plain northward of Larissa; it was by this that Xerxes entered, and we learn from Herodotus (vii. 173) that, when the Greeks discovered the existence of this passage, they gave up all thoughts of defending Tempe. On the side of Epirus the main line of communication passed over that part of Pindus which was called Mount Lacmon, and descended the upper valley of the Peneius to Aeginium in the north-west angle of Thessaly. This was the route by which Julius Caesar arrived before the battle of Pharsalia. Another pass through the Findus chain was that of Gomphi, farther south, by means of which there was communication with the Ambracian Gulf. The great southern pass was that of Coela, which crosses Mount Othrys nearly opposite Thermopylae. These Thessalian passes were of the utmost importance to southern Greece, as commanding the approaches to that part of the country.

Though Thessaly is the most level district of Greece, it does not present a uniform unbroken surface, but is composed of a number of sections which open out into one another, divided by ranges of hills. The principal of these were called Upper and Lower Thessaly, the former comprising the western and south-western part, which contains the higher course of the Peneius and all those of its tribu­taries that flow from the south—the Enipeus, the Apidanus, the Onochonus and the Pamisus; while the latter, which reaches eastward to the foot of Ossa and Pelion, is inundated in parts at certain seasons of the year by the Peneius, the flood-water from which forms the lake Nessonis, and, when that is full, escapes again and pours itself into the lake of Boebe. The chief city of the latter of these districts was Larissa; and the two were separated from one another by a long spur, which runs southwards from the Cambunian Mountains on the western side of that city. Again, when Thessaly, is entered from the south by the pass of Coela, another plain, containing a small lake., which was formerly called Xynias, intervenes, and a line of low hills has to be crossed before the town of Thaumaki is reached, which from its commanding position over­looks the whole of the upper plain. The view from this point has been described by Livy in the following remarkable passage:— “ When the traveller, in passing through the rugged districts of Thessaly, where the roads are entangled in the windings of the valleys, arrives at this city, on a sudden an immense level expanse, resembling a vast sea, is outspread before him in such a manner that the eye cannot easily reach the limit of the plains extended beneath.” (xxxii. 4). To the north-east of this, where a portion of the great plain begins to run up into the mountains, the Plain of Pharsalia is formed, which is intersected by the river Enipeus; and still farther in the same direction is the scene of another great battle, Cynoscephalae. Thessaly was further subdivided into four districts, of which Pelasgiotis embraced the lower plain of the Peneius, and Hestiaeotis and Thessaliotis respectively the northern and the southern portions of the upper plain; while the fourth, Phthiotis, which lies towards the south-east, was geographically distinct from the rest of the country, being separated from it by a watershed. The determining feature of this is the Pagasaeus Sinus (Gulf of Volo), a landlocked basin, extending from Pagasae at its head to Aphetae at its narrow outlet, where the chain of Pelion, turning at right angles to its axis at the end of Magnesia, throws out a projecting line of broken ridges, while on the opposite side rise the heights of Othrys. In the heroic age this district was of great importance. It was the birthplace of Greek navigation, for this seems to be implied in the story of the Argonauts, who started from this neighbourhood in quest of the golden fleece. From it the great Achilles came, and, according to Thucydides (i. 3), it was the early home of the Hellenic race, The site of Iolcus, the centre of so many poetic legends, is at no great distance from the modern Volo. Near that town also, at a later period, Demetrius Poliorcetes founded the city of Demetrias, which was called by Philip V. of Macedon one of the three fetters of Greece, Chalcis and Corinth being the other two.

The history of Thessaly is closely connected with its geo­graphy. The fertility of the land offered a temptation to invaders, and was thus the primary cause of the early migra­tions. It was this motive which first induced the Thessalians to leave their home in Epirus and descend into this district, and from this movement arose the expulsion of the Boeotians from Arne, and their settlement in the country subsequently called Boeotia; while another wave of the same tide drove the Dorians also southward, whose migrations changed the face of the Peloponnese. Again, this rich soil was the natural home of a powerful aristocracy, such as the families of the Aleuadae of Larissa and the Scopadae of Crannon; and the absence of elevated positions was unfavourable to the foundation of cities, which might have fostered the spirit of freedom and democracy. The plains, also, were suited to the breeding of horses, and consequently the force in which the Thessalian nation was strong was cavalry, a kind of troops which has usually been associated with oligarchy. The wealth and the semi-Hellenic character of the people—for in race, as in geographical position, the Thessalians held an intermediate place between the non­Hellenic Macedonians and the Greeks of pure blood—caused them to be wanting in patriotism, so that at the time of the Persian wars we find the Aleuadae making common cause with the enemies of Greece. When they were united they were a formidable power, but, like other half-organized communities, they seldom combined for long together, and consequently they influenced but little the fortunes of the Greeks.

For several centuries during the middle ages Rumanian immi­grants formed so large a part of the population of Thessaly that that district was called by the Byzantine writers Great Wallachia (Μεγάλη Βλαχία): the Jewish traveller, Benjamin of Tudela, who passed through the country in the latter half of the 12th century, describes them as then occupying it. At the present day only a few colonies of that race remain, the prin­cipal of which are found on the western side of Olympus and in some of the gorges of Pindus. The Turkish inhabitants were settled in the larger towns, and here and there in the country districts, the most important colony being those called Konia- rates, who were brought from Konia in Asia Minor shortly before the taking of Constantinople, and planted under the south-west angle of Olympus. The Greeks, however, form the vast majority of the population, so much so that, even while the country belonged to the Ottomans, Greek was employed as the official language. In accordance with the provisions of the Berlin treaty, Thessaly was ceded to the Greeks by the Porte in 1881, and became a portion of the Hellenic kingdom. Since that time the prosperity of the province has greatly increased. The port of Volo, which is almost the only outlet of the trade of the whole district, has become an important town of 23,000 inhabitants, and daily communication by steamers now exists between it and Athens. ' The interior of the country has also been opened up by means of railways. One line runs north-westwards from Volo by way of Velestino (the ancient Pherae) to Larissa, which is situated on the Salambria (Peneius), and has a population of 18,000 souls, including 2000 Jews. The Greeks, Turks and Jews here occupy different quarters of the city, but most of the Turkish inhabitants have now quitted the country, so that only four of the numerous mosques remain in use. From Velestino another line branches off to the west by Phersala (Pharsalos), Domokos (Thaumaki), Karditsa, and Trikkala (Trika), to Kalabaka (Aeginium), where the upper valley of the Salambria is entered. In the neighbourhood of the last-named place, where the Cambunian chain of mountains descends in steep precipices to the plain, are the Meteora (“ mid­air ”) monasteries (see Meteora).

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**THETFORD,** a market town and municipal borough of England, mostly in the south-western parliamentary division of Norfolk, but partly in the Stowmarket division of Suffolk, 91 m. N.N.E. from London by the Great Eastern railway. Pop. (1901) 4613. The town lies in a level, fertile country at the junction of the river Thet with the Little Ouse. In the time of Edward III. the town had twenty churches and eight monasteries. There are now three churches—St Peter’s, St Cuthbert’s and St Mary’s—principally of Perpendicular flint work; of these St Mary’s, on the Suffolk side, is the largest. There are a few monastic remains, the chief being two gate­houses. The most important relic of antiquity is the Castle Hill, a mound 1000 ft. in circumference and 100 ft. in height. The grammar school was founded in 1610. In King Street is the mansion-house occupied as a hunting-lodge by Queen Elizabeth and James I. The chief public buildings are a gild hall and a mechanics’ institute; there are several charities. Brewing and tanning are carried on; and there are also manure and chemical works, brick- and lime-kilns, flour-mills and agricultural implement works, engineering works and iron foundries. The Little Ouse is navigable for barges down to