A history of Greece, from the earliest times to the Roman conquest, with supplementary chapters on the history of literature and art

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A

HISTORY OF GREECE,

FROM

THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE ROMAN CONQUEST.

WITH SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTERS ON

THE HISTORY OF LITERATURE AND ART.

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WITH NOTES, AND A CONTINUATION TO THE PRESENT TIME,

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PREFACE

OF THE AMERICAN EDITOR.

The works of Dr. William Smith, on Classical Biography, Antiquities, and Geography, are so well known in the United States, that any commendation of them would be superfluous in this place. The History of Greece published by him in 1854 is marked by excellences similar to those of his other books, and is, beyond all question, the best summary in our language of the ancient history of that country, for the use of schools and colleges.

The editor of the present American republication has carefully revised the text, and corrected a number of misprints which escaped the author in the original English edition. In one place, a passage of some length is inadvertently repeated in nearly identical terms; the repetition, in this edition, has of course been omitted.* In the Chronological Table, the heading of the third book is omitted; that omission has been supplied. An attempt has been made to introduce a greater degree of uniformity in the spelling of the classical names. The example of Grote and other high authorities in English literature is now beginning to be followed, and English usage, in this respect, is gradually conforming itself to that which has been established among the scholars of Germany. Still I have not ventured to carry out the principle in all cases, having limited myself generally to those in which an opposite practice has not been irrevocably fixed. With regard to the Modern Greek names, I have followed the orthography of the Greek rather than of any other language. Thus, I have written Tricoupês,

* Pages 172, 178, and pages 181, 182, of the English work.
and not Tricoupi; Rhēgas, and not Rigas; Colocotronês, and not Colocotroni; and so of many others.

With regard to the passages from the poets, cited by Dr. Smith in his excellent chapters on Greek Literature, I have in a few cases substituted other translations. This has been done for the purpose of more exactly representing the form of the originals. The foot-notes are, for the most part, founded upon personal observations in Greece. All the vignettes, maps, and wood-cut illustrations of Dr. Smith's work have been retained, and a considerable number have been added, besides those prefixed to the new chapters. One of them, the Gate of Lions at Mycenæ, has been redrawn, for the sake of representing it in its present condition. When I visited Mycenæ, the approach to the gate had been entirely cleared of the rubbish which formerly blocked it up, and the pavement of the street, with the ancient wheel-ruts, was laid open. The drawing in the present edition exhibits it precisely as it now appears. The view of the Acropolis in its present state is copied from a drawing made by an accomplished English friend, whose society I had the pleasure of enjoying at Athens. It exhibits exactly the appearance of the western end of the Acropolis, since the excavations made under the superintendence of M. Beulé, a member of the French school in Athens, brought to light an ancient door at the foot of the marble stairs, and is, I think, in other respects, the most faithful representation ever yet published. This copy, and all the other new drawings, have been executed by the skilful hand of Mr. Ernest Sandoz.

As the Greek nation has wonderfully survived through the disastrous period of the Middle Ages, and their long subjection to the oppression of the Turks, I have thought it would add to the interest of the volume to complete the story down to the present day. The method of accomplishing this object has been a matter of some perplexity. The space is necessarily limited, and the time to be included in it embraces many centuries. A complete narrative would fill several volumes; a mere enumeration of the events in chronological order would be tedious and dry. Instead of following either of these courses, I decided to select those events and persons that have most prominently influenced the course of Hellenic history during the periods in question, or that seemed best to illustrate the condition and genius of the race. It is hoped that the reader will find
that, in proportion to the original work, a tolerably full and clear account has been given on all these points. The present condition of the Greek people is one of deep interest. In the kingdom of Hellas a remarkable progress has been made in letters and education, during the quarter of a century since the close of the terrible war of the Revolution. The Greeks have been greatly misrepresented by the hasty judgments of travellers, and the complicated interests involved in the Eastern war now raging have tended to disseminate political prejudices against them, both in Europe and America. Yet the war of the Revolution proved to an admiring world that a noble spirit still animated the breasts of the Greeks, after so many ages of suffering and slavery. In patience, in bravery, in public and individual devotion to the cause of their country, the Greeks of that day bear a favorable comparison with any nation which has ever struggled to redeem itself from oppression. The distinguished and heroic personages who appeared on the scene of action during the long-drawn and bloody drama of the Revolution prove that the race and the age were fruitful of the highest qualities of character. The names of Marcos Botzarēs, Karaīskakēs, Diakos, Alexander and Demetrius Ypselantēs, and numerous other departed warriors and patriots, shine in history with an imperishable lustre; while among the living, Alexander Mavrocordatos, Tricoupēs, Kalergēs, Psyllas, Pericles Argyropoulos, and others equally deserving, though less conspicuous, exhibit to the world the most conclusive proof that talents and integrity, in ample measure, still adorn the land of Pericles and Demosthenes. The capacity of the Greeks for political affairs and self-government has been demonstrated from the first opening of the Revolution. Among the earliest cares of those who commenced the struggle, the establishment of a regular constitutional administration held the most conspicuous place; and during the whole conflict, though its progress was marked at times by civil dissensions, and the overwhelming power of the enemy brought the insurgents more than once to the brink of destruction, yet the spirit of legality and the forms of representative government carried the people through their fiery trials.

After the establishment of a monarchy, the desire for a constitutional government continued to animate the heart of the nation, and in 1843 that desire was fulfilled by the formation
of a constitution, which was adopted at the beginning of the following year. The mode in which the people gained this great object of their long-postponed hopes; the moderation which marked their proceedings; the good feeling they exhibited towards the king and queen, and the confidence in the people manifested by these august personages; the proceedings at the elections, and the acts of the members of the assembly that framed the constitution; the excellent features of the constitution itself,—entitle the people and the popular leaders to the applause of enlightened lovers of order and liberty everywhere.

In literature and scholarship the Greeks are fast rising to distinction. The private schools established in many places, the system of public instruction supported by the government, and encouraged by the most liberal private contributions, are admirable. The activity of the press supplies the country with translations of the best foreign books, and numerous original works by the industrious scholars and writers of Hellas; and the names of Asopios, Argyropoulos, Rangabës, Kontogonës, Philippos Johannis, and Manousës would do honor to any European university. The History of the Greek Revolution, now nearly completed, by his Excellency Spyridon Tricoupës, the Greek Minister at the Court of St. James, in point of style and matter compares well with the historical works of the classical ages.

Since the Revolution— to sum up in a few words the progress of the Greeks—cities and villages have been rebuilt, commerce has widely extended its operations, and the mercantile marine has largely increased; a general system of public instruction has been established, which places the opportunity of education within the reach of every child in Greece, at the public charge. Organic legislative bodies are established by the constitution, and the laws are ably and impartially administered by the judiciary; the trial by jury and an able and independent bar guard the rights of the citizens against the encroachments of power. The freedom of the press is guaranteed by the constitution. Surely, a people just emancipated from four centuries of enslavement, who have effected all this in a quarter of a century, are entitled to respect, even if their roads are rough, and their plains ill cultivated, and the public domain not so wisely administered as the friends of Greece might desire.

I am therefore of opinion, that the interest which attaches
itself to the Hellenic name does not cease at the Roman conquest. In the existing state of affairs, the Greeks form the saving and intellectual element of the Eastern world; and if ever those regions — so richly endowed by nature with the most varied resources for national prosperity and happiness, and so long sunk in wretchedness by the vices of Turkish misrule and the pernicious institutions of a society founded on the Mohammedan imposture — are to be restored to civilization, it must be through the influence of the Hellenic race and the Oriental Church, liberalized and purified by the science and letters and general intellectual culture of the Western nations.

The study of Greek literature is, all over the civilized world, one of the most powerful agents of liberal education. The political institutions of the Ancient Greeks are the most instructive subjects of study to the citizens of a free commonwealth. But there are peculiar and striking analogies, which make these studies especially important to the citizens of the United States. Greek literature must for ever be congenial to the political tendencies which sway a republican people. The spirit which breathes from the historians, orators, and poets of Ancient Greece can best be appreciated under constitutional governments like those of England and the United States; and the struggles for freedom which have marked the modern history of Greece meet with the heartiest sympathy among a free people; who, like those of the United States, stand aloof from the political entanglements of Europe, which checked the sympathies naturally to be expected from Christian nations in behalf of a Christian nation striking for liberty. The services rendered by America to Greece in her war of independence are not forgotten by a grateful people. The feelings of the American nation found utterance in the admirable papers of Mr. Everett, — especially in an article published in the North American Review for October, 1823, which exhibited the qualities of comprehensive and elegant scholarship, with the rarest beauties of style, and appealed to the Christian sentiment and literary sympathies of the country. This was followed by the speech of Mr. Webster, delivered in Congress, in January, 1824, which, in power of argument and classical finish of language, stands on a level with the masterly models handed down from the brilliant days of the Athenian republic. These noble efforts of scholarship and eloquence were followed up by the most im-
portant practical results, chiefly through the agency of Dr. S. G. Howe,—a name which future ages will not willingly let die, either in Greece or in the United States. Large contributions of money were forwarded to the government, and abundant supplies of clothing and provisions were shipped at different times, by which hundreds of the sufferers were saved from perishing. These generous movements were well deserved by the people for whose benefit they were made, not only on account of the illustrious associations with the great ancients, but on account of the virtues and calamities of the living race. And now the love of constitutional government, the eager desire of knowledge, the capacity for letters, politics, and eloquence, the industry, frugality, and high spirit, which characterize the inhabitants of the Hellenic kingdom, entitle them to respect and cordial sympathy. They have a difficult part to perform in the conflicts now drenching the East with blood; and if they commit errors, they should not be censured on a partial view of their position and their political relations. There are two sides to every question. But whatever opinion may be formed of particular transactions, arising out of the crisis of the moment, all well-informed men will agree, that the welfare of the East of Europe depends in no small measure on the future development of the Hellenic-Christian element in that part of the world.


C. C. FELTON.

CAMBRIDGE, January, 1855.