging in a war for the profit of new masters, and not in a revolution for their own advantage.

Turakhan crossed the isthmus in October 1454, and hastened to attack the district of Borbotia, where the Albanians had secured the greater part of their wealth. This place served them as a citadel. The approach of the Turks compelled the Albanians to raise the siege of Misithra. The despot Demetrius, with a number of followers, immediately joined the Turkish army; which, aided by the topographical knowledge of these volunteers, was enabled to penetrate into the enemy's stronghold and capture ten thousand women and children, as well as the greater part of the riches that had been accumulating by plundering the Greeks during the insurrection. The siege of Patras was raised about the same time, and Turakhan, on advancing into Messenia, was met by the

despot Thomas, who conducted the Turks to the fortress of Aetos, where the Albanian partisans of Centurione and Loukanos had secured their share of the plunder. This party of the insurgents purchased impunity and pardon, by delivering up one thousand slaves to the Turks, with a quantity of arms and a large supply of provisions and cattle. The Albanians now everywhere laid down their arms, and sued for peace. The terms which Turakhan thought fit to dictate were by no means severe, for he was too politic a statesman to allow the Greeks to gain any very decided superiority over their enemies in consequence of his victories. The terms of the pacification he forced on the despots are a sad testimony of the utter ruin that had overwhelmed the Greek agricultural population. The Albanians were allowed to retain possession of all the cattle they had plundered. This seems to indicate that few private individuals of rank appeared to reclaim their property. The Albanians were also permitted to colonise all the waste lands they had occupied, on paying a fixed rent to the proprietors. After he had settled the affairs of the country, Turakhan gave the two despots some good advice, which, if it be correctly reported by Chalcocondylas, does honour both to the head and the heart of this experienced warrior, who had grown grey in the Grecian wars. The Albanian insurrection was marked by many atrocities, both at its commencement and during its progress: it reduced whole districts to a state of desolation, and converted many Greek towns into mere sheepfolds, or Mandra.

## SECT. V

### FIRST EXPEDITION OF SULTAN MOHAMMED II INTO THE MOREA

The suppression of the Albanian revolt did not tranquillise the Peloponnesus. The country continued to be troubled with plots and convulsions. Byzantine nobles, Greek archonts, and Albanian chieftains, were running a race for plunder through the mazes of political intrigue. Constant complaints reached the Porte, and at last Mohammed II resolved to examine the state of the country in person. On the 15th of May 1458, he passed the ruined wall of the isthmus, and entered the town of Corinth. The Acrocorinth was in a neglected state; but Matthew Asan, with his usual promptitude, introduced a supply of provisions and military stores into it from the port of Kenchries, though he had to convey them almost through the middle of the Turkish camp during the night. The impregnable position of the fortress then defied any attempt at assault. Mohammed therefore left a body of troops to blockade it, while he advanced into the centre of the Morea with the rest of his army. In order to avoid traversing the Venetian possessions round Argos and Nauplia, as he was then at peace with the republic, he turned off from the road thither at Nemea, to march by the lake Stymphalos, from whence he crossed a mountain road to Tarsos in the valley of the river of Phonia. Tarsos was inhabited by Albanians, who purchased immunity by furnishing the sultan with three hundred boys to recruit the ranks of the janissaries. A fortress called Aetos bravely resisted the ottoman arms; but after suffering every extremity of thirst, the inhabitants saw their walls stormed by the janissaries, who pillaged all their property. Their lives were spared, that the young and active might be selected as slaves. From

Aetos the sultan marched to Akova, where numbers both of Greeks and Albanians had sought refuge with their families. The place was attacked without success for two successive days; but when the sultan was on the point of raising the siege, the garrison sent an offer to capitulate. The inhabitants were personally well treated, but they were transported to Constantinople, which Mohammed was endeavouring to repeople with contingents from most of the cities he conquered. Twenty Albanians, who were found in Akova, were condemned by Mohammed to be executed with the most horrid cruelty, for having violated the capitulation of Tarsos, and again borne arms against the Mussulmans. The sultan now turned back, and entered the great Arcadian plain near the ruins of Mantinea. The Albanians of Pentechoria, or Pazenika, were summoned to surrender by the agency of Manuel (or Ghin) Cantacuzenos, the leader of the Albanian revolt, who was now serving with the Turkish army; but they rejected all the sultan's offers, and repulsed the ottoman troops. Mohammed continued his march to Mouchli on Mount Parthenios. Mouchli was at this time one of the principal towns in the peninsula, and its ruins still cover a considerable space, and are said by the peasantry of the neighbourhood to contain the remains of three hundred and sixty-five churches. Though nothing but rudely built walls are now visible, the Albanian population around connect this Byzantine rubbish with vague traditions of imperial grandeur, and of ancient wealth and prosperity, while they look with indifference on the Hellenic walls of Mantinea, as the work of heathen giants. Mouchli was soon compelled to surrender from want of water, the besiegers cutting off the supply by the aqueduct, and the cisterns being insufficient for the demands of the inhabitants. From Mouchli, Mohammed returned to Corinth, where he bombarded the Acrocorinth with such effect that the bakehouse and magazines were reduced to ashes. Want of provisions and the treachery of the archbishop caused the surrender of the place. The Greek archbishop secretly informed the sultan of the condition to which the garrison was reduced; and when Asan saw there was no hope of the siege being raised, or of his receiving any further supplies, he surrendered the fortress. Mohammed had the generosity to treat this brave enemy with honour. He deputed him to the two despots, to communicate the terms on which they would be allowed to retain their posts. The country visited by the sultan as far as Mouchli, with the whole coast of Achaia as far as Patras, was annexed to the pashalic of Thessaly, and intrusted to the command of Omar, the son of Turakhan. The tribute of the two despots was fixed at five hundred Staters of gold, and Demetrius was ordered to send his daughter as a bride to the sultan's harem.

When Mohammed had quitted Greece, the despot Thomas, fancying that the attention of the ottoman government was exclusively occupied with the affairs of Servia and the troubled state of Asia Minor, resolved to attack his brother Demetrius and the Turkish garrisons in the peninsula at the same time, hoping to render himself master of the whole of the Peloponnesus before the sultan could send any aid. Thomas then trusted to the chance of accidents for the means of making his peace with the sultan, or for resisting his attacks. Vanity whispered that his power as the prince of the Greeks made him a more redoubtable enemy than Scanderbeg the chieftain of the Albanians, whose exploits were then the theme of universal admiration, and whose great success proves to us the worthlessness of his Christian contemporaries. In the month of January 1459, Thomas assembled all the troops he could engage in his service, and in this way formed a considerable army. Karitena, St George, Bordonia, and Kastritza were induced to drive out the officers of Demetrius, and join the war party that allied itself with Thomas. The national hatred of the Turks, and the contempt felt for Demetrius as their

ally, joined to a public proclamation that the municipalities and provinces should be allowed to manage their local affairs, were the sentiments on which Thomas counted for securing the support of the whole Christian population of the Peloponnesus.<sup>1</sup> One division of his army besieged the Turkish garrison in Patras, while the other captured the fortresses of Kalamata, Zarnata, Leftron, and the castles in the Zygos of Maina. The whole peninsula was, by this ill-judged insurrection, converted into a scene of anarchy, pillage, and bloodshed. The Albanians, in order to revenge themselves for their former defeat, plundered all the Greeks alike, whether they were the partisans of one brother or the other; and they availed themselves of the general anarchy to lay waste the villages whose farms they were eager to convert into pasture-lands. The Turkish garrisons of Mouchli, Vastitza, and Corinth, however, found opportunities of making continual sorties, burning down the villages, and carrying off the cattle in the surrounding country, in order to prevent the possibility of the Greeks being able to concentrate a sufficient force to besiege them.

To repress these disorders, Mohammed II sent the pasha of Thessaly against Thomas. The Moslems marched from Patras along the western coast of the Morea into the plain of Messenia, from which they ascended by the pass of Makryplagia into the valley of Leondari. Here Thomas had drawn out a numerous army to await their attack, close under the walls of the town. The great English general of our age is said to have observed that, if fifty thousand men were drawn up in close order in Hyde Park, there would probably not be found three men in London who could move them out of it without producing a scene of confusion and disorder as dangerous as a battle. The Greek despot, in his long embroidered robes, surrounded by a crowd of ceremonious courtiers better versed in the formalities of Byzantine etiquette than the movements of troops in front of an enemy, surveyed his army in helpless pride and dignity. Younisbeg, the commander of the ottoman sipahis, after reconnoitring the position occupied by the close array of the Greeks, made a remark on the ignorance of their commanders not unlike the observation of the Duke. He soon verified the correctness of the judgment he had pronounced, by a charge which threw one flank of the army into inextricable confusion, while the great body of the troops remained utterly useless and helpless. The rapid flight of the Greeks, however, showed the Turkish general that fear can often accomplish with ease manoeuvres which military science only effects with difficulty. The defeated army left only two hundred men on the field of battle. The speedy capture of Leondari and the submission of Thomas seemed now inevitable; but at this critical moment a violent contagious disease broke out in the Turkish army, and compelled it to retire. The Greeks again advanced; Patras was once more besieged, and patriotism was revived; but the arrival of a fresh body of Turkish troops from continental Greece soon compelled the besiegers of Patras to take to flight, abandoning their camp-baggage and artillery to the enemy. Thomas, convinced that his troops were utterly unfit to cope with the Turkish militia, sued for peace, which the sultan, whose attention was occupied with more important affairs, readily granted. He was ordered to pay three thousand gold staters as indemnity for the expenses of the war, and to present himself to a Turkish envoy at Corinth within twenty days, in order to ratify the conditions of the peace.

Fear of treachery on one hand, and a vague conviction that the sultan would not have consented to any terms had he been prepared for war, inspired Thomas with the courage of despair, and he ventured to disobey the order. He reconciled himself with his brother Demetrius through the mediation of the bishop of Lacedaemon, and the two

brothers met at the church of Kastritza. The meeting was singularly solemn: the bishop, clothed in sackcloth, performed high mass in a small church, while the two despots stood side by side in his presence. They then stepped forward and swore perpetual amity, mutual oblivion of every past injury, and brotherly love—receiving the holy communion from the hands of the bishop as a guarantee of their oaths. But to these unprincipled Byzantine lords their plighted word was a jest; the ceremonies of their church mere mummery, to deceive the people; and their religion a mockery, by which they could cheat heaven out of pardon for the worst crimes. The light of the tapers they had held in their hands, as they uttered their imprecations on their own perjuries, was hardly extinguished before they were plotting how to violate their oaths. Before the end of the year 1459 both were in arms, ravaging one another's possessions, and exterminating the scanty remains of the Greek population in the Peloponnesus. The Albanian shepherds and herdsmen had good reason to adore the Constantinopolitan rulers of Greece : to the Hellenic race they were far more destructive enemies than the Slavonians or the Crusaders. We need not wonder when we find that, in this age, many Greeks quitted their religion to embrace Mohammedanism. The Greek church imposed no restraint on the worst vices, and the moralist might well fancy that such Christianity was less productive of moral good, and more at variance with the scheme of the creation, than the faith of Mahomet.

## SECT. VI

### FINAL CONQUEST OF THE MOREA BY MOHAMMED II

Instead of remitting the tribute to the sultan, and ratifying the treaty of peace, Thomas devoted all his endeavours to conquering his brother's territories before the Turks could send a force to his assistance. This insolence exhausted the patience of Mohammed, who delayed his proposed expedition into Asia in order to lead an army in person into the Peloponnesus, and put an end to these disorders, by extinguishing any trace of Greek independence. He passed the Isthmus of Corinth in the month of May 1460, and marched direct to Misithra, where the despot Demetrius received him with marks of profound submission; but the sultan immediately informed him that the state of affairs in the peninsula no longer admitted of a Greek governing any portion of the country, and ordered him to close his reign by transmitting commands to all his officers, and to every city and fort in his territory, to receive Turkish officers. The inhabitants of Monemvasia, whose situation had enabled their municipal government to retain some degree of independence, boldly refused to comply with these commands; and as they possessed a body of armed citizens sufficiently numerous to garrison their walls, they proclaimed the despot Thomas as their sovereign—preferring a Christian tyrant, against whom they could defend themselves, to a Mohammedan, who would soon destroy their liberties. The sultan marched from Misithra to Kastritza, which also refused to surrender but, after a vigorous defence, it was compelled to capitulate; and Mohammed, in order to strike terror into all who might feel inclined to resist his arms, excluded three hundred of its brave defenders from the benefit of the capitulation, and ordered them to

be put to death. Leondari offered no resistance, but the Turks found it abandoned by the greater part of its inhabitants, who had retired with their families and property to the secluded town of Gardiki. They hoped in this rocky retreat to escape notice, until the storm should roll over, like so many that had preceded it; but the sultan had now resolved to exterminate all those who possessed the means of offering the slightest resistance to the Turkish authority at a future period. He led his troops into the defiles of Mount Hellenitza, and stormed Gardiki. The citadel, in spite of its rocky and impregnable position, capitulated as soon as the town was taken. Men, women, and children were then all collected in one spot, and massacred without mercy, by the orders of the sultan. Six thousand souls, among whom were the principal families of Leondari, perished on this occasion to expiate the vices and folly of their Byzantine princes. The inhabitants of Old Navarin and Arkadia surrendered, and from their environs ten thousand persons were transported to repeople Constantinople. Amidst these scenes of desolation, the despot Thomas conducted himself with the basest cowardice. As soon as he heard that Mohammed had entered Misithra, he fled to the port of Navarin, and embarked in a ship he had prepared to be ready for his own escape, in case of any accident. When Mohammed approached the western coast, the despot sailed to Corfu.

The authority of the Byzantine despots was now at an end. Most of the political adventurers from Constantinople, who had been one of the chief causes of the ruin of Greece, now abandoned the country. They could no longer expect that the central government would allow them to extort wealth from the unhappy population—for the Ottomans systematically preferred levying the tribute by the agency of local primates. The implicit submission of the whole Peloponnesus might have been expected to follow the resignation of one sovereign, and the flight of the other, as a natural consequence—but it was not so. The fall of the Greek people was more dignified than that of their Byzantine rulers. Each separate community now acted on its own feelings, and the true national character of the population was for a moment visible ere it was extinguished in blood by the Turks. Cowardice, at least, does not seem to have been the prevailing vice. The spirit “attached to regions mountainous,” which, under a better system of family training, enabled the Swiss to maintain their national independence by the exertions of local communities, was not utterly wanting among the Greek and Albanian population of the Morea, even in this period of Greek degradation. Central governments are easily destroyed by a victorious enemy; local independence engenders permanent feelings that almost insure success, in a national struggle, against the most powerful conqueror.

While Mohammed II led the main body of the Turkish army in person into the centre of the Morea, he had detached Zagan pasha in command of another division, to complete the conquest of the northern part of the peninsula. Zagan executed the task intrusted to him with a degree of inhumanity which displeased even Mohammed, who was so little inclined to mercy that he ordered an Albanian chief named Doxa, who had repeatedly deserted from the Greeks to the Turks, and from the Turks to the Greeks, to be sawn in two, as a punishment for earlier treacheries, though he now gave up Kalavryta to the sultan’s troops. Part of the garrison of Kalavryta were sold as slaves, and the rest were beheaded. Zagan besieged Grevenos, which repulsed his attacks with great valour; but Santimeri, in which all the wealth of the surrounding country had been laid up, opened its gates on receiving from the pasha a promise that he would protect the lives and property of the inhabitants. When he gained possession of the place, he allowed the Turkish troops to plunder the houses and murder the inhabitants. This open



violation of his word caused such hatred against him that the whole population of the surrounding districts flew to arms, and, considering that it was vain to treat with such a monster, offered a determined resistance to the further progress of the Othoman arms. Zagan lost his master's favour by imitating too closely his master's example.

Mohammed II, who had met with no resistance, advanced from Arkadia through the plain of Elis, where all the towns opened their gates on his approach, and their inhabitants were uniformly treated with humanity. Grevenos, unable to resist any longer the additional force that attacked it, was compelled to surrender, and one-third of its inhabitants were selected by the conquerors to be sold as slaves. Salineniko was occupied by a garrison commanded by Paleologos Graitzas, and it made a desperate defence. For seven days the sultan's troops reiterated their attempts to storm the walls, but were repulsed by the gallantry of its defenders. At last the Turks cut off the supply of water, and thus compelled the town to surrender. Six thousand of the inhabitants were reduced to slavery, and nine hundred young men were enrolled among the janissaries. But the citadel continued to hold out, as the cisterns were sufficient for its supply. Nothing, however, now remained for the garrison to protect; and the commandant offered to evacuate the place, on condition that the garrison should be allowed to cross the Gulf of Corinth into the Venetian territory at Lepanto. Mohammed gave his consent to the terms proposed, and withdrew his army to Vostitza to afford the besieged a free passage to the shore. The commandant, however, entertained great distrust of the Turks, in consequence of their conduct at Santimeri, and, in order to guard against any treachery, he sent forward a detachment with a considerable quantity of baggage, trusting that this display of booty would allure any ambuscade from its concealment. The plan was successful. Hamza pasha, the successor of Zagan, who had been charged by Mohammed to receive the surrender of the fortress, allowed his troops to waylay this detachment, and plunder the baggage. The commandant of Salmeniko, finding that it was impossible to place any reliance on the capitulations he had concluded, sent a message to the sultan to announce that he was determined to defend the citadel to the last extremity. Mohammed disgraced Hamza, perhaps as much for his awkwardness as his treachery, and restored Zagan to his former post. He then continued his march, leaving troops to blockade the citadel of Salmeniko, which continued to hold out for a year. The garrison then obtained a capitulation, with proper guarantees for its faithful execution, and retired in safety into the Venetian territory. The gallant leader of this patriotic band was named Graitzas.

Mohammed II quitted the Morea in the autumn of 1460. On his way back to Constantinople he visited Athens for the second time; while the main body of his army, laden with spoil and encumbered with slaves, moved slowly northward from Megara by Thebes. This last campaign in the Morea was attended with wanton destruction of property and waste of human life. Mohammed's policy evidently was to ruin the resources of the country, as a preventive against insurrection, and a security that it would hold out little inducement to any Christian power to occupy it with an army. His measures were successful. The diminished population remained long in such a state of poverty and barbarism, that it could devote little care to anything beyond procuring the means of subsistence. Even the payment of the annual tribute of their children, which the Christians were compelled to send to Constantinople, in order to recruit the strength of the ottoman power, failed to awaken either patriotism or despair among the Greeks.

The fate of the two last despots hardly merits the attention of history, were it not that mankind has a morbid curiosity to pursue the most trifling records concerning the fortunes of the most worthless princes. Demetrius was sent by the sultan to reside at Enos, where he received from Mohammed's bounty an annual pension of six hundred thousand aspers. He died a monk at Adrianople in 1471. It is said that the sultan never married his daughter whom he had been compelled to send into the imperial harem. Thomas, after attempting to purchase an appanage from the sultan, by offering to cede Monemvasia to the infidels, finding his offers despised by Mohammed, finished his life as a pensionary of the Pope, who was so liberal as to allow him three hundred ducats a month, to which the cardinals added two hundred more. He died at Rome in 1465. The papal pension of three hundred ducats a month was continued to his children. His eldest son, Andrew, married a woman from the streets of Rome, and, dying childless in 1502, left the visionary empire of the East, of which he deemed himself the heir, to Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain. His second son Manuel, tired of papal patronage, escaped from Rome to Constantinople, where he threw himself on the protection of the sultan. Mohammed gave him a hospitable reception, and supplied him with the means of maintaining a more decent harem than his brother. Manuel left a son named Andrew, who became a Mussulman, and received the name of Mohammed. Thus ended the contemptible race of the imperial house of Paleologos.

The city of Monemvasia defended its independence for four years; but in 1464, when the inhabitants heard that the despot Thomas had offered to surrender their city to the Turks, they found it necessary to call in the assistance of the Venetian republic and receive an Italian garrison. The Venetians continued to hold possession of Nauplia, Argos, Thermisi, Coron, Modon, and Navarin, as well as Acarnania, Arta, Missolonghi, Naupaktos, and Euboea. In the year 1463, the Turks renewed their attempt to complete the conquest of the Morea by attacking the Venetian possessions. Argos was betrayed into their hands by a Greek priest, and the greater part of its Greek inhabitants were transported to Constantinople. The territory of Coron and Modon was laid waste, and Acarnania invaded. But Venice, on this occasion, nobly exerted herself to gain the title of Europe's bulwark against the ottoman. A powerful expedition was fitted out, and great exertions were made to rouse the Greek population to attempt a general insurrection. The Italian condottiere and foreign mercenaries who composed the armies of Venice, were no match for the severely disciplined regular troops of the ottoman empire, attended by the well-organised batteries of field and siege artillery, without which no Turkish army now entered on a campaign. The pashas who commanded the ottoman armies were almost the only soldiers in Europe accustomed to direct and combine the constant movements of large bodies of men for one definite result. The Venetians had a short gleam of success: Argos was recovered; the Isthmus of Corinth was occupied. Thirty thousand men were employed to work by relays, night and day, in order to repair the wall, which experience had so frequently proved to be useless as a fortification. For a fortnight the work was pursued with ardour; but, in the meantime, the Venetian army was repulsed in all its attacks on Corinth; and, the season setting in with intense cold early in autumn, the lines at the isthmus were abandoned, and the whole Venetian force retreated to Nauplia. In 1466, the Venetians, under Victor Capello, the advocate of the war, succeeded in taking Athens; but subsequently, on debarking his troops near Patras, they sustained a disastrous defeat. When peace was concluded between Venice and the Porte in 1479, the republic retained possession of Nauplia, Monemvasia, Coron, Modon, and Navarin; but it was compelled to cede to the

Turks the fortresses of Maina, Vatica, and Rampano, which had been captured during the war. In the year 1500, sultan Bayezid II gained possession of Modon and Coron; and in 1540 the Venetians were driven from all their remaining possessions in the Peloponnesus by Suleiman, who took Nauplia and Monemvasia.

To the last hour of the Byzantine domination in Greece learning was not neglected; and all men of any rank in society devoted some portion of their youth to study, and the acquirement of a knowledge of ancient Greek and of the history and laws of the Greek church. The annals of the Morea have given us the means of estimating the value of such an education as can be obtained from books alone, without the soul-inspiring culture of the moral and religious feelings that can be gained only in the domestic circle, and which must have its seeds sown before books can enlarge the mind. Some Greek manuscripts have been preserved, written at this disastrous period, even in the mountains of Zakonia and the city of Misithra, one of which contains the history of Herodotus, and another treats of the miraculous light on Mount Thabor. The selection indicates the nature of the Hellenic mind at this epoch. The classes that floated on the surface of society were in their mental dotage, and their pride and superstition sought gratification equally in the legends of Christian fable, narrated in pedantic phraseology, and in the tales of the father of history, sketched with the noble simplicity of nature.

## CHAPTER X

## DUCHY OF THE ARCHIPELAGO, OR NAXOS

## SECT. I

OBSERVATIONS ON THE VENETIAN ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE  
EMPIRE OF ROMANIA

It must not be supposed that the Venetian republic succeeded in establishing a greater degree of order, in the different portions of the empire of Romania which fell to its share, than the Frank Crusaders. The government of Venice was not yet either rich or powerful; its strength lay in the wealth, patriotism, and greatness of individual citizens. But her nobility partook of the spirit of the age, and were as deeply imbued with pride of caste as the haughtiest of the crusading barons. Within the walls of the capital the wealth of a numerous middle class, and the independent position of a maritime population, compelled the feudal pride of the nobles to yield to their interest; but abroad, the Venetian nobles were as eager to act the territorial baron as any adventurer in the crusading army at Constantinople. When the partition of the Byzantine Empire was settled, and the republic became sovereign of a quarter and an eighth of the whole empire of Romania, the senate soon perceived that its resources would be inadequate to conquer the territory to which it had thus acquired a right. The Venetians were not inclined to quit mercantile enterprises which secured them a certain profit, in order to toil for the glory of the state; nor would the nobles have been willing to act as governors of the many petty dependencies which the partition placed under the command of the senate. On the other hand, the enormous pay then exacted by knights and men-at-arms, who were the only efficient troops of the age, rendered it impossible to preserve any conquest with advantage to the republic by means of mercenary garrisons. Indeed, mercenary leaders in distant possessions, where they must have enjoyed unrestrained power, would immediately have rendered themselves independent, or transferred their allegiance to some rival protector. If the Venetian conquests in the empire of Romania had been intrusted to foreign troops, the noblemen and gentlemen who commanded these mercenaries would have been the liegemen of other sovereigns; and though they might have paid homage to the mercantile republic, in order to secure their pay, would immediately have cast off that allegiance when they found that they could secure greater profits by seizing the revenues of the country they were employed to guard.

These considerations induced the republic to adopt a singular policy in order to take possession of its share of the empire—a policy which produced little immediate advantage to the Venetian state, but saved Venice from all expense, and at least excluded its rivals, whether Frank Crusaders or citizens of the other commercial republics of Italy, from the territories in question. The senate authorised individual nobles to conquer certain portions of the empire, on condition that their conquests should be held as fiefs from the Venetian republic. In consequence of this authorisation, it would seem that Mark Dandolo and Jacomo Viaro occupied Gallipoli; that Marino Dandolo conquered the island of Andros; the family of Ghisi seized Tinos, Mykone, Skyros, Skiathos, and Skopelos; Justiniani and Michieli the island of Keos or Zea; Navigajosa that of Lemnos, and Quirini that of Astypalia. It was the intention of the government to reserve Corfou and Crete as dominions of the republic.

In the partition of the empire, the twelve islands of the Archipelago, which had formed the theme of the Aegean sea in the provincial division of the Byzantine empire, fell to the share of the crusading barons; but Mark Sanudo, one of the most influential of the Venetian nobles in the expedition, obtained possession of the principal part of the ancient theme—though whether by purchase from the Frank barons to whom it had been allotted, or by grant to himself from the emperor, is not known. Sanudo, however, made his appearance at the parliament of Ravenika as one of the great feudatories of the empire of Romania, and was invested by the emperor Henry with the title of Duke of the Archipelago, or Naxos. It is difficult to say on what precise footing Sanudo placed his relations with the republic. His conduct in the war of Crete shows that he ventured to act as a baron of Romania, or an independent prince, when he thought his personal interests at variance with his born allegiance to Venice. The goodwill of the republic was, nevertheless, of such importance to some of the other great feudatories of the empire, that Ravan dalle Carceri, the possessor of two-thirds of the barony of Negrepont, paid tribute to the Venetians, and acknowledged himself a vassal of their state, though he was not born a subject of the republic. A passion for seeking foreign territorial establishments is said, at this time, to have taken such possession of the minds of all classes at Venice, that it was publicly discussed whether the seat of government might not be advantageously transferred from the then humble city of Venice to the comparatively magnificent quarter of Constantinople, of which the republic had become the master.

The conquests of the republic in the East belong to Venetian rather than to Greek history, for the condition of the Greek nation was not directly influenced by the political conduct of the republic until a later period, except in the island of Crete, which lies beyond the circle of our present inquiries. Crete never formed a part of the Latin empire of Romania, and was never subjected to the feudal law. The valour with which the Cretans defended their local independence, and their repeated insurrections against the republic, form an interesting subject of inquiry, as presenting a marked contrast to the tame submission displayed by the majority of the Greek race to their foreign conquerors; but the history of Crete has very little of a Byzantine or Frank character, and would require a volume to do it justice. Our task is to review the history of the Duchy of the Archipelago as the connecting link between feudal, Venetian, and Greek society, in the dismembered provinces of the Byzantine empire. The independent existence of this duchy, long after the Turks had conquered the rest of the Frank possessions in Greece, and extinguished the independence of the Greek nation in the

Morea, exhibits an accurate outline of the general political and social relations that existed between the dominant Venetians and the subject Greeks throughout the Levant, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

## SECT. II

### DUKES OF THE FAMILIES OF SANUDO AND DALLE CARCERI

Mark Sanudo, who founded the duchy of the Archipelago, was one of those great merchant-nobles of his age who moved as the equal of the proudest princes and feudal barons in Europe. He was among the ablest and the wealthiest of the Venetians who had taken the cross; but, like old Dandolo, he seems never to have bestowed a thought on visiting the Holy Land, or on warring with the infidels. Many of the privateering merchants of his age, in the commercial republics of Italy, were warriors as well as traders; and their experience in war and diplomatic business enabled them at times to assume the station of princes, when their actions were those of pirates. Sanudo was one of the great men of this class: he was a man of ability, both as a soldier and a statesman. He had acquired so much influence in the camp of the Crusaders that he was selected by the republic to act with Ravan dalle Carceri, as Venetian commissioner, to conclude the treaty with Boniface, marquis of Montferrat and king of Saloniki, for the purchase of the island of Crete. While the crusading barons were occupied in taking possession of their fiefs in Greece, Sanudo fitted out his own galleys, and, assembling a strong body of mercenaries with the money he had received at the taking of Constantinople, sailed to conquer the barony of the twelve islands of the Archipelago. It was not, however, before the year 1207 that he invaded the island of Naxos. He landed with his troops at the port of Potamidhes, and immediately laid siege to Apaliri, the strongest fortress in the island, situated on a rugged rock and surrounded by a triple line of walls. The place, like all the fortified posts in the Byzantine Empire, had been long neglected, and was ill prepared to offer a prolonged resistance. After a siege of five weeks it capitulated, and on its surrender the rest of the island submitted to Sanudo. The Greeks of Naxos, like their countrymen on the continent, obtained very favourable terms from their conqueror. Sanudo guaranteed them in the possession of their property, both landed and movable, in the exercise of their local privileges and immunities, and in the free practice of all the rites of their religion, according to the usage and doctrines of the Greek church; and he confirmed the Greek archbishop, the priests, and the monks, in the possession of their property. The imperial domains, the estates of the Greek proprietors who had attached themselves to the fortunes of the emperors of Nice or Trebizond, or to the despot of Epirus, and the ecclesiastical possessions of Greek churches or monasteries abroad, were alone confiscated. From the wealth thus placed at his command, Sanudo was able to reward his followers, and yet to retain in his own possession an extensive domain. His own wealth, and the inferior rank of many of the mercenaries he had hired, enabled him to reward their services with money, and to grant fewer fiefs to his military dependants than was the case with the other great vassals in the feudal empire of Romania. The military power of Sanudo consequently appeared to rest solely on the pecuniary resources which supplied him with the means of hiring foreign mercenaries, and his power seemed, therefore, at the mercy of innumerable vicissitudes of fortune in

a warlike and piratical age. But naval expeditions are always expensive, and the object of their preparation is rarely kept as profoundly secret as in the case of Napoleon's expedition to Egypt, so that the enemy can usually take measures of defence. Sanudo knew well how to watch the signs of the times, and this principality, which he founded on what was at the time deemed but an insecure basis, enjoyed the longest existence and the greatest degree of internal tranquillity of all the Latin establishments erected in the dismembered provinces of the Byzantine Empire.

The first object of Sanudo in his new conquest was to improve the communications of Naxos with the capital of the Latin empire at Constantinople, and with the centre of the commercial power at Venice. For this purpose he rebuilt the ancient town on the sea-shore, repaired the port by constructing a new mole, formed an arsenal for his own galleys, and fortified the citadel which commanded the town with great care. A tower that still remains attests the solidity of his buildings, rivalling in its strength the tall tower in the Acropolis of Athens, and the thick walls of the palace of Santameri at Thebes. Within the city constructed by Sanudo everything was Latin. Its population flourished by the commercial relations they maintained with the other Latins, and secured their superiority over the Greeks by the great additional facilities they enjoyed for receiving foreign assistance. A catholic bishop was sent by the Pope to guide the political opinions as well as the religious consciences of the Latins of Naxos; and Sanudo, in order to secure the good-will of the papal power and clergy, built a cathedral in his new capital, and liberally endowed its chapter. While these improvements were in progress in Naxos, he found time to prosecute his conquests, and extend his dominions over the islands of Paros, Antiparos, Ios, Sikinos, Polykandros, Kimolos, Melos, Amorgos, Thera or Santorin, and Anaphe, which formed the twelve islands of his barony. At the parliament of Ravenika, Mark Sanudo appeared with the other great feudatories of the empire of Romania, and received from the emperor Henry the investiture of his conquests, with the title of Duke of the Archipelago.

The conduct of the new duke to his native country, when Venice was involved in a serious struggle for the possession of the island of Crete, shows that Sanudo, with the ability of a statesman and the ambition of a prince, had also the lax conscience of a piratical adventurer. The inhabitants of Crete had risen in rebellion against the Venetians, and the rebels had received aid from the Genoese and the count of Malta. Tiepolo, the Venetian governor of Candia, sent to Naxos to solicit aid from Sanudo, as a citizen of the republic. The duke of the Archipelago hastened to the scene of action with a force that might have rendered great service; but, moved either by unprincipled ambition, or by a frantic desire to avenge himself on Tiepolo for some imaginary affront, he entered into a plot to expel his countrymen from the island, and render himself king of Candia. A Greek named Sevastos was labouring at the same time to organise a plan for the deliverance of his country from a foreign yoke. Sanudo, hoping to render the patriotic projects of the Greek subservient to his own schemes of ambition and revenge, conspired secretly to assist him—opening, at the same time, communications with the count of Malta, who was a sworn enemy to Venice. The plan of the conspirators was to overpower the garrison and surprise Tiepolo. But though the conspiracy broke out unexpectedly, before any suspicions were entertained, Tiepolo was fortunate enough to escape from Candia to Retymos in woman's clothes, and to collect all the Venetian fugitives around him; while Sanudo was occupied in rendering himself master of Candia, by establishing his own partisans in all the positions of strength, and

in getting himself proclaimed king of Candia. As soon as the new king had secured his supremacy in the capital, he marched, with all his disposable force, to besiege Retymos; but before he could form the siege, his progress was arrested by the arrival of reinforcements from Venice, under the command of Querini, who anchored at Retymos. Tiepolo availed himself most skilfully of the arrival of these succours. He embarked with Querini, and instantly set sail for Candia, which a favourable wind enabled him to reach before the garrison was informed of the approach of the Venetian fleet; so that, sailing into port during the night, Tiepolo landed his troops, and recovered possession of the city without difficulty. Sanudo, who was preparing to march back from Retymos, heard to his confusion that the Venetians were again masters of Candia, and that his treachery and royal title had availed him nothing. Finding that he could no longer maintain his ground in Crete, he concluded a capitulation with the Venetian leaders, who allowed him to depart from Naxos on his consenting to quit the island immediately, and abandon his allies—Sevastos and the Genoese—to their fate. On his return to his own duchy, he sent envoys to Venice to deprecate the vengeance of the republic, and urge such excuses for his proceedings as he was able to frame. These explanations were accepted, for the senate wished to secure his alliance, in order to include his dominions within the circle of the commercial monopolies which it was the policy of Venice to extend as far as possible, to the exclusion of the Genoese and Pisans.

Mark Sanudo died in the year 1220, and was succeeded by his son Angelo. The new duke and his successors were compelled by their position to acknowledge themselves, in some degree, vassals both of the empire of Romania and of the republic of Venice; yet they acted as sovereign princes, and endeavoured to secure to themselves a considerable share of political independence in practice, by concluding separate alliances and commercial treaties with the Greek emperors and despots, with the dukes of Athens, and with the princes of Achaia. Angelo assisted John de Brienne when he was besieged in Constantinople by the Greek emperor and the king of Bulgaria; and the duke Mark II gave some assistance to the Venetians during the Cretan revolt, in the year 1247; but he was compelled to withdraw his succours and return home, to secure the tranquillity of his own dominions by his presence, in consequence of the demonstrations of the Greek emperor John VII, (Vatatzes,) who supported the insurgents, and threatened the islands of the Archipelago with his fleets. Mark II also furnished a squadron of three galleys to assist the emperor Baldwin II in his last war with Michael VIII; and when Constantinople was retaken by the Greeks, the duke of the Archipelago sent an embassy to Chalcis, where the fugitive emperor had sought refuge, to console him in his misfortunes, and furnished him with money to continue his voyage to Italy.

The decline of the Latin power augmented the bigotry of the Catholic clergy; and Mark II was so much alarmed by the discontent of the orthodox Greeks that he deemed it necessary to construct a fortress in the interior of Naxos, to command the fertile plain of Drymalia, which then contained twelve large villages, a number of farm-buildings, country-houses, and towers, with about ten thousand inhabitants. The duke Mark II had reason to distrust his Greek subjects, for he had been far more intolerant of their superstitions than his father and grandfather. Induced by religious zeal, or by a mistaken policy, he had destroyed an altar dedicated to the service of St Pachys, the saint of the Naxiotes, whose mediation in heaven was supposed to confer on mortals the rotundity of figure requisite for beauty in women and respectability in men. The devotion paid to this sanctification of obesity was probably a relic of superstition inherited from pagan



times. A hollow stone existed in the island, which St Pachys was believed to have taken under his peculiar care. Through this stone the mothers of lean or languishing children were in the habit of making their offspring pass; and the Naxiote matrons were convinced that this ceremony, joined to a due number of prayers to Saint Fat, an offering in his chapel, and some pieces of money placed in the hands of the priests, would infallibly render their children stout and healthy—unless, indeed, some evil eye of extraordinary power deprived the good-will of the saint of due effect. History has not recorded whether duke Mark II was fat or lean. He, however, broke the altar in pieces, and then found that it was necessary to replace it by a fortress.

In the year 1262, when the Byzantine troops took possession of the maritime fortresses of Monemvasia and Maina, and the people of the eastern and southern coast of the Morea broke out in rebellion against the Frank power in Achaia, the inhabitants of the island of Melos also seized the opportunity of driving out the ducal garrison, and claiming the assistance of the Byzantine officers. Mark II was a man of energy in war, with men as well as with saints; and on receiving the first tidings of the insurrection, he hastened to besiege the city of Melos, with a fleet of sixteen galleys, and a troop of Frank refugees, collected from the soldiers who had fled from Constantinople. The place was invested before any succours could reach it, and, after repeated attacks, the duke at last carried it by storm. The Greek priest suspected or convicted of being the author of the insurrection was thrown into the port, with his hands and feet tied together. The rest of the inhabitants were pardoned. Mark II died at Melos a short time after he had reconquered the island.

William, the fourth duke, maintained his independent position, as sovereign of his little state, by keeping a small and efficient naval and military force constantly ready for action, in a high state of discipline, and by adroitly balancing his negotiations with the emperor Michael VIII and Charles of Anjou. The fifth duke, Nicholas, had served the republic before he ascended the throne, and as sovereign prince he took an active part in the wars that were carried on by the Venetians in the Levant. He was the ally of the republic in its war with the Genoese, which commenced in 1293. He accompanied the sixty galleys of the Venetian admiral, Roger Morosini, when he ruined Galata, and he remained with the squadron of John Soranzo in the Black Sea. The city of Theodosia or Caffa was plundered, and its buildings destroyed; but the Black Sea fogs surprised the Venetians in the place, and they were compelled to pass the winter in a rigorous climate, without having made due preparations to resist the cold. The barbarity with which they had destroyed the city of Caffa now met with its punishment. A contagious disorder broke out, in consequence of the hardships to which they were exposed, and the bad food with which they were supplied, and a great mortality ensued.

The duke of Naxos was one of those who suffered severely from the disorder. Soranzo himself died; but the squadron, though reduced to sixteen galleys, boldly anchored before Constantinople on its return, and demanded from the emperor Andronicus II an indemnity for the losses the Venetian merchants had suffered, in consequence of a popular tumult which ensued after the destruction of Galata. The only answer the Venetian commanders received was a demand for forty thousand gold crowns, for Greek property wantonly destroyed at Galata; and the fleet, too feeble to linger within the Dardanelles, after ravaging the islands in the sea of Marmora, hastened to seek security in Candia and Naxos. The duke Nicholas soon refitted his squadron. He was present with the Venetian fleet at the disastrous defeat of Andrea Dandolo at

Cuzola, from which he escaped with difficulty; but in the following year he was wounded and taken prisoner, when the Venetians were defeated by the Genoese in the straits of Gallipoli. From this captivity he was soon released by the treaty of peace concluded between the two republics before the end of the year (1299), but as he was considered in the character of an independent prince, he was compelled to take an oath that he would not in future serve against Genoa.

After this he turned his attention to carrying on war against the Seljouk Turks, who then occupied a considerable portion of the coast of Asia Minor. This warfare consisted of incessant incursions and plundering expeditions, in which the duke and his followers collected considerable wealth. The treasury of Naxos was filled with money, soldiers flocked to the ducal standard, and his fame as a brave warrior and a devoted son of the church, who spent his time warring against the infidels, spread far and wide in Europe. He now, when it suited his interest, fought side by side with the Genoese adventurers in the East. In the year 1306 he aided Benedetto Zacharia to conquer the island of Chios, which the Turks had gained possession of the preceding year, by driving out the Catalan garrison. Nicholas died shortly after the conquest of Chios, apparently in the same year. No braver or more active prince ever sat on the throne of Naxos. He left no children, and was succeeded by his brother John.

John, the sixth duke, was called to preside over the government of the Archipelago from a hermitage in the plain of Engarais, where he had passed several years. He retired to this solitude on the death of his wife, and he manifested an intention of entering the priesthood, when the death of his brother Nicholas induced the Latin nobles and clergy to persuade him to quit his retreat, and mount the ducal throne. Mark Sanudo, the duke's younger brother, had expected to possess the dukedom on the death of Nicholas; for John's retirement from the world, and his having only one daughter, seemed to open the succession to Mark as a matter of right.

All his hopes were destroyed by the sudden installation of the hermit in the ducal palace; and when the new duke, as one of the first acts of his reign, married his daughter Florence to John dalle Carceri, the most powerful baron of Negrepoint, and established his son-in-law in the direction of the government of Naxos, Mark took up arms to defend what he pretended were his rights. He was governor of the island of Melos at the time, and John, to prevent a civil war in the Archipelago, agreed to acknowledge him as signor of that island. Of the duke John I nothing farther is recorded, and he does not appear to have occupied the throne of Naxos more than a year, though it is difficult to determine when his reign finished, and that of his son-in-law, John II dalle Carceri, commenced.

Mark Sanudo, signor of Melos, governed that island with prudence. He increased its trade very considerably, by affording every facility to foreign ships to touch at the island with as little delay and expense as possible. He abolished all anchorage-duties in the port, and by this concession rendered it the resort of most of the ships that entered the Archipelago, whose masters visited Melos to learn the state of the markets in the Levant, to know whether the sea was free from pirates and hostile fleets, and to take on board experienced pilots. Melos prospered greatly under his rule. Mark left a daughter, who was named Florence, as well as her cousin. She was married to a Greek named Francis Crispo, who became signor of Melos at the death of his father-in-law.

John II, of the family of dalle Carceri, became seventh duke of the Archipelago, in right of his wife Florence Sanudo, daughter of the last duke. He was the grandson of William dalle Carceri, grand-feudatory of Negrepoint, who assumed the title of King of Saloniki in consequence of his marriage with Helena of Montferrat. At his death he divided the island of Euboea by testament among his three children, Francis, Conrad, and a daughter (married to a relation, Boniface of Verona,) whose capitals were respectively Chalcis or Negrepoint, Oreos, and Kanyskos.

John II, duke of the Archipelago, was the son and heir of Francis, baron of Negrepoint. Not long after his accession to the ducal throne, his hereditary dominions were threatened by the ambition of Walter de Brienne, duke of Athens, and subsequently by the victorious Catalans, so that the whole attention of John was directed to the continent of Greece. He died about the year 1326, leaving an infant son, named Nicholas. His widow, the duchess Florence, soon married her second cousin, Nicholas Sanudo, called Spezzabanda.

Nicholas II mounted the ducal throne in virtue of the matrimonial coronet he received from his wife. No braver soldier ever lived; but his virtues were those of a popular captain, not of a wise prince. His character was described by the surname of Spezzabanda, or the Disperser, conferred upon him for his impetuous valour. The decline of the prosperity of the Archipelago commences from the manner in which he misemployed the resources of his dukedom, and drew on it the ravages of war. He was an honourable guardian to his stepson, and his first military expedition as duke was to defend the hereditary dominions of the infant Nicholas in Negrepoint, against the attacks of the Catalans of Athens. He carried on the war with them in Thessaly, at the head of an army of Albanian mercenaries, and, in conjunction with the Vallachians and Greeks of the country, succeeded in driving them out of all their conquests north of the valley of the Sperchius. He was recalled to his own dominions by the ravages of the Seljouks.

At this time the coast of Asia Minor was occupied by several Seljouk emirs, called often sultans, who maintained their armies almost entirely by plunder. Several of the Turkish princes possessed considerable fleets, by which they extended their piratical expeditions over all the coasts and islands of the Levant. These devastations were pursued both by land and sea with systematic rapacity, in a spirit of destruction that tended more to annihilate the accumulated wealth of civilisation, and to render the land in future incapable of nourishing an equal number of inhabitants, than ages of fiscal extortion could have effected. The Seljouk Turks destroyed not only fortifications and towers, but also all solid buildings, cisterns, aqueducts, roads, and bridges, and often filled up wells and burned plantations, to prevent pursuit or facilitate future invasions. It would have required a long period of security and commercial prosperity to restore the degradation of property in the small islands of the Archipelago, and such an epoch has never since visited Greece. The most celebrated of the Seljouk pirates was Amour, son of the sultan of Aidin, called by the Franks Morbassan, whose disinterested friendship for the imperial usurper Cantacuzenos has been much lauded by that hypocritical historian and worthless prince. The duke Spezzabanda, after he had secured the dominions of his stepson, engaged in an incessant warfare with the Seljouk emirs—sometimes acting as ally of the Venetians or the Genoese, and sometimes alone. The Turks had landed in the island of Naxos while Spezzabanda was absent in Negrepoint, and laid waste the open country with their usual merciless barbarity. The villages and olive-groves were destroyed with fire, to prevent the inhabitants from uniting their

forces; and a number of the inhabitants were carried off as slaves. The duke, who had heard of the sailing of the Turkish fleet, was fortunate enough to return to Naxos in time to find their ships still at anchor. With only twenty well-equipped galleys, he did not hesitate a moment to attack the enemy, whose numerous ships were encumbered with plunder and slaves; and, in spite of their superior force, he gained a complete victory, destroying or capturing twenty of the enemy's ships, and delivering two thousand of his own subjects from bondage. But the ruin this expedition had inflicted on Naxos was irreparable, and the duke subsequently declared that it had diminished the population of the island by at least fifteen thousand souls.

The ravages of the Seljouk Turks in the Latin possessions induced pope John XXII to proclaim a crusade and organise a confederation against them. The Pope, the Venetian republic, Philip VI of Valois king of France, Robert king of Naples, the king of Cyprus, the grand-master of Rhodes, and the duke of the Archipelago, formed a united fleet of thirty-seven galleys, which fell in with that of Morbassan near Mount Athos. The battle was long and bloody; but the Turks were at length defeated, and sixty of their vessels were destroyed, while forty more were captured by the allies. They are supposed to have lost about six thousand men in the action. The duke Spezzabanda commanded his own contingent in person, and distinguished himself greatly in the action. In sight of the two fleets, he captured the galley commanded by the Turkish vice-admiral. The Christians lost four galleys and about five hundred men; and this probably affords the means of forming a more correct idea of the engagement than the pompous enumeration of the numbers of the small Turkish vessels that were destroyed and captured. This battle was fought in the year 1330. Spezzabanda took also an active part in the war which the Genoese carried on with the emperor Andronicus III, in defence of Phokaea, in which the Greeks were aided by the emirs of Savoukhan and Aidin. The duke was at last slain in the unsuccessful attempt made by the Genoese admiral, Martin Zacharia, to raise the siege of Smyrna, when it was attacked by Morbassan in 1345. He left an only daughter, Maria, who was married to Gaspard Sommariva, signor of Paros.

Nicholas III dalle Carceri now succeeded to his mother's duchy. He formed an alliance with Manuel Cantacuzenos despot of Misithra, with the Franks of Achaia, and the Catalans of Athens, in order to defend their possessions against the Seljouk pirates. But the great naval warfare of the Venetians and Genoese, that commenced in 1348, soon engaged universal attention, and filled the Levant with its effects. The duke Nicholas III, with the other Frank princes in the East, joined the Venetians. The consequence was that the Genoese admiral, Pisani, took and plundered Negrepont, the capital of the hereditary principality of the Dalle Carceri, and pillaged Keos (Zea), one of the islands then annexed to the dukedom of the Archipelago. The duke could only hope for vengeance by serving with the Venetian fleet, which he joined, and with which he partook of all the varying fortune of the war. In the great battle off Sapienza in 1354, when Pagan Doria destroyed the Venetian fleet, the duke escaped capture by gaining the port of Modon, from which he fled to Skyros, where he fortified himself as in a safe retreat, for he feared the Genoese might pursue him to Naxos. While engaged in putting Skyros in a state of defence, that island was invaded by a squadron of Turkish pirates, who expected to turn the defeat of the Venetians to advantage by ravaging the Archipelago with impunity. Nicholas attacked them when they little expected to encounter any resistance. He captured six of their galliots, with a valuable supply of

money, arms, and provisions. When peace was concluded between Venice and Genoa, Nicholas III returned to Naxos, where he devoted his attention to restore the prosperity of the island, which had suffered much during the war. In the midst of his schemes, he was assassinated at a hunting-party by his relation Francis Crispo, the signor of Melos, who was on a visit to his court, and who had formed a conspiracy to render himself master of the duchy by means of the Greeks. This happened about the year 1381.

### SECT. III

#### DUKES OF THE FAMILY OF CRISPO

Francis Crispo was successful in seizing the duchy after the assassination of the duke Nicholas III. He appears to have been the grandson of that Crispo who married Florence Sanudo, the daughter of Mark signor of Melos; for as Mark was the son of duke William, who was born in the year 1243, and died in 1285, and the duke Francis Crispo died in 1414, it seems impossible to suppose that he was the son of Florence. The children of Maria Sanudo daughter of Nicholas III, Spezzabanda and the duchess Florence, were the lawful heirs to the dukedom; but Francis Crispo excluded them from the succession by means of his popularity with the Greeks, whose support he had secured by his lavish promises of sympathy and protection, and by publicly boasting of his Greek descent. He had already, as signor of Melos, formed a close alliance with the Venetian republic. There was therefore no enemy powerful enough to dispute his usurpation; but both he and his son James I passed the greater part of their lives in guarding their possessions against the hostile projects of their relations, whom they had deprived of their legitimate rights. They were also exposed to plots caused by the ambition of individuals of their own family, who, from that want of morality and honourable principle which marks the society of the Levant, whether Greek or Frank, during this age, were ever ready to intrigue against their nearest relatives. Francis I. died about the year 1414 —his son, James I, in the year 1438, without leaving any children.

John III, the second son of duke Francis I, purchased tranquillity in his own family by dividing the duchy with his younger brothers. Nicholas was appointed prince of Thera or Santorin; Mark, of Ios and Therasia; and William, of Anaphe. Mark found the island of Ios almost depopulated, from the uncultivated state in which it had been left for many years in consequence of the repeated ravages of piratical squadrons. In order to restore the land to cultivation, he transported a colony of Albanian families into the island from the Morea, and paid so much attention to their wellbeing, that in a short time Ios was again in a flourishing condition. Of John III, duke of Naxos, history has nothing to record. His son, James II, was officially recognised as a friend and ally of the republic of Venice by Mohammed II, in the treaty he concluded with the republic after the taking of Constantinople. The Venetian government, however, began now to regard the dukes of Naxos, on account of their diminished wealth and power, rather in the light of subjects than of allies. James II died in 1454, and his uncle, William, prince of Anaphe, assumed the regency of Naxos.

John James was the name of the posthumous child of James II. This infant died, after holding the ducal title for little more than a year. William II, who was acting as

regent, proclaimed himself duke, to the exclusion of his nephew, Francis, prince of Santorin, who was the lawful heir; but, on the death of William II, Francis II recovered his rights, and mounted the throne of Naxos. Both these dukes were compelled, by the power of the ottoman sultan, to act as subjects of Venice, and attach themselves closely to the fortunes of the republic both in war and peace—suffering on one side from their exposure to the attacks of the Turks, and on the other from their subjection to the commercial monopolies of Venice. James III, the son and successor of Francis II, was included in the peace between the Venetians and Mohammed II in 1478; but the expenses into which he had been plunged, by the naval armaments that Venice called upon him to maintain during the war, had ruined his finances. In order to raise money to pay his debts, he was compelled to pledge the island of Santorin to his cousin, the prince of Ios. His weakness, as well as the policy of the Venetian republic, made him an inactive though anxious spectator of the siege of Rhodes by Mohammed II, when it was successfully defended by the knights under the grandmaster D'Aubusson.

James III was succeeded by his brother, John IV, who levied such heavy taxes on the inhabitants of Naxos, in order to redeem the island of Santorin, that the Greeks broke out in rebellion, drove the Latins from the open country, and besieged the duke in the citadel. Duke John IV was in imminent danger of being forced to surrender at discretion to his infuriated subjects, when he was saved from ruin by the accidental arrival of the general of the galleys of Rhodes in the port of Naxos with a small squadron of ships. This force enabled the general to offer an effectual mediation. The Greeks, fearing that the knights might unite their forces with the duke, were persuaded to submit to the greater part of the duke's pecuniary demands; and he, on his part, promised to bury in oblivion all memory of the insurrection. The people, as is usually the case, observed their word better than their prince: they fulfilled their engagements—he violated his. Francis III, his son, served the Venetians in person during the war with the Turks that commenced in 1492. When peace was concluded in 1504, he retired to Naxos, in order to restore his affairs by economy.

John V, son and successor of Francis III, was again compelled to remain neuter, by the political interests of his Venetian protectors, when Rhodes was besieged and taken by sultan Suleiman II. The republic, however, was shortly after involved in hostilities with the Ottoman empire; and the duke of Naxos having been detected sending information to the Venetians concerning the movements of the Turks, the celebrated admiral, Barbarossa, availed himself of the circumstance to put an end to the independence of the duchy, or perhaps we might say, more correctly, to transfer the suzerainty from the Venetian republic to the Ottoman empire. Barbarossa appeared before Naxos with a fleet of seventy galleys, from which he landed a body of troops, and took possession of the town and citadel without meeting with the slightest resistance. The duke, seeing the immense force of the Turks, hastened on board the admiral's ship the moment it anchored, and declared his readiness to submit to any terms Barbarossa, as captain pasha, might think fit to impose. From the deck of the Turkish ship, where he was obliged to remain three days, Duke John V saw his capital plundered by the Turkish troops, and all his own wealth, and even the furniture of his palace, transported into the cabin of Barbarossa. He was at length allowed to return on shore and resume his rank of duke, after signing a treaty acknowledging himself a vassal of the Sublime Porte, and engaging to pay an annual tribute of six thousand sequins. This happened in the year 1537.

From this period the Latin power in the island of Naxos was virtually extinguished. The Greek inhabitants, who preferred the domination of the Turks to that of the Catholics, no longer respected the orders of their duke. The heads of the communities, who were charged with the collection of the taxes levied to pay the tribute, placed themselves in direct communication with the Turkish ministers, and served as spies on the conduct of their sovereign, under the pretext of attending to fiscal business. Both the Greek primates and the Turkish ministers contrived to render this connection a source of pecuniary profit. The primates obtained pretexts for extorting money from their countrymen at Naxos, and the ministers at Constantinople shared the fruits of their extortions. The Greek clergy, too, by their dependence on the Patriarch, who served the Porte as a kind of under-secretary of state for the affairs of the orthodox, were active agents in preparing the Greek people for the Turkish domination.

John VI, after writing a letter addressed to Pope Paul III and the princes of Christendom, in which he announced the degradation into which he had fallen, died in peace unmolested by the Turks, against whom his lamentations had vainly incited the Christians. He was succeeded by his son, James IV, in the year 1546. The impoverished treasury and enfeebled authority of the ducal government required the greatest prudence on the part of the new sovereign to preserve his position. James IV seemed to consider that he was destined to be the last duke of Naxos; and, to console himself for his political weakness, he resolved to enjoy all the pleasures within his reach. Circumstances favoured his schemes, and he was allowed for twenty years to live a life of the most shameless licentiousness. His court was a scene of debauchery and vice : the Latin nobles, who were his principal associates, were poor, proud, and dissolute : the catholic clergy, in whose hands the chief feudal estates in the island had accumulated, were rich, luxurious, and debauched, and lived openly with their avowed concubines. The Greeks laboured for a long time in vain to put an end to the scandal of such a court and government, which was both oppressive and disgraceful; but the Turks remained indifferent, as the annual tribute was regularly remitted to the Porte, At last the whole Greek inhabitants of Naxos united to send deputies to the sultan, to complain of some extraordinary exactions of the duke, to demand the extinction of his authority, and to petition the sultan to name a new governor. The Patriarch and the Greek clergy had aided the intrigues of the primates, and the Porte was prepared to give the petition a favourable reception. The duke was made sensible of his danger. Collecting a sum of twelve thousand crowns, he hastened to Constantinople to countermine the intrigues of his enemies; but he arrived too late—his destiny was already decided. He was thrown into prison, and his property was confiscated; but, after a detention of six months, he was released and allowed to depart to Venice. Such was the final fate of the duchy of the Archipelago, the last of the great fiefs of the Latin empire of Romania, which was extinguished in the year 1566, after it had been governed by catholic princes for about three hundred and sixty years. The last duke, James IV, was the twenty-first of the series. After the loss of his dominions he resided at Venice with his children, living on a pension which the republic continued to his descendants until the male line became extinct.

The Greeks gained little by their complaints, for the sultan, Selim II, conferred the government of Naxos on a Jew named John Michez, who never visited the island in person, using it merely as a place from which to extract as much money as possible. The

island was governed by Francis Coronello, a Spaniard, who acted as his deputy, and who was charged to collect the tribute and overlook the public administration.

The fortunes of the Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem, and other Frank, Venetian, and Genoese princes, signors, and adventurers, who at various times ruled different islands in the Grecian seas as independent sovereigns, though their history offers much that is curious, really exercised so little peculiar influence on the general progress of society among the Greeks, that they do not fall within the scope of the present work.

#### SECT. IV

#### CAUSES WHICH PROLONGED THE EXISTENCE OF THE FRANK POWER IN THE ARCHIPELAGO

The long duration of the Latin power in the Archipelago is a fact worthy of observation. When the Greeks found the means of expelling the Franks and Venetians from Constantinople and the greater part of the Morea, and even to attack the Venetians in Crete, it seems strange that they should have failed to recover possession of the Greek islands of the Archipelago; or if they failed to achieve the conquest, it seems even more surprising that the duchy should not have fallen into the hands of the Venetians. The peculiar circumstances which enabled a long line of foreign princes to maintain themselves in a state of independence as sovereigns of the Archipelago require some explanation. The popes, who were powerful temporal princes on account of their great wealth, were the natural protectors of all the Latins in the East against the power of the Greek emperors—and they protected the dukes of the Archipelago; but it was unquestionably the alliance of the republic of Venice, and the power of the Venetian fleets, rather than the zealous activity of the Holy See, that saved the duchy from being reconquered by Michael VIII, though the papal protection may have acted as a defence against the Genoese.

In forming our idea of the true basis of the Latin power in the Byzantine empire, we must never lose sight of the fact that the Venetians, who suggested the conquest, were drawn in to support the undertaking by their eagerness to obtain a monopoly of the Eastern trade; and the conquests of the republic were subordinate to the scheme of excluding every rival from the markets of the East. Monopoly was the end which all commercial policy sought to attain in the thirteenth century. After the loss of Constantinople, and the close alliance of the Genoese with the Greek empire, which enabled those rival republicans to aim at a monopoly of the trade of the Black Sea, the islands of the Archipelago acquired an increased importance both in a military and commercial point of view. Venice at this period found it an object of great consequence to exclude her rivals from the ports of the duchy; and, to obtain this end, she granted such effectual protection to the dukes, and formed such treaties of alliance with them, as persuaded them to include their dominions within the system of commercial privileges and monopolies which was applied to all the foreign settlements of Venice, and to hold no commercial communications with the western nations of Europe except through the port of Venice. The distinguished military character of several of the dukes of the



family of Sanudo contributed to give the duchy more importance in the eyes of the Venetian government than it might otherwise have held.

When Mark Sanudo established the duchy, the islands he conquered were in a happy and prosperous condition. The ravages of the Saracen pirates had long ceased: the merchants of Italy had not yet begun to act the pirate on a large scale. The portion of the landed property in their conquests which the dukes were enabled to seize as their own domains was immense, and the fiefs they granted to their followers were reunited to the ducal domain more rapidly than in the continental possessions of the other Latin princes; though we have seen that, both in Achaia and Athens, the mass of the landed property had a tendency to accumulate in the hands of a few individuals, from the constitution of feudal society among the Franks settled in Greece. The duke of the Archipelago, whose power was at first controlled by his Latin feudatories, and by the existence of a considerable body of Greek proprietors and merchants, as well as by a native clergy possessing some education, wealth, and influence, became an absolute prince before the end of the thirteenth century, in consequence of the decline of all classes of the native population, who were impoverished by the monopolies introduced in order to purchase the alliance of Venice, and the fiscal exactions imposed to fill the ducal treasury.

It is not easy to fix the precise extent of the privileges and monopolies accorded to the commerce of Venice in the duchy; but foreign ships always paid double duties on the articles they imported or exported, and many articles could only be exported and imported in Venetian ships direct to Venice. This clause was in virtue of the Venetians claimed to the exclusive navigation of the Adriatic; so that the Greeks in the islands were compelled to sell to the Venetians alone the portion of their produce that was destined for the consumption of England and the continental ports on the ocean, from Cadiz to Hamburg, and which could only be carried beyond the Straits of Gibraltar by the fleet periodically despatched from Venice, under the title of the Fleet of Flanders. The commercial system of Venice caused a stagnation of industry in Greece : the native traders were ruined, and either emigrated or dwindled into retail shopkeepers : all great commercial transactions passed into the hands of the Venetians, who left to the duke's subjects only the trifling coasting trade necessary to collect large cargoes at the ports visited by Venetian ships. The landed proprietors soon sank into idle gentlemen or rustic agriculturists; capital ceased to be accumulated on the land, for its accumulation promised no profit; the intercommunication between the different islands gradually diminished; time became of little value; population declined; and, in this debilitated condition of society, the dukes found a consolation in the thought that this state of things rendered any attempt at insurrection on the part of the orthodox Greeks hopeless. The wealth of the dukes, and even of the signors of the smaller islands, enabled them to maintain a small body of mercenaries sufficient to secure their castles from any sudden attack, while the fleets of Venice were never far distant, from which they were sure to receive effectual support. At the same time a Latin population, consisting partly of descendants of the conquering army, and partly of Greeks who had joined the Latin Church, lived mingled with the native population, and served as spies on its conduct. The Greeks, however, who lived in communion with the papal church, like the family of Crispo, were always regarded by the mass of the inhabitants as strangers, just as much as if they had been of Frank or Venetian extraction. Orthodoxy was the only test of nationality among the Byzantine Greeks.

The power of the Dukes was thus rendered so firm, that they oppressed the Greeks without any fear of revolution; and the consequence was, that their financial exactions exceeded the limits which admit of wealth being reproduced with greater rapidity than it is devoured by taxation. A stationary state of things was first produced; then capital itself was consumed, and the ducal territories became incapable of sustaining as large a population as formerly. History presents innumerable examples of society in a similar state, produced by the same causes. Indeed, it is the great feature of Eastern history, from the fall of the Assyrian empire to the decay of the Ottoman power. Empires and central governments are incessantly devouring what provinces and local administrations are labouring to produce. Towards the middle of the fifteenth century, the depopulation of some of the islands of the Archipelago had proceeded so far that it was necessary to colonise them with Albanian families, in order to restore the land to cultivation. It has been mentioned that Mark, brother of Duke John III, repopled Ios with Albanian families. About the same time Andros, Keos, and Kythnos (Thermia), received a considerable influx of Albanian cultivators of the soil. Nearly one-half of the island of Andros is still peopled by Albanians; but many of these are the descendants of subsequent colonists.

The Latin nobility in the Greek islands generally passed their lives in military service or in aristocratic idleness. Their education was usually begun at Venice, and completed on board the Venetian galleys. When the wealth of the islands declined, only one son in a family was allowed to marry, in order to preserve the wealth and dignity of the house. The sons sought a career in the Venetian service or in the church, the daughters retired into a monastery. The consequence of these social arrangements was a degree of demoralisation and vice that rendered Latin society the object of just detestation among the Greek population. The moral corruption of a dominant class soon works the political ruin of the institutions it upholds; and the Latins in Greece were almost exterminated by their own social laws, imposed for the purpose of maintaining their respectability, before they were conquered by the Turks.

## EMPIRE OF TREBIZOND

## CHAPTER I

## FOUNDATION OF THE EMPIRE.

## SECT. I

## EARLY HISTORY OF TREBIZOND

The empire of Trebizond was the creation of accident. No necessity in the condition, either of the people or the government, called it into existence. The popular resources had undergone no development that demanded change; no increase had taken place in the wealth or knowledge of the inhabitants; nor did any sudden augmentation of national power impel them to assume a dominant position, and claim for their residence the rank of an imperial city. They might have been governed by the Greek emperors of Nice with as much advantage to themselves as they had been previously by the Byzantine emperors, or as they were subsequently by the emperors of Trebizond. The destruction of a distant central government, when Constantinople was conquered by the Frank crusaders, left their provincial administration without the pivot on which it had revolved. The conjuncture was seized by a young man, of whom nothing was known but that he bore a great name, and was descended from the worst tyrant in the Byzantine annals. This youth grasped the vacant sovereignty, and merely by assuming the imperial title, and placing himself at the head of the local administration, founded a new empire. Power changed its name and its dwelling, but the history of the people was hardly modified. The grandeur of the empire of Trebizond exists only in romance. Its government owed its permanence to its being nothing more than a continuation of a long-established order of civil polity, and to its making no attempt to effect any social revolution.

The city of Trebizond wants only a secure port to be one of the richest jewels of the globe. It is admirably situated to form the capital of an independent state. The southern shores of the Black Sea offer every advantage for maintaining a numerous population, and the physical configuration of the country supplies its inhabitants with excellent natural barriers to defend them on every side. There are few spots on the earth richer in picturesque beauty, or abounding in more luxuriant vegetation, than the southeastern shores of the inhospitable Euxine. The magnificent country that extends from the mouth of the Halys to the snowy range of Caucasus is formed of a singular union of rich plains, verdant hills, bold rocks, wooded mountains, primeval forests, and rapid

streams. In this fertile and majestic region, Trebizond has been, now for more than six centuries, the noblest and the fairest city.

At an early period its trapezoid citadel was occupied by a Greek colony, and received its name from the tabular appearance of the rock on which the first settlers dwelt. In these early days, the Hellenic race occupied a position among the nations of the earth not dissimilar to that now held by the Anglo-Saxon population. Greek society had embraced a social organisation that enabled the people to nourish a rapidly-augmenting population in territories where mankind had previously barely succeeded in gleaned a scanty supply of necessaries for a few families, who neither increased in number, nor deviated from the footsteps traced by their fathers in agriculture or commerce. Many cities on the shores of the Black Sea, which received Greek colonists, perhaps seven centuries before the Christian era, have ever since retained a body of Greek inhabitants. The conquests of peace are more durable than those of war. The Chronicle of Eusebius places the foundation of Trebizond in 756 B.C. Sinope was an earlier settlement; for Xenophon informs us that both Trebizond and Kerasant were colonies of Sinope. But it is in vain to suppose that we can see any forms distinctly in the twilight of such antiquity.

Trebizond rose to a high degree of commercial importance in the time of the Roman Empire. The advantages of its position, as a point of communication between Persia and the European provinces of Rome, rendered it the seat of an active and industrious population. The municipal institutions of Grecian colonies, less dependent on the central administration than those of Roman origin, insured an excellent local government to all the wealthy Greek cities which were allowed to retain their own communal organisation; and we know from Pliny that Trebizond was a free city. The emperor Hadrian, at the representation of Arrian, constructed a well-sheltered port, to protect the shipping from winter storms, to which vessels had been previously exposed in the unprotected anchorage. From that time the city became one of the principal marts for the produce of the East. Three great Roman roads then connected the city with the rest of Asia—one from the westward, along the shores of the Euxine; another eastward, to the banks of the Phasis; and a third southward, over the great mountain barrier to the banks of the Euphrates, where, separating into two branches, one communicated with the valley of the Araxes, and proceeded to Persia, while the other conducted to Syria.

The country from Trebizond eastward to the summits of Caucasus was anciently called Colchis; but in the time of Justinian the district as far as the banks of the Phasis had received the name of Lazia, from one of the many small nations which have composed the indigenous population of this singular region from the earliest period. The Chalybes, the Chaldaians, the Albanians, the Iberians, the Thianni, Sanni, or Tzans, the Khazirs, and the Huns, appear as separate nations round the Caucasian mountains in former days, just as the Georgians and Mingrelians, the Circassians, the Abazecs, the Ossitinians, the Tchenchez, the Lesguians, and the Tzans—who each speak a distinct language—cluster round the counterforts of this great range at the present hour.

The history of Trebizond from the time of Justinian to the accession of Leo III (the Isaurian) is almost without interest. The iconoclast hero infused new life into the attenuated body of the Eastern Empire, and his stern spirit awakened new springs of moral and religious feeling in the breasts of the Christians in Asia. The palsy that threatened Christian society with annihilation, under the reigns of the successors of

Justinian, was healed. The empire was restored to some portion of its ancient power and glory, and remodelled by reforms so extensive, that Leo may justly be termed the reformer of the Roman, or, more properly, the founder of the Byzantine Empire. In this reformed empire Trebizond acquired an additional degree of importance. It became the capital of the frontier province called the theme of Chaldia, and the centre from which the military, political, commercial, and diplomatic relations of the Byzantine Empire were conducted with the Christian princes of Armenia and Iberia. The direction of the complicated business that resulted from the incessant warfare between the Christians and Saracens, on the frontiers of Armenia, was necessarily intrusted to the dukes of Chaldia, who made Trebizond their habitual residence. The freedom of action accorded to these viceroys afforded them frequent opportunities of forming personal alliances with the neighbouring princes and people, and when the central government at Constantinople displayed any weakness, the power of the dukes of Chaldia often suggested to these officers the desire of assuming the rank of independent princes. The position of the city of Trebizond, the nature of its mixed population, the condition of its society, divided into many separate classes, and the individual ambition of the leading men in the neighbouring provinces, all tended in the same direction. The decline of the population in the surrounding country, caused by the ravages of the Saracen wars, the diminution in the relative numbers of the Greek race throughout Asia Minor, and the dilapidated condition of the means of intercommunication, had paralysed the authority of the central government at Constantinople, and destroyed the internal trade which had supported the middle classes, except along a few principal caravan roads leading to the capital, or to the large commercial cities that served as depots for the exportation of produce.

The political and commercial position of Trebizond continued to insure to its inhabitants a considerable share of local liberty, and an unusual freedom from financial oppression. The Byzantine authorities feared to tyrannise over a population composed of various nations, many of whom could escape by emigration, and all of whom possessed close ties and pecuniary interests with powerful foreigners in the vicinity. The principal source of the imperial revenue was, moreover, derived from a transit trade, having its fountains and its recipients placed far beyond the control of the emperors of Constantinople. The prospect of annihilating the actual revenue by any attempt at unreasonable severity arrested the fiscal rapacity of the Byzantine government. Under the vigorous and prudent administration of the iconoclast emperors, and the legislative wisdom of the Basilian dynasty, the Byzantine Empire held a dominant position in the commercial world; and Trebizond, secure from anarchy, blessed with municipal liberty, and protected against external danger, flourished in repose. Its communications with the rest of the empire were in great part carried on by sea; but as the Roman roads were not then utterly ruined, its caravans proceeded also to foreign countries by land. The duties levied on this trade formed an immense revenue. Still, though the wealth of Trebizond preserved the people in the enjoyment of some advantages, little care was bestowed by the central administration on their local interests. Many of the public works constructed in Roman times, while Trebizond was a free city, were allowed to fall into decay; while their ruins, which were constantly before the eyes of the inhabitants, tended to keep alive some aspirations after political independence. The people in the Byzantine Empire were insensible to the advantages of popular institutions; indeed, these institutions were regarded by the majority of all classes with aversion, as containing the seeds of anarchy. On the other hand, there existed a strong prejudice in favour of despotic power, as the

only method of insuring legal order and the impartial administration of justice. Still, a considerable part of the population in the provinces desired the establishment of a state of things that would lead to the expenditure of a portion of the heavy taxes they paid on local improvements, and on indispensable repairs of old and useful public works. It was not unnatural, therefore, for the people of Trebizond to recur to the memory of the days when the Romans allowed the municipality to expend part of the money levied on the inhabitants in the city itself, and to contrast it with the Byzantine government, which had converted the ancient municipalities into police and fiscal offices, and had made it a state maxim to collect the whole taxes of the empire at Constantinople, where report said that immense treasures were expended in the pompous ceremonies of an idle court, or in pampering the mob of the capital with extravagant shows in the hippodrome.

The dukes of Chaldia frequently availed themselves of these aspirations after local improvements, and this incipient spirit of reform, to awaken the people to a desire of independence. The Byzantine viceroys were placed by their position so near the rank of tributary sovereigns that they were frequently impelled, by the unprincipled ambition which then formed a feature in the character of every man of talent, to aim at ascending the imperial throne. It was always easy for them to obtain the support of some warlike prince in the mountains of Armenia or Iberia; the people were gained without difficulty by promising them a reduction of taxation; while an army was quickly assembled among the mountain population, which furnished mercenaries to most of the princes of western Asia, or from the populace of the city, where many bad passions were always ready to burst into open insurrection, on account of some fiscal oppression or social inequality.

About the period of the extinction of the Basilian dynasty, the Byzantine administration fell into disorder: the imperial government ceased to be regarded by its subjects as the only human type of power that could guarantee religious orthodoxy, political order, and security of private property. The spell was then broken that for centuries had bound together the various provinces and nations of the Eastern Empire into one state. The growing incapacity of the Byzantine government to execute the duties imposed on it as the heirs of the Romans, added to the great changes that time had effected in the very elements of society, destroyed all public ties. Politics and society were both in a state of revolution at the conclusion of the eleventh century, and an impatience of control manifested itself in every grade of social life. Public opinion had done more to uphold the fabric of the Byzantine empire than the sword: civil virtues, as well as military, had driven back the Saracens beyond Mount Taurus, and rescued southern Italy from Charlemagne and his successors; the laws of Rome, rather than the fleets of Greece, had upheld the emperor of Constantinople as the autocrat of the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. As long as the Byzantine emperor was looked up to, from the most distant provinces of his dominions, as the only fountain of justice on earth, so long did a conviction of the necessity of maintaining the supremacy of the central administration find an advocate in every breast; and this conviction, as much as devotion to the divine right of the orthodox emperor, saved the empire both from the Saracens, the Bulgarians, and the Sclavonians, and from rebellion and dismemberment.

But from the period when the Asiatic aristocracy mastered the Byzantine administration, and placed Isaac I (Comnenos) on the imperial throne, in the year 1057, a change took place in the conduct of public affairs. Provinces were bartered as rewards for political and military support, and the law began to lose a portion of its previous

omnipotence. The people, as well as the provincial governors, showed themselves ready to seize every opportunity of escaping from the fiscal avidity of the central government, even at the risk of dissolving the ties that had hitherto bound them to the orthodox emperor. The imperial power was felt to be daily more arbitrary and oppressive, as the administration grew less systematic.

The arrival of the Seljouk Turks in the west of Asia, about the same period, changed the condition of the inhabitants of all the countries between the Indus and the Halys. These warriors swept from the face of the earth many of the accessories of civilisation, and of the vested accumulations of labour and capital, which afforded the means of life to millions of men. Wherever these Turkish nomads passed, cities were destroyed, watercourses were ruined, canals and wells were filled up, and trees cut down; so that provinces which, a few years before their arrival, nourished thousands of wealthy inhabitants, became unable to support more than a few families. A horde of nomads could barely find subsistence by wandering over territories that had previously maintained several populous cities. Provinces where mankind had once been reckoned by millions, saw their inhabitants counted by thousands. The defeat of Romanos IV (Diogenes) at the battle of Manzikert, in 1071, led to the expulsion of the Greeks from the greater part of Asia Minor, and carried the conquests of the Seljouk Turks up to the walls of Trebizond. The province of Chaldia was wasted by their incursions, but the city was saved from their attacks. It owed its safety, however, more to the strength of its position, defended by a great mountain barrier to the south, and to the spirit of its inhabitants, than to its Byzantine garrison, or to the protection of the emperors of Constantinople.

The Turks were ultimately expelled from the Trebizontine territory by the skill and prudence of Theodore Gabras, a nobleman of the province, who ruled Chaldia almost as an independent prince during part of the reign of the Byzantine emperor Alexius I. The personal differences of Theodore Gabras with Alexius I, in the year 1091, are recorded by Anna Comnena, but they afford us little insight into the real nature of the position of Gabras at Trebizond, except in so far as they prove that the emperor feared his power, and was unwilling to risk hostilities with an able vassal who could count on popular support. In the year 1104, the office of duke of Trebizond was filled by Gregorias Taronites, who was allied to the imperial family. Taronites went a step beyond Gabras, and, not satisfied with being virtually independent, he acted as a sovereign prince, and set the orders of the emperor at defiance. Alexius sent an expedition against him, by which he was defeated and taken prisoner; but though he was kept imprisoned for some time at Constantinople, he was subsequently, for reasons of which we are not informed, released and reinstated in the government of Trebizond. He ruled the province until the year 1119. In that year he formed an alliance with the emir of Kamakh, to attack the Seljouk prince of Melitene. The confederates were defeated, and Taronites fell into the hands of the Turks, who compelled him to purchase his freedom by paying a ransom of thirty thousand gold byzants—a sum then regarded in the East as the usual ransom of officers of the highest rank in the Byzantine Empire.

It would appear that Constantine Gabras succeeded in obtaining the government of Trebizond after the misfortune of Taronites. Nicetas mentions him, in the year 1139, as having long governed the province as an independent prince. In that year the emperor John II (Comnenus) led an expedition into Paphlagonia, with the expectation of being able to advance as far eastward as Trebizond, where he hoped to re-establish the



imperial authority, and recover possession of the whole southern shore of the Black Sea. But the emperor found Paphlagonia in such a depopulated condition that his progress was interrupted by the difficulty of procuring supplies, and it was late in the year before he reached Neo-Caesarea. That city was in the hands of the Seljouk Turks, who defended it with such valour that John was compelled to abandon the siege, and retreat to Constantinople after a fruitless campaign. During the reign of his son, Manuel I, however, we find the imperial authority completely re-established in Trebizond; and the city continued to remain in immediate subjection to the central administration at Constantinople, until the overthrow of the Byzantine Empire by the Crusaders, in 1204.

History has preserved no documents for estimating the proportions in which the different races of Lazes and Greeks inhabited the city of Trebizond and the surrounding country, nor can we arrive at any precise idea of the relative influence which each exercised on the various political changes that occurred under the Byzantine government. Even the extent of the commercial relations of the citizens, and the political tendency of these relations on the conduct of the neighbouring nations, is in a great measure a matter of conjecture. We know, indeed, that there was always a numerous Greek population dwelling in all the maritime cities of Colchis and Pontus, though whether these colonists had perpetuated their existence by descent, or recruited their numbers by constant immigrations from those lands where the Greek race formed the native population of the soil, is by no means certain. This Greek population permanently established at Trebizond lived in a state of opposition to the power and pretensions of the Byzantine aristocracy, which grew up in the province from among the officials, who accumulated wealth under the shadow of the central administration. Both these sections of Greeks were regarded with jealousy by the indigenous population of Lazes or Tzans, who inhabited the mountain districts that overhang the coast. We are wholly ignorant by what system of policy, and through what peculiar connection of interests, the trading classes secured protection for their wealth and obtained the amity of all parties.

## SECT. II

### ORIGIN OF THE FAMILY OF GRAND KOMNENOS OR COMNENUS

The name of Komnenos, or Comnenus, was originally borrowed from Italy. But Roman names were too generally diffused in the provinces among the clients, the freedmen, and the followers of distinguished Romans, for us to draw any inference concerning the descent of an Asiatic family, merely because it bore a name once known in Italy. All Gaul was filled with families of the name of Julius, few of whom had the slightest claim to any relationship with the Julian house of Rome. The family of Komnenos, which gave a dynasty of able sovereigns to the Byzantine Empire, and a long line of emperors to Trebizond, first made its appearance in Eastern history about the year 976, when Manuel Komnenos held the office of praefect in Asia. Manuel, at his death, left his children under the guardianship of the emperor Basil II. Of these children the eldest was Isaac I, who seated himself on the imperial throne after the extinction of the Basilian dynasty, by heading a successful rebellion of the Asiatic aristocracy in the

year 1057. After occupying the throne for little more than two years, he voluntarily retired into a monastery, without attempting to secure the empire as a heritage to his family. The domains of the house of Komnenos, their hereditary castle and the seat of their territorial power, was at Kastamona, in Paphlagonia, before that province was depopulated by the ravages of the Seljouk Turks. The emperor Alexius I was the third son of John Komnenos, the brother of Isaac I. Like his uncle, he mounted the imperial throne by heading a successful rebellion. Andronicus I. dethroned and murdered Alexius II, then about sixteen years of age, who was the lawful emperor, and the great-grandson of Alexius I, of whom Andronicus was the grandson.

In the year 1185, the savage cruelty of Andronicus produced a terrible revolution at Constantinople. Its immediate consequences effected little change at Trebizond, but it ultimately laid the foundations of a new empire in that city. Andronicus was dethroned and murdered by a popular insurrection. The anarchy and confusion with which the revolt was conducted, levelled the barriers that had for some time with difficulty opposed the complete demoralisation of the central administration. A city mob overthrew the imperial government, executed the emperor as a criminal, and remained masters of Constantinople for several days. The people plundered the treasury, and celebrated their orgies in the palace. These acts dissolved the spell that had invested the power of the emperor with a halo of divine authority. All legislative, judicial, civil, and military power, remained annulled by the will of the rabble. The new sovereign, Isaac II (Angelos,) was a man destitute of capacity and courage, and he only gradually recovered the semblance of the power held by his predecessors. But a mortal wound had been inflicted on the imperial government, and from the hour that the aged tyrant Andronicus, with his long-forked beard, was led through the streets of Constantinople on a mangy camel, to perish amidst inhuman tortures, a hideous spectacle to the mob in the hippodrome, the public administration became daily more anarchical. The worthless princes of the house of Angelos were high priests well suited to conduct the sacrifice of an empire exhausted by the energetic tyranny of the bold house of Komnenos.

The people had certainly good reason to hate the name of Komnenos, for the princes of that able and haughty race had been severe rulers, treating their subjects as the instruments of their personal aggrandisement, wasting the wealth of the state, and pouring out the blood of the people with a lavish hand, to gratify every whim of power. Yet the grandeur of their name was a spell on the minds of the populace, throughout every province where the Greek language was spoken; and when the empire broke up into fragments, the sovereigns of its several pieces used the mighty name as a passport to power.

Manuel Komnenos, the eldest son of the tyrant Andronicus, had acquired some popularity by opposing the cruelties of his father, and by declaring that his respect for the authority of the Greek church compelled him to refuse marrying Agnes of France, the betrothed of his murdered relation Alexius II,—the affinity established by the ceremony of betrothal, according to the ecclesiastical rules of the Greeks, creating a bar to marriage where the parties stand as Alexius II and Manuel did, in the relationship of second cousins. The prudent conduct of Manuel, and his reverence for established laws, excited distrust in the breast of his passionate father, who deprived him of his birth-right, and raised his younger brother John to the imperial dignity, investing him with the rank of colleague and successor. Yet the virtues of Manuel proved no protection, when the popular fury was roused against his father. The very name of Komnenos was for a

while hateful, and everyone who bore it was proscribed. The good qualities of Manuel were forgotten, and it was only remembered that he was the son of a cruel tyrant. The new emperor, Isaac II, weak, envious, and cruel, was induced, by the memory of the popularity which these good qualities had once inspired, to guard against a reaction in Manuel's favour. To prevent the possibility of his ever being called to the throne, Isaac ordered his eyes to be put out; and the sentence was executed with such barbarity that Manuel died from the effects of the operation. He left two children, Alexios and David.

Alexios was only four years old at the time of his father's murder. The friends of his family placed him and his infant brother in security during the fury of the revolution, keeping them concealed from the jealousy of Isaac II and the vengeance of the enemies of their house. When all danger was passed, the two children were allowed to reside unmolested at Constantinople, where they received their education, neglected and forgotten by the imperial court. Their title to the throne could give little disquietude to the reigning sovereign in a government which, like that of the Byzantine Empire, was recognised to be elective, and in which their father had been excluded from the throne by the exercise of an acknowledged constitutional prerogative. In virtue of the same power of selecting a successor, to be publicly ratified by what was termed the Senate and the Roman people, the emperor John II, the best prince of the name of Komnenos, had excluded his eldest son, Isaac, from the succession, and left the empire to Manuel, his youngest. Alexios and David lived in obscurity until the Crusaders besieged Constantinople. Before the city was taken, the two young men escaped to the coast of Colchis, where their paternal aunt, Tamar, possessed wealth and influence. Assisted by her power, and by the memory of their tyrannical grandfather, who had been popular in the east of Asia Minor, they were enabled to collect an army of Iberian mercenaries. At the head of this force Alexios entered Trebizond in the month of April 1204, about the time Constantinople fell into the hands of the Crusaders. He had been proclaimed emperor by his army on crossing the frontier. To mark that he was the legitimate representative of the imperial family of Komnenos, and to prevent his being confounded with the numerous descendants of females, or with the family of the emperor Alexius III (Angelos,) who had arrogated to themselves his name, he assumed the designation of Grand-Komnenos. Wherever he appeared, he was acknowledged as the lawful sovereign of the Roman Empire. The Greeks of Trebizond were in a state of alarm at the frightful revolution which had overwhelmed the political and commercial position of their race, by the proceedings of the Crusaders and the Venetians. The duke who then governed the province of Trebizond possessed neither the talents nor the power necessary to convert his government into an independent principality; nor had he the energy or the influence required to oppose the progress of the young Alexios, who had a considerable share of the active vigour and decision of character for which so many of his ancestors had been remarkable. The inhabitants of the city were sensible of the danger they would incur should the Franks or the Georgians attack them while isolated from the other provinces of the empire, and their fear of foreign conquest and domestic anarchy operated in favour of the claims of an emperor who could boast a name renowned in the East. Trebizond was sure of enjoying the advantage of being the seat of government for some time. It might become the capital of an empire. At all events, if victory attended the arms of the young Grand-Komnenos, and if he succeeded in expelling the Franks from Constantinople, and restoring the Byzantine Empire to the wealth and power it had formerly possessed under the emperors of his family, there could he no doubt that his early partisans would reap a rich harvest of reward.

SECT. III  
REIGN OF ALEXIOS I, GRAND-KOMNENOS

Alexios Grand-Komnenos was twenty-two years of age when he was crowned emperor in Trebizond. The title to which he laid claim was, The Faithful Emperor of the Romans. Such had been the title of the emperors of Constantinople until the dismemberment of the Eastern empire by the Crusaders; and Alexios, regarding the family of Angelos as dethroned usurpers, naturally laid claim to the position from which they had fallen, and which had been long occupied by his ancestors. The title of the emperors of Trebizond subsequently underwent some modification, particularly when it became necessary to conciliate the house of Paleologos, after Michael VIII had reconquered Constantinople; and the title of Emperor of the Romans was then exchanged for that of Emperor of all the East, Iberia, and the Transmarine dominions.

The conquests of Alexios at the commencement of his career were rapid and brilliant. The helplessness and incapacity of the Byzantine provincial authorities, however, favoured the progress of his arms quite as much as his own talents, for whenever he met with a determined resistance his advance was arrested. The governors of most of the cities before whose walls he appeared, knowing that they could entertain no hope of support from the central government, unable to place any reliance on their own administrative powers, and without any chance of receiving assistance from the native population, submitted to the new emperor as their lawful sovereign. The Byzantine troops flocked to his standard with enthusiasm, for under his command a new career of activity was suddenly opened to the ambitious, while long dormant hopes of plunder, glory, and power were awakened in many breasts. There was another cause affecting the minds of all the Greek Christians in the East, which made the mass of the population embrace his cause with ardour. The fear of the Mussulman yoke was becoming daily more alarming. The family of Angelos had neglected the defence of the eastern Asiatic provinces, while the Seljouk Turks had taken advantage of their indifference with vigour, and threatened to overwhelm the orthodox from the south. The invasion of the Latin Christians had cut off all retreat to the westward. The firm persuasion of the Eastern nations had been long fixed in the belief, that the power of the Greek emperors could alone offer a successful resistance to the progress of Mohammedanism, and drive the Seljouk Turks out of Asia Minor, as their predecessors had driven the Saracens. Alexios Grand-Komnenos presented himself in the East at the appropriate moment to profit by this state of public opinion.

In the course of a few months Alexios had rendered himself master of the fortresses of Tripolis, Kerasunt, Mesochaldaion, Jasonis, and Oinaion, and without a single battle he had conquered the whole country from the Phasis to the Thermodon. In the meantime his brother David, as soon as it was evident that no resistance would be encountered in Colchis, invaded Paphlagonia at the head of a strong body of Iberian mercenaries and Lazian volunteers. His success was as great as that of his brother. The whole coast, from Sinope to Heracleia, submitted to his orders, and was incorporated into the empire of Alexios. The rich and strongly fortified cities of Sinope, Amastris,

Tios, and Heracleia, opened their gates, and welcomed David as the representative of the lawful emperor of the Romans. He then advanced to the Sangarios, hoping soon to render his brother master of all the country which the Greeks still defended against the Crusaders.

The condition of the Greeks at Nicaea favoured the project. Theodore Laskaris then ruled in Bithynia, but he still contented himself with the title of despot, and acted in the disadvantageous position of appearing as the viceroy of his worthless father-in-law Alexius III, whose tyrannical government and cowardly flight from Constantinople, after the first assault of the Crusaders, rendered him universally detested. David, confident in the popularity of his family, satisfied by the rapidity of his conquests of the general feeling in favour of his brother's claims, and trusting to the valour of his Iberian cuirassiers, expected to enter Nicomedia without resistance. But Theodore Laskaris was a better soldier and abler statesman than either David or Alexios. He made every preparation in his power for stopping the tide of conquest which had borne forward the banner of Grand-Komnenos with uninterrupted success over all the southern shores of the Euxine. To prevent the two brothers from uniting the armies under their command, Theodore concluded a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, with Ghaiaseddin Kaikhosrou, sultan of Iconium or Roum, who like himself was alarmed at the progress of the crusaders at Constantinople, and of the new Greek emperor of Trebizond. While Theodore prepared to encounter the army of David in Bithynia, the sultan marched against Alexios, who had laid siege to Amisos. Both brothers were defeated. Neither of them had been trained as soldiers, and nature had not endowed them with that rare genius which sometimes enables an individual in early youth to divine the strategic knowledge and military experience that are usually only to be acquired as the result of long service in the field.

David had intrusted the command of his army to Synadenos, a young and inexperienced general, who was ordered to occupy Nicomedia, as if the operation could be effected by a simple march. Theodore Laskaris cautiously watched the movements of his enemies, and assembled a considerable force on their flank before they entertained any suspicion that a hostile army was observing them in their immediate vicinity. The advance of the Trebizontine troops was continued in careless confidence until they were surprised by a sudden attack. The Iberian mercenaries, on whom David had principally relied for extending his conquests westward, fought bravely, and were cut to pieces. The general Synadenos was taken prisoner, and carried to Nicaea. This defeat arrested the progress of David, but he was still at the head of so large a force that he was able to retain possession of all his previous conquests. For a moment the empire of his brother extended from the chain of Caucasus to the shores of the Bosphorus, with the exception of the two contiguous cities of Amisos and Samsoun.

Alexios was defeated by the Turks shortly after the loss of his brother's army. Amisos was the only Greek city on the coast that refused to acknowledge his authority. The Turks had formed a town at Samsoun for the convenience of exporting the produce of the Seljouk Empire, situated only about a mile from the gates of Amisos. This Turkish possession, though forming a fortified town, was really only a commercial factory, resembling in its object what the Genoese town of Galata, in the port of Constantinople, became at a subsequent period. Commercial interests united the Greeks of Amisos and the Turks of Samsoun in close alliance. This point of the coast offers the easiest line of communication with that part of the interior of Asia Minor which extends

from the Halys to the Euphrates, as far southward as Syria. The walls of Samsoun, consequently, protected warehouses filled with merchandise of immense value, the produce of the nomad Turks, which was first collected in the cities of the interior, from whence it was transmitted to the coast by their trading countrymen ; for the Turks of the earlier ages, as well as the Arabs and Persians, were a commercial people. It is only the ottoman race that has always been a tribe of warriors, like the Romans and feudal nobles. The produce accumulated at Samsoun was purchased by the Greeks of Amisos, who furnished the capital and the ships necessary for its distribution through Russia and western Europe. The capitalists and the mariners of Amisos dispersed the manufactures of the nomads, their cloth of hair and wool, and their variegated carpets, the copper of Tokal, and the brilliant dye-stuffs of Caesarea, among the populous cities of the Byzantine Empire and the Italian commercial republics. They conveyed them to Alexandria, Tripoli, and Tunis, from whence they reached Morocco and Spain; and to Bulgaria and the Tauric Chersonesos, from whence they were transported by various routes over the north of Europe and Asia. The present aspect of the small fortified city of Samsoun probably gives a tolerably exact idea of the aspect it presented at the commencement of the thirteenth century, by supposing everything that now appears old and dilapidated as then new and substantial. Amisos, however, which was then a larger, wealthier, and stronger city, has now disappeared; and the traveller who visits its site can only trace a few ruined walls on the hill which rises to the north-westward of Samsoun.

At the time Constantinople fell into the hands of the Latins, Amisos was governed by a Byzantine officer named Sabbas. Like several provincial governors in Europe and western Asia, he assumed the position of an independent prince. His government had been so prudent that the citizens of Amisos acknowledged his authority with readiness; and both the Greeks of the surrounding country and the Turks of Samsoun considered their interests so closely identified with the continuation of the order he had preserved, during his administration, that they joined in defending him against the attacks of the emperor of Trebizond, and assisted him in preserving his independence after Alexios was defeated by the sultan of Iconium. Alexios, on his way westward to complete the conquest of the Greek empire, encamped with his army before the walls of Amisos, and summoned Sabbas to surrender the city. His demand was rejected, and he laid siege to the place. The Turks of Samsoun, persuaded that the conquest of Amisos would be followed by an attack on their town, and would cause their exclusion from any direct communication with the Black Sea, made common cause with the Greeks of Amisos. Messengers were despatched to Iconium, to urge the Seljouk sultan to expedite his movements. The defence of the place was so vigorous that Alexios had made little progress with the siege when Ghaiaseddin Kaikhosrou arrived with the Turkish army. A battle was fought under the walls of the city, and the defeat of the Trebizontine troops was so complete, that Alexios was glad to escape with a remnant of his forces.

The position of the city of Amisos at this period affords us a glimpse into the anomalous state of society and political power that was not uncommon in Asia Minor during the latter days of the Byzantine Empire, and to which many parallels may be found even in European history. Sabbas occupied an intermediate position between that of an independent prince and a popular chief. The citizens of Amisos were enabled to defend their liberty in the midst of powerful and hostile states, rather by a favourable

combination of circumstances, of which they availed themselves with prudence and moderation, than by any power they derived from their own wealth, or the strength of their position. They were contented to submit to a foreign leader, because they found him a wise and judicious administrator. Sabbas, on the other hand, accidentally raised from the rank of a provincial governor to that of an independent sovereign, unable to count on the support of a large military force, and possessing only a limited power over the revenues of a single city with no very extensive territory, was dependent for the continuance of his high position on his popularity and good behaviour. He showed himself every way well adapted for his situation. He repulsed the attacks of the Christian emperor of Trebizond, and conciliated the good-will and active assistance of the Turks of Samsoun, without admitting the army of the sultan of Iconium within the walls of Amisos. Satisfied, however, that it would be an act of rashness to attempt defending his independence, unless he could secure the support of some powerful ally against both Alexios and Ghaiaseddin, he became a voluntary vassal of the Greek empire of Nicaea as soon as Theodore Laskaris assumed the title of emperor. Theodore was too distant to interfere with the local administration of the city, but he was able from his position to afford an effective protection to Amisos, should it be attacked either by the troops of David Grand-Kommenos or of the sultan of Iconium.

David had found himself so much weakened by the loss of his Iberian troops, and the impossibility of drawing further succours from Trebizond after his brother's defeat, that he sought a new alliance to maintain his ground against Theodore and Ghaiaseddin. The emperor of Nicaea had leagued with the Turks; David formed a treaty with the Latins in Constantinople. Without their assistance he feared that he should be unable to preserve his conquests in Paphlagonia; and in order to purchase their aid, he consented to become a vassal of the Latin empire of Romania, and to hold Heracleia and the neighbouring country as a fief from the emperor Henry; thus virtually separating himself from his brother's empire. The emperor Henry had already gained possession of Nicomedia, and was eager to press the war against Theodore Laskaris, whose dominions he had compressed into a narrow space, by the conquest of all the southern shore of the Propontis, from the Hellespont to the Rhyndakos. David received from Henry the assistance of a body of Crusading knights, with their followers and men-at-arms. These vainglorious auxiliaries, despising both their Greek enemies and their Greek allies, advanced boldly forward to attack the troops of the emperor of Nicaea, without condescending to combine their movements with the other corps that composed the army of David. Andronikos Ghidos, who commanded the army of Nicaea, availing himself of the rashness of the Latins who separated themselves from their allies, surrounded their cavalry in the great forest that extends over the highlands between Nicomedia and Heracleia, called by the Turks, with poetic feeling and descriptive observation, the "ocean of trees." The crusading knights were completely routed. Those who escaped death were carried as prisoners to Nicaea, and the trust David had placed in foreign aid was annihilated.

About the year 1214, Theodore concluded a treaty of peace with Henry, in which David was not included. The Greek emperor immediately endeavoured to unite the territory still held by David to the empire of Nicaea. He successively conquered Heracleia, Amastris, and Tios, making himself master of the whole country as far as Cape Carambis. His progress was facilitated by the sultan Azeddin, who laid siege to Sinope about the same time, and whose invasion induced the Greeks to throw

themselves into the hands of their countrymen rather than run the risk of falling under the sway of the Turks. Sinope was the richest city in David's dominions, and he hastened to defend it with all the troops he could assemble. A battle ensued, in which he terminated his active career on a bloody and disastrous field. Sinope surrendered to the victor, and Azeddin subdued the whole country from Cape Carambis eastward to the territory of Amisos.

The affairs of Alexios at Trebizond now assumed a threatening aspect. From the time of his defeat at Amisos he had been cut off from all regular communication by land with his brother, to whose activity he had been so much indebted at the commencement of his career. Enemies had attacked his dominions on every side, alarmed at the sudden formation of a new empire in their vicinity. The Turks of Cappadocia assailed Pontus on one side, while the Georgians ravaged Colchis on the other. The Georgians, or Iberians, were at this time the bravest warriors in all Asia; and it was fortunate for the young emperor of Trebizond that, at this crisis, their hostilities were principally directed against the Mussulmans in Armenia, for, had they turned all their energy to effect the overthrow of the empire of Trebizond, they might have stifled the existence of the imperial house of Grand-Komnenos in the cradle.

It was not until after the fall of Sinope, and the conquest of the country eastward to the Thermodon, that the sultan of Iconium and the emperor of Trebizond were brought into direct collision for the second time. Azeddin proved a more active and dangerous enemy than his father Ghaiaseddin. He was a man of great ambition and few prejudices; indeed, the cotemporary Europeans reported that he was extremely favourable to the Christians, and almost, if not really in secret, a Christian.

The report was propagated in the West as a ground of praise; in the East, his enemies gave it currency as proving him a traitor to his faith and nation. He may, like some other members of his family, have been an infidel, as far as the divine commission of Mahomet was concerned; but the accusation of his preferring Christianity was spread among the Turks by those who feared his political ambition. Like the Caliphs of Bagdad and Cairo, he had more confidence in veteran mercenaries than in patriotic native troops. He feared the turbulent and independent spirit of his Seljouk subjects. Neither the nomad hordes nor the territorial nobles were the instruments which he could employ at will, to extend his dominions and augment his personal power. In order to possess a body of troops on whose service he could constantly reckon, he formed a guard of mercenaries; and circumstances rendered it easier for him to hire Christian warriors than to purchase slaves, like the Mamlouk sultans of Egypt, or collect neophytes and renegades, like later Moslem princes. His infidel guards, hated by all around, and looking only to the sultan for wealth and honour, were ready to execute all his orders without distinction of rank or respect for law or religion. At this time the East swarmed with European adventurers, who, having secured indulgences to an unlimited amount by their services as Crusaders, were eager to enjoy the interest of the treasures they had laid up in heaven by committing a few additional sins on earth. Their visit to the tomb of Christ, and their wars against the infidels, had brought them neither wealth nor lands as a reward for their pious exertions. They had, however, obtained indulgences, which in their opinion authorised them to seek riches by hiring their swords to Greek heretics or Turkish infidels without shame or sin. Theodore I (Laskaris) the Greek emperor of Nicaea, had at one time eight hundred of these soldiers of fortune in his service. Azeddin assembled round his person a powerful corps of similar mercenaries.



Alexios of Trebizond was unable to resist a powerful, wealthy, and warlike sovereign like Azeddin. Cut off from all direct collision with the Greek empire of Nicaea, and the Latin empire of Romania, he was almost forgotten in the West. Involved in a political and international circle of alliances and hostilities, that disconnected his interests from those of the Greeks on the Asiatic and European shores of the Aegean, his wars and treaties placed him in close relations with the Christian princes of Georgia and Iberia, with the Turkoman chieftains of Cappadocia, and the emirs of Armenia. In this state of comparative isolation, he was unable to offer any effectual resistance to the arms of the grand-sultan of Roum, and he was glad to purchase tranquillity, and save his dominions from devastation, by acknowledging himself a vassal of the Seljouk empire, by paying an annual tribute to the treasury of Azeddin, and sending a contingent of troops to serve in the Turkish armies. Of the particular circumstances or misfortunes that reduced him to this extremity, nothing is known: the fact alone is recorded. It is probable, however, that the commercial relations of the Greeks of Trebizond with the rest of Asia, both assisted the emperor in concluding this treaty of peace with the sultan, and rendered it, in spite of its humiliating conditions, not unpopular among his own subjects.

Of the internal history of Trebizond during the reign of Alexios I nothing has been preserved. We know, however, that the emperor or his ministers did not neglect to profit by the advantages of his position, and of the commercial relations of his subjects in the Black Sea. Cherson, Gothia, and all the Byzantine possessions in the Tauric Chersonesos, were united to his empire; and so close was the alliance of interest, that these districts remained dependent on the government of Trebizond until the period of its fall. (The territory of the city of Cherson, and the province of Gothia, embraced the southern and south-eastern parts of the Crimea). It is not very probable that this conquest could have been effected by an imprudent or unpopular sovereign. We know, too, that Trebizond rose rapidly in power and wealth immediately after the establishment of its independence. This was a natural consequence of the increased security afforded to communications, in consequence of the great addition to the size of its territory, which from a province grew suddenly into an empire; and of the improvement in the roads, and the diminished expense of transport, which resulted from its becoming the recipient of funds formerly remitted to Constantinople. Money previously expended to maintain the carriage promenades of the court of Byzantium was now devoted to the construction of bridges and roads, that increased the riches of the natives of Trebizond.

Alexios I died at Trebizond in the year 1222. Of his character, feelings, passions, and talents, so little is known, that any attempt to embody his personality would be an encroachment on the domain of poetry or romance. He appears in the history of Trebizond as the shadow of a mythic hero, the founder of an empire, whose origin we may perhaps, without sufficient warrant, feel inclined to trace to his individual actions, when he himself was probably nothing more than an ordinary man, moved forward by circumstances operating on the organisation of society in his age, in which he was accidentally selected by fortune to act a prominent part. That he possessed the noble figure, handsome face, and active frame that were hereditary in the house of Grand-Komnenos, and which they probably derived from their Georgian ancestors, may be admitted.

A modern Greek empire, in the thirteenth century, required a new saint just as necessarily as an ancient Greek colony, in the heroic ages, required its demi-god or eponym hero. This new saint was indispensable, for it was his duty to appear in the celestial tribunals unencumbered with the business of older clients. St Eugenios was chosen by the emperor and people of Trebizond to act as their advocate in heaven and their protector on earth. His name and worship served to separate the citizens of the empire of Trebizond from the Greeks of the Byzantine Empire. The votaries of St Eugenios formed a nation apart, united together by their own ecclesiastical ideas and religious prejudices, then the most powerful feelings and motives of action with the Christian population in the East. St Eugenios was a native martyr, who had been condemned to death during the persecution of Diocletian for boldly destroying a statue of Mithras, which had long been an object of adoration to the people of Trebizond, on the romantic Mount of Mithrios, now Boz-tépé, that overlooks the city with its wall of rock. On the spot where he was executed—an isolated point between two ravines that separate the upper citadel and the great eastern suburb—Alexios erected a splendid church and monastery to the patron of the city and empire. The buildings dedicated to St Eugenios in this place were more than once destroyed amidst the revolutions of Trebizond; but a Christian church, now converted into a mosque by the Osmanlees, and called Yeni Djuma, still exists. Alexios I appears also to have made it a law of the empire, that the effigy of St Eugenios should be impressed on all the silver coins of Trebizond. The festivals of St Eugenios became the bond of social communication between the emperor and his subjects: the biography of the saint was the text-book of Trebizontine literature; his praise the subject of every oratorical display; his name the appellation of one member in every family, the object of universal veneration, and the centre of patriotic enthusiasm. The religion, the literature, and the politics of the inhabitants of Trebizond, during the whole existence of the empire, identified themselves more with the worship and the legends of St Eugenios, than with the practice of Christianity or the doctrines of the gospel.

The earlier, while the emperor and people had some warlike habits, represent the saint on foot, as the spiritual guide and shepherd of his flock; the later, when the emperor and people were effeminate and luxurious in their way of life, display him on horseback with a cross in his hand, as a mace-at-arms, ready to protect the city, which the sovereign and the people felt themselves too weak to defend without miraculous aid.

## CHAPTER II

## TREBIZOND TRIBUTARY TO THE SELJOUK SULTANS AND GRAND-KHANS OF THE MONGOLS

## SECT. I

REIGNS OF ANDRONIKOS I (GHIDOS,) AND JOANNES I (AXOUCHOS),  
1222-1238

The succession to the imperial title was never considered hereditary among the Byzantine Greeks; but the New Greek Empire at Trebizond forgot many of the old Roman ideas, and soon assumed a far more hereditary form. At the death of Alexios I, however, the hereditary principle had not prevailed over the elective constitution imprinted by imperial Rome on all its offshoots, and the vacant throne was occupied by Andronikos Ghidos, the son-in-law of Alexios, to the exclusion of Joannes, the eldest son of the deceased emperor.

Though Andronikos continued to be tributary to the Seljouk Empire, he availed himself so skilfully of the embarrassments attendant on the decease of the emperor at Iconium, as to succeed, in the second year of his reign, (1214,) in concluding a treaty with Alaeddin, who had succeeded his brother Azeddin. This treaty, it is true, made no change in the relations of vassalage already established between the two empires, but it provided that the two sovereigns were to live together in perpetual amity, and that the subjects and frontier garrisons of the one were never to molest those of the other. Such a treaty of a suzerain with his tributary, being a direct acknowledgment of complete political independence, was not likely to be long respected; and the manner in which it was broken indicates that Alaeddin soon repented of his concession.

A ship bearing the imperial flag of Trebizond was driven on shore near Sinope. It carried the receiver-general of Cherson, and several archonts of Perateia, with a large sum of money destined for the public treasury of the empire. The ship was seized by Hayton, the *reis* or governor of Sinope, who took possession of the treasure destined for Andronikos, and detained the archonts in order to enrich himself by their ransom. The emperor no sooner heard of this act of piracy and injustice than he sent a fleet to punish Hayton. The Trebizontine expedition proceeded to Karousa, where troops were landed, and the whole country, up to the very walls of Sinope, was wasted and plundered. The fleet also attacked the ships in the port with equal success; and Hayton, distracted by the ruin of his dominions, the captivity of his people, and the signs of discontent within his city, was glad to purchase peace by giving up the captured ship with the treasure seized,

and releasing all his prisoners without ransom. The Trebizantine officers also, at the same time, released all the prisoners on board the fleet; but the troops and sailors carried off all the plunder they had collected on the coast, and from the ships in the harbour.

Hayton was a vassal of the Seljouk Empire, and the termination of the affair was extremely displeasing to the sultan Alaeddin, who considered that the emperor of Trebizond, as a tributary of his throne, was bound to appeal to his suzerain at Iconium, before attacking Sinope and ravaging the Turkish territory. He resolved to avail himself of the occasion, not only to set aside the treaty by which he had placed Andronikos on the footing of an equal, but even to conquer Trebizond. The Greek emperor could bring no force into the field capable of contending with the Seljouks. Alaeddin ordered an army to be immediately assembled at Erzurum; and, to strengthen it, he drew a body of veteran troops from Melitene. The command of the expedition was intrusted by the grand sultan Alaeddin to his son Melik, who was ordered to lay siege to the capital of the empire—for it was supposed that Trebizond would be unable to offer a long resistance. The young Melik pressed rapidly forward through the passes to Baibert, where he encamped for a couple of days to make the necessary dispositions for descending with his army to the coast, by the defiles of the wooded mountains that surround Trebizond. Andronikos had done everything in his power to meet the threatened danger. The fortress of Trebizond was put in the best state of defence, the wealth of the suburbs was secured within its walls, and arrangements were made for lodging the immense population crowded within its narrow circuit. All the chosen warriors of the empire, from Sotiropolis, under the Mingrelian mountains, to Oinaion, in the land of the Chalybes, were summoned to assemble round the imperial standard; and the emperor, hoping to be able to delay the march of the Seljouk troops, advanced to the summit of the mountain range with his army. But his followers were sadly inferior to the Turks both in courage and discipline, and as soon as they perceived the numerous array of their enemies, the greater part dispersed. Some sought the recesses of the forests, from which they subsequently issued to interrupt the communications of the Turkish army during the siege. Others fled back on Trebizond, to seek shelter at the shrines of the Panaghia Chrisokephalos and St Eugenios, where they quartered themselves in the immense monasteries around those churches. Andronikos covered the retreat with a small guard of five hundred chosen cavalry armed with shield and lance, who distinguished themselves by a valiant attack on the advanced guard of the Turkish army, at a bridge over the Pyxites. Melik, however, moved steadily forward with the main body; while Andronikos, unable to defend even the extensive suburb of Trebizond to the east of the fortress, was compelled to shut himself up within the city walls. The Seljouk army encamped on the spot thus left unoccupied, pitching their tents along the whole space from St Eugenios to St Constantine, down to the sea. The besieging army was only separated from the fortress by the deep ravine that bounds it on the eastern side.

At this period the fortress of Trebizond occupied only the surface of the table-rock between the two great ravines of Gouzgoun-deré and Issé-lepol, including what now forms the central and upper citadels. The northern wall ran parallel to the shore at some distance from the sea, and the intervening space was not yet fortified by the wall which now protects it, and includes a considerable part of the suburb beyond the western ravine. The first attack of the Seljouk army was directed against this northern wall. In this spot alone the ground offered facilities for approaching the fortifications,

and admitted of an attempt to carry the place by storm. But though the ramparts at this point did not tower so high above the assailants as at every other, the narrowness of the space between the wall and the sea deprived the Turks of the advantages to be derived from their superior numbers; and, by crowding them closely together, exposed those engaged in the assault to certain injury from every missile discharged by the besieged. The consequence was that this attack was repulsed with considerable loss; and Andronikos, by a well-directed sally of his horsemen, pursued the disordered column into the Turkish encampment, where the fugitives threw a portion of the army into the greatest confusion. The Seljouk generals soon re-established order, and a superior force was drawn out against the Greeks, who then retreated within their walls. The leaders of both parties in this engagement displayed great personal valour, and several men of rank fell on both sides. Ghiaseddin, a cousin of Melik, and Hayton, the *reis* of Sinope, were slain in this sortie.

The next attempt to storm Trebizond was made from the south. Melik had occupied the narrow platform between the two great ravines with a division of his army. His own headquarters were in the monastery of St Eugenios, the church itself serving as the residence of his harem. It was resolved to attempt to surprise the upper citadel by a night attack; but the darkness which was to aid the success of the operation proved the ruin of the Turkish army. Three divisions of the besiegers, occupying the eastern suburb, the hill of St Eugenios, and the platform above the citadel, were separated from one another by deep ravines, yet they were destined to act in concert. As the troops were moving forward to support the storming party, a dreadful tempest, accompanied by a shower of hail and torrents of rain, filled the ravines with a sudden deluge. Some of the troops from St Eugenios and the suburb were unable to mount the rocky ascent to the platform; others were stopped by the flood, in their endeavour to cross the ravine: the feint attack from the north was deranged, and the whole assault failed. The repulsed troops were driven back on those destined to support them. The cavalry, horse and man, was in many cases forced over the precipices; the infantry was carried away by the torrents which poured down the ravines from the mountains, and the confusion was soon inextricable. As soon as the fury of the storm had abated, and it became possible to render the local knowledge of the garrison of some avail, a sortie of the besieged was directed against the centre of the camp, and the headquarters of Melik, from the northern gates. The whole Seljouk army then fled in confusion, leaving everything to the enemy; and Melik himself, who had joined the fugitives, was made prisoner at Kouration by a party of mountaineers from Matzouka. The glory of the victory was attributed to St Eugenios, whose history it enriched with many a legend.

Andronikos availed himself of his victory with prudence. He treated Melik with great attention, and dismissed him without a ransom, sending him forward with a becoming escort to Iconium. His negotiations with the sultan Alaeddin ended in a new treaty of peace being concluded, by which the empire of Trebizond was declared free from all tribute, from the obligation of furnishing a military contingent, and from the homage which Alexios and Andronikos had been hitherto bound to pay to the grand sultan of Roum.

The independence of the empire of Trebizond was not of long duration. The sovereignty of western Asia was disputed by the great Khoaresinian shah, Gelaeddin, and the grand sultan Alaeddin. Andronikos saw that, in such a conflict, it would be impossible for him to retain his dominions, unless he secured the alliance of one of

these powerful princes. The ambitious shah was the more dangerous neighbour; and to purchase his friendship the emperor of Trebizond acknowledged himself Gelaleddin's vassal, and furnished a contingent to the Khoaresinian army. The army of Gelaleddin was completely defeated by Alaeddin at the bloody battle of Akhlat. One division of the Persian cavalry was driven over a range of precipices, and perished almost to a man in a vain attempt to escape; but another, by a rapid retreat, gained the passes of Armenia, and reached Trebizond in safety, where they served to strengthen the imperial army. Another defeat of Gelaleddin by the Mongols, in the year after the battle of Akhlat, placed Octai the grand khan of Tartary in direct rivalry with the sultan of Roum. Andronikos was again called upon to secure his political existence, and the duration of the empire of Trebizond, by the sacrifice of his imperial pride. The activity of Alaeddin allowed no time to choose; and as soon as the Seljouk sultan had completed the conquest of lesser Armenia, Andronikos hastened to renew his relations of vassalage with his old suzerain, and engaged to maintain a subsidiary force of two hundred lances constantly in the service of the sultan. This force may be considered as forming a body of one thousand men.

The sultan Alaeddin, with all his ambition and personal daring, was a politic and able prince, who did not overlook the commercial interests of his subjects. He perceived that the idle satisfaction of conquering a weak state like that of Trebizond, which only desired by its alliances to secure to itself a neutral position, would be ill compensated by the injury he would inflict on trade. He had discernment enough to understand that commerce was considered by the great majority of the merchants, whether Christians or Mussulmans—both in his own dominions and in the other states of western Asia—more secure while Trebizond and its territory remained an independent and neutral empire, than it would be were that city governed by one of his own turbulent emirs. The Seljouk Empire was not at the height of its power, and had Alaeddin not thought and acted as a wise statesman, the Greek empire of Trebizond might have been destroyed at this early period of its existence, and its very name utterly lost to European history. Though Trebizond survived this crisis, its extent suffered some contraction. Iberia, which had hitherto formed one of its most valuable provinces, and the possession of which was long recorded in the imperial title as one of the pillars of the empire, seized the opportunity afforded by the weakness of Andronikos I to assume complete independence. After the Mongols had driven the Georgian queen Roussadan from Tifflis, her son David was elected king by the Iberian and Lazian tribes, who had hitherto remained independent; and all the Trebizontine province of Iberia threw off its allegiance, and united itself with the new Iberian kingdom. David was for some time the only Christian prince in these regions who lived in a state of complete independence, owning no vassalage to the surrounding infidels. His capital was at Kutasion in Imerathia.

Andronikos reigned thirteen years. He was succeeded by his brother-in-law Joannes I, surnamed Axouchos, who occupied the throne only three years. The death of Joannes was caused by a fall from horseback while playing at the dangerous game called Tzoukanion—an amusement extremely fashionable among the Byzantine nobles. John I left a son, named Joannikios, who was compelled to enter a monastery; and the crown was assumed by Manuel I, the second son of Alexios I.

## SECT. II

MANUEL I, THE GREAT CAPTAIN. ANDRONIKOS II GEORGE—A.D.  
1238-1280

Manuel I was distinguished by the title of the Great Captain, but of the military exploits that gained him this name we know nothing. They were not, however, sufficiently brilliant to deliver Trebizond from its state of vassalage, for it is certain that he was compelled in the earlier part of his reign to pay homage to the Seljouks, and in the latter to the Mongols. We can only conjecture that his personal character was remarkable for daring, and that his military skill enabled him to command a degree of political influence incommensurate with the extent of his empire.

After the death of Alaeddin, in 1237, the Seljouk empire lost much of its power. His son Ghaiaseddin Kaikhosrou II, who was said to have poisoned his noble father, was a weak and luxurious prince. During his reign the Mongols renewed their incursions into western Asia; and in the year 1244 he was entirely defeated in a great battle at Kousadac, near Arsinga, by the army of the grand khan Octai. The Seljouk force, composed of Turks, Arabs, Greeks, Georgians, Armenians, and Franks, though far superior in numbers to that of the Mongols, fled before them without offering any serious resistance. Manuel's contingent had fought in the routed army. Policy now urged him to lose no time in conciliating the victor, and he was fortunate enough to be allowed to constitute himself a vassal of the Tartar empire, on nearly the same terms as had previously bound him to the Seljouk sultan. Trebizond was viewed by the Mongol court, as it had been by that of Iconium, rather as a mercantile station than as the capital of an empire; and the great captain escaped appearing as a suppliant sovereign before the grand Mongol at the court of Karakorum, because he was regarded as the chief of a trading factory, not as the emperor of a powerful state. His position and his power awakened neither the ambition nor the jealousy of the grand khan.

The political condition of Asia Minor during the reign of the emperor Manuel I is described by the friar Rubruquis, who visited it in the year 1253, on his embassy from St Louis to the court of Karakorum. He mentions that the Circassians, the Soanes, and the Iberians, then lived in a state of independence; but Trebizond, which was governed by its own prince, named Komnenos, who was of the family of the emperors of Constantinople, was in a state of vassalage to the Tartars. Sinope belonged to the sultan of the Turks, but at that time it was also reduced to a state of vassalage by the Tartars. The Greek empire of Nicaea, called by Rubruquis the land of Vatzes, was ruled by Theodore II, called Laskaris, from his maternal grandfather; and this country was independent, and owed no vassalage to the Tartar Empire.

The only notice of Manuel that is found in any western contemporary writer is contained in the life of St Louis by Joinville. The stout seneschal mentions that, in the year 1253, while St Louis was engaged fortifying Sidon, ambassadors visited the king from the signor of Trebizond, who called himself Grand-Komnenos. They brought with them rich presents, and asked the hand of a princess of France for their sovereign. No princess having accompanied the king on his pilgrimage, he recommended Manuel to form a matrimonial alliance with the family of Baldwin II, emperor of Constantinople,

since the house of Courtenay was related to the royal family of France. This advice was doubtless not much relished by Manuel, who cared very little about the blood of Capet, and only sought an alliance with the French king on account of the great personal fame and influence of St Louis; and because he hoped that a marriage with a princess of France might enable him to direct the expeditions of the crusading chivalry of the West in the way most conducive to the interests of the empire of Trebizond.

Manuel died in the year 1263, after a long and prosperous reign of twenty-five years. He was the founder of the magnificent church and monastery of St Sophia, situated in a delightful position on the sea-shore, about a mile and a half to the westward of the fortress of Trebizond, where the inhabitants of the city still crowd to enjoy every festival. His half-defaced portrait still exists on its walls.

Andronikos II, the eldest son of Manuel, occupied the throne for three years, and died without issue. Georgios succeeded his brother. His reign lasted fourteen years and as the power both of the Seljouks and the Mongols was now declining in Asia Minor, he gradually acquired a position of complete independence, and ventured to make war on the Turkoman tribes on the frontiers of his dominions. His endeavours to increase his own power had, however, rendered him unpopular among the nobles and military chiefs of Trebizond, whose assumption of individual authority, and whose attempts to arrogate to themselves the complete control over the financial and judicial affairs within their possessions, he determined to repress. In one of his military expeditions he was deserted by the nobles who accompanied him. Their object in deserting their sovereign was to turn the defeat of the imperial army to their own advantage, by weakening the central power; for they feared the increased authority of the emperor's administration, in matters of finance and justice, far more than they desired the extension of the limits of the empire or the prosperity of their country. This treacherous retreat left Georgios a prisoner in the hands of the Turkomans at the moment he expected to drive them from the range of Mount Tauresion, where they had begun to settle.



## CHAPTER III

## TREBIZOND INDEPENDENT. INTERNAL FACTIONS

## SECT. I

REIGN OF JOANNES II. ALLIANCE WITH THE EMPIRE OF  
CONSTANTINOPLE A.D. 1280-1297

Joannes II, the third son of Manuel, ascended the throne in the year 1280, as soon as the news of the captivity of his brother Georgios reached the capital. The empire of Trebizond was now completely relieved from its vassalage to the Mongols, and its history assumes a new character. Hitherto, we have known little of its internal condition; henceforward the memorials of its intestine factions, the intrigues of the palace, and the vices of the emperors, form the prominent features in the records of the empire; but we hardly obtain a glimpse of the nature of the commerce or the social organisation of the people, that furnished the financial wealth of the ruling classes, and enabled the nobles, the courtiers, and the sovereigns, to amuse themselves with alternate feats of war and sensuality.

Joannes was a weak young man, whom the heads of the aristocratic party expected would prove a convenient tool in their hands. The state of society in the thirteenth century, not only at Trebizond, but over all the world, required that the sovereign should be a man of energy in order to preserve his authority. It was an age in which law and legislation exerted no control on the actions of men, and in which religion ceased to uphold the temporal power of princes. The talents and the will of the vigorous ruler could alone repress the tyrannical conduct of his own officers, the aristocratic insolence of the noble classes, and the anarchical propensities of the populace. Want of roads insulated each little district; experience was as difficult to acquire as a lettered education; wealth, in such a society, was concentrated in the hands of a few landlords; public opinion had no existence; legal tribunals were powerless, and justice slept. The supreme authority in the state was consequently irresponsible; and for power of such a nature, emperors, nobles, and ministers of state fought and intrigued with an energy and at a risk which now excites our surprise, when we couple this boldness with the worthless characters of the individual actors.

Able and energetic sovereigns are, from the nature of man, not of frequent occurrence on despotic thrones, after power has been transmitted in the same family for some generations. The palace is rarely a good school for education. The family of

Grand-Kommenos displayed at least an average deficiency in all great and good qualities, from the reign of Joannes II to the extinction of the empire. Part of the difficulties, however, in which this emperor and his successors were placed arose from the state of society, as well as from their own incapacity and mal-administration. Mankind was beginning to feel the operation of those social causes which have replaced medieval life by modern habits. Masses of the population were growing up beyond the ordinary movement of the old social routine. Slavery was disappearing, without creating any immediate opening for the employment of free labour. Popular anarchy, aristocratic oppression, royal rapacity, and military cruelty, were often the throes of a society in which men were driven to despair in their endeavour to obtain a subsistence or defend a hereditary right. The convulsions which destroyed the old system threatened for several generations to depopulate all western Asia and great part of Europe; nor has a large portion of the East yet attained a political organisation suitable to social improvement. The history of the empire of Trebizond offers us a miniature sketch of this great social struggle, drawn in faint colours and with an indistinct outline.

The records of the reign of Joannes II are extremely confused. Ducange and Gibbon supposed that he was the first sovereign of Trebizond who assumed the imperial title; but the discovery of the Chronicle of Panaretos enabled Fallmerayer to restore the title of emperor to the earlier princes. The critical sagacity of Ducange had almost divined the true position of Joannes, even from the scanty materials at his disposal. There can be no doubt that the form of the coronation ceremony, and the title of the emperors of Trebizond, had remained, up to this period, precisely what that of Constantinople had been at the time the city fell into the hands of the Crusaders. Joannes II was crowned emperor of the Romans; and no especial political significance would probably have been given to the title, as constituting him a rival to the throne of the Byzantine emperor, Michael VIII (Paleologos,) had it not been for the religious disputes that distracted the empire of Constantinople. Michael had rendered himself unpopular among the orthodox by forming a union with the papal church. The fealty of the Greeks was not considered to be due to an emperor of doubtful orthodoxy. Michael had been pardoned, by the lax morality of the Greek people and church, for dethroning and putting out the eyes of his young ward, the emperor John IV; but he was condemned as an outlaw, by the ecclesiastical bigotry of Byzantine society, for seeking to unite the Greek and Roman, or orthodox and catholic, sections of the Christian church. A powerful party in his own dominions, and a large body of Greeks living beyond the bounds of his empire, were eager to dethrone him. Fortunately for Michael, the people of Europe and Asia were not agreed on the rival emperor they wished to place on the throne of Constantinople. The European Greeks looked to the despot of Epirus, or to John, prince of Thessalian Vlaskia, both of whom called themselves Komnenos; but the Asiatics, and a considerable party at Constantinople, invited Joannes II of Trebizond to place himself at the head of the orthodox Christians, as the undoubted heir of the imperial house of Komnenos, and as already crowned emperor of the Romans. Michael was regarded as a usurper, from the fact of his having ceased to be orthodox, since no apostate could reign over the true believers.

Joannes was utterly destitute of the talents necessary to profit by the advantages of his position, nor had he any councillors around him capable of contending with a veteran diplomatist and experienced sovereign like Michael. No man estimated the exact danger of his situation better than Michael himself; and though his fears at times

seemed to indicate a nervous sensibility, there can be no doubt that there was reason to apprehend a general rebellion in support of any rival claim to the imperial title at this momentous crisis. At the very time Joannes II was crowned emperor of the Romans at Trebizond, Charles of Anjou, the papal vassal-king of Naples, threatened to invade the Byzantine empire, as the champion of the rights of Philip of Courtenay, the heir of the Latin empire of Romania, and thus deprived Michael of all hope of finding any support from the Latin Christians, with whose church he had endeavoured to unite. In this critical conjuncture, Michael, who feared domestic treason more than foreign invasion, was anxious to secure the alliance of the young emperor of Trebizond. Knowing his weak character, and the factious views of the nobility of Trebizond, he sought to neutralise all opposition from that quarter by a combination of cajolery, bribery, and intimidation, that would induce the government of Trebizond to dread the danger of an open rupture with the Byzantine Empire.

The first embassy sent by Michael to sound the disposition of the young emperor of Trebizond was intrusted to the experience of the veteran statesman and valuable historian George Acropolita, in the year 1281. But the ambassador could neither persuade John to lay aside the use of his title of emperor of the Romans, nor inspire him with a wish to unite his fortunes with those of Michael, by forming a matrimonial alliance with the family of Paleologos. Acropolita, however, whose duty it was to ascertain the party views and political designs of the aristocracy as well as of the court, seems to have discovered the means of preparing the mind of Joannes to admit the conviction, that it would be impossible for him to wage war with the Byzantine court, and that it would even be dangerous to neglect forming a close alliance with the emperor. Acropolita had hardly quitted Trebizond before a general insurrection, headed by a Greek named Papadopoulos, drove the ruling party from power. The rebels rendered themselves masters of the citadel, and kept Joannes II for some time a prisoner in his palace.

It is true that Joannes soon escaped out of the hands of the insurgents and recovered his power. Nor is it possible to establish the complicity of the Byzantine agents in this business; but there cannot be a doubt that it was the cause of producing a great change in the views of the emperor of Trebizond and his court, and that it suggested to them the necessity of forming a close alliance with the emperor of Constantinople, on the basis of consolidating a league of the two sovereigns, for their mutual protection against the rebellious movements of their subjects. The veteran Acropolita was not the man to have overlooked this obvious condition of public affairs in his arguments with the court of Trebizond, nor to have neglected taking measures for making events confirm his reasoning.

After the failure of Papadopoulos's insurrection, a new embassy arrived at Trebizond, and the emperor Joannes soon expressed a wish to form a close political and family alliance with Michael; but while he expressed his eagerness to espouse Eudocia, the emperor's youngest daughter, he declared that it was impossible for him to lay aside the imperial title which had been borne by his ancestors.

The title of Basileus, the purple boots, the robes embroidered with eagles, and the prostrations of the powerful chiefs of the aristocracy, were dear to the pride of the citizens of Trebizond, and attached them to the person of the emperors, of whose heart these vanities formed the inmost delight. Neither the personal honour of Joannes, nor

his political position, nor the feelings of his people allowed him to think for a moment of abandoning the title of emperor. Michael himself soon saw clearly that the change was impossible; and this very circumstance rendered it more important that the rival emperor should be included within the circle of his own family. But his notorious bad faith, and the just suspicions it awakened in the breast of Joannes, still created some difficulties. The young emperor of Trebizond feared to trust himself in the power of Michael, lest, instead of becoming the husband of Eudocia, he should meet the fate of the unfortunate John Laskaris. At last, however, he received such assurances of his personal safety, and such pledges of the sincerity of Michael, that he repaired to Constantinople, where his marriage was celebrated in the month of September 1282.

The reception of the emperor of Trebizond at the Byzantine court displays all the vanity and meanness of the Constantinopolitan Greeks in a striking manner. Michael VIII was a perfect type of this class, and his agents were worthy of their master. When Joannes reached the capital, he found Michael absent at Lopadion, and every species of intrigue, persuasion, and intimidation was employed to induce the young emperor to lay aside his purple boots and imperial robes. Seeing himself surrounded by the unprincipled instruments of Byzantine tyranny, and retaining always a lively recollection of the fate of the blind Laskaris, he consented, at last, to present himself before his future father-in-law in black boots, and in the dress of a despot of the Byzantine court. He was even induced to carry his concession to Byzantine vanity so far, as not to resume the insignia of an emperor until the celebration of his marriage. It seems that it was at this time the emperor of Trebizond first used the style of Emperor of the East, instead of his earlier designation of Emperor of the Romans; and probably his robes, adorned with single-headed eagles, were viewed by the Constantinopolitan populace as marking a certain inferiority to the family of his wife, who appeared in a dress covered with double-headed eagles, to mark her rank in the empire of the East and West as a princess born in the purple chamber. Both Joannes II and his successors found it advisable to cultivate the alliance of the Byzantine court after this period. Policy, therefore, prompted them to lay aside the use of their ancient title of Emperor of the Romans, which was reserved exclusively for the sovereigns of Constantinople, while those of Trebizond confined themselves to that of Emperor of all the East, Iberia and Perateia.

The emperor Joannes returned home shortly after his marriage. His dominions had suffered severely during his absence, in consequence of David, king of Iberia, availing himself of the conjuncture to attempt the conquest of the capital. The Iberian army ravaged the whole country up to the walls of the citadel of Trebizond, which David besieged for some time; but with so little success, that he was compelled to effect his retreat without being able to carry off any booty. The reign of Joannes was not without its troubles after his return. Georgios, his brother and predecessor, was released by the Turkomans, and found a faction of discontented nobles to support his pretensions to recover the throne. The attempt proved unsuccessful. The followers of Georgios were defeated; and the dethroned emperor, after wandering in the mountains in a condition between a knight-errant and a brigand, was at last taken prisoner and brought to Trebizond. In order to insure family concord as well as public tranquillity, Joannes allowed his brother to retain the title of Emperor, without, however, admitting him to take any part in the administration of public affairs.

A new revolution suddenly drove Joannes again from his throne. His sister Theodora, the eldest child of Manuel I by his first marriage with Roussadan, an Iberian princess, availed herself of the party intrigues of the nobles, and the popular dissensions in the capital—perhaps also of the civil war between her two brothers—to assemble an army and mount the throne. Her reign occurred in the year 1285; but its duration is unknown, though the existence of coins, bearing her name and effigy, attest that her power was not destitute of political stability, and that she was fully and permanently recognised as sovereign of the empire. No clue exists that affords us the means of explaining how Theodora obtained the throne, or how she lost it, but Joannes appears soon to have recovered possession of his throne and capital. He died at the fortress of Limnia in the year 1297, after a reign of eighteen years, and his body was transported to Trebizond, where it was entombed in the cathedral of Panaghia Ohrysokephalos. He left two sons, Alexios II and Michael.

The effects of the incessant domestic revolutions and civil wars in the empire of Trebizond can be more clearly traced than their causes. One of their immediate consequences, in the reign of Joannes, was the loss of the extensive and valuable province of Chalybia, with its strange metallic soil, from which, since the days of the Argonauts, the inhabitants have scraped out small nodules of iron in sufficient quantity to form a regular branch of industry. The Turkomans, availing themselves of the internal disorders at the capital, laid waste the province, and drove out the greater part of the ancient population, in order to convert the whole country into a land of pasture suitable for the settlement of their nomadic tribes.

Joannes II enjoyed a reputation among the nations of Western Europe totally incommensurate with his real power. The magnificent title of Emperor of Trebizond threw a veil over his weakness, and distance concealed the small extent of his dominions behind the long line of coast that acknowledged his sway. He was invited by pope Nicholas IV to take part in the crusade for the recovery of Ptolemais, in which his Holiness flattered himself that the emperor of Trebizond would be joined by Argoun, the Mongol khan of Tauris, and all the Christian princes of the East, from Georgia to Armenian Cilicia. The invitation proved of course ineffectual.

Joannes was too constantly employed at home watching the movements of domestic faction, and guarding against the inroads of the Turkomans of the great horde of the Black Sheep, to think of aiding the Latin adventurers in Palestine, even had he felt any disposition to listen to papal exhortations.

## SECT. II

### REIGN OF ALEXIOS II. INCREASED COMMERCIAL IMPORTANCE OF TREBIZOND. TRADE OF GENOESE—A.D. 1297-1330

Alexios II, the eldest son of Joannes II, succeeded his father at the early age of fifteen. He was naturally for some time a mere nominal sovereign, acting under the guidance of the ministers of state who held office at the time of his father's death. His father's will placed him under the guardianship of his maternal uncle, the Byzantine

emperor Andronicus II; but the courtiers and nobles of Trebizond easily persuaded the young sovereign to assume complete independence, and emancipate himself from all control. Andronicus, on the other hand, was eager to direct his conduct even in his most trifling actions. His first attempt to enforce his authority was ridiculous and irritating, like many of the acts of that most orthodox and most injudicious sovereign. He ordered the young emperor of Trebizond, an independent foreign prince, to marry the daughter of a Byzantine subject, Choumnos, his own favourite minister. The idea of this marriage was offensive both to Alexios and the people of Trebizond; so that, when the young emperor married the daughter of an Iberian prince, in contempt of his guardian's commands, the act gained him great popularity in his own dominions.

Andronicus, who was fond of regarding himself as especially the orthodox emperor, conceived that he could always make the Greek Church a subservient instrument of his political enterprises. In order to carry into execution his plans concerning the marriage of the daughter of his favourite, he put the whole Eastern Church in a state of movement, and treated the question as if it was of equal importance with papal supremacy or the doctrine of the Azymites. He assembled a synod at Constantinople, and demanded that the marriage of his ward, the emperor of Trebizond—or the prince of the Lazés, as the Byzantines in the excess of their pride had the insolence to term the young Alexios—should be declared null by the Greek church, because it had been contracted by a minor without the sanction of his guardian, the orthodox emperor. The patriarch and clergy, alarmed at the ridiculous position in which they were likely to be placed, took advantage of the interesting condition of the bride, to refuse gratifying the spleen of Andronicus. At this time Eudocia, the mother of Alexios, was at Constantinople. She had rejected her brother's proposal to form a second marriage with the krai of Servia, and was anxious to return to her son's dominions. By persuading Andronicus that her influence was far more likely to make her son agree to a divorce than the sentence of an ecclesiastical tribunal whose authority he was able to decline, she obtained her brother's permission to return to Trebizond.

On arriving at her son's court she found him living happily with his young wife; and, on considering the case in her new position, she approved of his conduct, and confirmed him in his determination to resist the tyrannical pretensions of his uncle. Eudocia showed herself as much superior to her brother Andronicus in character, judgment, and virtue, as most of the women of the house of Paleologos were to the men. The difference between the males and females of this imperial family is so marked, that it would form a curious subject of inquiry to ascertain how the system of education of the Byzantine empire, at this period, produced an effect so singular and uniform.

The ecclesiastical culture of the Greek clergy may possibly have tended to strengthen the female mind, while it weakened and dogmatised that of the men.

Alexios II displayed both firmness and energy in his internal administration. He defeated an invasion of the Turkomans in the year 1302. Their army, which had advanced to the neighbourhood of Kerasunt, was routed with great slaughter, and their general Konstaga taken prisoner.

The danger to which the empire was exposed by the insolent pretensions of the Genoese, and their endeavours to secure a monopoly of the whole commerce of the Black Sea, was as great as that which threatened it from the Turkomans and Mongols. This bold and enterprising people had already gained possession of the most important

part of the commerce carried on between Western Europe and the countries within the Bosphorus, both on the Black Sea and the Sea of Azof. These commercial relations had been greatly extended after the expulsion of the Latins from Syria, Palestine, and Constantinople; and the Genoese colonies at Galata and Caffa, joined to the turbulence and activity of the people, rendered them dangerous enemies to a maritime state like Trebizond, which was dependent on foreign trade for a considerable portion of its revenues.

At this time the ruin of the commercial cities of Syria, by the invasions of Khoarasmians and Mongols, the insecurity of the caravan roads throughout the dominions of the Mamlouk sultans, the bull of the Pope, forbidding the Christians to hold any commercial intercourse with the Mohammedans under pain of excommunication, and the impossibility of European merchants passing through Syria and Egypt to purchase Indian commodities, all conspired to drive the trade of eastern Asia through the wide-extended dominions of the grand khan of the Mongols, where security for the passage of caravans could be guaranteed from the frontiers of China and Hindostan to the shores of the Caspian and Black Seas. The grand khans, Mongou and Kublai, had cherished the useful arts; and during their reigns the vigorous administration of Houlakou in Persia, Armenia, and Asia Minor, had allowed merchants to wander in safety with their bales from Caffa, Tana, and Trebizond, to Samarcand, Bokhara, and other entrepots of Indian and Chinese productions. The importance which this trade suddenly acquired, and the amount of wealth it kept in circulation, may be estimated by observing the effects of the Mongol invasions on the commerce of lands that might be supposed to have lain far beyond the sphere of their direct influence. Gibbon mentions, that the fear of the Tartars prevented the inhabitants of Sweden and Friesland from sending their ships to the fisheries on the British coast, and thus lowered the price of one article of food in England.

Akaba, the son and successor of Houlakou, on the vassal throne of the Mongols at Tauris, was a friend of the Christians, and an ally of both the Greek emperors, Michael VIII of Constantinople, and Joannes II of Trebizond. On ascending the throne he married Maria, the natural daughter of Michael, though she had been destined to become his father's bride. The political interests of the Mongols of Tauris suggested to them the advantages to be derived by constituting themselves the protectors of the commercial intercourse between the Christians of Europe and the idolaters of India. The desperate valour of the Mussulmans of western Asia made even the dreaded Tartars seek every means of diminishing the wealth and financial resources of the restless warriors who ruled at Iconium, Damascus, and Cairo. The approval of this policy by the grand khans created an active intercourse with the Tartar Empire, and suggested to the Christians hopes of converting the Mongol sovereigns to the papal church. Frequent embassies of friars were sent to the court of Karakorum, whose narratives supply us with much interesting information concerning the state of central Asia in the thirteenth century. The commerce of the farthest East had at this period returned to a route it had followed during the wars of the Romans with the Parthians, and of the Byzantine emperors with the Sassanides and the early caliphs.

The treaty of alliance which Michael VIII had entered into with the Genoese, before the recovery of Constantinople from the Latins and Venetians, conceded excessive commercial privileges to the republicans. Subsequent grants placed them in possession of Galata, and rendered them masters of a large part of the port of

Constantinople. Their own activity and daring enabled them to convert this factory into a fortress under the eyes of the Byzantine emperor, and within a few hundred yards of the palace of Boukoleon. New factories on the northern shores of the Black Sea soon became even more important for their commerce than the colony of Galata; and the trade they carried on from Caffa and Tana was of such value, that Caffa became the greatest commercial factory, and the most valuable foreign colony, of the republic. The advantages the Genoese derived from these establishments enabled them to extend their commerce, until it far exceeded that of any other power. Their long chain of factories, from Chias and Phokaia to Caffa and Tana, gave them the power of supplying every market both of Asia, Europe, and Africa, more speedily, and at a cheaper rate, than their Pisan, Catalan, and Venetian rivals. When they feared that the mercantile competition of rival traders was becoming too keen, their turbulent disposition led them to plunge into open hostilities with the party whose commercial activity alarmed them. Their insolence increased with their prosperity, and at last they aspired at securing to themselves a monopoly of the Black Sea trade. To carry their project into execution, it was necessary to obtain from the emperor of Trebizond all the privileges in his dominions which they enjoyed in the empire of Constantinople. They had already formed an establishment at Daphnous, the anchorage of Trebizond, where the eastern suburb overhangs the beach; and if they could obtain the permission to fortify this position, they would have rendered themselves as completely independent of the government at Trebizond, as their fortress of Galata made them of the government at Constantinople. To obtain their object, they commenced disputing with the imperial officers, hoping to find a pretext for employing force whenever a favourable opportunity presented itself.

They denied the title of the revenue officers to open their merchandise, in order to levy the transit-duties, and they made the amount of these duties a constant subject of contestation. They expected in this way to induce the emperor to agree to a commutation of the transit-duties into a regular tribute of a fixed amount, which they regarded as the first step to the formation of an independent colony. These disputes lasted several years.

A formal embassy was at last sent from Genoa to Alexios II, to demand the conclusion of a commercial treaty on the same terms as that which the republic had concluded with the emperor of Constantinople, whom the government of Genoa affected to regard as the suzerain of Trebizond. The ambassadors declared that unless the Genoese merchants were freed from the examination of their goods in levying the transit-duties, and allowed to farm the tax for a fixed sum, they would quit the dominions of Alexios and transfer their commercial establishments to the neighbouring states. The admission of this pretension would have greatly curtailed the revenues of the empire, and would have placed the Genoese in the possession of immense warehouses, into which the imperial authorities would have had no right to enter. These buildings, from their very nature and extent, would have soon formed a fortified quarter. The Genoese would then have repaired the ruins of Leontokastron, overlooking the port in the position now occupied by the Lazaretto; and the emperor of Trebizond, in the old fortress and citadel, would have sunk into a mere vassal of the republic.

The proposals of the Genoese were peremptorily rejected by Alexios; and, in refusing their demands, he added that they were all at perfect liberty to depart with all their property as soon as they paid the duties on the merchandise then in his dominions. The emperor knew well that, if they withdrew from Trebizond, their place would be



immediately occupied by the Venetians, Pisans, or Catalans. The Genoese, enraged at the prompt rejection of their terms, acted with violence and precipitation. They were always the most reckless and quarrelsome of merchants, and ever ready to balance their books with the sword. They began immediately to embark their property without offering to pay any duties. This was opposed by the imperial officers of the revenue, and a battle was the consequence. The Genoese, pressed by numbers, set fire to the houses of the Greeks towards the Hippodrome, (Meidan), expecting to distract the attention of their enemies and impede the arrival of troops from the citadel. Their infamous conduct was severely punished. The variable state of the wind drove the fire in the direction they least expected it, and, descending the hill to the port, it destroyed the greater part of the merchandise about which the battle had arisen, and laid the warehouses of the Genoese in ashes. This unfortunate result of their passion brought the traders to their senses. They felt that they had suffered a far greater loss than it was in their power, under any circumstances, to inflict on their enemy. The destruction of their goods would serve as a premium to other merchants, and quicken the eagerness of the rival Italian republics to supplant them. Very little hesitation on their part, therefore, was likely to place either the Venetians or the Pisans in possession of the profitable trade they were on the eve of losing, after having long enjoyed almost a monopoly of its advantages. In this critical conjuncture they forgot their passion and their pride, and hastened to conclude peace with Alexios, on condition that they should be allowed to resume their usual trade on the previous terms. Alexios prudently consented to this demand; and a treaty was signed by which the Genoese were allowed to re-establish themselves at Trebizond. But they were compelled to quit the position occupied by the warehouses that had been burnt, and form their new quarter deeper in the bay at the Darsena. Their industry soon enabled them to repair their losses; and these indefatigable merchants grew richer and more powerful from year to year, while the Greeks became as rapidly poorer, and saw their political influence hourly decline.

The summit of the position previously occupied by the Genoese was fortified by Alexios II, who repaired the ruins of an old castle, called Leontokastron, as a check on the naval power of the republicans.

The Greeks in general had now lost much of their taste for naval affairs, as well as that skill which had made them, in the early part of the middle ages, the rulers of the sea. The people of Trebizond had participated in the national decay. The city was filled with that inert population which congregates round an idle and luxurious court, when the sovereign or the government expends immense revenues, extracted from the industry of an extensive realm, within the walls of a palace or a single city. In such a state of things men's minds are turned away from every useful occupation and enterprising course of life. Wealth and distinction are more easily gained by haunting the antechambers of the palace, or frequenting the offices of the ministers, than by any honest exertion in private undertakings. The merchant is generally despised as a sordid inferior, and exposed to insult, speculation, and injustice. Merit cannot even make its way without favour, either in the military or naval service. A large body of the populace lives without exertion, by performing menial service about the dwellings of the courtiers, or acting as military retainers and instruments of pomp to the nobles. The public taxes and private rents, levied from the agricultural classes in the provinces, supplied to a certain number of favoured individuals the means of perpetuating a life of worthlessness and power. Such was the state of Greek society in the city of Trebizond.

In the Mohammedan city of Sinope everything was different. There, valour and military skill were the shortest road to riches and distinction. But as the continent offered no field of conquest to the small force at the disposal of the emir of Sinope, his attention, and that of his people, was directed to naval affairs. The Black Sea became the scene of their enterprises. Every merchantship was the object of their covetousness. The rich commerce of the Christians, joined to the skill and bravery of the Italian mariners, made the war against the trade of the western nations a profitable but dangerous occupation. This very danger, however, tended to make it an honourable employment in the eyes of the Mussulmans of Sinope. The merchantships of this age were compelled to sail on their trading voyages in small fleets, well-armed and strongly manned. In the Archipelago they were exposed to the attacks of the Seljouk pirates of Asia Minor; in the Black Sea, to the corsairs of Sinope. Even the Genoese, Pisans, Venetians, and Catalans were ready to avail themselves of slight pretexts for plundering one another. Piracy was a vice of the Christians as well as the Mohammedans. The difference was, that it was a deviation from their ordinary pursuits on the part of the maritime population of the Christian states, while it was the chief occupation of the ships of the Mussulman princes. The corsairs of Sinope were thus sure of meeting enemies worthy of their valour; nor had they any chance of success, unless they became experienced seamen as well as daring warriors. Their usual expeditions were directed against the flags of the Italian republics; but when it happened that they met with no booty at sea, they turned their arms to other sources of gain, and ravaged the coasts inhabited by the Christians. Every article of property on which they could lay their hands, even to the metal cooking-utensils of the poorest peasants, were carried away, and all the inhabitants they could seize were sold as slaves.

In the year 1314 a band of these pirates landed in the vicinity of Trebizond, and, after ravaging the surrounding country, plundered the suburbs of the city, and set fire to the buildings without the gates. The conflagration spread far and wide, and many splendid edifices were destroyed. Alexios II, in order to protect the western suburb, and the space between the fortress and the sea, from all future attacks, constructed a new wall to the city. This addition to the fortress extended from the tower that protected the bridge over the western ravine, in a line running down to the sea. The style of the new fortification was modelled on the land wall of Constantinople; and it still exists in tolerable preservation, particularly where it covers the bridge over the romantic ravine that forms the noble ditch of the citadel.

Pope John XXII seems to have entertained some hope of inducing Alexios to acknowledge the supremacy of the see of Rome, though we are aware of no grounds that could lead him to adopt such an opinion. There exists a letter of his Holiness, addressed to the emperor, dated in 1329, inviting him to co-operate in bringing about the union of the Greek and Latin churches, and recommending some missionaries to his good offices. The emperor Alexios died in the year 1330, after a prosperous reign of thirty-three years. He left a brother named Michael, and four sons, besides two daughters—one of whom, Anna, occupied the throne of Trebizond for a short period.

## SECT. III

## PERIOD OF ANARCHY AND CIVIL WARS. REIGNS OF ANDRONIKOS III, MANUEL II, BASIL, IRENE, ANNA, JOHN III, AND MICHAEL—1330-1349

Andronikos III, the eldest son of Alexios II, reigned little more than a year and a half. He is accused of having murdered his two younger brothers, Manuel and George. If the crime was committed from motives of political suspicion, we may conclude that his second brother Basilios, and his uncle Michael, only escaped the same fate by being absent, or by effecting their escape to Constantinople.

Manuel II was only eight years old when his father Andronikos III died. The crimes of his parent had utterly depraved a society already deeply stained with vice. No measures were now too violent for those who hoped to obtain wealth or power by civil broils or private murders. The chiefs of the different factions incited the populace to tumult, and goaded them to rebellion, in order to gratify their own ambition. The city was a scene of disorder, and the interior of the palace became the theatre of many an act of bloodshed. As soon as Andronikos III died, the ministers of state, the clergy, the nobility, the provincial governors, and the leaders of the troops commenced intriguing one against the other, in order to obtain the sole direction of the central government, and the command of all the patronage of the court.

The moment seemed favourable for the Turkomans to invade the empire : but it not unfrequently happens that a country apparently on the verge of ruin, from intestine troubles, is peculiarly ready to encounter a foreign enemy, on account of the very preparations which have been made to perpetrate political offences; and all parties are found eager to gain popularity, by evincing extraordinary patriotism in defence of their native land.

Each leader wishes to strengthen his own faction, by performing deeds that all must approve. This was experienced by the Turkomans, who invaded the empire of Trebizond in the year 1332. They advanced as far as Asomatos, where they were defeated with considerable loss, and compelled to escape with such precipitation that they abandoned the greater part of their horses and baggage to save their lives. The disorder within the walls, however, was not diminished by this victory, and the whole population became at length seriously alarmed for the fate of the empire. In order to put an end to this state of anarchy, Basilios, the second son of Alexios II, was invited from Constantinople to govern the empire.

Basilios arrived at Trebizond in the month of September 1332, and was immediately proclaimed emperor. Manuel II was deposed, after his name had been used for eight months to authorise every kind of violence and disorder. The young prince was kept in a state of seclusion, with the view, doubtless, of compelling him, when he grew older, to become a monk; but in the course of a few months an insurrection was produced by the intrigues of a eunuch, who held the office of grand-duke, during which Manuel was stabbed. Basilios, on mounting the throne, had allowed his partisans to commit the most shocking enormities. The grand-duke Leka, and his son Tzamba, the grand-domestikos, were slain; while the grand-duchess, a member of the family of Syrikania, one of the most illustrious houses in the empire, was stoned to death. The reign of Basilios lasted seven years and six months. It was disturbed by the exorbitant

power and independent position which the great officers had acquired during the preceding anarchy. The principal territorial nobles of the provinces had assumed the rank of petty sovereigns, and their wealth and influence enabled them to form parties in the capital. The Scholarioi, or privileged militia, in the fortress, possessed a constitution and a degree of power not unlike that of the Janissaries of the Ottoman Empire, in the century preceding their destruction. The emperor found it necessary to surround his person with a body of Frank, Iberian, and Byzantine guards, to guard the citadel and the palace; and their insolence and rapacity increased the unpopularity of the government.

The personal conduct of Basilios was ill suited to extend his influence or gain respect for his dignity. He married Irene, the natural daughter of the Byzantine emperor, Andronicus III; and, had he availed himself with prudence of this alliance, he might have rendered the defeat of the Turkomans, who again ventured to advance to the walls of his capital, extremely advantageous to the empire. His conduct, however, was such that it excited the popular indignation; and an eclipse of the sun being interpreted by the people as a proof of divine reprobation, he was pursued with insults, and driven with stones to seek refuge in the citadel. The empress Irene had no children. Basilios, not contented with living in open adultery with a lady of Trebizond, also named Irene, by whom he was the father of two sons, determined to open the way for their succession to the throne, by celebrating a public marriage with his Trebizantine mistress. Whether he ever succeeded in obtaining any divorce from his first wife, except by his own decree, seems doubtful, and on what plea he could pretend that his marriage was invalid is not known; but it is recorded that he persuaded or forced the clergy of Trebizond to celebrate his second marriage in the month of July 1339. He died in the following year, in the month of April.

Irene Paleologina, who was universally considered as the lawful wife of Basilios, was suspected of having had some share in causing his death. She was found prepared for the event, and had already organised the movements of a party which placed her on the throne. This promptitude in profiting by her husband's death certainly looked suspicious; while the readiness of mankind to repeat calumnious reports concerning their rulers, the known immorality of the society in the imperial palace, and the careless levity of Irene herself, all tended to give circulation and credibility to the rumour. Irene, as soon as she had secured possession of the capital, sent off her rival and the two sons of her husband to Constantinople, to be detained by her father, Andronicus, as hostages for the tranquillity of Trebizond. A powerful party among the nobility, however, was both alarmed and offended by the success of her schemes, which deranged all the plans they had formed of acquiring wealth and power during the minority of the children of Basilios, through the favour of the Trebizantine Irene, whom they had intended to name regent.

The empire of Trebizond became, for several years, a prey to civil wars and intestine disturbances. Two great parties were formed, called Amytzantarants and Scholarants. Civil war in itself, though more to be deprecated than any foreign hostilities, may nevertheless be as necessary and legitimate. Its instigator may be a true patriot, its duration may be a proof of social progress, and its successful termination in favour of those who were stigmatised as rebels at its commencement, may be an indispensable step to the establishment of national prosperity. Where war is undertaken by the people for the purpose of establishing the empire of the law, it indicates a healthy condition of society, even though it be a civil war. It is when internal contests take place

among those who have no object to obtain but power, and no feelings to gratify but party spirit, revenge, or avarice, that civil war marks a state of the body politic so demoralised as to serve for a sure herald of national degradation. In the fourteenth century, neither the governments of Trebizond nor Constantinople, nor the Greek people, felt any disposition to submit their power, their passions, their prejudices, or their factions to the dictates of law or justice; and nowhere did the blind violence of individuals represent the demoralised condition of Greek society more clearly than in the city of Trebizond.

The empress Irene was no sooner established on the throne than civil war broke out. Assisted by the Amytzantarants, by a powerful party among the nobles, and by the Italian and Byzantine mercenaries, she held possession of the fortress, with its citadel and small port. The rebels, who affected to consider themselves the patriotic champions of native rights, headed by the lord of Tzanich, who was the captain-general of the Scholarioi, or city militia, and supported by the great families of the Doranites, Kabasites, and Kamakh—joined to a detachment of the imperial guard which remained faithful to the memory of the emperor Basilios, and a body of the people, who hated Irene as a Constantinopolitan stranger—established themselves in possession of the great monastery of St Eugenios. This monastery then rose like a fortress over the eastern ravine that enclosed the citadel; and though it was almost within rifle range of the imperial palace, the distance, when combined with the advantages of its situation, was at that time sufficient to render it impregnable on the side of the old city, while another ravine separated it from the populous suburb extending to the Meidan and the great port. A third party, under the command of the grand-duke, the eunuch John, who had murdered the young emperor Manuel II, held possession of the fortress of Limnia, then the most important military station in the empire beyond the walls of the capital. It was situated at a distance of only two hundred stades to the westward of Trebizond. For two months the parties of the empress Irene and of the Scholarioi and great nobles remained in arms, watching one another, within hearing of their mutual cries, and engaging in daily skirmishes leading to no permanent result.

The circumstance of a grand-duke, who was a eunuch, holding Limnia as if it was his private estate, indicates sufficiently that the power of many of the factious leaders was not so much hereditary and territorial as official and administrative. The oligarchs of Trebizond were representatives of a Roman, not a feudal aristocracy, and partook more of the ancient and Asiatic type than of the medieval characteristics of the nobility of Western Europe. The eunuch at last declared in favour of the empress, and advanced with his troops to her assistance. The communications of the citadel with the country to the westward had always remained open, as they were completely protected against the nobles at St Eugenios by the two deep ravines that surround the old city. As soon as the troops of the grand-duke had effected a junction with those in Trebizond, the party intrenched in St Eugenios was vigorously attacked. The approaches were made from the south, battering-rams were planted against the walls, and fire-balls were hurled into the place, which was soon set on fire. The immense monastery and the splendid church—the rich plate, images, and relics, and the old mural paintings, which would have been more valuable in modern times even than the bones of martyrs—the pride and palladium of the empire of Trebizond, was on this occasion reduced to a shapeless heap of ruins by a foreign empress and a factious eunuch. The leaders of the aristocratic party and the Scholarioi were captured by the warlike eunuch, who sent them prisoners

to Limnia, where they were put to death in the following year, when the throne of Irene was threatened by Anna Anachoutlou, her deceased husband's sister.

Irene was of a gay, thoughtless, and daring disposition, like her father Andronicus III. She soon overlooked the danger of her position, though she fully understood that her tenure of power was exposed to hourly perils. It was evident that, without a husband who could wear the imperial crown, she could not hope to maintain her position long; and she urged her father to send her a husband, chosen from among the Byzantine nobles, who could direct the administration, command the armies of the empire, and aid her in repressing the factions that were constantly plotting against her authority. Her ambassadors found Andronicus occupied in preparing for his campaign against the despotat of Epirus, and he died before he had found time to pay any serious attention to his daughter's request. Irene consoled herself for the delay by falling in love with the grand-domestikos of her own empire. The favour this passion led her to confer on a few individuals divided her own court into factions, and afforded her old enemies, who had escaped the catastrophe at St Eugenios, an opportunity of again taking up arms, so that a new storm burst on the head of the thoughtless empress.

Another female now appeared to claim the throne, with a better title than Irene. Anna, called Anachoutlou, the eldest daughter of the emperor Alexios II, had taken the veil, and until this time had lived in seclusion. The opposition party persuaded her to quit her monastic dress and escape to Lazia, where she was proclaimed empress as being the nearest legitimate heir of her brother Basilios. The Lazes, the Tzans, and all the provincials, preferred a native sovereign of the house of Grand-Komnenos to the domination of a Byzantine scion of Paleologos, who seemed determined to marry a foreigner. Anna, strong in the popular opinion that it was a fundamental law of the empire that Trebizond could only be ruled by a member of the house of Grand-Komnenos, marched directly to the capital without encountering any opposition. The government of Irene was unpopular, both on account of her personal conduct and the losses which a recent Turkish expedition had inflicted on all classes. Her Constantinopolitan mercenaries had fled without giving battle to the infidels, who had advanced to the walls of the capital and burned the suburbs on both sides of the fortress, leaving the blackened ruins encumbered with such numbers of unburied bodies that a fearful pestilence was the consequence. At this conjuncture Anna arrived at Trebizond. She was immediately admitted within the citadel, and universally recognised as the lawful empress. Irene was dethroned after a reign of a year and four months.

On the 30th of July 1341, when Anna had only occupied the throne for about three weeks, Michael Grand-Komnenos, the second son of Joannes II, arrived at Trebizond. He had been selected by the regency at Constantinople as a suitable husband for Irene; but he had attained the mature age of fifty-six—a circumstance which may have rendered it a piece of good fortune for him that she was dethroned before his arrival. As he was the legitimate male heir of his house, and had a son Joannes already nineteen years old, there were certainly strong political reasons in favour of his election. Michael reached Trebizond accompanied by three Byzantine ships of war and a chosen body of troops. He landed without opposition, attended by Niketas the captain-general of the Scholarioi, and it appeared that his title to the throne would be readily acknowledged by all parties. But the circumstance that he came to marry Irene, surrounded by Byzantine mercenaries and supported by the faction of the Scholarioi, irritated without intimidating the native party of the Lazic nobility, who had driven

Irene from the throne. They were not willing to lose the fruits of a successful revolution without a contest; but as they were doubtful of the support of the people, and not prepared for open resistance, they resolved to gain their ends by treachery. Michael was received by the archbishop Akakios with due ceremony. He received the oath of allegiance of the assembled nobles and officers of state, and retired to the palace to prepare for his coronation on the morrow. At daybreak the scene was changed. The people had been incited during the whole night to resist the invasion of a new swarm of Constantinopolitan adventurers, and they now rose in rebellion. The treacherous nobles and officers of state facilitated their enterprise. Michael was seized in the palace and sent prisoner to Oinaion. The Lazes, after a severe engagement, captured the three Byzantine ships, and Irene was embarked in a European vessel, and sent off to Constantinople with the adventurers who had escaped from the people in the tumult.

The nobles of the Lazian faction now became the sole possessors of political power, and used the name of the empress Anna to govern the empire by an association of powerful chiefs.

The Greek people were too deeply imbued with an administrative organisation, and too firmly persuaded of the necessity of a powerful central authority, to remain long satisfied with this state of things. Niketas, the captain-general of the Scholarioi and the Greek party, which looked to the Byzantine alliance as the surest guarantee of civil order, resolved to make another attempt to drive their rivals from power. It was evident they could expect no success, unless they placed at their head a member of the family of Grand-Kommenos. Michael was in a distant prison; his son Joannes, who resided at Constantinople, was now twenty years old, and to him the Scholarioi resolved to apply. Niketas and the chiefs of the party left Trebizond in a Venetian galley, to persuade the young man to embark in the project. The expedition was undertaken without any open support from the Byzantine government. Three Genoese galleys were hired, in addition to two fitted out by the chiefs of Trebizond; and a body of chosen troops was enrolled, for an attack on the government of the empress Anna. They reached Trebizond in the month of September 1342, and effected a landing and a lodgment in the great eastern suburb, about the Hippodrome. The Scholarioi, the Midzomates, and the Doranites, joined them; and after a fierce contest in the streets the invaders forced their way into the fortress, and proclaimed Joannes III emperor. Anna was taken prisoner in the imperial palace, and, to guard against the possibility of any reaction in her favour, she was immediately strangled. She had occupied the throne rather more than a year. Many nobles of the Lazic party, particularly the Amytzantarants, were murdered; and a lady of rank was strangled, as well as the empress Anna, during the tumults that accompanied this revolution.

Joannes III celebrated his coronation in the church of Chrysokephalos. So little concern did he give himself about his father's fate, that he allowed the eunuch John to retain him a prisoner at Limnia. But before a year elapsed the grand-duke was murdered; and soon after this event, the party who had placed Joannes III on the throne became disgusted with his conduct. The young emperor had never possessed much power beyond the walls of the capital, nor did he pay much attention to the duties of a sovereign. He found money enough in the public treasury to enable him to indulge in every species of luxury and idle amusement, and he trusted to his foreign guards for repressing any dangerous effects of popular discontent. At the same time, the preference he gave the young nobility of the native party, who, to gain his goodwill and recover

power, flattered his follies and his vices, alienated the attachment of those statesmen and soldiers who had placed him on the throne. The captain-general Niketas, who had taken the lead in so many revolutions, again commenced his factious movements. It is true there is no mode of reforming an absolute sovereign: he must be dethroned, as the first step to a better state of things. Niketas and his party marched to Limnia, and, releasing the imprisoned Michael, conducted him to Trebizond and proclaimed him emperor, in May 1344. Joannes III was dethroned, after a reign of a year and eight months, and confined by his father in the monastery of St Sabas.

The emperor Michael seems to have made some attempt to improve the condition of the government, but his talents were unequal to the task. The two great parties of the Lazian nobles and Greek leaders of the citizens maintained themselves in a condition to control the imperial administration, by personal combinations and political arrangements, arising out of temporary and local causes. Michael resolved to break the power of both parties. Immediately after his accession, he condemned to death the most eminent of the nobles of the Lazian party—a measure in which he was supported by the Greek party, to whom a distribution was made of all the great offices of state. Niketas was made grand-duke.

All parties now felt the evils of the vicissitudes to which they were continually exposed in their civil contests, and became seriously alarmed at the bloody massacres which followed every change. Those who had recently secured power attempted on this occasion to give their authority a greater degree of permanence, by establishing an organic law for regulating the administration of the empire. In short, the confederacy of Scholarioi attempted to give Trebizond an oligarchical constitution. The emperor Michael was compelled to sign an act, ratified by a solemn oath, promising to leave the whole of the legislative power, and the direction of the public administration, in the hands of the great officers of state and members of the senate; and to remain satisfied with the imperial dignity, a liberal civil list, and the rule over his own palace. Neither party violence nor imperial ambition could be long restrained by such a convention; while the knowledge that the nobles had circumscribed the power of the emperor excited indignation among the people, who looked to the sovereign as their protector against the aristocracy, and as the only pure fountain of law and justice.

The emperor Michael seized the earliest opportunity that presented itself to rid himself of the tutelage in which he was held. The people of the capital and the Lazes flew to arms, and declared that they were determined to live under the government of their lawful emperors, and not under the arbitrary rule of a band of nobles. The enthusiasm of the people for the mere shadow of the laws of Rome enabled Michael to resume absolute power, and declare the concessions he had made to the ministers and the senate null. The grand-duke Niketas and several of the great officers of his party were arrested; but on this occasion no blood appears to have been shed. The emperor, to guard against further troubles, sent his son Joannes to be kept in ward at Adrianople, where he could find few opportunities of communicating with the factious at Trebizond.

The absolute sway of the emperor Michael brought no more prosperity to the city and empire of Trebizond than the government of the nobles had done. The great plague that about this time devastated every country in Asia and Europe visited Trebizond in the year 1347, where it swept off numbers of the population, and increased the social disorder, by dissolving all family ties. The Turkomans, who occupied the country from



Arsinga and Erzurum to the castle of Baibert, invaded the empire, and ravaged the valley of the Pyxites up to the walls of the capital.

A more serious war than any which had yet occurred broke out about this time with the Genoese, who availed themselves of the enfeebled condition of the empire to seize on some of the most important positions in the imperial territories. In the year 1348, they captured the city of Kerasunt, after burning great part of the buildings. Two expeditions from Kaffa were successively directed against the capital. The first consisted of only two large Genoese men-of-war. The imperial officers considered that the force ready for action in the port was sufficient to capture these enemies. The Trebizontine squadron, consisting of one large ship, a galley, and several smaller vessels, left the harbour of Daphnous to attack the republicans; but the Greeks were no match for the Genoese. The large imperial ship was burned; the grand-duke John Kabasites, Michael Tzaoichites, and many more who bravely engaged in the fight, were slain. The Greeks now revenged themselves by attacking all the Franks settled at Trebizond; their houses and warehouses were plundered, and those were imprisoned who escaped death from the popular fury. The Genoese, however, returned from Kaffa in a few weeks, with a stronger force, determined to exact signal satisfaction for the treatment of the Europeans. Affairs at Trebizond were in a state of anarchy. Michael was stretched on a sick-bed, incapable of action. An internal revolution was on the eve of explosion. With much difficulty peace was negotiated with the Genoese; but it was only obtained by ceding to them the fortress of Leontokastron, which Alexios II had constructed to restrain their insolent pretensions, (1349.) Kerasunt, however, was restored to the Trebizontine government. From this period the Genoese acquired the complete command of the harbour of Daphnous, and the importance of the empire of Trebizond began to decline.

Against all these misfortunes, an old man like Michael, worn out with sickness, and naturally destitute of talent, either as a soldier or a statesman, was ill suited to contend. Party spirit revived, conspiracies were formed, and popular tumults broke out, until at last Michael was dethroned, on Sunday the 13th December 1349, after a reign of five years and seven months. He was compelled by the partisans of his successor, Alexios III, to enter the monastery of St Sabas; but after a short time, the imperial monk was sent to Constantinople for greater security.

## CHAPTER IV

RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE IMPERIAL SUPREMACY IN THE  
ILLEGITIMATE BRANCH OF THE HOUSE OF GRAND-KOMNENOS

## SECT. I

## REIGN OF ALEXIOS III. PROGRESS OF THE TURKOMANS.

## REVENGE OF LERCARI.

## MAGNIFICENT ECCLESIASTICAL ENDOWMENTS

A.D. 1349-1390

Alexios III, son of Basilios by Irene of Trebizond, had been brought from Constantinople by the party of the Scholarioi and the citizens to occupy the throne. He was now declared emperor by the senate and the people, and solemnly crowned in the church of St Eugenios, though he had not yet completed his twelfth year. His real name was John, but he adopted that of Alexios, which was the name of his deceased brother, on account of the auspicious influence it was supposed to exert over the family of Grand-Komnenos. The youth of the prince secured the aristocracy from all immediate attempts to diminish their power, and they hoped to profit by their tenure of administration, in such a way as to consolidate their authority, without openly restricting the exercise of the imperial prerogative, to which the people had given so many proofs of devotion.

The young emperor had received his education at Constantinople, and the usurper John Cantacuzenos assisted in placing him on the throne, in order to exclude the legitimate branch of the family of Grand-Komnenos, represented by the emperors Michael and Joannes III, from the empire, on account of their alliance with the house of Paleologos, the lawful emperors of Constantinople. That the union might be drawn as close as possible between the two dynasties of intruders, the young Alexios, when only fourteen years old, was married to Theodora, the daughter of Nicephorus, cousin of the emperor of Constantinople. The marriage ceremony of the imperial children was celebrated in the church of St Eugenios, whom the young Alexios selected as the patron saint of his dynasty, in addition to the previous duties of the saint, as protector of the family of Grand-Komnenos and guardian of the empire of Trebizond. The church and monastery, which had been ruined by the conflagration during the reign of Irene Paleologina, (1340,) were both rebuilt, and enriched with great external splendour; but the appearance of the existing church proves that the arts had already declined at

Trebizond, and the restoration of the shrine of his patron saint by the magnificent Alexios will bear no comparison, either in solidity or purity of architectural decoration, with the earlier church of St Sophia—and it is doubtless far inferior in these qualities to the preceding building whose place it occupied.

The rebellions of the aristocracy and the seditions of the people continued with unabated violence during the early part of this reign. Each noble and senator strove, by intrigue or force, to secure for himself some private advantage, before the prevailing system of partitioning the resources of the state should be brought to a conclusion. No concessions of the ministers of state could satisfy even the pretensions of a single faction, so that plot was succeeded by plot. Nor were the people always inclined to submit tamely to see their interests sacrificed to the rapacity of the aristocracy, or stand idle spectators while the officers of state squandered the heavy taxes, that were employed to maintain bands of armed followers, who did little else than plunder the country they ought to have been guarding against the inroads of the Turkomans. On one occasion the family of Doranites, mastering the whole administration, of which they had for some time held the principal offices, forced the young emperor to retire to Tripolis; but they were soon after overpowered by the people, who often changed sides in their vain endeavours to find individual leaders willing to establish order, and conduct the government according to law.

The fortresses of Limnia, Tzanicha, Kerasunt, and Kenchrina were for a time in the hands of various parties of rebel nobles. Limnia was recovered from the Doranites by an expedition led by the emperor's mother, with Panaretos, the author of the dull Chronicle which has preserved a place for the revolutions of Trebizond in the world's history, as one of her council. It would hardly tend to give us a clearer insight into the state of society at this period, if we were to repeat the meagre enumeration Panaretos has left us of the various revolutions that followed one another for some years in quick succession.

A few prominent facts will paint with greater accuracy the universal disorder. The grand-duke Niketas, who was the leader of the Scholarioi, had been invested with the direction of the public administration at the popular rising which drove the Doranites from power; but in the course of about two years, the young emperor having recovered possession of the fortresses of Limnia, Tzanicha, and Kenchrina, and displaying both the power and the will to take upon himself the direction of the administration, the grand-duke and his partisans retired to Kerasunt. Counting on their influence over the factious native militia, and their popularity with the citizens, they made an attempt to recover their power by force. The rebels presented themselves before the capital in the spring of 1355, with a fleet of one large ship and eleven smaller vessels. Their arrival caused great disorders; but they found the young emperor's authority firmly established, and they were compelled to return to Kerasunt without having gained their object. This retreat marks the period at which the power of the emperor was again reestablished in its full supremacy; but an altered state of society, and a general feeling that individuals, whether high or low, must trust to their individual position, and not to the law or the central administration, for justice, gave the authority of the emperors of Trebizond, henceforth, rather the characteristics of feudal suzerainty blended with Oriental despotism, than the old Byzantine ascendancy of supreme legislator and incorruptible and allpowerful judge. Force, to the exclusion of justice, acquired the same influence over public opinion among the Greek race, that it had long

held in western Europe and among the Mohammedan nations; and as the social organisation of the Greek people was now essentially unwarlike, their repudiation of law produced nothing but degradation; and their appeal to force, from their want of discipline and courage, rendered them despicable, and soon lowered them in the scale of society.

The defeat of the grand-duke before Trebizond was followed up by Alexios with some vigour. He sailed to attack the rebels in Kerasunt with two ships and a small fleet of transports, and after a single engagement the place capitulated. The grand-duke assembled his troops at Kenchrina, of which he had gained possession, and the emperor marched to besiege him; but the place was so strong that he was compelled to rest satisfied with a simple acknowledgment of his authority, and the apparent submission of the rebels who retained possession of the fortress. But Alexios III gradually extended his power, and consolidated the central authority. In this eventful year John Kabasites, the duke of Chaldia, recovered the forts of Cheriana and Sorogaina from the Turkomans, and restored the imperial power in these districts. The dethroned emperor Michael was also defeated in an attempt he made to profit by the rebellion of his old ally, Niketas the grand-duke. The partisans of the Byzantine emperor John V (Paleologos,) had favoured the escape of Michael from Constantinople, and assisted him in his enterprise, in order to weaken the party of Cantacuzenos by the fall of their ally the young Alexios. Michael, however, was too well known at Trebizond to find any support, and he was obliged to return to Constantinople without having had it in his power even to create a revolt.

Before the end of the year, the grand-domestikos, Meizomates, and the grand-general, Michael Sampson, took Kenchrina and put an end to the civil war. The grand-duke Niketas, whose administrative talents were very great, was soon received into favour; and when he died in the year 1361, the emperor Alexios, to mark his grief for the loss of so able a man, led the funeral procession clad in white robes—the mourning garb of the emperor. The authority of Alexios III was now re-established along the whole line of coast, from Oinaion to Batoun; but very little order existed in the interior of the country, at a distance from the sea-ports. Even the possessions of the great monastery of the Virgin at Sumelas, not thirty miles from the capital, was exposed to constant attacks on the part of the neighbouring Mohammedans. Many of the great landed proprietors continued to be almost independent, and their conduct kept several districts in a state bordering on anarchy. Domestic raid, and foreign inroads of plundering tribes, were events of frequent occurrence during the whole reign of Alexios. On one occasion the emperor himself had very nearly fallen into the hands of a party of his subjects, who had the boldness to attempt making him a prisoner, in order to carry him off to the mountains, from under the walls of his palace in the citadel of Trebizond. Alexios had formed a party of pleasure in the ravine of St Gregorios, and while he was enjoying the fresh air on the picturesque banks of this deep ravine, a band of nobles of the party of the Kabasites attempted to seize him, and it was with difficulty that he effected his escape into the citadel by the southern sally-port. This daring outrage occurred in the month of October 1363.

The emperor Alexios III was less fortunate in his wars with the Turkomans than in the civil broils with his own subjects. The fall of Kenehrina encouraged him to make an expedition against the tribes established in the district of Cheriana. The chronicler Panaretos says, that the idea of the expedition must have been inspired by the

machinations of the devil. The imperial troops marched forward without any plan of operations, ravaging the country, plundering, and making prisoners. In the midst of their career they were suddenly assailed by a small body of the enemy's cavalry. Emperor, generals, and troops, were all seized with a panic, and fled without offering any resistance. Four hundred were left dead on the field. John Kabasites, the duke of Chaldia, who a few months before had reconquered the forts of Cheriana and Sorogaina, perished. Not only was all the plunder lost, but the whole of the baggage of the troops, the military chest of the army, and the personal equipage and tents of the emperor, fell into the hands of the Turkomans. Alexios fled among the foremost, and Panaretos followed him close. The historian declares, that if the Lord had not been with him, and strengthened his horse, so that he galloped after the emperor for three days, posterity would have lost the imperial notary, and the history of Trebizond would have been at this hour a blank. The fugitives never stopped a moment, either to rally the troops or take a single measure for their safety; nor did they hold their own persons to be perfectly secure until they entered the walls of Trebizond, to which they brought the news of the disgraceful overthrow.

The Turkish hordes which attacked the long slip of territory that composed the empire of Trebizond belonged to different independent tribes. They were united by no political tie, and generally acted without concert. Indeed, they formed not unfrequently hostile races, more inclined to contract alliances even with the Christians than with one another. The great impulse that carried them onward in their career of conquest and colonisation was the necessity of securing new lands for their augmenting population, and for their increasing flocks and herds.

Why the nomadic population should have increased in an augmented ratio, at this, or at any other given period of history, is one of the social problems that lies beyond the sphere of Greek history; or, at least, it would require to be examined in greater detail, and involve a deeper investigation of the state of society among the Oriental nations, during the middle ages, than falls within the scope of this historical sketch. A few prominent facts alone require to be noticed. The Turkish nomads were compelled yearly to occupy a greater extent of land with their migratory encampments. Necessity obliged them either to exterminate other nomads, or to push before them the civilised cultivators of the soil, just as the civilised cultivators of the soil in our day, acting under the impulse of similar motives, are now driving before them the nomadic tribes of North America, Southern Africa, and Australia.

The Turkomans on the frontiers of the empire of Trebizond, when they met with a numerous population, or a strong castle capable of resisting their progress, usually began their attacks by ruining the resources of the natives, not by risking a battle with them in the field. A successful foray in autumn would generally enable them to burn the standing grain, even when they were powerless to carry away plunder. The farm-houses, the cattle, and the fruit-trees, little by little, would be all destroyed; until at last the population was so reduced in numbers, and so impoverished, as either to emigrate or to become incapable of longer defending their paternal possessions. In this way the Mussulman nomads in Asia, and the Sclavonian and Bulgarian herdsmen and shepherds in Europe, occupied many extensive provinces, and exterminated millions of the Greek race. Their progress, it is true, was aided by the rapacity of the central governments at Constantinople and Trebizond, which neglected the defence of the country, and, by the very nature of their administrative agency, fomented a spirit of local dissension and

selfishness that took away from the Greek people all power of acting in common, paralysed their courage, and taught them a degree of social degradation in which they hailed slavery as a welcome repose.

The process of depopulation was likewise at times effected by internal changes in the profits of industry. A dense population of cultivators of the soil often, in the declining period of the empire, gave way to a few graziers. This change was brought about by the fiscal severity of the government, which taxed gardens, vineyards, olive-groves, and orchards, while it neglected to repair the aqueducts, the roads, and the bridges, which could alone secure to the cultivator the power of converting his surplus produce into money at a profitable price. The peasantry made the discovery that the government could not so easily absorb the gains of a pastoral population as they could tax the fruits of the soil, and consequently it became the interest both of the great landed proprietors and of the peasantry to produce cattle, wool, and hides, rather than corn, wine, and oil. Every person who has paid attention to the condition of society in the interior of the Ottoman empire must have frequently observed traces of the practical results of similar causes.

In the decline of all absolute governments, the expenses of the sovereign absorb so large a portion of the public revenues that every department of the executive power is weakened to increase the splendour of the court. Distant lines of communications are allowed to become useless for transport. Military positions and strong fortresses are neglected, because the immediate district they cover is insufficient to pay the expense of their maintenance. Weak princes prefer dismantling fortresses to reducing the number of their chamberlains and court pageants. Of this spirit of economy the Turkomans frequently reaped the fruits. Every successive generation saw them gain possession of some frontier fortress, or encroach far into some province, that the emperors regarded as hardly worth defending. It must not, however, be supposed that they were always allowed to advance in an uninterrupted career of conquest. The army of Trebizond inherited some portion of the military discipline and science which enabled the Byzantine sovereigns to repulse the Saracens, not only from the walls of Constantinople, but to drive them back beyond Mount Taurus. On the field of battle, if properly commanded, it was still superior to the nomad cavalry of the Turkomans. Even the reign of a sovereign so destitute of military talents as Alexios III was distinguished by several successful military enterprises. The emir of Baibert was defeated and slain; and the emir of Arsinga, who had laid siege to Golacha, was repulsed with loss. On the other hand, however, the forts of old Matzouka and Golacha were ultimately captured by the Mussulmans. Limnia was either conquered by Tadjeddin, who married Eudocia, the daughter of Alexios, or it was ceded to him by the emperor as the dowry of the princess, to prevent its conquest. Alexios made a second attempt to reconquer Cheria; but his military incapacity and the severity of the weather destroyed his army, which suffered greater loss from hunger and cold than from the sword of the enemy. Fortunately for the empire, the chiefs of the Turkomans directed their forces against one another, instead of uniting to conquer the Christians. Tadjeddin, the emir of Limnia, attacked Suleimanbeg, the son of Hadji-Omer, emir of Chalybia, at the head of an army of twelve thousand men. A great battle was fought between these princes, who were both sons-in-law of the emperor of Trebizond. Tadjeddin was defeated, and perished on the field of battle with six thousand of his army.

The character of the emperor Alexios III was stained with far deeper disgrace by a quarrel in which he was involved with a Genoese merchant, than by all the defeats he suffered from the Turkomans. The disgraceful circumstances connected with this affair rendered the empire of Trebizond a byword of contempt throughout all the commercial cities of the East. A Genoese merchant noble, named Megollo Lercari, was settled at the colony of Caffa. He was in the habit of residing a good deal at Trebizond, partly on account of the facilities it afforded him for conducting some part of his business, and partly to enjoy the agreeable climate and gay society. As a man of rank and wealth he frequented the court of Alexios, where his knowledge of the world and intelligent conversation gained him a degree of intimacy with the emperor that excited the jealousy of the Greek courtiers. It happened one day, while playing at chess, that he became involved in a dispute with a page whom Alexios was reported to treat with unseemly favour. The young Greek, knowing that Lercari was regarded with jealousy by all who were present, carried his insolence so far as to strike the Genoese. The surrounding courtiers prevented Lercari from revenging himself on the spot; and when he demanded satisfaction from the emperor, Alexios treated the affair as a trifle and neglected his complaint.

Lercari was so indignant at the treatment he received that he quitted Trebizond, declaring that he would hold the emperor accountable for his favourite's insolence. In order to prepare the means of gratifying his revenge he returned to Genoa, where, with the assistance of his friends and relations, he fitted out a piratical expedition, consisting of two war galleys, to cruise in the Black Sea.

He soon made his appearance off Trebizond, where he captured the imperial ships, ruined the commerce of the Greeks, ravaged the coasts, and took many prisoners, whom he treated with horrid cruelty—cutting off the ears and noses of all those who were in any way connected with the imperial service. Alexios sent out a squadron of four war galleys of superior size, manned with his best mariners and favoured by a leading wind, in the fullest confidence that the Genoese would be easily overtaken and conquered by the superior swiftness and size of these ships. But, even at this great disadvantage, the naval skill and undaunted courage of the unruly republicans gave them a complete victory over the Greeks. By a feigned flight, the Genoese succeeded in separating the four galleys from one another, and then by a combined attack they captured them all in succession. The prisoners were mutilated as usual, and sent on shore in the boats.

On this occasion an old man was taken prisoner with his two sons. When the sons were brought up to be mutilated, the old man entreated Lercari to take his life and spare his children. They had only obeyed their father's orders in taking arms against the Genoese. Lercari was moved by the noble earnestness of the father's entreaties, and for the first time a sentiment of compassion touched his heart for the innocent victims of a worthless monarch's pride, and he perhaps felt ashamed of his own brutal revenge. The old man and his sons were released and sent on shore; but they were charged to deliver to the emperor a barrel full of the salted ears and noses of his subjects, and a letter declaring that the only means of delivering the empire from the exaction of this species of tribute was to send the author of the insult to Lercari, as a prisoner. Alexios, seeing his best galleys captured and his subjects exposed unprotected to the fury of the Genoese, submitted. The insolent page, in spite of the imperial favour, was delivered over to the vengeance of Lercari.

As soon as the young Greek courtier beheld the revengeful Genoese, he threw himself on his knees, and begged with many tears to be put to death without torture. Lercari, whose revenge was gratified by having humbled an emperor, felt nothing but contempt for the despicable page. He understood that his honour would gain more by sparing the weeping courtier, than by treating the blow he had received as a thing which of itself merited a moment's consideration. He only pushed the kneeling suppliant from him with his foot, adding with a significant sneer, "Brave men do not revenge themselves by beating women."

The revenge of Lercari appears to have been connected with some diplomatic transactions between the empire of Trebizond and the Genoese colonies in the Black Sea, for, at the peace which followed this transaction, the emperor Alexios engaged to put the Genoese merchants at Trebizond in possession of an edifice to serve as a warehouse. This must have been one of those great buildings like the caravanseries of the East—storehouses for goods, lodgings for merchants, and castles for defence, which, in the same way as the monasteries of the period, formed fortresses in the midst of every city, and of whose walls remains may yet be traced even in the fire-devastated city of Constantinople. The emperor also published a golden bull, confirming all the privileges enjoyed by the Genoese traders throughout his dominions.

The facts relating to the vengeance of Lercari have not been noticed by any Greek writer, and they are evidently strongly coloured by the pride and passion of the Genoese chronicles. Yet the whole history of the enterprise is so characteristic of the violence and daring of the citizens of Genoa *la superba*, that, even had it rested on a slenderer basis of fact than probably supported it, still it would have merited notice as a correct portraiture both of the people and the age.

The emperor Alexios III, though neither a successful warrior nor an able statesman, walked through life with some show of dignity as a sovereign. He received the empire, in boyhood, in a state of anarchy; he gradually restored it to order, and reconstructed the central administration. In completing this great work, he did everything in his power to secure the aid of the clergy. Policy required him to gain their goodwill, in order to render their influence over the people of some practical use in re-establishing the imperial supremacy over the rival factions of the Amytzantarants and Scholarants. He may also have felt that something was necessary to calm his own conscience. Whether from policy, the memory of his vices, or the expression of heartfelt piety, certain is it that the ecclesiastical endowments of Alexios were singularly magnificent. He restored the church of St Eugenios to something resembling its ancient splendour. He discovered that the 24th of June was the saint's birthday, and celebrated it annually with great pomp at the expense of the imperial treasury. He rebuilt other churches, and founded and repaired several monasteries and almshouses. The convent of nuns of Panaghia Theoskepastos, which occupies a fine position before a cavern in the rocky face of Mount Mithrios, overlooking the romantic city of Trebizond, was enlarged, decorated, and enriched by his care and liberality. He built a church and founded a monastery of St Phokas at Kordyle. The great monastery of Sumelas, buried in an immense cavern amidst the sublime rocks and magnificent forests which overhang the roaring torrents of the Melas, was enriched and protected by his imperial bounty, and still possesses the golden bull he signed as the charter of its privileges.



But the most splendid existing monument of the liberality of Alexios is the monastery of St Dionysius, situated in an enchanting site, overlooking the sea, on the south-western coast of the holy mountain. It was the last constructed of the two-and-twenty great monasteries which consecrate the mountain in the eyes of the Eastern Church. The golden bull of Alexios, the charter of its foundation, is still preserved in its archives, and forms one of the most valuable monuments of the pictorial and caligraphic art of the Greeks in the Middle Ages. This imperial charter of foundation consists of a roll of paper, a foot and a half broad and fifteen feet long, surrounded by a rich border of arabesques. The imperial titles are set forth in capitals about three inches high, emblazoned in gold and ultramarine; and the word Majesty, wherever it occurs in the document, is always written, like the emperor's signature, with the imperial red ink. This curious document acquires its greatest value from containing at its head, under a half-length figure of our Saviour with hands extended to bless the imperial figures, two full-length portraits of the emperor Alexios and the empress Theodora, about sixteen inches high, in which their features, their imperial crowns, their rich robes and splendid jewels, are represented in colour, with all the care and minuteness of the ablest Byzantine artists. Immediately under the imperial titles, below the portraits, are the two golden bullae or seals, each of the size of a crown-piece, bearing the respective effigies and titles of the two sovereigns. The seals are attached to the bull by clasps of gold.

Alexios III died in the year 1390, after a reign of forty-one years. The period in which he lived was one of almost universal war, civil broils, and anarchy; and few countries in Europe enjoyed as much internal tranquillity, or so great security for private property, as the empire of Trebizond. By his diplomatic arrangements he succeeded in preserving a degree of political influence which his military reverses frequently endangered, and the commercial advantages of his territories gave him financial resources vastly exceeding the apparent wealth of his small empire. The most powerful princes in his vicinity were eager to maintain friendly relations with his court, for all their subjects profited by the trade carried on in the city of Trebizond. Alexios availed himself of this disposition to form matrimonial alliances between the princesses of his family and several neighbouring sovereigns, both Mohammedan and Christian. His sister Maria was married to Koutloubeg, the chief of the great Turkoman horde of the White Sheep; his sister Theodora to the emir of Chalybia, Hadji-Omer. His daughter Eudocia was first married to the emir Tadjeddin, who gained possession of Limnia; and after Tadjeddin was slain by the emir of Chalybia, she became the wife of the Byzantine emperor, John V. That prince had selected her as the bride of his son, the emperor Manuel II (Paleologos), but when she arrived at Constantinople, her beauty made such an impression on the decrepid old debauchee that he married the young widow himself. Anna, another daughter of Alexios, was married to Bagrat VI, king of Georgia; and a third daughter was bestowed on Taharten, emir of Arsinga or Erd-zendjan.

Constantinople was now tributary to the Ottoman Turks; and its vassal emperor was glad to find an ally in the wealthy and still independent emperor of Trebizond.

The countenance and whole personal appearance of Alexios were extremely noble. He was florid, blonde, and regular-featured, with an aquiline nose, which, his flatterers often reminded him, was considered by Plato to be a royal feature. In person he was stout and well formed; in disposition he was gay and liberal; but his enemies reproached him with rashness, violence, and brutal passions.

## SECT. II

REIGN OF MANUEL III. RELATIONS WITH THE EMPIRE OF TIMOR—  
1390-1417

Manuel III had received the title of emperor from his father in 1376, when only twelve years of age. As a sovereign, he appears to have been more prudent than his father, and to have possessed all his diplomatic talent. He lived in critical times, and fortune favoured his prudence. The great Tartar irruption that desolated the greater part of Asia Minor during his reign left his little empire unscathed. Though he was compelled to acknowledge himself a vassal of the mighty Timor, and pay tribute to the Mongol empire for a few years, still his government was disturbed by no political vicissitudes of any general importance. The only interest we feel in his reign, of twenty-seven years' duration, is derived from its transitory connection with the exploits of Timor.

Alexios III left the empire of Trebizond reduced to a narrow strip of coast, extending in an uninterrupted line from Batoun to Kerasunt, and including also the territory of Oinaion, separated from the rest of the empire by the possessions of Arsamir, the son of Tadjeddin, emir of Limnia. Its breadth rarely exceeded forty miles, its frontier running along the high range of mountains that overlook the sea. Within these limits several Christian nobles owned a doubtful allegiance to the imperial authority. The city of Oinaion, with its territory, extending westward to the Thermodon, was governed by a Greek named Melissenos. As his possessions were separated from the imperial garrison at Kerasunt by the possessions of the emir of Limnia, he was almost virtually independent. Arsamir, the emir of Limnia, was, however, fortunately closely allied with Manuel, both by relationship and political interest. He was the son of Manuel's sister, the beautiful Eudocia.

Leo Kabasites, the head of a distinguished family, which had long possessed great influence in the empire, ruled an extensive territory in the mountains, and held several fortified castles, that gave him the command of the caravan route leading southward from the capital. The possession of these castles, which after the Ottoman conquest became the residence of Dere-Begs, enabled him to levy tribute on all travellers who passed through his district, along the great road leading to Persia and Armenia.

The Spanish traveller Gonsalez de Clavijo, who was sent by Henry III, king of Castile, as ambassador to Timor, has left us a curious account of the power of Leo Kabasites, and of the manner in which he exercised it on those who came within his jurisdiction as duke of Chaldia. The picture he gives of the insubordination and rapacity of the great nobles in the empire of Trebizond shows how generally the frame of society was convulsed by aristocratic anarchy, which was a feature of the social movement of the human race, not merely of a change in the feudal system of Europe. Clavijo confirms the expressions used by Alexios III, in his golden bull to the monastery of Sumelas, which he wished to protect against the exactions of his nobles. The Spanish traveller accompanied an envoy sent to Henry by Timor, on his way back to Samarcand.

After quitting Trebizond, they were stopped by Leo Kabasites, as they entered his territory, and required to pay toll or make a present. In vain the Mongol envoy protested that an ambassador of the great Timor was not bound to pay toll like the agent of a merchant, and insisted that he was entitled to a free passage through a land which was tributary to the Great Mongol—for Leo, as a vassal of the emperor of Trebizond, had no pretext for exacting toll from the representative of the suzerain of his prince. To all this Leo replied that his duty was to keep the road open, which was done solely by his care, and that he was consequently entitled to receive toll from every traveller who passed. He lived in a desert district, where it was necessary to maintain a larger body of guards than the inhabitants could furnish, otherwise the mountain passes would be left open to the incursions of the nomad Turkomans, and would soon become impassable. Nay, he added significantly, at times he found it necessary to make incursions himself into the more fertile districts of the empire, to carry off provisions by force when travellers were rare. Clavijo was compelled to give the chieftain a piece of scarlet cloth, and a silver dish; and the Mongol ambassador offered him at first a piece of fine linen, and a dress of scarlet; but Leo was not satisfied with this present, and would not allow the two ambassadors to proceed on their journey until they had purchased a bale of camlet from a merchant in their caravan, and added it to their previous presents. Leo Kabasites then treated them as his guests, and supplied them with an escort through the Christian territories, but at the same time he made as much profit as he could of their passage, by letting them pack-horses for the transport of their baggage as far as Arsinga.

The other Christian chiefs who acknowledged the suzerainty of the emperor of Trebizond were the signors of Tzanich, Dora, Larachne, Chasdenik, and the prince of Gouriel.

Timor was now the lord of Asia. Gibbon thought that this great conqueror had overlooked the little empire of Trebizond, amidst those mighty projects of ambition which led him to plan the conquest of China while encamped before the walls of Smyrna. Speaking of the flight of Mohammed, the son of Bayezid, from the disastrous defeat of Angora, the historian observes, “In his rapid career, Timor appears to have overlooked this obscure and contumacious angle of Anatolia.” But it was not so. Timor neither overlooked Trebizond nor forgot Mohammed; but neither the Greek empire nor the Ottoman prince possessed a degree of importance that called for his personal presence to arrange their affairs. It reflects no discredit on the measures of Timor, either as a general or a statesman, that the empire of Trebizond outlived the Tartar power in Asia Minor, or that Mohammed I became the second founder of the Ottoman empire. Timor did not advance to the decisive battle with Bayezid until he had secured his right flank from every danger, and taken due precautions that no serious attempt could be made to interrupt his communications with the countries in his rear, by a diversion from the shores of the Black Sea.

All the princes who ruled in the countries between the gulf of Alexandretta and the sea of Trebizond, whether Christian or Mohammedan, were compelled to contribute their contingents to swell the numbers, and to form magazines to supply the wants, of the Tartar army. The king of Georgia was forced to abjure the Christian religion, and to deliver up to Timor the coat of mail which was believed by all the votaries of the Koran to have been forged by king David the psalmist, with his own hands. Taharten the emir of Arsinga, and Kara Yolouk, the chief of the Turkomans of the White Horde, became the voluntary vassals of the Mongol empire. Kara Yousouf, the redoubted leader of the

Black Horde, was driven from the vast possessions over which he had wandered with his nomad army, and was a fugitive under the protection of the Ottoman court.

Bayezid had pushed forward the frontiers of the Ottoman Empire to the banks of the Thermodon, and his territories were contiguous with the empire of Trebizond. Amasia, Tokat, and Sivas were in the possession of the sultan, who was also master of a fleet which would enable him to attack Trebizond by sea. In this state of things it became impossible for Timor to overlook the position of Manuel, nor could he without great imprudence have allowed the emperor of Trebizond to enjoy even a nominal independence. The precise period at which Timor reduced Trebizond to the rank of a tributary state cannot be exactly determined, but it seems to have taken place after the Georgian campaign in the spring of 1400. Timor detached a division of the northern army, then under his own immediate orders, to attack the empire; and Manuel made an attempt to arrest the progress of the Tartars by occupying the mountain passes. But the troops who had stormed the inaccessible cliffs, and plunged into the precipitous ravines and dark caverns of the Georgian mountains, defended by the bravest mountaineers and hardiest warriors of Asia, made light of the obstacles which the mercenary forces of Manuel could oppose to them. The prudence and diplomatic talents of Manuel served him better than his military skill or the courage of his army. By some negotiations of which we are ignorant, he succeeded in averting the march of a Tartar army on Trebizond, by acknowledging himself a tributary of the Mongol empire, and placing his whole land and sea forces at the orders of Timor.

When the grand army of the Tartars was marching against Bayezid, Timor ordered the emperor of Trebizond to appear in person at the headquarters of the army, in command of his contingent. By some means or other, and most probably for the purpose of hastening the preparation of the naval force which Timor had ordered to be prepared to cover his flank, Manuel obtained the relaxation of this order, for there is no doubt that he was not present at the battle of Angora. His dignity and fame as a Christian emperor, and the deep detestation felt by all Christians against Bayezid, who had so often defeated the chivalry of the west, would have embalmed the name of Manuel in glory as a champion of a holy war, had he taken any part in the victory of Angora. We have too many accounts of that great battle, both by contemporary Christians and Mohammedans, to leave any doubt on the subject. At the same time, the close political alliance that existed between Taharten, the emir of Arsinga, who was highly distinguished at the court of Timor, and his brother-in-law Manuel, would alone be sufficient to establish the impossibility of the wary Mongol having overlooked the importance of the empire of Trebizond. Indeed, so minute was Timor's attention to every circumstance that could contribute to aid his cause in the severe struggle he anticipated with the ottoman forces, that he resolved to distract the attention of Bayezid, and deprive him of succours from his European dominions, by attacking the flank and rear of the Turkish army. For this purpose he ordered a fleet to be assembled at Trebizond; and there exists proof of this in a letter of Timor, addressed to John Paleologos, the nephew of Manuel II, emperor of Constantinople, who governed the Byzantine empire while his uncle was begging assistance against the Turks in western Europe. This communication shows the importance attached by Timor to a naval diversion, in case of a prolonged campaign in the interior of Asia Minor. The letter is dated about two months before the battle of Angora. The Tartar monarch orders John Paleologos to prepare immediately twenty galleys, to unite with a fleet of the same

number which the emperor of Trebizond was fitting out, and to hold them ready for further orders. It is true that no use was made of these fleets, and that Timor did not cross the Bosphorus and lay waste the Serai of Adrianople, nor enter the walls of Constantinople; but this must be attributed to the utter destruction of the ottoman forces at Angora, and to the disappearance of every trace of further resistance in every corner of the Ottoman empire; not, as Gibbon supposes, because “an insuperable though narrow sea rolled between the two continents of Europe and Asia, and the lord of so many ottomans and myriads of horse was not master of a single galley.” The reason was different. The same political views which made Timor disdain to visit Trebizond and Brusa led him to despise Adrianople and Constantinople.

Timor ruled the world as the general of an army, not as the sovereign of a state. He was a nomad of surpassing genius, but he gloried in remaining a nomad. His camp was his residence, hunting was his favourite amusement, and, as long as he lived, he resolved that no city should relax the discipline of his invincible cuirassiers. In his eyes, wisdom and virtue existed only in tents; vice and folly were the constant denizens of walled cities and fixed dwellings. Before the battle of Angora, Timor had wisely prepared for a long war by calculating that all the resources of the immense empire of Bayezid would have been ably employed to resist the Tartars. But after the irreparable defeat of the sultan, and the total dissolution of the Turkish army, he overlooked the vitality of the administrative institutions on which the ottoman power reposed; and, in consequence of the contempt he felt for the Turks as a nation, he erroneously believed that the Ottoman empire was based on the military strength of a tribe that appeared to be almost exterminated. Timor saw no ottoman army in the field, while he beheld the Seljouk princes of Asia Minor resuming all the power torn from them by Bayezid. The different tribes of Turks and Turkomans were now only vassals of the Mongol empire, and among them the Ottomans appeared by no means more powerful than many others.

When the grand army of Timor quitted Asia Minor, a division of the troops visited Kerasunt. But the steep mountains, the winding and precipitous paths, and the want of forage for the cavalry and beasts of burden along the coast, between Kerasunt and Trebizond, saved the capital from their unwelcome presence. Manuel, we may rest assured, did everything in his power to collect abundant supplies of provisions and furnish ample means of transport on the shorter lines of road, in order to preserve the caravan routes in the immediate vicinity of Trebizond free from interruption. Fortunately none of these routes conducted to the westward. The revenues of the empire were now in a great measure dependent on the commercial importance of the capital. On quitting western Asia, Timor established his nephew, Mirza Halil, as immediate sovereign over the tributary states of Trebizond, Georgia, and Armenia, as well as over the chieftains of the Turkoman hordes. The troubles that ensued in the Mongol empire after Timor’s death, and the departure of Mirza Halil to occupy the throne of Samarcand, enabled Manuel to throw off all dependence on the Tartars, and deliver the empire from tribute.

Manuel III died in the year 1417. He was twice married; first to Eudocia of Georgia, in the year 1377, by whom he had a son, Alexios IV, and after her death to Anna Philanthropena of Constantinople, by whom he left no children. Alexios was suspected of having hastened his father’s death.

## SECT. III

## REIGN OF ALEXIOS IV. RELATIONS WITH THE TURKOMAN HORDES.

## FAMILY CRIMES IN THE HOUSE OF GRAND-KOMNENOS.

1417-1446

After the retreat of the grand army of the Mongols, the empire of Trebizond was exposed, almost without defence, to the attacks of the two great Turkoman hordes of the Black and White Sheep, who wandered over the whole country between Sinope and Bussora. Kara Yousouf, the chief of the horde of the Black Sheep, appeared for a time to be on the point of founding a great empire between the Mongols and the Turks. His conquests extended from the Euxine to the Persian Gulf. The career of Kara Yousouf was marked by the strangest vicissitudes, and a history of his empire would be nothing more than a record of his own singular adventures. Born the hereditary chieftain of a tribe that mustered thirty thousand cavalry, he was more than once forced to gain the necessaries of life as a common robber, while at other times he swept through Mesopotamia at the head of sixty thousand of the finest troops in Asia. As early as the year 1387, he had tried his fortune in battle with Timor; but he was no match for the military skill of the wary Tartar. Undaunted by his first misfortune, he renewed the war in 1393; and though defeated a second time, he again raised his standard against the Tartars in 1400. In this last war, his army was so completely routed, and he was himself so hotly pursued, that, unable to conceal his movements either in the mountains of Assyria or the deserts of Mesopotamia, he fled to the court of Bayezid. The refusal of the Turkish sultan to deliver him up to Timor, who claimed him as a rebellious vassal, was the immediate cause of the invasion of the Ottoman Empire by the Mongols.

When Bayezid became the prisoner of Timor, Kara Yousouf fled to Cairo, where the Mamlouk king, Furreg the son of Berkouk, gave him an asylum until Timor's death. He then hastened to the banks of the Euphrates, and once more collected the Turkomans round his standard. The genius of Timor no longer directed the movements of the Tartar armies, and success attended the enterprises of Kara Yousouf. Tauris itself was captured, and became the capital of his empire. Kara Yousouf then occupied Arsinga, driving out the family of Taharten. He also defeated Oulough, who commanded the troops of the White Horde of the Turkomans for his brother Hamsa, their chieftain.

Alexios IV was a helpless spectator of these sudden revolutions in his vicinity. He had trusted, when he heard rumours of the impetuous career of Kara Yousouf, that the emir of Arsinga and the chieftain of the White Horde, who were both allied to his family, would serve as a barrier to protect his empire. The defeat of these allies compelled the emperor to throw himself on the mercy of the conqueror, and to declare his readiness to submit to any conditions of peace. Kara Yousouf ordered the suppliant monarch to send his daughter, the most beautiful princess of the house of Grand-Komnenos, which had long been celebrated in Asia for the beauty of its daughters, to be the wife of his son Djihanshah, and to pay the same amount of tribute to the Black Turkomans that his father, Manuel III, had paid to the Mongols.

Kara Yousouf died, in the year 1420, in as strange a manner as he had lived. A fit of apoplexy smote him in his tent as he was speculating on the consequences of an approaching conflict with the Tartars, in which he felt confident of victory. The next day was to have witnessed a great battle with Shah Roukh, the youngest son of Timor; and had victory continued faithful to the standard of Kara Yousouf, the empire of Asia would have passed from the Tartars to the Black Turkomans. The death of their leader, however, served as a signal for the dispersion of the Turkoman army. Each captain, the moment he heard the news, hastened from the camp to gain possession of some province rich enough to supply the means of keeping his troops together, until he could find an opportunity of selling his services to a new sovereign.

Kara Yousouf had never thought of employing his power to frame any regulations tending to connect the instruments of his personal authority with a systematic administration extending over all his dominions. The consequence of his ignorance deserves to be contrasted with the fate of the ottoman administration after the catastrophe of Angora. While the Ottoman Empire revived with undiminished vigour even after the annihilation of its armies, the empire of the Black Turkomans melted away, on the death of its ruler, before any disaster had shaken its fabric. Kara Yousouf's corpse lay in his tent, surrounded by a chosen body of hardy veterans, while tribe after tribe marched off from the camp; but at length these guards, on beholding the troops in their immediate vicinity striking their tents, suddenly began to inquire what was to be done. They could not wait until Shah Roukh fell upon them. All their hopes had been concentrated in the dead prince, who had ridden proudly through their ranks the day before, promising them victory. To him they had looked for rewards and wealth, and he could serve them no longer. In this crisis, every man felt that there was no time to lose. With one accord, as if seized by a common spirit of demoniacal impulse, the whole regiment of guards rushed in silence within the royal enclosure, hitherto held sacred from intrusion, and guarded by the black eunuchs. They plundered the treasury; and, loading all the wealth in the royal tents on the first baggage horses on which they could lay hands, they departed from the camp, leaving the body of the mighty Kara Yousouf in a royal enclosure of empty canvass, surrounded by weeping women, howling eunuchs, and helpless mutes. The Tartars were more compassionate than the Turkomans. When the body was taken up for interment, it was seen that the ears had been cut off. Some avaricious officer of the Turkoman guards, who knew the inestimable value of the diamond earrings of his sovereign, on approaching the body, as if to mark his reverence for his deceased master, had taken this strange way, as the quickest, to perpetrate the robbery, and prevent anyone from sharing the plunder.

After the death of Kara Yousouf, the White Horde recovered its independence; and the emperor of Trebizond, protected by its power, ceased to pay tribute to the Black Turkomans.

We must now record the existence of a state of moral degradation in the house of Komnenos, calculated to insure the ruin of a state and nation so degenerate as to submit to such a dynasty. Without attaching much importance to the details of those anecdotes, concerning the vices of the court of Trebizond, that are transmitted to us by the Latins, we still find enough in the Byzantine writers to confirm the picture they give of the crimes habitually perpetrated in the palace of the later emperors of Trebizond.

Manuel III had associated Alexios IV with him in the imperial dignity, but he met neither with gratitude nor filial affection. Clavijo relates an anecdote which paints the state of society in the capital, as well as the relations between the two emperors. Manuel had taken into his favour a page of low birth, but of great personal advantages. This upstart obtained a degree of influence in public affairs that excited the jealousy of the nobility, accustomed to divide among themselves all the favours of the court. The discontented did everything in their power to increase the general dissatisfaction, and succeeded in awakening a popular outcry against the favourite. Alexios availed himself of the public indignation to form a conspiracy for seizing the reins of government, and dethroning his father. He raised the standard of revolt, and, with the assistance of the people, demanded that the young bow-bearer should be driven from the palace. Manuel was besieged in the upper citadel, and compelled to banish his favourite. The ambition of Alexios was now disappointed; for the people, having obtained their object, and having probably observed that he possessed worse vices than his father, ceased to support his rebellion. He succeeded, however, in making his peace with his father; and, perhaps as the price of his reconciliation, he retained the exiled bow-bearer about his own person. His subsequent conduct led to the suspicion, already alluded to, that he caused his father's death.

Alexios IV was a weaker and a worse man than his father. An avenger of his own filial ingratitude stepped forward in the person of an undutiful son. According to the usage of the empires of Trebizond and Constantinople, Alexios had raised his eldest son, Joannes, as heir-apparent, to share the dignity of the imperial throne. Alexios IV, like his grandfather, Alexios III, married a lady of the family of Cantacuzenos, who likewise bore the name of Theodora. The empress Theodora was impatient of her husband's conduct, and consoled herself for his neglect by too close an intimacy with the protovestiaris. Her son Joannes, indignant at his mother's disgrace, assassinated her lover in the palace with his own hand. But the young hypocrite contemplated the perpetration of crimes of a blacker dye than those he pretended to punish. Having made himself master of the upper citadel, he imprisoned both his father and mother in their apartments. The nobles, alarmed that he was about to commit a double parricide, and the people, persuaded that the young tyrant would prove a worse sovereign than the old debauchee, interfered, and delivered Alexios IV from the hands of his son.

Joannes, who was called Kalojoannes, from his personal beauty, not from his mental accomplishments, fled to the court of Georgia, where he married a daughter of the king. Alexios IV raised his second son, Alexander, to be his colleague in the imperial dignity, conferring on him all the rights of heir-apparent.

The greater part of the long reign of Alexios IV was passed in luxury and idleness. The first rebellion of his son Kalojoannes occurred in the early part of his reign; about twenty years later, a second brought the emperor to a premature and bloody grave. The death of Alexander seems to have suggested to Kalojoannes the necessity of making a vigorous attempt to dethrone his father, as the only means of securing the succession to the empire. He succeeded in opening communications with the powerful family of Kabasites, who stood in opposition to Alexios Kalojoannes then repaired to the Genoese colony of Caffa, where he hired a large ship, which he fitted out as a man-of-war. Engaging a band of military adventurers in his service, he crossed the Euxine, invaded the empire, and seized the monastery of St Phokas at Kordyle, where he fortified himself, in order to wait until some movement of his partisans should enable



him to enter the capital. But the people were so satisfied with their condition that Alexios, secure of his capital, marched out to attack his rebellious son. The imperial camp was pitched at Achantos. It seems that a party of the emperor's attendants had been gained over to betray him, for two emissaries of Kalojoannes were allowed to penetrate into his tent at midnight. In the morning, Alexios IV was found murdered in his bed. The parricide entered Trebizond without opposition, being everywhere hailed as emperor by his demoralised subjects. But it was necessary, even in the vicious state to which Greek society had then fallen, to repudiate the charge of having suborned his father's assassins. The obsequies of Alexios were celebrated with unusual pomp. His body, after remaining many days entombed in the monastery of Theoskepastos, was subsequently transported into the metropolitan church of Chrysokephalos. The agents of the assassination were punished as murderers; for the new emperor declared that, though he had sent them to secure his father's person, he had charged them to pay the strictest attention to his safety. Probably there was not a single individual in his empire capable of believing in the possibility of such an undertaking; or, had it been possible, could any one credit the possibility of its being attempted at midnight in the midst of an army. The lives of the assassins were spared. One was punished with the loss of his hand; the other with that of his eyes.

The murder of Alexios IV occurred about the year 1446, for he was alive in the year 1445; and in the year 1449 Joannes IV was sole emperor, and had been for some time in the enjoyment of sovereign power.

## CHAPTER V

## END OF THE EMPIRE OF TREBIZOND

## SECT. I

## CAUSES OF THE RAPID RISE AND VITAL ENERGY OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

The first attack of the Ottoman Turks on the empire of Trebizond occurred during the reign of Alexios IV, in the year 1442. Sultan Murad, who was an accomplished statesman as well as an able general, fitted out a fleet which he sent into the Black Sea to surprise Trebizond. In case the attempt on the city should fail, the admiral was instructed to lay waste the territories of the empire wherever they were open to attack, and to carry off as many slaves as possible. By this means the resources of the Christians would be diminished, and the ultimate conquest of the country accelerated. The attack on the city of Trebizond was repulsed, but the Turks landed at several places on the coast, plundered the country, destroyed the habitations, and carried off the young men and women to be sold in the slave-markets of Brusa and Adrianople. After ravaging the territories of the emperor of Trebizond, the fleet crossed the sea, and laid waste the Genoese possessions round Caffa. Before quitting the Black Sea, however, just as the Turks had directed their course to the Gulf of Moudania, which was then the naval station of the Ottomans, this fleet was assailed by a furious tempest. Many of the largest ships were wrecked on the Asiatic coast near Heracleia, and those that escaped through the Bosphorus to Moudania and Ghiumlek brought back so little glory and plunder, that the sultan was not encouraged to try a second maritime expedition.

The Ottoman Empire is one of the most singular creations of human genius. It owed its rapid growth to institutions and laws more than arms; and the institutions on which its greatness was more particularly founded, were the work of an individual chief at the head of a small band of followers, not of the chosen lawgiver of a united nation. Hence the name of Orkhan has not been ranked among the great legislators of mankind. His contemporaries were unable to appreciate the profundity of his views, and historians have regarded the Ottoman Empire with feelings of religious and political prejudice, so strong as to have surveyed its ethnical anomalies with a species of mental blindness.

The grandfather of Orkhan entered the Seljouk Empire, then in a state of decline, at the head of a tribe of only four hundred horsemen. Othman, his father, became the territorial chief of a Seljouk province, which he succeeded in appropriating to himself as an independent principality, at the dissolution of the Turkish empire of Roum. His power increased; and his own little tribe of followers, whose very name is lost to

history, became confounded in the various nomad hordes who soon filled the ranks of his army. At length Orkhan conquered Nicaea, which had been for a time the capital of the Greek empire; he then commenced giving systematic institutions to the people he ruled, and laying the foundations of a political society, destined to grow into a mighty nation.

Let European pride contrast what Orkhan did with what Napoleon failed to do. Orkhan's own respect for religion, and the reverence paid by the tribe his grandfather had led into western Asia to their religious and moral duties, gave the Ottomans a high rank among the Mussulmans. They were virtuous men in the corrupt mass of Seljouk society. The family education of this tribe may be more correctly estimated by its superiority for several generations over all its contemporaries, than by the declamations of historians against the vices of the seraglio. It was not chance that conferred on Orkhan and his successors a character so pre-eminent for firmness, that both Christians and Mohammedans sought to become their subjects, as a security for a stricter administration of justice, and a greater respect for personal rights, than was then to be found under any other government. This moral superiority, though it was mixed with many vices, must not be overlooked in searching for the causes of the rapid conquests of Orkhan and the earlier sultans: it is the key to the facility with which both the Seljouk Turks and the Greeks submitted to a power originally so weak as that of the Ottomans. It also illustrates the extent to which moral superiority will efface the impressions of religious truth; for we must attribute the numerous apostasies of the Greek renegades, who filled some of the highest commands in the ottoman armies, to a preference for valour and morality over policy and religion.

The most remarkable institution of Orkhan, and that which exercised the greatest influence in extending the power of his house, was the manner in which he organised a regular army into a permanent society. This army had no home but its barracks; the soldiers had no parents and no relations but their father the sultan. The choicest portion of this force was separated from the people by birth, as much as by habits and residence. It was composed of Christian children—neophytes, who became the adopted children of the sultan—and votaries especially consecrated to enlarging the domains of the prophet. Many of these children were orphans, whom the devastations of the Turkish armies would have left to perish, had Orkhan not converted them into instruments for the creation of the Ottoman Empire. But no permanent institution can trust to casual supplies. Orkhan, therefore, imposed a fixed tribute of children on every Christian village and town that he added to his territory. The habit was then so prevalent of selling Christians as slaves, that this inhuman tax was by no means so appalling to the conquered as we are inclined to suppose it must have proved to a Christian population. From these tribute children, Orkhan formed the celebrated corps of Janissaries, whose ranks were every year recruited and augmented by new votaries, drawn from successive conquests.

Corps of regular troops, formed of purchased slaves, had been created in the Byzantine Empire by Tiberius II, towards the end of the sixth century. In different Mohammedan states, the same species of troops, under the name of Mamlouks, composed the principal military force. But the Janissaries differed from all preceding soldiers in the careful and systematic character of their education. The art with which their moral training was developed, and the success with which they were formed into enthusiasts, not less adroitly fitted for their peculiar mission than the Jesuits themselves,

must place Orkhan, and the counsellors who aided him in establishing this strange college of destruction, among the greatest masters of political science. Perhaps they themselves did not perceive that they were among the worst corrupters of human society. Few institutions, formed to educate mankind for good purposes, have been so successful as this accursed college of infant proselytes of war, by means of which the Ottoman sultans conquered Christianity in the East. In the time of Orkhan the Janissaries received an annual addition of two thousand tribute children. No accumulation of noble idlers encumbered their ranks with insufficient aristocratic or titled officers; nor could wealth or favour introduce military incapacity to a permanent command over such a band of well-disciplined enthusiasts. The institutions of the Janissaries at last declined; but the Greeks had lost their political existence long before the decline was perceptible.

Orkhan also gave the cavalry and infantry of his dominions a new organisation, which rendered them the centre of a civil and financial administration, around which a mighty empire and a populous nation arose. But the details of these remarkable measures of policy belong to the history of the Ottoman empire: enough has been said to indicate how Orkhan's administration began to absorb the better and more energetic portions of the Greek race, and convert the majority of the aspiring and ambitious among the Christian population of the East into agents of the ottoman power. That the steady progress of the ottoman conquests could not be the result of brutal force or of individual talent alone, is sufficiently evident. No combinations, not based on permanent institutions and enduring causes, could have given a small tribe of nomads the power of invariably increasing in power at every change in the circumstances of those around them, and of surviving the greatest misfortunes. The defeat of Angora would have annihilated any other Asiatic dynasty and empire.

It has been noticed that Timor believed the ottoman power dissolved by that battle; yet little more than ten years from the day that Mohammed I fled, attended by one faithful vizier, from the bloody field which seemed to have destroyed his race, he had reunited under his sway nearly the whole of the dominions of his father Bayezid. The Seljouk principalities of Aidin, Saroukhan, Mentshe, Kermian, and Karamania had been restored by Timor to their ancient extent; so that each of these Turkish states appeared to have as good a chance of subduing its neighbours as the Ottomans. The sagacious Tartar overlooked the tendency of the institutions of Orkhan: he did not perceive that the tribute of Christian children levied in Europe rendered the foundations of the Ottoman power at Adrianople every day more firm. The numerous Christian population of the European provinces, which the Tartars never entered and wasted, became the element that revived the Ottoman empire.

The civil administration of the Ottoman government was as intimately connected with the tribute children as the military power. Orkhan, like the Greek philosophers of antiquity, was aware of the importance of commencing the education of the servants of the state at the earliest period of life. The tribute children were collected in colleges, at the age of eight and nine. In the earlier days of the empire they were all educated in the imperial palace. Those of superior mental capacity were trained as administrators and jurists; those who appeared to possess only bodily strength and activity became pages, guards, and Janissaries; while any happy combination of physical and mental advantages insured their possessors the rank of generals, pashas, and viziers. The Jesuits conducted their projects of domination over the human mind with less skill than

Orkhan, for their system was not so closely interwoven with the physical principles of the aristocracy of nature. It is not, therefore, surprising that the ottoman administration was superior, both in the field and the cabinet, to all its contemporaries. Systematic education and true discipline existed, at that time, only in the papal church and the ottoman government; and they had far deeper roots in the hearts of the individuals composing the latter than the former, because the seeds were planted at an earlier age.

Though the genius of Orkhan and his counsellors was able to organise an admirable system of personal agency for the administration, it would be a great error to infer that they possessed the acquirements and views necessary for creating the machine of civil government, even in the imperfect form in which it existed in the Ottoman Empire. Such a task can only be performed by a great man in an intelligent society; for the work requires to be consolidated by a succession of generations moving in a uniform course, each contributing to improve the road that has already been travelled over, while pushing forward new paths advancing in the same direction. In so far as the scheme of civil government, independent of the personal execution of administrative business, was concerned, in the departments of law and finance, the Ottoman Empire remained in a defective condition in its best days. Its civil and fiscal organisation was adopted from the degraded provinces of the Byzantine Empire, as they were subdued; and all the economical and legal science it possessed was inspired by the corrupt race of Constantinopolitan officials, called Phanariots. Whatever merit can be found in the Turkish civil government was derived from traditions of the Roman power, corrected by the simple feelings of military leaders. The municipal institutions of the people, and the ecclesiastical and financial organisation of the state, were long allowed to exist among the Christian population in the condition in which they were found. The great improvement visible under the government of the earlier sultans arose from the employment of a better and honester class of men in the administration; for in that age the Turks were far superior in moral character and sound judgment to the Greeks. A mass of official corruption was swept away; and thus society under the ottoman government acquired a degree of energy, of which it had been deprived by the governments of Constantinople and Trebizond. But the Mussulmans could not adopt the greatest benefit which the Roman Empire had conferred on mankind. The Roman law, which had upheld the Byzantine Empire for seven centuries, was repudiated by the Koran. For this reason the ottoman race has never developed a perfect national existence in its extensive conquests. The ottoman administration has been wise and just, the ottoman armies have been numerous, well-disciplined, and victorious, but the ottoman Turks have formed only a comparatively weak and insignificant nation.

## SECT. II

### REIGN OF JOANNES IV, CALLED KALOJOANNES

A.D. 1446-1458.

The Greeks of Trebizond had now lost all feeling of national independence: they thought only of pursuing their schemes of official intrigue or commercial gain without interruption. The example of their Georgian neighbours, who defended their liberty with

determined courage, made no impression on the Greeks. The vices of the government nourished the worthlessness of the people. The dynasty of Grand-Kommenos began to be regarded by the Christian population of the country, Tzans or Lazes, as a race of foreign tyrants, and its alliances with the Turkoman plunderers of the frontiers increased the aversion. Bitter observations on the imperial diplomacy must have been often wrung from the native clergy, while profound hatred frequently rankled in the hearts of the Colchian mountaineers. The state of moral degradation into which all the Greek princes of this age had fallen, the mean spirit of the Greek archonts, and the avarice of the Greek dignified clergy, were so offensive, that the common people everywhere looked to their conquest by the Ottomans as an event preferable to the continuance of their actual miseries.

Joannes IV was hated by his subjects for his crimes; yet the force of social habits upheld the established order of things in his dominions, and the foreign attacks on his government were repulsed without creating any domestic disturbances. The decline of the empire of Trebizond was, however, now so apparent to strangers, that one of the small independent Mussulman princes in the Armenian mountains made a bold attempt to render himself master of the city of Trebizond, a few years after the accession of Joannes. He was called the Sheik of Ertebil. His army was composed of troops collected from the neighbouring tribes, and particularly from the population of the district of Samion. With this force the sheik of Ertebil marched to Meliars, and rendered himself master of the pass of Kapanion, near Cape Kereli. The emperor Joannes advanced to oppose the progress of the enemy, and encamped at the monastery of Kordyle, in the position he occupied when his father was assassinated. The duke of Mesochaldion, chief of the house of Kabasites, then held the rank of Pansevastos, and commanded the imperial forces under the eye of the emperor. It was resolved to make a joint attack on the army of sheik Ertebil by land and sea. The duke led the troops forward to storm the pass of Kapanion, while the fleet was ordered to harass the flank and rear of the enemy. The violence of the wind raised such a swell at the moment of attack, that the ships were unable to approach the shore, and the Mussulmans, deriving every advantage from their position, routed the Christians without much difficulty. The pansevastos, his son, and thirty chosen men, who were leading the attack, were killed. On beholding the defeat of the advanced guard, terror seized the army at St Phokas—the troops, probably considering it a Divine judgment on an act of parricide, fled to the capital in confusion. The emperor escaped on board the fleet, and was among the first to reach Trebizond.

The sheik of Ertebil took many prisoners, most of whom he ordered to be immediately put to death. He then occupied the camp of the Greeks, and secured the plunder. In the meantime Trebizond was thrown into such a state of alarm, that he would probably have succeeded in capturing it, had he not wasted his time in murdering his prisoners and collecting the plunder of the camp in person. Rumour declared that he was already in possession of the monastery of St Sophia, and all the inhabitants of the western suburb crowded into the citadel for safety. An Armenian woman, whose house was situated within the western wall built by Alexios II, felt so alarmed, that, for additional security, she transported all her wealth into the city and took up her abode there. Unfortunately she had left some charcoal burning in her abandoned dwelling. In the middle of the night fire burst from the building, and quickly communicated to the adjoining houses. The confusion caused by this sudden conflagration was extreme. The people believed that the Mussulmans had stormed the outer fortifications, and the

greatest terror prevailed lest, by seizing the western bridge, they should be able to attack the city. It was repeated from mouth to mouth that a conspiracy was formed to deliver up the citadel to the sheik of Ertebil, and this report increased the suspicions entertained by each section of the motley population of Trebizond for the citizens of a different race, and prevented every man from placing confidence in the conduct of his neighbour.

On this critical occasion the emperor Joannes showed both prudence and courage. The stake was his empire and his life. He ordered all the gates of the fortifications to be immediately closed, and allowed no communications between the different parts of the capital, except to the troops acting under his own orders. The towers of the western enclosure and the monastery of St Eugenios were garrisoned. The emperor, at the head of a guard of fifty men-at-arms, hastened in person to the fire, and then made the round of the western enclosure during the remainder of the night. In this manner he prepared the troops for offering an efficient resistance to the invaders, and succeeded in restoring some degree of order among the inhabitants of the quarter most exposed to attack. The energy of the people was restored when it was found that the fire was accidental, and that the fortifications were uninjured. But in the quarter towards the Meidan, which was unprotected by walls, confusion continued to prevail. The inhabitants sought safety at the port, endeavouring to embark on board the vessels in the harbour. The nobles, whose palaces were situated in this quarter, instead of repairing to the citadel to aid in defending their country, placed themselves in security, by a precipitate flight to Iberia in the first ships they could hire.

On the following day the sheik of Ertebil encamped on the hill above the quarter of Imaret Djamisi, extending his lines to the ground now occupied by that picturesque mosque, and the tomb of the mother of sultan Selim I. The towers of the fortification of Alexios defended the approach to the western bridge, and the great western ravine separated the enemy by an impassable gulf from the upper citadel. Though the sheik arrived too late to take advantage of the confusion of the preceding night, he still hoped to profit by the general alarm. His army was too small to attempt forming the regular siege of a place so large as Trebizond, with its extensive suburbs; and the central citadel, protected by its two ravines, could only be assailed from the narrow isthmus to the south. The sheik of Ertebil, however, expected to terrify the Greeks into a surrender. He ordered his guards to bring out his most distinguished prisoner, Mavrokostas, an imperial equerry and postmaster of the empire, whom he had spared at the massacre of the other prisoners, but whom he now beheaded before the walls. This cruelty inflamed the garrison to seek revenge instead of disposing them to surrender, and the Mussulmans were repulsed in all their assaults on the western suburb. It was soon necessary to retreat from Trebizond; and the sheik only encountered an additional repulse when he made an attack on the fort of Mesochaldion, in the hope that, by its capture, he might palliate his loss before the capital. In evacuating the territory of the empire, however, he revenged himself for his failures by carrying off an immense booty and a crowd of slaves.

The empire of Trebizond was on the brink of ruin; yet self-conceit blinded the emperor and his Greek subjects to the extent of the dangers that surrounded them. On no subject did their scholastic presumption so completely stultify the Byzantine Greeks in every age as on their foreign policy. They always underrated the intellectual powers of their opponents, more, even, than they overrated their own political talents and physical force. Their minds were always confused by echoes of old Hellenic names,

which they mistook for practical proofs of their own merits. Under the influence of this habitual defect, the emperor Joannes rejoiced when he heard of the death of the politic Murad II, and immediately began to project the means of converting the young sultan, Mohammed II, into a serviceable ally, believing that an experienced Greek like himself would easily mislead and overreach an inexperienced Turkish youth in the paths of diplomacy. In this he mistook both his own capacity and the character of the young sultan. It must seem strange to those who do not appreciate the full extent of the immemorial presumption of the Byzantine court, to find that all the Greek princes in this age shared the absurd fancy, that they should be able to direct the career of Mohammed II to their own ends. Their diplomatic agents at the court of Murad II must have had their perceptions strangely obscured by vanity, when they were unable to give their masters any presentiment of the great talents and firm character of the fiery Mohammed. Constantine, the last emperor of Constantinople, allowed himself to be so far deluded by this national self-conceit, as, in his diplomatic communications with the Sublime Porte, to remind the sultan that it was in his power to raise a rebellion among the Turks, by releasing Orkhan, the great-grandson of sultan Bayezid, who was allowed to reside at Constantinople as a hostage, with a Turkish pension. Such menaces are rarely forgotten even by the weakest sovereigns. The young Mohammed revenged himself for the insult by putting an end to the Byzantine empire.

With this example before him, the emperor Joannes IV formed the plan of expelling the Ottoman Turks from Asia Minor; a plan which he vainly believed he could find others to execute under his direction. His negotiations did not escape the watchful eye of the young sultan, who, as soon as he had taken Constantinople, determined to give the emperor of Trebizond some foretaste of the Ottoman power. The first operations were intrusted to Chitir Bey, the governor of Amasia, who was ordered to make a vigorous attack on the empire by land and sea.

During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the towns inhabited by the Greeks, both in Europe and Asia, were visited by fearful pestilential maladies in such rapid succession, that plague alone seemed to threaten the nation with extinction. This calamity was caused by the neglect of the people as much as by the rapacity of the government. No attention was any longer paid to the most necessary police and sanatory regulations, either by emperors, archonts, or municipal authorities. Each man in power was occupied in rendering his situation as profitable as possible, in a pecuniary point of view, to himself, his relations, and clients. Those measures which are absolutely requisite for the maintenance of health in crowded cities were disregarded, and the moral degradation of the Greek people was fitly represented by the filthy condition in which the inhabitants of the densely populated localities were living. No human prudence, it is true, can guarantee mankind from every visitation of pestilence, but the corruption of society invariably produces an augmentation of physical sufferings.

At the time Chitir Bey invaded the empire of Trebizond, the plague was carrying off the inhabitants of the capital with such fearful rapidity, that the emperor was unable to take any steps for defending his dominions. The Ottomans plundered all the open country, and marched up to the walls of the capital, without meeting the slightest resistance. Chitir Bey descending from Bostépé, on which he had established his camp, attacked the eastern suburb, and made himself master of the Meidan and the neighbouring quarter. All the houses and magazines east of the fortified monastery of St Eugenios were pillaged, and two thousand prisoners were secured; for the Turks, bold



from their confidence in predestination, despised the danger of the plague. The emperor, unable to carry on war in the midst of a dying population, and surrounded by sickly troops, offered to submit to any terms Chitir Bey thought fit to impose. The Ottoman leader, seeing that the force under his command was inadequate to besiege the citadel, and having performed the task of reconnoitring the military power and political resources of the empire, consented to retire, and even to release his prisoners, on Joannes acknowledging himself a vassal of the Ottoman empire. The emperor engaged to send an embassy to Constantinople, to receive the sultan's orders concerning the price of the definitive treaty of peace, and his brother David was the ambassador who presented himself before Mohammed II. Peace was granted on very easy terms, the sultan fixing the annual tribute of the empire of Trebizond at the paltry sum of three thousand pieces of gold. The sultan, however, seems to have had no intention of abstaining from hostilities longer than suited his interests. This treaty put an end to the political independence of the Greeks, if, indeed, we are authorised to consider the mongrel and semi-Asiatic inhabitants of Trebizond and its territory as at this time possessing a claim to be regarded as true Greeks.

The emperor Joannes knew that his tenure of power would be of short duration, unless he could break the chain that now bound him to the Sublime Porte. The last years of his reign were occupied in preparing for revolt. As the military resources of his own empire were inadequate to sustain a contest with a single pasha, and as he knew that he could count on no patriotic feelings in the breasts of his Greek subjects, who were absorbed in selfishness, nor on the hardy Lazian mountaineers, who were oppressed by the exactions of a host of imperial tax-gatherers, and impoverished by the extortions of senators and nobles, he was compelled to look abroad for some powerful ally. The daring courage and prosperous fortunes of Ouzoun Hassan, the chieftain of the Turkomans of the White Horde, who was then advancing in a rapid career of conquest, made him a rival of Mohammed II in the general estimation. On being invited to join in a league against the Ottoman Turks, Hassan demanded, as the price of his assistance, the hand of the emperor's daughter Katherine, who was renowned over all Asia as the most beautiful virgin in the East. He required also to be invested with the sovereignty of Cappadocia as her dowry; for it seems the Christians of that province, who were still numerous in the cities, attached some importance to the vain concession. Joannes IV was delighted to purchase his alliance on such easy terms. Yet, in order to save the honour of a Christian emperor with the Christian world, and, perhaps, as a balm to his own conscience, more tender about marrying his daughter to an infidel than murdering his father, he inserted in the treaty a clause by which the beautiful Katherine was insured the exercise of her own religion, and the privilege of keeping a certain number of Christian ladies as her attendants, and of Greek priests in her suite, to serve a private chapel in the harem. To the honour of Hassan, it may be observed that he strictly fulfilled his engagements, after the empire of Trebizond and the house of Grand-Komnenos had ceased to exist.

Joannes also concluded alliances, offensive and defensive, with other princes, particularly with the Turkish emir of Sinope, who still maintained his independence, with the Seljouk sultan of Karamania, and with the Christian princes of Georgia and Cilician Armenia. All these allies engaged to make preparations for a vigorous attack on the Ottoman dominions, and high expectations were entertained that the young Mohammed would be expelled from Asia Minor; but, as often happens among allies,

each member of the alliance trusted that his neighbour would prove more active and energetic than himself.

At this critical conjuncture Joannes IV died before witnessing the effects of the storm he had laboured to raise. He left a son named Alexios, only four years old, who was set aside to allow his uncle David to mount the imperial throne. No respect for the rights of their nearest relations seems ever to have influenced the minds of Greek princes or nobles, to whom any chance of ascending a throne presented itself. The ambition of wearing a crown annihilated every private virtue. From the days of the tyrants of Hellenic history, to those of the emperors of Constantinople and Trebizond, the feelings of family affection and the ties of duty were habitually neglected or contemned. The depravity of the house of Grand-Kommenos may have led David to violate his duty; but the peculiar difficulties of the times would have served him as an apology for departing from the ordinary rules of succession, had it been possible by such a change to place an able administrator or an experienced warrior at the head of the government. In an ill-organised state a regency is often a greater evil than a usurpation. David, the new emperor, was a weak and cowardly man, and his conduct in usurping his nephew's place was the result of mere pride and vanity, not of noble or patriotic ambition. He had secured the support of the powerful family of the Kabasites, who were now independent lords of the province of Mesochaldion; and this alliance, joined to the indifference of the people, fortified him against all opposition. He could likewise pretend that the rule of succession to the empire was not so clearly laid down as to exclude an uncle of full age, in preference to his nephew when a minor.

### SECT. III

#### REIGN OF DAVID.

#### CONQUEST OF TREBIZOND BY SULTAN MOHAMMED II.

1458-1461.

David was a fit agent for consummating the ruin of an empire. Proud, effeminate, and incapable, he blindly rushed forward in the course of policy his more energetic brother had traced out. All his attention was required to prepare for the coming war with the Ottoman sultan; and he was fortunate enough to gain a respite of two years before the commencement of hostilities, in consequence of Mohammed considering that the affairs of the Greek despots in the Morea required to be finally adjusted before transferring the bulk of the Ottoman armies into Asia. The haughty stupidity of David appears to have rendered him unable to appreciate the value of the strict discipline of the Janissaries, and the admirable organisation of the sultan's armies, though he had seen them in full activity as he stood a suppliant before the Sublime Porte when soliciting the treaty for his brother. He was too little either of a soldier or a statesman to be sensible of the dangers of the contest into which he was hurrying. Yet he must have contemplated the possibility of his capital being besieged by Mohammed II, as it had often been by far weaker enemies. But even for this contingency he made no reasonable preparation. Nothing but the most complete ignorance of the changes which had

recently taken place in the military art could induce any officer in Trebizond to fancy that the antiquated defences of the capital could offer any prolonged resistance to the system of attack with heavy artillery, of which the fall of Constantinople was a recent and terrific example. The romantic tower, crowning the highest point of the citadel, recently added to the fortifications by Joannes IV, could hardly, even in the opinion of David, have been considered a work capable of serving as a palladium against the Ottoman power, any more than the bones of St Eugenios and other martyrs. Yet the emperor acted as if such was his firm conviction.

The first step of David, as emperor, was to complete the matrimonial alliance of his family with Ouzoun Hassan; for Joannes IV had died before the marriage of the beautiful Katherine had been celebrated. The fair princess was now sent to her bridegroom with suitable pomp. She soon acquired great influence over his mind, and in her conduct generally displayed more sense and talent than any other member of her house. New treaties of alliance were signed with Ismael of Sinope, and with the Christian princes of Georgia, Imerethi, Mingrelia, and Cilician Armenia.

David even made an attempt to revive the expiring spirit of crusading zeal among the nations of Western Europe; but in his propositions for rendering the passions of the warlike Franks subservient to the transparent selfishness of Greek policy, he miscalculated the political sagacity of the Latins, and the diplomatic astuteness of the papal court. In the letters addressed by David to Pope Pius II (Aeneas Sylvius,) and to Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy, to invite them to make a diversion in his favour on the side of Hungary, he indulged in such exaggeration and bombast, while enumerating the forces of his allies in Asia, that Pius II, though really disposed to do everything in his power against the Turks, could not trust the writer. After the capture of Trebizond, this Pope wrote a letter to Mohammed II, begging him to treat the Christians who had fallen under his sway with less severity; but this request was probably of little service to the poor captives, for his Holiness availed himself of the opportunity to recommend the sultan to embrace the Christian faith. Philip of Burgundy was as little pleased with the letter of the emperor as the Pope. David, in offering to reward his services by the futile promise that he would acknowledge the duke as king of Jerusalem, seemed to treat Philip as a child; for if the duke of Burgundy could conquer this distant kingdom, he certainly stood in no need of the acknowledgment of a suppliant ally, who was begging aid to defend his own capital. To attack the Ottoman sultan on the banks of the Danube, at the recommendation of the Greek sovereign of Trebizond, was, moreover, not the nearest way to conquer the kingdom of Jerusalem, which was then in the hands of the Mamlouk kings of Egypt.

The assistance the empire of Trebizond received from the Catholics was limited to the mission of a Minorite monk, who was sent by the Pope to preach war against the Ottoman sultan among the Christians in Asia, and to promise support to their Mussulman allies. This emissary passed through Trebizond, on his way to Iberia, Georgia, Diarbekr, Cilicia, and Karamania. On his return, he brought back letters from the emperor of Trebizond, and the princes of Iberia and Georgia, and he was accompanied by their envoys, as well as by ambassadors from Ouzoun Hassan to the duke of Burgundy. But Trebizond was taken by the Turks before Pope Pius II could concert any steps for its defence. His zeal for a holy war was sincere; and he died at Ancona in 1464, hastening forward preparations for an expedition against the Turks.

The only result of the coalition against the Ottoman power was to point out to Mohammed II the enemies against whom it was necessary to turn his arms and make use of his diplomatic arts. It was evident that the only member of the alliance whose power and talents rendered him dangerous to the Ottoman power was Ouzoun Hassan, and, at first, the Turkoman chief showed no eagerness to involve himself in the contest. His whole attention was directed to establishing his supremacy over the rival horde of the Black Turkomans. But the persuasion of his beautiful wife determined him to embark in the war with Turkey. In 1459 he sent an embassy to the Porte, to ask Mohammed to release David from the annual tribute of three thousand pieces of gold imposed on the empire, and at the same time he reminded the sultan that the Ottoman Porte was indebted to the White Horde. Sultan Mohammed I had agreed to purchase the friendship of Kara Youlouk, the grandfather of Ouzoun Hassan, by the payment of an annual tribute of one thousand prayer carpets, and an equal number of cavalry equipments; but this tribute had now remained unpaid for nearly sixty years. The demand was justly considered by the sultan as an insulting bravado. His reply was worthy of the haughty race of Othman. After hearing the Turkoman envoy patiently to the end, he replied calmly, "Depart in peace; I will soon come to Mesopotamia, and discharge all my debts."

As soon as Mohammed II had completed the subjugation of the Greeks in the Morea, he resolved to conquer those in Asia. In order to secure his European dominions from all inquietude during his Asiatic campaigns, he concluded peace with his brave enemy, the Albanian prince Scanderbeg, in the month of June 1461. A large naval and military force was already prepared for action. A fleet of a hundred and fifty galleys had been fitted out in the port of Constantinople during the winter, and a powerful army collected at Brusa in the spring. It would appear that about this time Mohammed wrested Amastris from the Genoese. That city was the principal Genoese fortress on the coast of Asia Minor, yet it surrendered the moment the sultan appeared in person before its walls; and the republic felt itself too weak to declare war with the Ottoman empire, even after this attack. The Genoese were willing to make any territorial sacrifice in the East, in order to preserve their commerce in the Black Sea.

The preparations of Mohammed had been immense, and their precise object was never communicated even to his own ministers. The inhabitants of Sinope, of Trebizond, and of Caffa, were all equally filled with consternation; but their rulers felt so confident that the whole force of the storm would be directed against the Turkomans, that they neglected to take the necessary precautions for an immediate siege. Before the Ottoman army moved, it is said that the *cadi* of Brusa ventured to ask the sultan against what enemy he intended to direct his forces. The young sultan turned sharply to the inquisitive old judge, and replied, "If a hair of my beard knew my secret, I would pluck it out and cast it into the fire".

The power of Mohammed II was great, his military and naval resources inexhaustible, the valour and discipline of the ottoman armies unrivalled, and their sovereign's confidence in his own military talents boundless. Yet he did not disdain to employ deception and falsehood for the furtherance of his ends. The Phanariots had already taught their Turkish lords that these were the most effective weapons of political experience. Mohammed's eagerness to increase his territorial possessions, as the real foundation of a prince's glory, led him to confound deceit with wisdom, and ferocity with valour. No falsehood appeared to be dishonourable, if it tended to aid him in his

conquests, or enabled him to spare the blood of his veteran troops; nor did any cruelty appear blamable that was exercised against the Christian faith, or the enemies of the house of Othman.

The sultan's first object was to detach Ismael, the emir of Sinope, from his alliance with the emperor of Trebizond. The fortress of Sinope was strong, and in a condition to make a long defence. Its port is the best on the southern shore of the Black Sea; so that its possession was absolutely necessary for the security of the left flank of the ottoman army. If it were besieged, the whole summer might be wasted, and the Turkomans, by making an irruption into the heart of Asia Minor, might find an opportunity of raising the siege. Mohammed, therefore, conceived that he could gain possession of the place more rapidly by deceit than by force of arms. An envoy was sent to Ismael, to assure him that the expedition of the ottoman army was destined to bestow the inestimable gift of the true faith on the infidels of Trebizond, and that he had nothing to fear. The emir of Sinope, willing, on the near approach of danger, to secure peace for himself, and fearing perhaps to appear as the ally of Christians, and the enemy of Mussulmans engaged in a holy war, allowed himself to be deceived by the sultan's assurances, and neglected to put his capital in a state of defence.

When Mohammed had made himself master of Amastris, and concluded his treaty with Scanderbeg, he hastened to the headquarters of his army, which had advanced to Angora. The son of Ismael presented himself in the camp, bearing rich presents from his father. The position of the ottoman army now cut off all hope from the emir of Sinope of receiving aid from the Turkomans. Amasia was occupied by a powerful body of troops, and the ottoman fleet was already in sight. The sultan, though still wearing the mask of friendship, changed his tone, and communicated his orders to Ismael in a hypocritical strain of advice. He counselled the emir to surrender Sinope, since the ottoman power alone was capable of defending a city whose possession was so important to the true faith, and he offered in exchange a territory in Europe of equal value. Ismael, who was a weak man, destitute of energy, and inspired by no feeling of patriotism, felt so alarmed at this sudden display of hostile feeling on the part of his powerful neighbour, that he was glad to secure what we may call a large civil list: he resigned his dominions, and received the government of Philippopolis as an indemnity for the hereditary principality of Sinope.

The resources at the command of this feeble prince, and the strength of the situation of Sinope, were, in the opinion of Mohammed II, cheaply purchased by a sacrifice of truth and honour. Ismael was one of the wealthiest sovereigns of his time. He possessed a well-filled treasury, besides an annual income of two hundred thousand gold staters or ducats. The rich copper mines in his territory alone yielded about fifty thousand staters annually to the sultan, after he entered on their possession. The ramparts of the isthmus which connects Sinope with the mainland, and the fortifications which overlooked its two ports, were crowned with four hundred pieces of artillery, large and small. The garrison consisted of two thousand musketeers, and ten thousand soldiers armed in the ordinary manner of the age, with spear, bow, sword, and iron mace. Many war-galleys and large ships were ready for sea in the ports; and one of these was of the burden of nine hundred pithoi, which we may perhaps call tons. It was then the largest vessel in the Eastern seas. The magazines were filled with provisions and military stores. But the cowardice of Ismael rendered all these advantages unavailing, and Mohammed II became master of Sinope without opposition.

The sultan hastened eastward by the road of Amasia and Sivas. An army of Turkomans attempted to arrest his progress; but it was swept from his path by the charge of the Janissaries, and Arsinga and Kayounlon Hissar were occupied without further opposition. Ouzoun Hassan, who had taken up a position in the passes leading to Kamakh, perceived that he had nothing to hope in a pitched battle with the ottoman army, which exceeded his own in numbers as much as in discipline. The country was ill adapted for the effective employment of cavalry, and it was only by availing himself of the excellence of his light horse that the Turkoman chieftain could expect victory. He saw the necessity of soliciting peace, and sent his mother as his ambassador to the sultan. Mohammed was fully aware of the impolicy of involving himself in a protracted war either amidst the mountains of Armenia or in the great plains beyond the Euphrates, into which it would be easy for the Turkomans to retire, and from whence they could renew their attacks as soon as the ottoman army was compelled to disperse in order to garrison its conquests. Under these circumstances, Mohammed listened with pleasure to the supplications of Hassan's mother, and a treaty of peace was concluded. Its principal condition was, that the Christians of Trebizond were abandoned to their fate by the chieftain of the White Turkomans. Thus ended the coalition with the Mussulmans, which the emperor Joannes IV had regarded as a masterpiece of diplomatic skill, and on which he had counted for the ruin of the ottoman power, and the aggrandisement of the Greek empire of Trebizond.

David was now left to encounter the whole force of his enemy without any ally. In the year 1459, when he expected an immediate attack, he had made arrangements for enrolling twenty thousand troops and fitting out thirty galleys. The mountaineers of Georgia were ready to furnish experienced warriors, and among the Frank and Italian adventurers in the Black Sea he could have found many brave and skilful mariners. The storm was delayed; David forgot his danger; and the autumn of 1461 found him utterly unprepared to sustain a prolonged siege in his capital.

When the sultan led his army against the Turkomans, the fleet quitted Sinope, and began to blockade Trebizond, in order to cut off its communications with Caffa and Georgia. The troops on board the fleet landed, burned the suburbs, and invested the fortress. For thirty-two days the place was closely blockaded, but little progress was made in pushing forward the siege. The news then reached the camp that the Turkomans had been defeated, and that Ouzoun Hassan had concluded a separate peace, and abandoned his Christian ally to his fate. The emperor David, on hearing the news, lost all hope of defending his empire, and thought only of preserving his treasures and his life. The example of Constantine, the last emperor of Constantinople, who, by falling gloriously in the breach, had raised an imperishable monument in the hearts of all the Greeks, awakened no sympathetic feeling in the breast of the last emperor of the degraded race of Grand-Kommenos.

Mohammed II lost no time in leading his army over the lofty and inhospitable chain of mountains that serves as a barrier to the city of Trebizond. The advanced guard, under Mahmoud Pasha, took up its position at Skylolimne, and summoned David to surrender his capital. The cowardly prince declared that he was ready to enter into negotiations for a capitulation. Messengers were instantly despatched to inform the sultan of the humble sentiments of his enemy, and spare the advance of any more troops from the interior to the sea-coast. Mohammed II dictated the terms on which he was willing to accept the submission of David. He required the instant surrender of the

fortress and citadel of Trebizond, and offered, in exchange, to assign the emperor an indemnity in the shape of an appanage equal in value to that which he had conferred on Demetrius Paleologos, the dethroned despot of Misithra. To hasten the decision of the timid emperor, Mohammed added a threat, that in case his offer was not immediately accepted, he would storm Trebizond, and put all the inhabitants to the sword. David had no thought of resisting; he only desired to secure the terms most advantageous to his own personal interests: of his subjects he took no heed, for he transferred them to the sultan without even one single request in their favour. He would fain have bargained with the sultan for better conditions for himself; but when he found this to be hopeless, he embarked with his family and his treasures on board one of the Turkish galleys, to enjoy luxurious ease in his European appanage. Pope Pius II endeavoured to do more for the Greeks than either the emperor of Trebizond or the despots of the Morea.

Kerasunt, which was occupied by a garrison of imperial troops, and Mesochaldion, the stronghold of the Kabasites, surrendered on the first summons. Even the inhabitants of the mountains submitted to the sultan's government without an attempt at resistance. The people generally found the ottoman administration less rapacious than that of the Greek emperors; and the tyranny of the nobles prevented the rural population from feeling any attachment to the semi-independent princes in the different parts of the empire. The population of the city of Trebizond, however, had cause to repent bitterly the cowardice of their emperor. Had their city been taken by storm, their condition could not have been worse.

There can hardly be a doubt that had Trebizond been defended by a man possessing a small portion of the courage and military skill of the Albanian prince Scanderbeg, Mohammed II would have been compelled to abandon the siege and withdraw his army until the Mowing spring; or, had he persisted in attacking the place so late in the year, he would have met with a repulse as disastrous as that which he suffered under the walls of Belgrade. In a few weeks the ottoman fleet must have quitted the open anchorage of Trebizond, and it would have been impossible to keep the army properly supplied with provisions and stores by sea during the storms of an Euxine winter. To attempt the collection of provisions for the army in the mountainous districts around would have been unavailing, while it would have involved the troops in a desultory warfare with a brave and hardy population, and exposed the sultan to have all his communications by land cut off, even during the intervals when the weather in this cold and rainy district left the road passable. Sultan Mohammed saw and appreciated these difficulties. His rapid advance from Sinope had prevented the army from bringing up the necessary tents and baggage for an autumnal encampment. No siege artillery had arrived with the fleet, nor had preparations been commenced for casting battering-guns by the blockading squadron. In all probability, therefore, if the emperor of Trebizond had boldly refused to listen to any terms of surrender, and contented himself with offering an increase of tribute, and a sum of money to the sultan for the expenses of the war, prudence would have induced Mohammed to accept these terms as the best he could obtain, and withdraw his army without loss of time. The ottoman troops could never have passed the winter encamped in this secluded corner of Asia without suffering great losses, and exposing even the empire of Mohammed II to some great disaster.

The force of these observations, and the natural propensity of mankind rather to accuse a subject of treachery than to believe a sovereign can be guilty of meanness and

cowardice, led the Greeks to accuse George, the protovestiarios of the empire of Trebizond, of having caused the surrender of the capital by the treacherous communications he made to the sultan, and the bad advice he gave to the emperor. George happened to be the cousin of Mahmoud Pasha, the commander of the first division of the ottoman army; he was, therefore, selected as the envoy sent to negotiate the surrender. This was sufficient to excite the imaginations of the Greeks, who held it less dishonourable to their nation to suppose that the last independent Greek state was conquered by the treachery of an individual, than by the cowardice of its sovereign and the degradation of its people. They had found a melancholy consolation in attributing the fall of Constantinople to the weakness of Justiniani, yet they ought to have felt that if a few hundred Greeks had fought by the side of Constantine until the last day of the siege as bravely as Justiniani, Mohammed II might have been foiled in his attack. George, the protovestiarios, was perhaps accused with as much injustice as Justiniani. After all, little persuasion must have sufficed to induce the timid David to surrender a fortress he had made no proper preparations to defend.

Sultan Mohammed passed the winter at Trebizond. The internal administration of this important conquest, forming an advanced post amidst people still hostile to the ottoman domination, required to be regulated with care, in order to prevent the Christians from finding an opportunity of future rebellion. No infliction of human suffering affected the policy of Mohammed, so that the measures he adopted were of frightful efficacy. Only one-third of the Christian population, composed exclusively of the lower classes, was allowed to remain in the capital; and even this remnant was compelled to take up its residence in the distant suburb of St Philip, beyond the Meidan, overlooking the dwellings of the fishermen. The wealthy Greeks, the independent nobles, the Kabasites, and other members of the territorial aristocracy, were ordered to emigrate to Constantinople. Their estates in the country, and their palaces in the capital, were conferred on ottoman officers, unless some individual in the family of the possessor became a renegade; in that case, he was usually put in possession of the family property. The remainder of the population, consisting of young persons of both sexes, were set apart as slaves for the sultan and the army. The boys of the noblest families, remarkable for strength and beauty, were placed in the imperial serai as pages, or in the schools of administration as pupils. Eight hundred youths were selected to be enrolled in the corps of Janissaries, and crowds were dispersed among the soldiers in the capacity of slaves.

The whole Christian population having been expelled from the ancient city, the houses were distributed among a Mussulman colony of Azabs; and for many years no Christian was allowed to pass the two narrow bridges over the magnificent ravines of Gouzgoundere and Issé-lepol, which form the gigantic ditches to the table-rock of Trapezous. The citadel was garrisoned by a body of Janissaries, and the palace of the emperors became the residence of the pasha, who, from the tower recently constructed by Joannes IV, looked out over the amphitheatre where the emperor Joannes I had died playing at Tchoukan.

The dethroned emperor David was not long permitted to enjoy the repose he had purchased at the price of so much infamy. For a few years he lived undisturbed at Mavronoros, near Serres, which he had received in exchange for his empire. At length he was suddenly arrested by order of the sultan, and sent with his whole family to Constantinople. Mohammed began to suspect that the dethroned emperor was carrying



on secret communications with Ouzoun Hassan, and plotting to re-establish the empire of Trebizond. The great Turkoman chieftain had prospered after his defeat. He had completed the subjugation of the Black Horde, and conquered all Persia, so that Mohammed felt seriously alarmed lest he should join his forces to the army of the sultan of Karamania, who was preparing to attack the Ottoman Empire. At this crisis a letter from Despina Katon to her uncle David was intercepted by the ottoman emissaries. The fair Katherine requested David to send her brother, or one of her cousins, to be educated at the court of her husband. This letter afforded convincing proof to the suspicious sultan that David was plotting with the enemies of the Porte and Ouzoun Hassan, to recover possession of Trebizond and re-establish the empire.

Mohammed's suspicion was a sentence of death to the whole race of Grand-Komnenos. When David arrived at Constantinople he was ordered to embrace the Moslem faith, under pain of death. Adversity had improved the unfortunate prince. Though he had been formerly a contemptible emperor, he was now a good Christian. He rejected the condition proposed with firmness, and prepared to meet his end with a degree of courage and dignity very unlike his conduct in quitting the palace of his ancestors. His nephew Alexios, whom he had excluded from the throne, and his own seven sons, perished with him. Even George, the youngest, who had been separated from his family and compelled to become a Mussulman, was executed with the rest of his family, lest he should find an opportunity, at some future period, of joining the Turkomans and reviving his claims to the sovereignty of Trebizond. The bodies of the princes were thrown out unburied beyond the walls. No one ventured to approach them, and they would have been abandoned to the dogs, accustomed during the reign of Mohammed II to feast on Christian flesh, had the empress Helena not repaired to the spot where they lay, clad in a humble garb, with a spade in her hand. She spent the day guarding the remains of her husband and children, and digging a ditch to inter their bodies. In the darkness of the night compassion, or a sense of duty, induced some of the friends and followers of her house to aid in committing the bodies to the dust. The widowed and childless empress then retired to pass the remainder of her life in mourning and prayer. Her surviving daughter was lost to her in a Turkish harem. Grief soon conducted her to a refuge in the grave.

The Greek population of Trebizond never recovered from the blow inflicted on it by Mohammed II. No Christian descendants of the families who inhabited the city in the times of the emperors now survive. Of the four hundred families who at present dwell in the suburbs, all have emigrated from the neighbouring provinces within the last two centuries. The only undoubted remains of the ancient race of inhabitants are to be found in a class of the population that has embraced Islam, or, to speak more correctly, that conforms to the external rites of the Moslem faith, while it retains a traditional respect for Christianity. A large portion of the mountaineers of Colchis embraced Islam; some became confounded with the rest of the Mussulmans in the Ottoman Empire; but the inhabitants of some districts retained a slight tincture of Christianity in the interior of their own families, and for four centuries they have preserved this attachment to the religion of their ancestors. Their conversion, which for many generations was simulated, became at last almost complete. They always, however, openly boasted of their descent from Christian ancestors, and they owed the toleration they obtained from the Osmanlees more to a conviction of the strength of their sinews than to any confidence in the purity of their faith.

In concluding the history of this Greek state, we inquire in vain for any benefit that it conferred on the human race. It seems a mere eddy in the torrent of events that connects the past with the future. The tumultuous agitation of the stream did not purify a single drop of the waters of life. Yet the population enjoyed great advantages over most of the contemporary nations.

The native race of Lazes was one of the handsomest, strongest, and bravest in the East. The Greek colonists, who had dwelt in the maritime cities until they were children of the soil, have always ranked high in intellectual endowments. The country is one of the most fertile, beautiful, and salubrious on the face of the earth. The empire enjoyed a regular civil administration, and an admirable system of law. The religion was Christianity that boasted of the purest orthodoxy. But the results of all these advantages were small indeed. The brave Lazes were little better than serfs of a proud aristocracy. The Greeks were slaves of a corrupted court. The splendid language and rich literature which were their best inheritance were neglected. The scientific fabric of Roman administration and law was converted into an instrument of oppression. The population was degraded, demoralised, and despised, alike by Italian merchants and Turkish warriors. Christianity itself was perverted into an ecclesiastical institution. The church, too, subject to that of Constantinople, had not even the merit of being national. Its mummerly alone was popular. St Eugenios, who seems to have been a creation of Colchian paganism as much as of Greek superstition, was the prominent figure in the Christianity of Trebizond.

The greatest social defect that pervaded the population was the intense selfishness which is evident in every page of its history. For nine generations no Greek was found who manifested a love of liberty or a spirit of patriotism.

The condition of society which produced the vicious education so disgraceful in its effects, must have arisen from a total want of those parochial and local institutions that bind the different classes of men together by ties of duty and benevolence, as well as of interest. No practical acquaintance with the duties of the individual citizen, in his everyday relations to the public, can ever be gained, unless he be trained to practise them by constant discipline. It is, doubtless, far more difficult to educate good rulers than good subjects; but even the latter is not an easy task. No laws can alone produce the feeling of selfrespect; and where the sense of shame is wanting, the very best laws are useless. The education that produces susceptibility of conscience is more valuable than the highest cultivation of legislative, legal, and political talents. The most important, and in general the most neglected, part of national education, in all countries, has been the primary relations of the individual to the commonwealth. The endless divisions and intense egoism that arose out of the Hellenic system of autonomy, where every village was a sovereign state, disgusted the higher classes with the basis of all true liberty and social prosperity. Despotism was lauded as the only protection against anarchy, and it often afforded the readiest means of securing some degree of impartiality in the administration of justice. But despotism has ever been the great devourer of the wealth of the people. The despotism of the Athenian democrats devoured the wealth of the free Greek cities and islands of the Aegean. The Roman empire of despots annihilated the accumulated riches of all the countries from the Euphrates to the ocean. The empires of Byzantium and of Trebizond were mild modifications of Roman tyranny, on which weakness had imposed a respect for order and law that contended with the instincts of the imperial government. Yet, with all the

imperfections of its society, and all the faults of its government, it is probable that the two centuries and a half during which the empire of Trebizond existed, contributed to effect a beneficial change in the condition of the mass of the population over the East. That change, however, was developed in the general condition of mankind, and must be traced in a more enlarged view of society than falls within the scope of the History of Trebizond.

THE END

GEORGE FINLAY'S

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PRESENT TIME  
B.C. 146 TO A.D. 1864

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