

A

CLASSICAL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL
 TOUR THROUGH GREECE.

CHAPTER I.

Preparations for our voyage to Greece. Departure from Venice—driven back by unfavourable winds. Second departure. View of the Istrian coast, Pola, Fiume, islands of Cherso, Veglia, Arbo, Ossero, Unia, the Canigule. Number and state of the Dalmatian islands, Salve, Premuda, Morlachian mountains, islands of St. Pietro, Ista, Grebani, Pago, Pontedura, Melada, Tre Sorelle, Isola Grossa, Scorda, Veglia, Pasmari. Town of Zara, islands Morter, Coronata, Zuri, Rachen, Solta, Trau, Bua, Bratsa, Nirenta, Lissa, Melisello, Sant' Andrea. Lessina—description of the town and island. Festival of St. Prospero. Islands Torcola, Curzola, peninsula of Sabioncello, and promontory of Lavischchi; island of Meleda, Ragusa; islands Mezzo, Sant' Andrea, Bocca di Cattaro, Queen Teuta. Town of Cattaro, Monte Negro, and its inhabitants. Towns of Croja, Durazzo, Polina, Acroceraunian mountains; ignited hydrogen; the Linguetta. Town of Valona: other cities on the coast. Arrival at Corfu; revolution and murder of some Greeks and Turks; visit to the Capigi Baschy, to the Seraskier, and to the President of the Republic.

INSTEAD of commencing my Tour with an account of my departure from England, or of my journey to the gulph of Venice, by a route which has been repeatedly described, I shall simply state that I arrived at Trieste in the month of April, in the year 1801. My intention was to visit Greece, to explore its antiquities, to compare its past with its present state, and to leave nothing unnoticed, which, to the classical reader, can be an object of interest, or a source of delight. No country in Europe abounds with so many

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spots, which teem with the most captivating associations. A deep interest seems, as it were, to breathe from the very ground, and there is hardly a locality which is not consecrated by some attractive circumstance; or which some trait of heroism, of greatness, and of genius, has not signalized and adorned.

In the prosecution of this journey I had the good fortune to be accompanied by two English gentlemen, Mr. now Sir William, Gell, and Mr. Atkins. During our voyage from Trieste to Venice, where we intended to embark for the Grecian islands, we formed an acquaintance with a young Greek, named Georgio Gavra, of the island of Santirene, who was a passenger in our boat. We continued our acquaintance with him at Venice; and, finding him clever and enterprising, and, to all appearance, a man of honour, and on the point of returning to his native island, we proposed to him to prolong his journey, to accompany us through Greece, to undertake the management of our expenses, and to act as our interpreter.

Every thing being arranged to our mutual satisfaction, we provided ourselves each with a small bed, some trinkets, to serve as presents in Turkey, and a fortnight's provisions for our voyage to Corfu; which we expected to perform in ten days, although, on account of calms and contrary winds, it took us near a month. The distance is only five hundred geographical miles.

On Wednesday, the 29th of April, 1801, we set sail in a merchant ship, trading from Venice to the Ionian islands; our captain, Giovanni Marassi, from the Bocca di Cattäro, in Dalmatia, was a catholic, and his vessel named *Lo Spirito Santo, e la Nativita della Madonna*. We had thirteen Dalmatian sailors, dressed in short jackets, large breeches, and small red caps. They understood Italian, but spoke Illyrian among themselves. We occupied the cabin, but in stormy weather we often experienced the intrusion of the captain and a few of the privileged sailors, who were solicitous to offer up their devotions before the picture of the Virgin, in front of which a lamp was suspended, that was kept constantly burning. After a few hours' sail, the wind becoming contrary, we put back

TOWNS OF ROVIGNO AND POLA, DALMATIAN ISLANDS. 3

into port, at the small island of Pelegrina, which, with some other long and narrow islands in the vicinity, shelters Venice from the fury of the sea.

On the 30th we proceeded on our voyage, and the next morning came in sight of the Istrian coast, at the distance of twenty miles, and the town of Rovigno, which contains about 10,000 inhabitants, who are industrious and commercial. We passed by the Sinus Polaticus, and our attention was drawn to the city of Pola, which was founded by the Colchians,¹ and subsequently colonized by the Romans, under the name of Julia Pietas; but the distance was too considerable for us to distinguish its magnificent amphitheatre, its three temples, and its triumphal arch. This ancient town is now little more than a large village. We saw the mouth of the Flanaticus Sinus, with the city of Fiume at the extremity. The islands of Cherso, Veglia, and Arbo, are at the entrance of the gulph.

Beyond Pola begins the ancient Japydia; which coast extended, according to Strabo,² 1,000 stadia, and contained the cities of Metulion, Arupenon, and Ouendon, joining with Liburnia, a part of Dalmatia. We passed near the islands of Ossëro and Unja; the former is a bishopric. Three subordinate rocky islands in the vicinity are called Canigüle, or Canidöle, at the mouth of the gulph of Quarnero, the Sinus Flanaticus; the distance is closed by the Alban mountains.³ As the night approached, we steered amidst the Dalmatian Cyclades, which are so extremely numerous, so various in their dimensions and produce, and so little known, in ancient or modern history, that a regular description of them would require much more time than we were able to bestow. The most considerable are interspersed with small villages. The soil, which is calcareous, produces corn, olives, vineyards, almonds, figs, pomegranates, and earobas, &c.; and a great quantity and variety of aromatic

¹ Pliny, Nat. Hist. b. 3. c. 19. From Pola across the Adriatic to Ancona is 120 miles, according to the same author. ² B. 7. p. 315. Paris edit. 1620. ³ Strabo, b. 7. p. 314.

herbs. Their outlines are composed of round hills, generally rocky, but not very lofty, or bold; their colour is a dark green, being mostly covered with the wild olive, lentiscus, myrtle, terebinth, and juniper, and all the different evergreens which flourish in these southern latitudes. They contain many good ports, the importance and utility of which were fully appreciated by the Romans, who have left several remains on the insular, as well as the continental, parts of the country. The smaller islands, however, which have neither ports nor any useful produce, were probably at all times uninhabited, as at present; many of these are even nameless, and not a fourth part of them are laid down in the maps. Strabo, in his description of this coast, mentions first the islands Apsyrtides, from Apsyrtos,¹ who was killed by his sister Medea in this vicinity. These are the islands at the entrance of the Flanatic gulph, of which Cherso, Veglia, and Ossëro, are the chief. He next mentions the island Kuraktike, near the Japodes, the same as the Curictæ of Pliny. Then the Liburnides, being forty in number; these are probably the cluster about Pago, Salve, Scorda, Pontadura, and Meläda. He next mentions others in a mass; only naming a few, as Issa, Tragurion, and Pharos. Dalmatia joins Liburnia. Strabo tells us that, before their wars with the Romans, and their destruction by Augustus, the Dalmatians had fifty places of some importance; and, amongst them, the towns of Salon, Priamon, Ninia, Sinotion (the old and the new), Andretion, and Dalminion.

Pliny² gives a long list of towns and fortresses situated on whole length of coast, which shews that it must have been extremely populous. He also asserts that there are more than a thousand islands near the Illyrian shore, separated from each other by shallow and narrow friths. Near the Istrian coast he mentions Gissa, Pulariæ, and the Apsyrtides, and near these the Electrides, where elec-

¹ About the Apsyrtides and Liburnides see Dionys. Orb. Descrip. v. 488, &c.

² Nat. Hist. b. 3. c. 21, 22, 23, 25, 26.

MOUNT ALBION, ISLANDS OF DALMATIA.

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trum was found. He places Lissa opposite Jader, (now Zara) and the islands called Creteæ, opposite the Liburni. He next mentions the Liburnicæ, and Celadussæ. Scylax says, that the Illyrian territory extended from Liburnia to Chaonia; that is, from Spalätro to Valona.

During the night we passed by several of the islands, and the next morning found ourselves in a narrow channel between Salve and Premūda; both of them small, and thinly peopled, with little appearance of cultivation, and consisting of low rocky hills covered with shrubs. On Salve we saw a pretty village, and near it two small chapels, by the sea-side, in a bay, called Porto di Sant' Antonio. Behind the island are seen the rough and Alpine mountains of Morlachia, (the ancient Albion being a link of the Alpes) rising to a great height, forming a vast mass of bare rocks and broken precipices, with snow upon their pointed summits. They stretch from Istria to the Acroceraunian mountains, separating the Moesiæ, the Norici, and the Triballi¹ of the ancients, from Istria, Japidia, and Liburnia. The inhabitants of that wild and rugged district live in scattered villages, at the foot of their mountains; but, reaping uncertain harvests from their narrow glens, trust to their flocks and herds for a precarious subsistence. They inherit the warlike disposition of their Illyrian ancestors. Premūda is not so large as Salve, and contains one village, visible from the channel through which we passed. Near it are two small and nameless islands. We passed near several others, also uninhabited. Those of St. Pietro, Ista, and Grebani, form a picturesque cluster. We steered between the islands of Pago, Pontadura, and Melāda; the two former on the left, with the Morlachian mountains towering beyond them; the latter on the right. Pago is a considerable island, with a good port and town, and is supposed to be the ancient Gissa;² the other

¹ At present forming Croatia, Bosnia, and Servia.

² Pliny, Nat. Hist. b. 3. c. 21.

two are much smaller. The weather being almost calm, and our land-locked situation depriving us of the little wind there might be in the open gulph, we proceeded slowly, and were wearied by the astonishing uniformity in the outline of the Dalmatian islands. On the morning of the 5th, we found ourselves near the Tre Sorelle; three small islands, to which the name of the Sisters is applicable, from their resemblance to each other. We sailed near Isola Grossa, which is sometimes called Isola Lunga, a fine fertile island of considerable extent, and containing some villages. Within a short distance of it is the island called Scorda. We entered the channel of Zara, formed by the Dalmatian coast on our left, and the islands of Veglia, or Vegliano, and Pasmāni on our right; the strait being about a mile broad. Vegliano and Pasmāni are long and narrow, and are composed of round hills completely covered with dark green bushes. On an eminence of the former is the ruined castle of St. Michael; and some cottages and chapels are seen, prettily dispersed towards the base. The Dalmatian coast is composed of a green rising ground, part of which seemed well cultivated; but I observed few trees. Near the shore is seen a village, called Dido, with two small churches. The distance is terminated by the Morlachian rocks, which are particularly grand in this part. Towards sun-set we steered within a few hundred yards of Zara, the capital of Dalmatia, situated on a peninsula, but separated from the continent by an artificial canal. The fortifications are strong, and are built, as well as the houses, of the fine close-grained calcareous stone, of which the coast of Istria, Dalmatia, and its islands, are composed. Eleven churches were visible from our ship: they have a neat appearance; but the Corinthian arch, and some other Roman ruins, which indicate the site of the Colonia Iadera, were not distinguishable. The present town contains about 5,000 inhabitants, and has a theatre, and some amusements; its port is large and secure. Zara is a catholic archbishopric, and the cathedral is dedicated to Saint Grisogone, protector of the city. The fortifications of Zara rendered it a place of great strength and importance in the time of

ISLANDS AND COAST OF DALMATIA, ISLAND OF LESSINA. 7

the crusades. Geoffroy de Ville-Hardouin¹ calls it, “Iadres en Esclavoniè, &c. Citè fermie de halz murs, et de haltes tors, et pornoiant demandesiez plus bele, ne plus fort, ne plus riche.”

In the night we passed near the islands of Morter and Coronata, perhaps the Portunata of Pliny, and several smaller rocks; and, the next morning, being becalmed, took the opportunity of landing at Zuri, to cut wood. This island is formed of round and rocky hills, extremely barren, producing only stunted cypresses, lentiscus, myrtles, junipers, and wild sage, which our sailors cut for fuel. The small quantity of soil on this island is planted with vines, olives, figs, and other fruit trees: it contains about one hundred and fifty inhabitants, and two small villages; the principal one is situated near the sea, and neatly built of the fine stone of the island. Opposite Zuri, on the Dalmatian side, is the island called Rachen; which, although of considerable size, has not the smallest appearance of cultivation. The situation of the towns of Scardōna² and Sebenico,³ on the Dalmatian coast, was pointed out to us, but were not visible on account of intervening islands: the latter is a large and well-fortified place, and the see of a catholic bishop. On the 7th we passed near the islands of Solta, Trau,⁴ and Bua, which intercepted the view of Spalätro,⁵ and the magnificent remains of the palace of Diocletian, and two Corinthian temples. The islands of Bratsa⁶ and Nirenta were to our left; and to our right those of Lissa,⁷ Melisello, and Sant' Andrea, in Pelago: the former has several villages; the two latter are little more than uninhabited rocks. On the 8th we landed at Lessina, and in an hour continued our course. The next

¹ De la Conquete de Constantinople. p. 29. Paris edit. ² Retaining its ancient name. ³ The ancient Sikoun. ⁴ Tragurium. ⁵ Salon. ⁶ Brattia, or Brettanis.

⁷ Issa. This island anciently had its mint, some of its autonomous coins are known: on one of 3d, brass, is the head of Minerva—rev. a diota, or two-handed vase—ins. ΙΣ. On another is the same head—rev. a deer—ins. ΙΣ. A third has a female head—rev. a star—ins. ΙΣΣΑ. The diota is probably represented on its coins in allusion to its good wines, which are praised by Athenæus in his *Deipnosophista*.

morning a violent sirocco, or s. e. wind, obliged us to make the same island again. We landed in the port of the capital, which we were surprised to find a neat and elegant town, delightfully situated in a small but commodious bay, formed by two rocky promontories covered with verdure. The houses are built with stone, and are interspersed with trees, which gives the town a beautiful appearance. The general style of the place is Venetian; it has its piazza neatly paved, at one end of which is the episcopal church, and at the opposite end the coffee-house. The capital contains about 1,000 inhabitants, three churches, and two convents, and is the see of a bishop. On a hill rising from the town are the ruins of the fortress. We entered into conversation with some of the people, who gave us the following information concerning their island. Its length is between sixty and seventy miles, and its greatest breadth twelve. It contains several villages; and the entire population amounts to about 14,000 persons. Its principal trade is with Trieste, and the shops are well stored with different commodities. Its chief produce is wine, which is exported. Lessina is a curious mixture of fertility and barrenness. Its general face is rocky; but, wherever a little bit of soil can be found it is planted with corn, figs, vines, oranges, and lemons. The mulberries were quite ripe, and the almond trees covered with fruit. Every thing appeared as forward here in the beginning of May as at the end of July in England. The corn was nearly ripe, the roses in full bloom; the aloes, which were growing among the rocks, were in bud. Olives, carobas,¹ and pomegranates, also abound here; and the fences are made with rosemary and myrtle. The island abounds with curious plants, so strongly aromatic, that the whole air is scented with them. They exude a glutinous matter, which, attaching itself to our clothes, as we walked

¹ The *Κερωνία* of Theophrastos; *Κεραρία* of Dioscorides; *ceratonia siliqua* of Linnæus; and the *Ζυλοκεραρία* of the modern Greeks. It is sometimes called, by the Italians, the locust tree, or St. John's bread, from a supposition that its long sweet pod was the food of St. John in the wilderness.

ISLAND OF LESSINA, FESTIVAL OF SAINT PROSPERO. 9

about the rocks, so completely impregnated every thing it touched, that we were a long time before we got free of the smell. The Lessiniotes extract many different kinds of perfume from them, which are exported to Italy and Turkey, forming one of the principal branches of their commerce. The botanist would find ample employment, and a rich harvest of plants, in this thirsty soil. Amongst the many flowers which enamel this curious island, are several species of the cistus, and a gnaphalium, the *Ελιχρυσον* of Dioscorides, at present called *Καλοκοιμιθίκις*. Its leaf is covered with a light-coloured down, and it bears several clusters of a small yellow flower, shining with a glutinous matter of a powerful aromatic smell; the inhabitants are very fond of it, and it generally forms an ornamental part of the female head-dress. The language of the Lessiniotes is Illyrian; but most of them speak a little Italian. They are Roman catholics: there are, however, a few Greeks among them, who have a church within the town. The convent of Santa Croce, which stands close to the sea, is a picturesque object. St. Prospero, who lived in the fifteenth century, is the tutelar saint of the island; and his festival was celebrated on the 10th. Our captain remained here purposely to partake of the common joy, as he feared that some misfortune would befall him at sea if he quitted the place on the eve of the solemnity. By sun-rise all the ships in the port were decked out with their colours, and a general cannonading commenced both at sea and on shore. The people were dressed in their smartest attire: the men wear the common Dalmatian costume; that of the women is not elegant; their head-dress is a large straw bonnet, tied under the chin with a white handkerchief. They are fond of long and ponderous ear-rings of gold, which hang down upon their shoulders; and their hair is ornamented with roses, and other sweet-scented flowers. In the afternoon we went to the episcopal church, which contains the relics of the saint; whose bones are enclosed in a sumptuous altar, the front of which being removed, the remains were beheld enveloped in rich and splendid robes. The priests chanted solemn hymns, in honour of the saint, accompanied by the organ; the procession then

set out from the church, and was conducted, with much splendour, through the town ; and, although composed of few attendants compared with those we had seen at Venice, it was regulated with much more decorum than the processions of that city ; the ceremony terminated by enclosing the sacred relics, when the cannons fired, and all the bells in the town were set ringing.

The evening of the same day was passed in festivity ; we went to a house to see a dance amongst the country people ;—the music was a lyre with only three strings, which was played with a bow, like a violin, and produced few, and unharmonious, sounds. The dance consisted of five or six couple, running slowly round the room, the men turning their partners with great violence. I was assured there were no antiquities in Lessina. Its ancient name was Pharos,¹ or Paros, having been colonized from Paros in the Ægean. It formed part of the kingdom of Queen Teuta ; and, with Lissa and Corcyra Melaina, was ceded to her by the Romans, about two hundred and thirty years B. C.

It was the native place of Demetrios Pharios, who acted so conspicuous a part in the wars between the Romans and the Illyrians, a long account of which has been left us by Polybius. It was an island of considerable importance, and its capital, the site of which is probably occupied by the modern town and castle, was a place of great strength.

Autonomous brass coins of this island have been found ; on one of 2d, brass, is the head of Jupiter—rev. a goat—ins. ΦΑΡΙΩΝ. Another of 3d, brass, has the head of a young man—rev. a diota, or two-handled vase—ins. ΦΑ.

The wind becoming moderate and favourable, we quitted Lessina on the 12th, and coasted the island for some miles, the shore rising into small green hills. We passed to the left of the low island of Torcöla ; the weather was nearly calm, and the following morning

¹ Strabo, b. 7. p. 315. Pliny, Nat. Hist. b. 3. c. 21.