FREEMAN EDWARD AUGUSTUS

STUDIES OF TRAVEL - GREECE

Edward Freeman

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Freeman E.

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Содержание

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Preface

The papers that have been brought together in these small volumes are the results of three several journeys made by my father in Greece and Italy. He visited Greece for the first time in 1877, but of the papers written in that year, which appeared in the *Saturday Review*, only those on Corfu have been reprinted. They form part of the volume of *Sketches from the Subject and Neighbour Lands of Venice*, in the preface to which work the hope was held out that some out of many papers on the more distant Greek lands might one day be put together. It has been thought that these papers will not prove the less welcome that they must now lack the re-casting that my father would undoubtedly have given to them. Since his Greek journey was made, fresh light has been thrown on many points by the German excavations at Olympia as well as by those conducted by the Greeks themselves on the Athenian Akropolis, at Eleusis and elsewhere.

The papers on the two Italian journies of 1881 and 1883 also stand as they were written with the exception of a few verbal alterations which have seemed needful in such a reproduction of what was originally intended for the columns of a newspaper.

I have to thank the editors of the *Saturday Review*, the *Guardian*, and the *Pall Mall Gazette* for their courtesy in allowing the reprint of these articles which have appeared in their pages.

Florence Freeman,

Alicante:
January 17, 1893.

Round Peloponnêsos

The traveller who enters the older Hellenic world by way of Corfu, and who leaves that island by an evening steamer, will awake the next morning within a region which even modern geography and politics allow to be wholly Hellenic. As long as light serves him, he still keeps along the channel which divides free Corfu from enslaved Epeiros; night cuts him off from the sight of the mouth of the Ambrakian Gulf, and of the point where modern diplomacy has decreed that Greek nationality shall, as far as diplomacy can affect such matters, come to an end. The next morning's dawn finds him off the mouth of the outer Corinthian Gulf. To the east he is shown the position, on one side, of Patras, the old Achaian city which St. Andrew a thousand years back so manfully defended against Slave and Saracen, on the other side, of Mesolongi, whose fame belongs wholly to our own day. We call up the two sieges — the one where the civilian Mavrokordatos, the one hero whom the Fanariot aristocracy gave to the cause of Greece, beat back the Ottoman from its mud walls; the other made more famous still by that fearful sally of the besieged, when, like the men of Ithômê or Eira, they cut their way through the thickest bayonets of the Egyptian invader. There may be some to whom the record of those great deeds may be an unknown tale, but who may yet remember how Mesolongi saw the last and worthiest days of the life of Byron. Of Patras, of Mesolongi, however, we have hardly so much as a distant glimpse; we are told where they are, and that is all. For a while, too, the Peloponnesian coast itself is more distant and less attractive than the islands to the west of it, now parts, no less than Peloponnêsos itself, of the Hellenic realm. Yet we may remember that, as we pass by the Eleian shore — Βουπράσιόν τε καὶ Ἤλιδα δῖαν, while we are shown where lies the path to Olympia, we are now passing by the true *Morea*, the land which once distinctively bore that name before it gradually spread over the whole peninsula. The mainland as yet hardly attracts us. The dawn has hardly given way to full sunlight as we see Ithakê fade away in the distance, while Kephallênia lifts her bold height full before us. Half the Odyssey rushes on our memory, and the memory of some may be English enough to remember the happy description of our own Ælfred, how Aulixes — his form of *Odysseus*— was king of two kingdoms, Ithakê and something else, which he held under the *casere* Agamemnôn. A happy power of seeing the analogies between the institutions of his own day and those of remote ages enabled the West-Saxon King who had seen Rome in his childhood, the prince under whom English, Welsh, and Danish rulers held their kingdoms, to understand the imperial position of the lord of many islands and of all Argos better perhaps than it was understood again till the light of comparative research broke on our own age. We pass by, hoping for some future chance of prying into the geographical difficulties of the Homeric Ithakê, but feeling at all events that it is a stirring moment when we look on islands which legend at least pictures to us as the realm of Odysseus, and in seeing which we may take in a lesson of comparative politics from the noblest ruler of our own people.

Still the insular side is more prominent than the peninsular. Zakynthos, Zante, the isle of flowers, the flower of the Levant, plays no great part in Hellenic history, but as the height of Kephallênia passes away, the beautiful island, with its hills, its valleys, its city spread along the shore and climbing up the mountain-side, is the chief object to draw the eye to itself as long as it remains in sight. It is not till we have passed the curve of the Kyparissian gulf, not till we have passed the great islands, that the coast itself becomes the main object of study. For a study it is, whether in geography, in history, or in simple contemplation of the grand coast-line with the inland mountains soaring above all, and changing their seeming geographical position with the various shiftings of the vessel's course. The snow-capped height of Pentedaktylos, once Ta getos, rises over all, seen from this point and from that, but always suggesting the same thought, and commonly bringing with its mention the same answer — There lies Sparta. The shape of southern Peloponnêsos lends itself well to a coasting survey of this kind. The three long fingers in which the peninsula ends, and the two deep gulfs between them, allow the whole country to be seen as in a map, and allow most objects

to be seen from several points, and therefore to assume several shapes. From Zante to Cerigo — a name which can hardly be a corruption, but which must have by some process supplanted the earlier Kythêra — the coast-line is everything. Islands there are not a few, but they are small islands near to the coast, entering into the general scenery of the coast, and, near as they are, some of them were, like Cerigo itself, part of the dominion of Venice and of the powers which stepped into the place of Venice. Any map earlier than the cession of the Ionian Islands to Greece will show a boundary passing between the coast and several islands which seem to lie within a stone's throw of it. Along the whole line, the possessors of the mainland, first Ottoman, then Greek, were hemmed in, and as it were blockaded, by a series of floating outposts planted off their shores by the successive possessors of the Seven Islands. One is apt, in using a map of the days of "the Protection," to mistake the odd-looking frontier drawn in the sea for the probable course of the steamer. Now the frontier is gone; the great islands and the tributary islets all form part of the same kingdom as the mainland. All are now Hellenic in every sense, yet the most striking object in the journey brings forcibly to the mind how recent and artificial is the modern use of the Hellenic name. Tainaros runs far into the sea, as it did when the temple of Poseidôn crowned its height, and when the Helot refugee sought shelter under his protection from his Spartan master. Behind it rises Pentedaktylos, or rather Tainaros carries on Pentedaktylos into the sea. All the folk of those heights called themselves Hellênes in the old days, and all call themselves Hellênes now. But in those intermediate days which are painted for us by the Imperial geographer, the name of Hellênes was confined to a very narrow range indeed. The only Hellênes whom Constantine knew, the only people who were so called by their neighbours — for they do not seem to have borne that name on their own tongues — were the men of Tainaros, the wild and, down almost to our own day, unconquerable land which had in his time already got the name of Maina. These, he tells us pointedly, were no Slaves, distinguishing them from their Slavonic neighbours on Pentedaktylos itself. They were called Hellênes, but it was not in distinction from the Slaves that they were so called. They were, he says, descendants of the old Romans. Let no one dream of colonists from the Palatine or even from the Aventine. The "old Romans" of Constantine are what we should call Greeks, Hellênes, in this particular case the Eleutherolakônes, the people of the Lakonian towns set free under Roman patronage from their subjection to Sparta. The Roman, the subject of the Empire, is distinguished from the Slave, but these particular Romans bore the Hellenic name because they, or at least their immediate forefathers, clave to the Hellenic Gods. Late in the ninth century, till the apostolic zeal of the first Basil brought them within the Christian fold, the men of Maina still sacrificed to Poseidon and the other gods of their fathers. Thus they were Hellênes, Hellênes in the sense which the name bears in the New Testament, Hellênes in the sense in which Jovianus of Korkyra despoiled the temples and altars of the Hellênes to raise the church of the Panagia. No piece of nomenclature is more instructive than this. The name of Hellên would have been an insult to the Orthodox Roman of the purest Hellenic blood. It clave to the men of Tainaros only because they clave to Hellenic idols. Yet, whether as Eleutherolakônes, as Hellênes, or as Mainotes, the men of Tainaros have for many ages continued to have a name of their own.

The most historic spot, however, in the whole voyage is reached some while before we come to Tainaros. Pentedaktylos, the specially Slavonic mountain of Constantine's day, suggests its Hellenic neighbours, and Pentedaktylos comes in sight before we have doubled the first of the three great Peloponnesian promontories. Among the islands which lie along the coast is one which at first sight is hardly known to be an island. Sphagia keeps close watch over the haven of Navarino — watch so close that the whole length of Sphagia has to be passed before we see the narrow mouth which leads into the landlocked harbour which saw the last great sea-fight fought in Hellenic waters. Sphagia is there; Navarino is there; but some have ventured to doubt whether Sphagia is Sphaktêria, and whether Navarino is Pylos. Some have held that, in the changes of the coast, what was Sphaktêria has now become part of the mainland, and that the island which we now see is not that where Sparta endured her first great humiliation, where Kleôn and Dêmosthenês, in the teeth of all expectation, of every

seeming impossibility, brought back “the men,” the Spartan captives, in triumph to the harbour of Peiraieus. Such questions as this cannot be settled by one who sees the sites only as the power of steam hurries him alongside of them. In this general view the question is of no great moment. There is the coast, whatever may be the exact spot, where the legend makes Nestor entertain Têlemachos, and whence Têlemachos and Peisistratos drove a carriage and pair in two days from Pylos to Sparta. Now whether Têlemachos and Peisistratos be real men or mere creations of fancy, the road at least is no creation of fancy. The poet would not have ventured to make his heroes perform such a drive, as something perfectly easy and usual unless Peloponnêsos had been better supplied with roads in his day than it is in our own. Here then we get a kind of history out of the legend. There again is the coast, whatever may be the exact spot, where happened the most remarkable episode of the Peloponnesian war, the occupation of Pylos-the Lacedæmonian Koryphasion-and all that came of it. With yet more certain knowledge of the exact spot, we can point to the harbour where the fetters of Greece were broken, and where the might of Turk and Egyptian fell before the combined powers of Orthodox Russia, Catholic France, and Protestant England.

We pass on from promontory to promontory, the gulfs taking different shapes and bringing different objects into sight at every moment. At last

> Slow sinks, more lovely ere his work is done,
> Behind Morea’s hills the setting sun.

Pentedaktylos and Tainaros are lighted up, as the sun, in Greek phrase, reigns (βασιλεύει) over the heavens from which he is about to sink into his golden cup. Cerigo and Malea are seen only by the help of the lesser lights, but we can still see the long harbourless coast of Lakonia stretching away to the Argolic lands, and we have found out too the site of the Lakonian Epidauros, more famous in later days as Monembasia. As we woke one morning about the islands of the West, so we wake the next along the islands of the Ægæan. Tênos, Andros, Mykonos, Mêlos, Naxos, Dêlos itself, come into view at different points, till we stand before the haven which has in modern times made itself the centre of the commerce and navigation of these seas. The isle of Syros stands before us, bleak and barren. There is the steep conical hill, covered, every inch of it, with houses rising up to the church of St. George, the cathedral church of Latin Syra, the mediæval city, the city of refuge in days when men were driven to fall back on the hill-fortresses of the earliest day. On the shore, on the site of ancient Syros, but spreading over the adjoining hills, is the modern Hermoupolis, the busy mart of all the islands. Another night, a fair starry night, on the deep, and we reach the goal of the whole pilgrimage. Day has hardly dawned enough to see clearly Sounion and its marble columns, but there, however dimly seen, is the shore of Attica, and the thought comes that came into the heart of the sailors of Salaminian Aias, that before long

> προσείποιμ’ αν Ἀθάνας.

The Athenian Akropolis

It may not seem easy to say anything new on so well-worn a subject as Athens and her Akropolis, but of all subjects in the world there is none which has been more steadily looked at from a single inadequate point of view. It is moreover a subject whose history is not yet ended, and which supplies new points of view by the fact that new pages in its history are still happening. Nowhere is the unity of history more needed to be taught as a practical lesson than on the spot where we may fairly say that the political history of the world begins. There, on the spot whose history begins before the beginning of recorded history, we feel perhaps more keenly than anywhere else how blind and narrow is the way in which the history of that spot has been so commonly looked at, how large a part of the true interest, the true life, of the spot is lopped away, if we look only at some two or three centuries of its long and varied history. In the city of Athens, as a whole, we are painfully struck by the glaring contrast of extreme antiquity and extreme newness. There are buildings of yesterday; there are buildings of a thousand years back; there are buildings of two thousand years back, but the three classes stand out in marked and indeed unpleasant contrast to one another. There are no intermediate links such as there are at Rome, binding the great classes of objects together, and making them all fit into their places as members of one unbroken series. Hence, while at Rome we never forget that we are at Rome, at Athens we may sometimes forget that we are at Athens, That so it is no fault of the Athenians, old or new. It comes of the fact that the Turk once ruled in Athens, and therefore had to be driven out of Athens; while, as the Turk never ruled in Rome, he never had to be driven out of Rome. If this is true of the city in general, it is far less true of the Akropolis. There we can never forget that we are in Athens; and, if we use our eyes aright, we can never forget that the Athens in which we stand did not exist, as some seem to fancy, only for two or three centuries two thousand years back, but that its long history spans the whole range from our first glimpses of civilized Europe down to the warfare in which men still living have borne a part. It is but a narrow view of the Akropolis of Athens to look on it simply as the place where the great works of the age of Periklês may be seen as models in a museum. A truer and a wider view will begin earlier and will go on later. The Parthenôn and the Propylaia are but the records of one stage, though doubtless the most brilliant stage, in the history of a city which ought equally to number among its records the primæval wall which was venerable and mysterious in the days of Thucydides and the bulwarks which were raised by the last Odysseus in warfare with the Turkish oppressor. In the eye of the true historian those earliest and those latest records, and the records of the long ages which passed between them, all have, perhaps not all an equal value, but at least value enough to stamp them all as alike parts of the history of the city, all alike entitled to respect and veneration from every one in whose eyes the history of the city is precious. On the hill of the Akropolis and its buildings the whole history of Athens, from its earliest to its latest days, has been clearly written, and there it may still be clearly read wherever the barbarism of classical pedantry has not wiped out the record. The primæval wall, the wall of Themistoklês, the wall of Kimôn, all come within the charmed period. No one is likely to damage them. It needs, however, a wider view than that of the mere student of the writings, the mere admirer of the art, of two or three arbitrarily chosen centuries, to take in the full meaning even of the works of those arbitrarily chosen centuries. Those remains of the earliest masonry, for which we have to search behind the great buildings of the days of the democracy, those stones which rival aught at Argos or at Tiryns, have a tale to tell such as Argos and Tiryns cannot tell. Why was Athens Athens? How came that one city to fill that particular place in the world's history which no other city ever did fill? In the Homeric catalogue Athens stands alone; all Attica is already Athens, while every other part of the catalogue is crowded with the names of those smaller towns many of which passed away before recorded history begins. Marathon and Eleusis find no place in the great record. The work had already been done, be the name of the doer of it Thêseus or any other, which made Athens all that Athens was — which

fused together into one commonwealth the largest extent of territory, the largest number of citizens which, according to Greek political ideas, could act together as members of a single commonwealth. Athens could become all that she did become, because, in an unrecorded age, in an age of which those rude stones at least are the only record, all Attica became Athens. To that great revolution, none the less certain because in its own nature unrecorded, it is alike owing that Athens in one age could rear the trophy of Marathôn, and that in another she was chosen to be the head of regenerate Greece. The oldest wall — we may call it the wall of Thêseus — and the latest wall of Odysseus are but the earliest and the latest pages of one story, bound together by the direct tie of cause and effect.

If then, fully to take in the historic greatness of the Athenian Akropolis, we must look to facts and their records alike far earlier and far later than the days of Periklês, the works of the days of Periklês lose half their value if we look at them simply as the works of the age of Periklês, and do not bear in mind the long ages, the stirring events, of their later history. The house of Athênê is emphatically the *Parthenôn*. When Dêmêtrios the Besieger was lodged in its *opisthodomos*, the satirical remark was made that he and his following were by no means fitting guests for its virgin owner. It should, however, be remembered that that ancient temple has remained the house of the Virgin under three distinct forms of worship. The classical purist might disdain to notice — or, if he noticed, he might be eager to wipe out such a memory — that on the walls of the *cella* may still be seen the paintings, the εἰκόνες of another creed, another form of art, from those of Pheidias and Iktinos. Yet those painted forms tell us of one of the great moments in the history of South-Eastern Europe — one might rather say one of the great moments in the history of the world. It speaks of the day when the New Rome was again queen of all the nations, from Crete to the Danube, from the Euphrates to the Bay of Naples, when the Slayer of the Bulgarians, in the moment of his triumph, chose, out of all the holy places of his Empire, the church of the Panagia on the rock of Athens as the scene of his thanksgiving for the great salvation which his arms had wrought. We stand on the rock, and run over in our minds the long ages between Periklês returning from the recovery of Samos, and Basil returning from the recovery of Ochrida. We look down upon the lands which endured the ravages of the last Philip in the cause of Rome, on the city which endured the storm of Sulla in the cause of Mithridatês. We look down on the works of Hadrian and the works of Hêrôdês, and the eye wanders to a spot where the monument of a Syrian prince is the most prominent object on an Athenian hill. We think how long Athens remained the school of Rome, how the Goth turned away from her walls, how Justinian at once strengthened her as a fortress and took away from her her crown as the seat of heathen philosophy and heathen worship. Yet we mark the slight lingering of ancient memories which, in re-dedicating her ancient temples to the new faith, still kept a certain analogy between their older and their newer functions. We mark how the Parthenôn still remained the Parthenôn; how the temple of the heathen warrior Thêseus became the church of the Christian warrior George. We think — Athens is not expressly mentioned in the tale, but she can hardly be deemed to have lagged behind her fellows — how the Greeks, the Ἑλλαδικοί, as the Byzantine writer scornfully calls them, set forth on their strange and bootless errand of delivering Constantinople from Isaurian and Iconoclastic rule. Below us lie the churches of Eirênê, monuments of days when Athens and Constantinople were united in a common orthodoxy, when Athens had given an Empress to the Eastern world, and when men again dreamed of a union of East and West by the marriage of an Athenian and a Frank. All these memories lead up naturally to the great scene of Basil's day of triumph, when a prince who might be deemed at once Roman, Greek, and Slave, chose Athens and her still abiding Parthenôn for the greatest ceremony of his long reign of warfare and of victory. We pass on to another age. The spirit which will hardly endure the memory of a Greek-speaking Cæsar on the holy hill of Athênê will find times even less to its taste when an Italian prince, in his will drawn up in the Italian tongue, bequeaths the city of Athens to the Church of St. Mary. Things had indeed changed, alike from the days of Periklês and from the days of Basil, yet Athens under the French and Italian Dukes had in some sort come back nearer to her ancient place than when she beheld the thanksgiving of the Macedonian

Emperor. Athens, by that name, was again one of the powers of the world, no longer a mere province of Rome, either in her older or her newer seat. It was indeed a time of foreign rule. A Latin Duke had made his palace in the Propylaia of Periklês; a Latin Bishop had displaced the Orthodox rite of Basil's day in the church which was still the Parthenôn. Yet those were days when Athens was the seat of a brilliant court, when the fame of her princes was spread through Europe. The formula of our own Shakespeare, so strange in the ears of many, when he speaks of Thêseus Duke of Athens, is a mark of days when her Kings and Archons had been forgotten, but the memory of her Dukes still lived in the minds of men. But the wanton barbarism of classical exclusiveness will not endure the memory or the record or the monuments of days like these. Only yesterday the tower of the Dukes of Athens was standing. Its stern and heavy mass well broke the horizontal lines of the Greek architecture, and gave to the whole group somewhat of that outline which the hill of Laon has, and which the hill of Athens has not. But the tower was late; it was barbarous; it did not belong to the two or three favoured ages; it was a reminder of times which the exclusive votaries of those two or three favoured ages would fain wipe out from the records of mankind. Mr. Mahaffy, indeed, who cannot distinguish between the taking of Constantinople in 1204 and the taking of Athens in 1687, believed that Morosini had found time to build this massive tower during the few weeks of his occupation. Mr. Mahaffy, who looks on the Akropolis as so sacred that it was a sin to bombard it, even to drive the Turks out of it — who seems to think freedom and national being something of less moment than the preservation of this or that statue or column — calls for its destruction in his text and crows over its completed destruction in a note. Of this piece of wanton barbarism Dr. Schliemann must bear the blame. Who, if any, were his Greek accomplices, we have forborne to ask. But the tower is gone; a most striking memorial of one age in the history of Athens has been swept away, under the paltry pretext that inscriptions might be found among its materials. By a righteous Nemesis, when the destroyers had finished their work of havoc, they found nothing to reward them.

We can conceive nothing more paltry, nothing more narrow, nothing more opposed to the true spirit of scholarship, than these attempts to wipe out the history of any age. So far from destroying the ducal tower, we would have kept the Turkish minaret. For the Parthenôn, already the temple of heathendom and of two forms of Christianity, became in the end the temple of Islam. A mosque had of course its minaret. Its lower part is still there in the form of a staircase, but the characteristic upper part has vanished. We know not how it vanished, whether through wanton destruction or in one of the sieges in the seventeenth or the nineteenth century. In any case, we should have been well pleased to see both minaret and tower breaking the outline, and speaking of days which have been, but which have passed away. Greece is free; the rule both of the Frank and of the Turk is gone; but that is no reason why the memorials of either Frank or Turk should be swept away. A higher national feeling would keep them carefully as trophies of victory. At all events, let not men, calling themselves scholars, lend themselves to such deeds of wanton destruction. The name of Morosini is unfairly held up to execration because an accident of warfare, which he could not control, made him the destroyer of the Parthenôn. A far heavier blame rests on those who were the deliberate destroyers of the ducal tower. On them indeed may well fall the words of withering scorn in which Byron so well couples the destroying names of Eratostratos and Elgin.

Athens Below the Akropolis

The main characteristic of modern Athens, and one of its chief points of contrast with Rome, is that whatever is not very old is so very new. But the visitor is apt at once to press this characteristic further than strict truth warrants, and to draw a more strongly marked geographical limit between old and new than strict truth warrants either. At first sight we are apt to fancy that everything that is old stands above, and that everything that is new lies below. The fact that the greatest work of all, the temple of Olympian Zeus, happens to lie below, hardly makes a practical exception. By the loss of so many of its columns it has ceased to be in appearance the greatest work of all, and, what is more to the point, it has practically ceased to be part of the city. It lies outside and alone, apart both from the Akropolis and the modern city. It joins indeed to make one of the best and most familiar views of the Akropolis, but it joins only as a foreground to a distant object. To take Mr. Mahaffy's illustration, it has come to stand to the Akropolis as Hoar Abbey stands to the Rock of Cashel. On another side, the Thêseion, in its absolute perfection as it is seen in any general view, stands as a kind of intermediate link between the upper and the lower region. Otherwise the impression given by the general view of Athens is that the old things are all above, as, with one or two exceptions which need not be dwelled on, the new things undoubtedly are below. The Akropolis seems to throw out the hill of the Mouseion with the monument of Philopappos as a kind of outwork; and, if we take in objects which cannot be seen at the first glance, the most remarkable and venerable objects, the remains of the ancient walls, the tombs cut in the rock, the seats of the Pnyx, the steps on the hill of Arês, all lie on the upper ground. Against these, setting aside very recent diggings, the low city seems to have nothing to set, except a mass of modern and ugly houses and one modern house bigger and uglier than the rest.

This impression is not untrue as regards the general aspect of the city, but it breaks down when we come to examine things somewhat more in detail. There is more of antiquity in the modern city of Athens than one thinks at first sight; still the comparative rarity of ancient remains, and the strong contrast between such as there are and the modern buildings, form a distinct feature in the character of Athens, as distinguished from cities which present to us an unbroken series of monuments from the earlier times to the latest. Again, it is true that, of such ancient remains as there are, the greater part seem, as it were, to shelter themselves under the shadow of the Akropolis, and but few of them belong to the most brilliant times of Athenian history. The Thêseion, standing as a link between the upper and the lower city, has a position of its own. The most perfect of existing Greek temples, it might alone make the fortune of Athens as a place of artistic pilgrimage, even were there nothing else there to see. In the general view it seems to be absolutely perfect. The one small change which it has undergone reminds us at once of a living page of history and of the folly of those who labour in vain to wipe out history. The temple, like its greater fellow on the Akropolis, became a church, but in its new character it still kept a certain appropriate remembrance of its older use. As the house of the Virgin still remained the house of the Virgin, so the house of the warrior hero remained, as the church of St. George, the house of a warrior saint. If, as some say, the older dedication was really not to Thêseus but to Hêraklês, the parallel is in no way weakened, but rather strengthened. Thêseus indeed overthrew the Marathonian bull; but Hêraklês and St. George were alike victorious over dragons. To fit the building for its new use, no change seems to have been needed, beyond taking down two columns of the inner range of the eastern front to make room for the apse of the converted basilica. The caprice of a generation back took away the apse without restoring the columns, and so left the building in a state which would seem incomplete in the eyes of either its heathen or its Christian patrons. Thêseus might ask for his columns; George might ask for his apse; and the common robber of both would be hard put to for an answer. Now, as one of the many detached museums of Athens, the Thêseion contains a collection of sculptures, inscriptions, and architectural fragments, pre-eminent among which is the archaic statue wrought by Aristiôn, which looks so unpleasantly like

a specimen of barbaric art. Still, why may we not hold that in sculpture, as in so many other things, likeness does not prove direct connexion, but merely analogy of stage? At all events, Assyria never made anything better than the work of Aristiôn, while Athens went on and grew from the stage of Aristiôn into the stage of Pheidias.

Before the diggings in the Kerameikos which have brought to light such choice sculptures, as well as a large part of the city wall and the Dipylon gate, the Thêseion stood almost alone as a representative of the great days of Athens on ground lower than the Akropolis and the hills which front it. The theatre of Dionysos and the other buildings which have been dug out from the side of the hill are rather part of the Akropolis itself. The temple of Olympian Zeus, and its feeble companion, the Arch of Hadrian, stand apart and make a feeble company by themselves. In that part, however, of the modern city which lies nearest under the Akropolis, we still have a collection of remains of later Greek and Roman times, while such of the Byzantine churches as are left scattered here and there through the city form a study of surprising interest in their own class. All the world knows the monument of Lysikratês and the later *hôrologion* of Andronikos Kyrrhestês, better known as the Temple of the Eight Winds. Perhaps all the world does not know the singular way in which they were adapted to the uses of rival creeds, how Franciscan friars found a home under the graceful Corinthian finial of Lysikratês, while howling dervishes quartered themselves under the pagan symbols of Andronikos. We mourn as we look at the graceful toy of Lysikratês, the parent of a whole class of structures at St. Remi and Igel — is it sacrilege to add Northampton, Geddington, and Waltham? Genuine Greek Corinthian capitals are so rare that it is sad to see that not one is altogether perfect.

The *hôrologion* of Andronikos — if it is lawful to speak so freely of anything built at Athens before the Christian era — has never struck us as anything specially graceful, but it is one of the links which directly connect the ancient and the modern city. It stands at what we may call the ancient end of one of the great modern streets, one which seems to represent an ancient street and which from this monument bears the name of Aiolos. But the quarter where the *hôrologion* stands is one of the quarters where these later and lesser antiquities stand thickest on the ground. Not far off is the *Stoa* of Hadrian, where the Imperial architect, forsaking the fashion of his own day, tries, like our modern architects, to call up the forms of a past time, and reproduces the ancient Doric, of course in its slenderer form. But this whole quarter is full of remains of one kind and another. The bazaar is in every sense a link to past times; an ancient wall fences it in, and the sight within, so unlike the European streets of the more polished quarters, reminds us that Athens once was an Eastern city. Various scraps lie around us; here are two little forsaken churches side by side forming in a manner one building; the cupola of one is half broken down, and its bell-gable, its κωδωνοστάσιον, is perched on a neighbouring colonnade. Not far off are two buildings, works of intrusive powers and intrusive architecture, both of which form part of the history of the city, and of which the one ought to be preserved as carefully as the other. No one is likely to propose to destroy the colonnade of Roman Corinthian work because its capitals are not of the same types as the capitals of Lysikratês. But it is equally needful to keep the one mosque which remains from Turkish Athens, a building whose style stands to that of the Byzantine churches in somewhat the same relation in which the Roman colonnades stand to the true Grecian. The mosque stands applied to some military purpose. A worthier use for it, a better badge of triumph and deliverance, would have been to make it a memorial church for some of the heroes of the War of Independence. In the same quarter, drawing near to the Thêseion, are the remains of the *gymnasion* of Ptolemy, where a crowd of inscriptions of various dates tempt us to spell them out, till we light on one which contains the name of the wife of Hêrôdês of Marathôn. His theatre is on the other side of the Akropolis, forming part, like the elder theatre, of the Akropolis itself. But it is in the quarter to the north of the Akropolis, the quarter of the new *agorê*, in which the visitor to Athens finds more than elsewhere the opportunity for the process so delightful in the old cities of Gaul and Germany, and Italy, the process of prowling hither and thither, and lighting on some fragment of antiquity — the more varied date of style the better — at every

quarter. The Akropolis is too carefully cleared of all that is new; the modern city keeps too little that is old; here, in this quarter of Athens, old and new are mingled together in that way which gives to the inquirer the full interest of discovery.

But, among the later antiquities of Athens, it is the churches which claim the highest place. To the traveller from the West they have a special interest. As no other city of his pilgrimage gives him the same store of buildings of pagan Greek architecture, so there is no other which gives him such a store of buildings of the second — the Christian-Greek architecture. Nor is their interest any the less because of the small size of the modern Athenian churches. There is not only nothing to rival St. Sophia, St. Vital, or St. Mark; there is nothing to rival even their own neighbour at Daphnê. The Eastern Church, like the ancient Church of Ireland, seems always to have been better pleased to build a crowd of small churches rather than a single one on the scale of the great minsters of Western Europe. One cause of this peculiarity doubtless was the use of a single altar in the Eastern rite, which suggested the building of several distinct churches in cases where a Western architect would rather have built a single large church with several chapels. Athens, therefore, is full of small churches, the survivors, we fear, of a larger number, some of which perished in the laying out of the modern city. A crowd of them cling, as it were, to the roots of the Akropolis, in the region of the bazaar and of the monument of Andronikos. The eye soon gets used to, but it does not get tired of, their little cupolas and apses, which always add a pleasing feature to the corners where they are found, though none of them rival either the stateliness or the picturesque effect of the churches of the West. A few are of greater size and of higher architectural character, and one, without being of greater size, is one of the greatest curiosities in Christendom. This is the metropolitan church of Athens, surely the smallest church out of *Scotia*— we seek for a word which shall take in both Cashel and St. Andrew's — that ever was designed for metropolitan or cathedral rank. It looks like a toy; it has been wittily said that it seems meant to receive the throne of the Boy Bishop. But it has the thorough Byzantine air; it has the apse, the cupola of the Athenian form, the heads of the windows cutting into the cupola — a form which stands to such cupolas as we have seen at Corfu and Daphnê in the same relation in which a German apse or tower with many gabled sides stands to an apse or tower of the more usual form. The church, small as it is, is rich, covered with plates of sculpture, some of which at least are ancient fragments used up again.

It is not easy, at all events for the traveller to whom Byzantine forms are still new, to fix the exact date of the Athenian churches. Nor can he find, at least off-hand, much to help him in easily accessible books. Messrs. Texier and Pullan have put out a splendid book, most valuable for the illustrations of the particular buildings which they think good to describe, but which is useless as a general view of Byzantine architecture, and which does not contain a single Athenian or other Greek example. Mr. J. M. Neale, in his *History of the Holy Eastern Church*, goes far more fully into the matter, though we are sometimes tempted to kick at the guidance of a writer who talks about "Arta in Ambracia," and who attributes "a long and peaceful reign" to the Slayer of the Bulgarians. Of the periods into which he divides Byzantine art he places the metropolitan Church in the second, which reaches from 537 to 1003. This takes in the time of Eirênê, the Athenian Empress to whom Athenian tradition is fond of attributing the churches of her native city. But most of the Athenian churches, including the two which call for most special notice, he assigns to his third period, 1003–1453. This period, we do not exactly know why, is said to be one of Latin influence; but why should Latin influence come in in 1003 of all years? and what Latin influence is there to be seen in such buildings as the churches of St. Theodore and the Kapnikarea? These are, on the whole, the two most striking churches in Athens. They stand well in open places of the modern city, a relief, though a strange contrast, among its modern forms — a contrast indeed so strong that we have heard it whispered that their destruction has sometimes been dreamed of. If there is any Latin element in either, it is in the church of the Kapnikarea which has a kind of secondary church, with a cupola of its own, alongside of the main building, with its Greek cross and central cupola. This secondary

church does not appear at St. Theodore, but the Kapnikarea has another feature which St. Theodore has not, in the form of a large *narthex*, which is surely a special sign of orthodoxy. The remembrance of Peterborough flashed across our mind as we saw this noble portico with its six arches, two wider and four narrower, crowned by four gables. It has suffered much in its effect from the glazing of some of the arches, as well as from the rising of the ground, which has covered the columns up to nearly half their height. This portico is indeed worthy of study; it is a legitimate translation into the language of an arched style of the old portico with its entablature, as the west front of Peterborough is a further translation into the language of a style, not only arched, but pointed. Joining on to the *narthex* is also a porch on the north side, a porch clearly forming part of the same design, with arches resting on columns, and finished with three gabled faces. Instead of these features, St. Theodore has a simple west front, composed, like ordinary west fronts, of doors and windows. Its most marked external feature is the large bell-gable perched on the south transept. Within, the Kapnikarea has the advantage, as its cupola rests on columns with quasi-Corinthian capitals. Those of the portico have capitals of various forms, mostly unclassical. The material of both these churches is mainly that later form of the alternation of stone and brick which grew out of the earlier Roman masonry, and which we have already seen in Corfu.These churches, and a crowd of others, smaller and less striking, will not be passed unheeded by any one in whose eyes history, whether political or artistic, is one unbroken tale. They are, unless we may claim a place for their corrupt follower in the Turkish mosque, the latest among the antiquities of Athens, and they are not less worthy of study than the earliest. With them we will take our leave of the city of the violet crown, and of the land of which the wisdom of some præ-historic reformer made her more than the head. We pass from Athens and from Attica; one stage more, one bound rather, over the central sea of Greece, will lead us beyond the bounds of Hellas itself. One thought more comes across us as we pass from Athens, as we make ready to pass from Greece. Between the work of the earliest and of the latest Grecian heroes there is a strange likeness. Thêseus — that name will do as well as any other — brought together rival cities to form one abiding commonwealth, and thereby to create the Athens alike of archons, emperors, dukes, and kings. As rival cities forgot their rivalry in the presence of Thêseus, so rival party leaders forget their rivalries in the presence of Kanarês. The hero is gone; and while we write this, Greece, and those who care for Greece, are wondering who can fill his place. His place in truth no one can fill, but the lesson taught by the close of his life ought not to pass away. If rival leaders could work side by side at the bidding of the one man whom all were proud to own as their master, they may go on in the same unselfish path when the voice which calls them to union is no longer the voice of one man, however illustrious, but the voice of their country itself.

Marathôn

The visitor to Athens, even if he has not time to examine every historic spot in Attica, must at least visit the most historic spot of all, the spot where it was fixed that Attica should remain Attica and that Europe should remain Europe. Mr. Lowe, we may well believe, stood alone in looking on the fight of Marathôn as a matter of small importance, because the day which fixed the destiny of the world saw only a comparatively small amount of slaughter. Mr. Lowe of course really knew better; but there are those who really seem not to know better, those who measure things only by their physical bigness, and cannot take in either their results or their moral greatness. There has often been far more blood shed to decide which of two Eastern despots should have the mastery than was shed to decide that Europe should not fall under the dominion of Eastern despots. Never surely did the future fate of the world hang in the same way on the will of a single man as when the arguments of Miltiadês won over the Polemarch Kallimachos to give his vote for immediate battle. That vote was, as it were, the very climax of European constitutional life. All rested on the voice of one man, not because all authority was vested in one man, but because it was vested in many. When the ten generals were equally divided, Kallimachos gave the casting vote, and Europe remained Europe. It is inconceivable that, if Athenian freedom had been then crushed when it was still in its first childhood, the course of the world's history could have been what it has been. Enslaved Greece could never have been what free Greece was. Athens and Megalopolis could have been no more than an Ephesos or Milêtos. It may well be that, even if the Eastern peninsula had been rent away from the Western world, the central peninsula might still have stood its ground. The barbarian might still have been checked, and checked for ever, by the hands of Romans or Samnites or Lucanians. The Roman power might still have been spread over the world; the Teuton and the Slave might still have come to discharge their later mission within the Roman world; but a Roman world, untutored by Greece, could never have been what the Roman world of actual history was and is. The men who fought at Marathôn fought as the champions of every later generation of European man. If on the Akropolis of Mykênê we feel that we have some small share, the share of distant kinsmen, in the cradle of the oldest European civilisation, the subject of the oldest European literature — so, as we stand on the barrow of the one hundred and ninety-two who died at Marathôn, we feel that we have a nearer claim, the claim of men who come on pilgrimage to the resting-place of men who died that European lands and European men should be all that they have been.

In fact, on the plain of Marathôn, the famous saying of Johnson becomes clothed with a fuller meaning than its author is likely to have thought of. "That man is little to be envied whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathôn." The saying is true, if we think merely of association, of example, of analogy. It becomes true in a yet higher sense, if we look on the day of Marathôn as being all that it truly is, as having fixed, not only the destiny of Athens, but the destiny of Europe. And we may look on that spot from another point of view, less wide indeed than this, but wider than that which looks on it simply as the scene of a single event of the year 490 before our era. Even setting aside the event which has made Marathôn famous with an undying fame, Marathôn would still have a considerable history, mythical and real — a history some chapters of which come within the memory of many of us. We must remember that, besides the view which looks on Greece as being almost in her first youth on the day of Marathôn, there is another view which looks on Greece as being then already in her decline. The one view is true, if we think only of Athenian democracy, of Athenian art, of Athenian poetry; the other view is no less true in the general history of the Greek nation. When the fight of Marathôn was fought, the bondage of the Greek nation had already begun; the work which was ended by Mahomet the Conqueror had been already begun by Crœsus and Cyrus. Asiatic Greece was already enslaved; the fight of Marathôn was fought in order that European Greece might not be enslaved like it. It may also flash across the minds

of some who tread the plain of Marathôn that the fight which Miltiadês waged there in the cause of Hellenic freedom was not the last fight which has been waged on the same ground in the same cause. On that same plain, where the Athenians of one age fought to save Greece from coming under the yoke of the Persian, the Athenians of another age fought to free enslaved Greece from the yoke of the Turk. The modern fight of Marathôn, the fight of July, 1824, hardly ranks among the great events of the War of Independence, as its leader certainly does not rank among the purest heroes of the War of Independence. Yet when Gouras smote the janissaries of Omar of Karystos on the same ground on which Miltiadês had smitten the hosts of Datis and Artaphernês, to an eye which takes in the whole range of Grecian and European history, the fact has something more about it than mere association, than mere coincidence. The two fights of Marathôn were in truth only two stages in one long tale, the tale of the undying struggle between civilisation and the freedom of the West and the barbarian despotism of the Eastern world.

Marathôn, like Eleusis, gives us the usual lesson in Greek geography, and makes us better understand the greatness of that wonderful change which fused all the towns of Attica into a single commonwealth. We see at once that Marathôn — the name was, at least in later use, extended to the whole Tetrapolis — was, no less than Eleusis, designed, according to the common laws of Greek political geography, to form a separate state, distinct from Athens. Indeed it is more thoroughly cut off than Eleusis. In the view from the Akropolis, Pentelikos altogether hides the Marathônian plain; while, though Eleusis is actually kept out of sight by Aigaleôs, Kithairôn and the other greater heights beyond it suggest the existence of the Thriasian plain. Marathôn therefore, naturally enough, has a long mythical history distinct from that of Athens. Not only Thêseus, but Hêraklês and the Hêrakleidai figure in it, and legend tells of a fight of Marathôn earlier than either of those which history records. Hêraklês remained in historical times the chief object of local worship, and it was by his sanctuary that the Athenian host encamped before, what we suppose we must call, the second battle. Athênê too, as on other spots of Attic soil, was not without her temple by the marsh. Marathôn does not appear in the Catalogue any more than Eleusis, and for the same reason as Eleusis. But its name appears in the Odyssey in a passage which may suggest some geographical reflections:

> Ὣς ἄρα Φωνήσασ᾽ ἀπέβη γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη
> Πὸντον ἐπ᾽ ἀτρύγετον· λίπε δὲ Σχερίην ἐρατεινήν·
> Ἵκετο δ᾽ ἐς Μαραθῶνα καὶ εὐρυάΆγυιαν Ἀθήνην,
> Δῦνε δ᾽ Ἐρεχθῆος πυκινὸν δόμον·

If Scheriê really be Corfu, this may seem a most unexpected route to Athens, and yet it is hardly more wonderful than the route by Syra by which the modern traveller often actually goes. In history the first appearance of Marathôn is when Peisistratos lands there on his return from exile. The second is when the son of Peisistratos led the Persian host thither, as a fitting place for the use of the cavalry which after all they seemed not to have used. No battle in history has been more minutely examined, and that in some cases by men who united technical military knowledge with a thorough knowledge of the country. Colonel Leake, to mention only one inquirer, has done all that the union of both qualities could do, though one is amazed at his constantly referring to Herodotus as a contemporary writer. Yet, after all his labours, after all the labours of Mr. Finlay and others, everybody complains that the narrative of Herodotus is unsatisfactory. The comments of Dean Blakesley strike us as among the most acute that have been made. One may doubt whether Herodotus had ever been there; he certainly shows no knowledge of the ground. He makes no mention of the marshes which form so marked a feature in the character of the Marathônian plain. The marshes lie between the sea and the fighting-ground, as the fighting-ground lies between the marsh and the mountains. The marsh is not only not mentioned by Herodotus, but his account seems almost inconsistent with its existence. But Pausanias saw the picture in the Poikilê which showed the Persians falling into the marsh. It is like appealing

to the Bayeux Tapestry from the later accounts of the battle of Senlac. Pausanias, though he lived so many ages after, was in this way really nearer to the time than Herodotus. The picture commemorated the fact; Herodotus tells the story as it had grown up a generation later. By that time, as Dean Blakesley says, the story had come under the operation of the law by which "popular tradition rapidly drops all those particulars of a battle which evince strategic genius, and substitutes for them exaggerated accounts of personal bravery." Miltiadês, as a good general, took advantage of the ground, and largely owed his success to the nature of the ground. Popular tradition made everything be done by sheer hard fighting.

In short, almost every detail of this memorable fight seems shrouded in uncertainty. It is hard to fix the exact position of either army, and the very name of Marathôn has perhaps shifted its place. The site of the old town seems quite as likely to be, not at the modern Marathôn, but, as Colonel Leake puts it, at Brana. Yet, amid all this doubt, there is essential certainty. Of the work that was done that day, of the general site, there is no doubt, and the most living and speaking monument of all is there to bear its witness. We stand, not, as the poet puts it, on the Persians' grave, but on the mound which covers the ashes of the men of Athens who fell that day. Within the space between the bay with its blue waters and the hills which fence in the plain, the fate of Europe was fixed. We stand on the mound; the eye passes over the hills, from Probalinthos to the cape of Kynosoura. We look on the older and the newer candidate of the name of Marathôn; we look on the hill where older legends fixed the home of Pan, and where the later name of Drakonera speaks of some older or later dragon myth. We know that it was within these bounds that the might of Asia was broken by the force of two Hellenic cities. Standing on that mound, instead of dreaming, as the poet dreamed in the days of enslaved Greece, we may call to mind how, in the cycle of human things, another triumph of Europe over Asia was won on the same spot, and if there be, as other poets tell us, two special voices which call to freedom, no spot could be better chosen for the work that was done there than the Marathônian plain. Once that land was said to be

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.