

ceeds southwards it becomes ever narrower, the mountain ranges at various points coming right down to the water's edge. The land is subject to intense heat in summer, and is free from great cold, even in the middle of winter. But it suffers from fierce winds, from the *bora*, which, whirling down from the treeless wastes of the Karst mountains in the north-east, sweeps along the coastline with terrific force. Another curse from which it suffers is the frequency and severity of the earthquakes, which from time to time have wrought fearful havoc among the Dalmatian towns.

But in spite of these disadvantages, along this shore a Latin civilisation arose and flourished which, if inferior to that of Italy, nevertheless played an important and valuable part in European development. Many wars were fought for the possession of Dalmatia. Roman, Byzantine Greek, Norman, Venetian, Hungarian, Slave, and Austrian struggled for it, and each left his impress on its civilisation, although the influence of two among these peoples far surpassed that of all the others—the Roman and the Venetian.

Dalmatia has at all times been essentially a borderland. Geographically it belongs to the eastern peninsula of the Mediterranean, to the Balkan lands. But this narrow strip of coast, as Professor Freeman said,¹ “has not a little the air of a thread, a finger, a branch cast forth from the western peninsula.” In its history its character as a march land is still more noticeable, and this feature has always been manifested in a series of civilised communities in the towns, with a hinterland of

¹ *Historical Essays, Third Series*, pp. 22, 23.