SOME EPISODES IN THE HISTORY OF MEDIAEVAL SALONICA.¹

OF the cities which have been made remarkable in human history, most owe their interest to peculiar qualities in the citizens themselves, which have, at times, made their towns in some way eminent—either as city-states, or as cities embodying or typifying the social and political life of a nation. Under the former category come Athens, Florence, Venice; under the latter Paris, the Jerusalem of the Jews, old Edinburgh—in a slighter degree London. Other cities have, in a sense, “had greatness thrust upon them.” They have not permanently stood for an idea, a people, or a type of civilisation; they owe their celebrity to their geographical position, which has forced them to take part in many conflicts of contending peoples and of social and religious principles. The same circumstances have brought them wealth, vicissitudes, and an external aspect splendid in the days of their grandeur, picturesque in their decline. Their population has always been mixed; they have changed hands frequently without any essential change in characteristics. The great men whom they honour or the villains who have ruined them are scarcely of their own production. They belong to the world rather than to any nation or even to any period of history. Among such cities is Salonica.

The present-day interest in the city dates, for some people, from its cession by Turkey to Greece by the Treaty of Bukharest; to a few, perhaps, from the events of the year before last, when

¹ This paper was read to the Bristol Branch of the Historical Association on January 26th, 1917. The following authorities have been used:—*Corpus Byz. Hist.*, especially works of Nicetas Choniates, Acropolita, Cantacuzenus, Gregoras, John Anagnostes.—MIGNE, *Patrologia Græca*, esp. vols. 136, 140, 150, 151, for Eustathius, Palamas, Greg. of Sinai, etc.—O. TAFRALI: *Topographie de Thessalonique und Thessalonique au 14^{me} Siècle*. Paris, 1913.—FINLAY: *Hist. of Greece*. Vol. III. (Tozer's Edition, Oxford, 1877).—BURY's *Gibbon*. Vols. VI. and VII.—K. KRUMBACHER: *Geschichte der Byzantinischen Literatur* (Müller's Handbooks).—NORDEN: *Das Papsttum und Byzanz*.—C. DIEHL: *Études Byzantines*.—ADRIAN FORTESCUE: Article on *Hesychasm* in *Catholic Encyclopedia*.

it was occupied by the armies of the Allies. I had come across interesting episodes in its history in the course of my rambles into the story of Greek, Frank, and Oriental rivalries in the times before and after the momentous Fourth Crusade. But such interesting episodes multiplied before me when I undertook to write a little magazine article for the students of this University on the vicissitudes of the city. Imagining myself to be a bird of prey that had hovered over the region for more than two millennia, I saw the hosts of Xerxes on their way to invade Greece, marching along the coast of the Gulf of Therma, on which the city (perhaps even its forerunner) had not yet been built. Afterwards came the foundation of the city by Cassander of Macedon,¹ from whose wife, a half-sister of Alexander the Great, it was to receive its name. Later on, the Gulf was all alive with ship-building—the fruitless preparations of the last Philip of Macedon and his son Perseus to resist Roman supremacy. Later, again, the conflicts of the Romans themselves are felt in these parts. Cicero arrived there, a banished man, full of pain at the ingratitude of his fellow-citizens. Then, in the first Civil War, Pompey, with the remains of the Senatorial party, made the city his headquarters. In the second Civil War it suffered from the exactions of the “Liberators,” Brutus and Cassius. For Thessalonica, as for other Greek cities, a better age dawned with the advent of Augustus. It counts as a “free city,” and the word “Liberty” is stamped on its coins. In that age St. Paul appears, and acquires influence, be it observed, not only with male citizens, but with “honourable women not a few,” until a hostile party among the Jews, from that day to this an important element in the city, forced him to depart. During the period of splendour and luxury occurs the frightful massacre ordered in haste and officially repented of by Theodosius the Great.

Times of danger and threatenings came with the movements among the peoples—Goths, Huns, Slavs, Bulgars, Saracens—which last-named people acquired ephemeral possession in A.D. 904. But the city seemed to have a wonderful power of recuperation, and the noble Byzantine churches with which it is adorned testify to its wealth, piety, abundance of labour, and artistic skill. Later on the city falls a prey, in turn, to Normans, Frank Crusaders, and Turks. I had originally intended to confine this paper to the first and third of these last-mentioned captures, my reason being that in each of them a considerable Greek scholar was shut up in the town during the attack and wrote an account of it

¹ Another, but less safe, tradition ascribes it to Philip II. of Macedon.

afterwards. But on looking into the whole story it seemed to me that the narratives of barbarian captures are too gruesome to dwell upon in detail, without special obligation; also, by consulting a recent and excellent investigator, who has unearthed many Greek MSS. in Paris relating to the subject,¹ I have realised the great interest of two movements—one religious, the other political—that shortly preceded—perhaps helped to bring about—the submission of the city to the Turks.

During the last three centuries, at least, of the Byzantine Empire, Thessalonica counted as its chief city after Constantinople. When the Empire was divided into Themes (or military and administrative districts), Thessalonica was the capital of the "Theme of Macedonia and the First Thessaly"—geographical terms which, we may say, were not quite constant in their scope, any more than they are at the present time. The excellence of the harbour, which had been improved by Constantine the Great, and the accessibility of the city, along the course of the Vardar, or Axios, to the north, the Via Egnatia to the west, and the routes from island to island of the Ægean Sea, and to the Asiatic coast, ensured constant streams of traffic. The soil, favourable to the growth of corn and of wine, might have nourished a hardy and well-fed peasantry, if the good intentions of some Emperors and various patriots had been effectual against large proprietors and money-lenders. The wealth and cosmopolitanism of the city were promoted by, and in their turn greatly promoted, the ecclesiastical splendour of Thessalonica. As I have said, there were from early times magnificent churches, and the saints in whose honour they had been built presided over the city in its commerce and its mirth, as in its devotions. Foremost of these was, and is, St. Demetrius. The historical Demetrius is said to have suffered martyrdom under Diocletian, but in hagiology he ranks among the warrior-saints, like St. Michael, St. George, and St. Theodore, who in many cases succeeded to the cult of some Thracian horseman-hero.² His festival lasted a whole week in the month of October, and comprised both magnificent religious processions and a veritable Vanity Fair of all nations. Some of the foreigners were residents in the city, the population of which must have been as mixed in the twelfth to fourteenth centuries as it is to-day. There were Greeks, Slavs, "Gasmules" (mixed Greek and Western), Armenians, Jews, "Vardariotes"

¹ O. Tafrali: *Thessalonique au 14^{me} Siècle* and *Topographie de Thessalonique*.

² In the museum of Sofia there are a great many sculptured stones in honour of a certain knight-hero, supposed to be of Thracian origin.

(said to be Persian), and also settlements of Italian merchants from Venice, Pisa, and Genoa, and some Spaniards. The Government of so heterogeneous a population employed numerous officials. The Governor (*dux*, *ἐπίτροπος*, *ἄρχων*) had large powers—dangerously large, perhaps, especially as he was commonly related to the reigning imperial family. Justice and finance were—on paper—well secured, and were supposed to rest on ancient privileges, guaranteed to the city even under changes of government. The functionaries were almost always of the wealthy class, though a middle class with some popular sympathies becomes an influential element during the fourteenth century. The monastic and clerical bodies were strong. The Bishop was an important person, though more, perhaps, by way of influence and prestige than of direct political functions.

At the time of the great Norman invasion Thessalonica ought to have been in a satisfactory position for self-defence. But the measures necessary for its protection had been neglected. The Emperor, Andronicus I., generally a capable villain, not without some statesmanlike ideas, was a usurper and insecure on his throne, and had entrusted the care of Thessalonica to a particularly incapable and weak-kneed man, David Comnenus.¹ The story of the siege has been given by the great Bishop Eustathius, who was burning with indignation at the incompetence of the defenders. Eustathius was a learned commentator on the Greek poets, and a church-reformer in so far that he recognised the danger of a wealthy and idle body of monks who no longer respected their vocation. On this occasion he did something to prevail on the Norman leaders to check the horrors, and acted up to his reputation of poor man's friend. It may be noted here that the "frightfulness" which attends the sack of a wealthy city by a half-disciplined army seems to be much of the same kind and degree when carried out by real Huns or—as in this case—by ancestral kinsmen of our bluest-blooded aristocracy. But the cause and significance of the event must be briefly explained.

The rivalry of Normans and Greeks had first been prominently shown in the conflict between Alexius the Great and Bohemond of Sicily, who obtained the principality of Antioch in the First Crusade. It was natural enough that the Greek Emperors should take a different view of the main purpose of the Crusades from that held by Western adventurers. It was not the carving out of feudal principalities in Asiatic lands—poor exotics doomed to a

¹ Of course his name shows him to have been connected with the imperial family, though I have not been able to trace his affinity.

speedy extinction—not even the recovery of the Holy Places for Christian worship, that inspired the appeals of the Eastern Emperors to Western Christendom to unite against the encroaching Mohammedan power. They, as might have been expected, aimed first at their own security, and next at the recovery of the lands previously under their sway. True, compromises had to be made, and the Eastern Emperors gained something by the First Crusade, but to the knights of the West the Eastern peoples were as remote from Christianity as the Turks. The caterwauling of the Norman soldiers in Thessalonica, as the Greek priests sang mass in the churches, and their utter contempt of all sacred places, vessels, and persons, as described by Eustathius, bear witness to the religious animosity between the two Churches. Certainly great prelates and great statesmen had tried to take a broader view. In order to keep the Turk at bay, some kind of reconciliation among the antagonistic States and Churches of Europe was quite essential. For a time the dissensions between Popes and Western Emperors led the Eastern rulers to put out a feeler, so to speak, towards Rome; but though there were lengthy negotiations, nothing was effected. The Greek clergy and people were intensely opposed to anything like a recognition of Roman supremacy, and it is not, on the other hand, to be supposed that either the Pope or the secular Western Powers would have been content to allow free course in the East to the Byzantine Government.

I may seem to have been wandering from Thessalonica; but this is not the case, as the main excuse for the expedition sent by William II. of Sicily was furnished by a hideous massacre of Italians in Constantinople,¹ sanctioned, if not instigated, by the Emperor Andronicus. William sent an army which took Durazzo (or Dyrrhachium) and advanced on Thessalonica by land; while a fleet rounded Cape Matapan (Tænarum) and advanced to the harbour. The siege lasted ten days, with the result already given.

The rash confidence of the Normans was the salvation of the city. The misdeeds and blunders of Andronicus were culminating to bring about his ignominious fall. His successor—a distant cousin—Isaac Angelus, though not a man of great ability, was a new broom that swept clean. His general, Branas, defeated the Sicilians on their march towards Constantinople. The leaders were captured, and all who could escape took to their boats.

The contemplation of what *might* have been the result of a

¹ In Constantinople the merchants of various Italian cities had acquired special quarters and privileges.

permanent Norman conquest of Salonica opens up a curious vista to the historical dreamer. If the Normans had then succeeded in capturing Constantinople, they would have anticipated the Fourth Crusade, and would probably have done the work more efficiently and founded a stronger dynasty. If they had only kept Salonica, it would have been a thorn in the side of the Byzantine Empire. But the ultimate issue would have been the passing of the East into even abler hands than those of the Normans. For the very year before the expedition there was celebrated one of the most fateful marriages of the Middle Ages—Constance, heiress of Sicily, to Henry, son of Frederick Barbarossa, whose son became *Stupor Mundi*, Frederick II. Whether Frederick's great contest with the Papal Power would have ended otherwise if he had been possessed of authority and power in the East as in the North is a speculation in which we need not now indulge.

During the period of "Latin," or French, domination, which followed the Fourth Crusade—the most disgraceful and lamentable event in mediæval history—Thessalonica underwent many vicissitudes. It became for a time the centre of government of the ablest and most venturesome of the crusading leaders—Boniface of Savoy. Disappointed, probably, in his hopes of being elected head of the new-formed Empire of Constantinople, or Rumania, Boniface refused the offer of territory in Asia, and preferred to play an independent game in Macedonia and Greece.

Thus he made himself master of Thessalonica, and was only with difficulty induced to do homage for it to the "Latin" Emperor Baldwin. But Boniface soon after fell fighting the Bulgarians, now a rising Power, whom we find allied with one nation or another, according to circumstances, throughout this tangled story. His son succeeded him, but was shortly expelled by an able adventurer related to the Greek Imperial family—Theodore Angelus. The Angeli maintained themselves, with various vicissitudes and conflicts, in Salonica for about twenty-five years. Theodore Angelus was ambitious enough to set up this second city of the Greeks as a temporary substitute for Constantinople, and caused a local bishop to place on his head the Imperial crown. This step, most unfortunately, brought him, his family, and his ecclesiastical supporters into bitter conflict with the Greek Empire, now established in the Lascarid dynasty in Nicæa, awaiting its opportunity to recover the Queen City of Constantinople. It was ever the misfortune of the Greeks, in mediæval as in ancient and modern times, to find

themselves hopelessly divided at a moment when the national cause required union. It was not only the crusading Empire of Roum, but the King of the Bulgarians, John Asan, who threatened the new Empire of Thessalonica. At this point we have a few romantic incidents which enliven a dreary story. The Bulgarian King got possession of the person of Theodore Angelus and, according to a practice not confined to Byzantines, had his eyes pierced. But, at the same time, he fell in love with Theodore's beautiful daughter, Irene, and married her. The result was a liberation of the wily Greek, who, by ingenious shifts, succeeded in recovering Salonica, where, being himself hardly capable of governing, he placed his elder son in possession. But his younger son, Demetrius, who shortly succeeded the elder, proved an incapable libertine, and the Emperor in Nicæa, anxious to strengthen himself on the European side of the Bosphorus, took advantage of the complaints of the Thessalonians and seized the city for his own dynasty. The scene which occurred is graphically described by a contemporary, who was probably an eye-witness.¹ The beautiful Irene was in the city with her brother, who, on discovering his danger, was about to fly to the citadel. She came out and implored the Nicæan Emperor, John Vatatzes, that at least the youth might not lose his eyes. On receiving an assurance to that effect, she led him forth, and her sisterly zeal, together with the handsome face and figure of the unfortunate boy, moved the heart of the Emperor, who descended from his chariot to speak with her. After this, both empire and despotat² of Salonica became included in the Empire of the Lascarids, and thus, when that Power had obtained its own again, Thessalonica belonged once more to the Empire wielded from Constantinople—that city having been recovered by Michael Palæologus in 1261.

This complicated story of Thessalonica during the critical time of Latin dominion in the East may seem to belong to the byways of history, yet it illustrates tendencies operative in Eastern Europe which were of extreme importance, and the traces of which we see even to-day. Rival Powers—Greek, Bulgarian, and Western—are ever shifting in alliances and hostilities, and even within the ranks of Greek and of Western peoples, respectively, there is scope for rivalries on a smaller scale. The city of Salonica was one of the prizes to be contended for in all cases; yet it survived, and its reputation for wealth and culture remained.

¹ George Acropolita, 45.

² The successors of Theodore had been obliged to content themselves with this lesser title.

For it must ever be borne in mind that the period of the Palæologi was not all of decadence, but manifests the beginnings of the Renaissance, which it would be absurd to regard as a peculiarly Western movement. M. Charles Diehl¹ has called attention to the new development of scholarship and of art which marks, in the East, the time succeeding the expulsion of the Crusaders, and the great historian of Byzantine literature² remarks: "The philologists of the time of the Palæologi are, in character, powers, and point of view, heralds of a new order. In their methods and purposes of study they are connected less with such writers as Photius, Arethas, and Eustathius than with the first pioneers of the Classical Renaissance in the West." In this new life Thessalonica had her part. Literary men flourished, and at least one literary woman. There seems to have been rather more freedom in intellectual discussion there than in Constantinople, where conservative and ecclesiastical influences were stronger. In the upper circles of society life was pleasant and enlightened, but the deluge—in the form of the Turkish power—checked from time to time, was advancing, to overwhelm it all, and the religious and social dissensions referred to earlier had a weakening result which led to the collapse of Salonica even before that of Constantinople.

The religious controversy, that of the Hesychastæ, which raged for fourteen years, and occupies considerable space in contemporary writings, was concerned with ideas so remote from politics or from the ordinary thoughts of men that one would have to apologise for treating of it at all, were it not that it was bound by subtle chains to causes which helped to decide the fate of the East. The very remoteness and abstract character of the disputed propositions form a characteristic feature in the mind of the mediæval Greek. But after all, the controversy has its analogy in a religious faction and persecution of the enlightened seventeenth century, that of the Quietists, of whom Mme. Guyon is the best known type, and who, up to a certain point, received the sympathetic approbation of Abbé Fénelon. There is always some risk in tracing resemblances between old and more recent party divisions, whether in religion or politics, and I do not want to put Palamas and Barlaam in the places respectively of Fénelon and Bossuet, yet the fundamental ideas of Hesychasm and of Quietism seem at least to be akin—to point to a possible illumination of the spirit by the cultivation of physical apathy and intellectual

¹ *Études Byzantines*.

² Karl Krumbacher: *Byzantinische Literaturgeschichte*, p. 451.

quiescence. It can only flourish among recluses, and is sure always to irritate both the man of the world and the ecclesiastical disciplinarian. It may do mischief by exciting excessive admiration among the ignorant and susceptible, and it is generally at variance with a rational attitude towards religion and towards the world in general.

It has already been said that the monastic element was strong in Thessalonica. Not only were there large and important monasteries in or near the city itself, but it was very accessible to that hive of Greek monasticism, the promontory of Mount Athos. I would not for a moment disparage the debt which modern scholarship owes to the monks of Mount Athos, in that they copied and preserved for us classical manuscripts of the highest value. But if withdrawal from the world gives scope for intellectual and artistic effort, it also leaves the way clear for mental and spiritual aberrations.

Although some teaching of the kind had been current in Mt. Athos, the founder there of Hesychastic practices and propaganda was Gregory of Sinai.¹ He developed the idea of *νοῦς θεωρητικός* and *νοῦς πρακτικός*, the former purifying the soul from passion, the latter uniting it to Divinity, by means of *νοερά προσευχή* or inward mental prayer. The state of mind in which the silent worshipper is made capable of the beatific vision or of divine ecstasy, is to be reached by sitting in a cramped position, restricting respiration, and uttering certain ejaculations. Painful sensations ensue, but in time they give way to intense joy. It may be added that the grosser means of attaining to ecstasy are not much dwelt on by Gregory himself, and that in what he and others of the leading Hesychasts write, a good deal belongs to the body of spiritual aspiration common to all mystics, Pagan and Christian, of all the ages. But the grotesque elements were made prominent by their opponents, and became all the more weird when linked to metaphysical conceptions. Those who practised the Hesychastic discipline enjoyed the spectacle of a glorious light. This light which the illuminated beheld and which the Apostles had seen on Mt. Tabor, was it an uncreated emanation of Deity or a mere creature? With this question was connected another, familiar to Pagan Neo-Platonists; whether we should distinguish the energy or operation of God from His Essence or Being. And, again, it was asked how did this question stand in relation to the dogma which ever hindered the union of Eastern and Western Churches, of the single or double

¹ There are several of his works in Migne's *Pat. Gr.*, vol. 150.

procession of the Holy Ghost? Certain it is that *some* of those who opposed the Hesychasts were inclined to accommodate themselves to the Latin view. This point is of importance, as the help of the West was becoming more and more necessary to the East. And there is another link between the supermundane ideas of quietist monks and the decidedly mundane objects of Byzantine politicians; John Cantacuzenus, who had practically been ruling in the name of the boy-Emperor, John V. (Palæologus), had an idea of superseding him and becoming Emperor himself. But in Thessalonica the reigning dynasty, and especially Anne of Savoy, mother of John V., were popular. It was the policy of Cantacuzenus to gain to his side the monastic influence, and especially that of the Hesychasts.

The party opposed to the Hesychasts was led, as one might suppose, by some eminent representatives of ancient learning, the most notable of whom was a monk from Calabria, Barlaam. He stands for the earlier phase of the Renaissance, in that he and Petrarch gave each other "exchange lessons" in Greek and Latin.¹ He was well versed in Plato and Aristotle, and also in Euclid, and accustomed to the use of Greek dialectic. To him the attempt to attain to knowledge of the highest truth by means of stupefaction rather than of reasoning seemed foolish in the extreme. He applied his own reasoning powers in the great controversy between Greek and Latin Churches with impartial effect, as we have writings of his on both sides. But there is also a statement by him, which one would like to be able to set down as his latest decision, that if we were asked whether the *Filioque* clause in the Nicene creed were to be accepted, the answer should be: "I don't know." According to Cantacuzenus, Barlaam, in his attempts to learn all about Hesychasm, put himself under a stupid instructor, who increased his prejudices.

The opponent of Barlaam was Gregory Palamas, a Byzantine of good family, and though a partisan of the Hesychasts, a man of considerable learning. The discussions held between these protagonists and their followers became so exciting as to endanger the public peace, and the Governor began to intervene. This only made feelings more bitter, and each side accused the other of innumerable heresies. In 1341 the Patriarch summoned both parties to Constantinople. The doctrine of the created or uncreated light was examined. Barlaam relied on syllogisms, Palamas on authority. Imperial influence was used on the side of the monks, and Barlaam was obliged to go abroad. His place,

¹ I think at Avignon, where certainly both resided for a time.

however, as opponent of Palamas, was taken by a learned Slav, who had formerly been his pupil, Gregory Akindynos. In 1347 another synod was held, and by the influence of Anne of Savoy the party of Barlaam was rehabilitated. Akindynos was for a time made Archbishop of Thessalonica, but in a third synod Cantacuzenus, now Emperor, again pronounced for Palamas. This step caused great indignation in Salonica, and Palamas, when appointed Bishop, could not obtain recognition from his flock. The opposition to him was led by men of some eminence in Greek learning, and apparently taken up by the educated middle class.

In the end, the tenets of Barlaam, Akindynos, and the others were condemned, and, as I have said, the result has been regarded¹ as one of the causes of the fatal descent of Salonica. For it marks the intervention of political power on the side of obscurantism, and the suppression, in the second Greek city of the Empire, of the Greek Renaissance. Yet we may doubt whether the opponents of Palamas, with all their learning and respect for ancient logical and philosophic method, could have supplied what the times needed. Certainly the Mystics, too, had a cause, and in setting limits to the powers of human reason they too showed something of the Greek spirit—as was, indeed, acknowledged by their adversaries. The attempts to prove theological dogmas by syllogisms, and even to illustrate them by mathematical diagrams, which we find in some theologians of those times, appear to us quaint and unactual. Yet there can be no doubt that the controversy involved a terrible loss of force at a moment when all the mental and moral and physical energy of the Thessalonians were needed to meet their grave emergencies.

The political movements which more or less coincided with the religious were in like manner disastrous in their results and illustrative of what one may call a certain wayward energy in the ill-fated city. It has been seen that Cantacuzenus, in his ambition for himself and his family, had to contend with a party devoted to the House of Palæologus, and that his reliance was chiefly placed on the Byzantine, and especially on the Thessalonian, nobility, together with the Hesychast party among the monks. The interesting point to notice here is that his conduct and the arrogance of the nobles led to the rise of something like a democracy, which for a time obtained the ascendant in Thessalonica and some neighbouring cities, insisted on the rights of the people, and endeavoured, at any rate, to obtain a levy of the wealth and power of the city for the good of the whole community.

¹ Especially by Tafrali: *Thessalonique au 14^{me} Siècle*.

It is not easy to conceive enthusiasm¹ for the principles and actions of the democrats: *Ζηλωται* as they were called. Their most prominent leaders were treacherous, the mob was sanguinary and fickle. The patriotic spirit of the zealots was not strong enough to prevent them from throwing themselves into the arms—if only they could be received therein—of the great king of the Serbians. It is a poor excuse for them to say that the usurper and the nobles were equally removed from anything like humanity, fidelity, and patriotism, and that they even called in the Turks. But what can be said on the Zealot side is, strange to say, to be gleaned from the accusation of a monastic advocate, which quotes the apologies they may be supposed to have made for their irregularities. If they had confiscated monastic property it had only been for the good of the State, and they had from the revenues obtained provided for the continuance of public worship; if they had continued certain illegal exactions, these again were demanded by public necessity, as well as being permitted by custom; they claimed to have repaired the defences of the city and to have bettered the condition of the poor cultivator. What is specially interesting to notice is that just before this time a similar revolution had taken place in Genoa,² where the people had risen and formed a republican government which was to give their city a long season of splendour and of free activity. There was much communication at that time between Salonica and the Italian ports. Did Salonica consciously copy the great maritime city second only to the Queen of the Adriatic, and if the fates had been propitious might it have risen to a like fortune?

In any case, the fates were not propitious. The Zealots were put down, and our information about them only comes from the reactionaries who suppressed them. This does not, however, imply any increased security or prosperity in the aristocratic class. Pirates, loose mercenary bands, Serbians, Bulgarians, finally Turks, soon made independence and even life precarious for the whole community. Manuel, son of the Emperor John Palæologus, held his ground well for a time in Thessalonica, but in or about 1380 a Turkish general (Khairredin Pacha) obtained the city. For some years, however, it seems to have kept its autonomy under the Empire. Again it fell and again was recovered, but before long the Emperor, unable to defend it, made it over to the Venetians for a large sum of money. In 1430 it was again

¹ As Tafrahi does.

² Special stress is laid on this point by Tafrahi. I should be more inclined to refer to general democratic spirit in the air, in absence of superior state control. It seems important that the Zealot party was strong among the sailors.

attacked by the Sultan Amurath II. The "Latins" (as the Venetians were called by the old inhabitants) and the Greeks were unable to make a strong resistance. As in former sieges, a Greek Scholar (John the Reader) was present at the terrible scenes, and the unfortunate city had again a story of its capture and a monody which deplored the destruction of what, in spite of all vicissitudes, was still regarded as a joy and delight to the world. The rest is silence.

In the sketches I have brought before you I have seemed rather to be giving a set of kaleidoscopic views than to be tracing part of the history of a great city. But, as was said at the outset, there can be little unity or organic development in a city of which the population is always mixed, the situation open and tempting to armies and fleets of warring peoples. If I were to pursue the story further, it would still be to give episodes, not to follow lines of continuous life. One of the great episodes is that of the present moment (I mean the moment at which I *write*), with armies of the Allies entrenched in the fields, and British men of war in the Gulf, while the mighty struggle is raging, as of old, among Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbians, Italians, Jews, Turks, and men (like the Crusaders) of northern climes. The city, as we have seen, suffered much in the old times from hostile incursions; yet it never obtained or never retained for long the one compensation for the sufferings of war, the civic and national pride that grows from vigorous self-defence. If one might look forward to the future, one would desire that such a cosmopolitan city might reap one advantage from its cosmopolitanism, in receiving some guarantee and exemption from participation in the struggles of the nations. But whatever its fate, the tragic element in its background will commend it to the respectful notice of the historians of all nations, and its very lack of unity, which marks its inferiority to more famous cities of antiquity, brings home to our minds the unity of the drama of human life and history.

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