

he, to one of his officers, "does not savor at all of barbarism. We shall presently see what they can perform." And, in fact, he very soon began to find that even his victories cost him so dear, that there was little room to hope for his ever achieving the conquest of Italy. The Romans soon became accustomed to his mode of fighting, and every campaign proved to him more and more unsuccessful. At length, wishing for an honorable pretext for dropping his enterprise, the Sicilians furnished it, by imploring his aid against the Carthaginians. Pyrrhus, accordingly, embarked his troops for Sicily, and during his absence for two years, the Romans reduced the Samnites, Tarentines, and their allies, to extremity. Pyrrhus returned, and made a last effort, near Beneventum, in the Samnian territory. He was totally defeated, lost 26,000 men, and taking the first opportunity of giving his allies the slip, he set sail for Epirus. The Samnites, the Tarentines, the Lucanians, Bruttians, and all the other states, submitted to the arms of the Romans; who were now, in the 480th year from the foundation of the city, masters of all Italy. It is to be observed, however, that, at this time, *Gallia Cisalpina*, or the country between the Apennines and Alps, was not comprehended under the name of Italy.

The policy of the Romans with regard to the nations which they conquered is worthy of some attention. The tribes into which the Roman citizens were divided were formerly, as we have seen, a local distinction. Matters were otherwise at this time. It had become a great exertion of political judgment to arrange the members of which the tribes were composed, as on that arrangement depended the issue of any measures to be carried by popular suffrage, or new laws to be enacted. It was the province of the censors to distribute the citizens in the different tribes. Now, when they formed new tribes from the inhabitants of the conquered countries, they composed these tribes chiefly of the ancient Roman citizens, and transported to Rome the principal men of the conquered nation, whom they ingrafted into the original urban, or rustic, tribes of the commonwealth. Thus two good purposes were at once served. The Roman citizens, who principally composed the new tribes, kept the provinces in order, and inspired them with an affection for the Roman government; while, on the other hand, the new citizens, dispersed among many of the ancient tribes, and constantly under the eye of Roman magistrates, could have little or no influence in the affairs of the commonwealth.

* See Livy, lib. ii. c. 23, where this incident is most eloquently related.

CHAPTER VIII.

CARTHAGE, a Phœnician Colony—Early History—Government—Wars—Early History of Sicily—Syracusan Government—Dionysius the Elder—Dionysius the Younger—Dion—Timoleon—Agathocles—Character of the Carthaginians and Romans compared.

As we are now arrived at that period when Rome, mistress of Italy, began to extend her conquests, and aim at foreign dominion, it is necessary, in order to prepare the mind of the student of history, to follow with advantage the detail of the progress of her arms, that he should have some acquaintance with the history of Carthage, and of Sicily.

Carthage, according to the most probable accounts, was founded by a colony of Tyrians, about seventy years before the building of Rome. The colony had the same language, the same laws, the same customs, and exhibited the same national character with the parent state. The early Carthaginian history is extremely uncertain; but from the vigorous industry of that people who were its founders, and their great progress in the arts, we may suppose that the Carthaginians made a rapid advancement. From the time of the elder Cyrus, their marine was formidable. One of the most ancient naval engagements recorded in history, is that in which the Carthaginian fleet, in conjunction with that of the Etruscans, fought against the Phocians of Iona, who were desirous of escaping the yoke of the Persian monarch.

The Carthaginians had by degrees extended their dominion along the whole African coast of the Mediterranean, from the confines of Egypt on the east, to the Pillars of Hercules, or the Straits of Gibraltar. Their capital, in the days of its splendor, that is, during the wars with the Romans, was one of the most magnificent and most populous cities in the universe. The number of its inhabitants is said to have amounted to 700,000; and it had under its sovereignty about three hundred towns along the Mediterranean coast.

We know nothing of the nature of the earliest government of the Carthaginians, that is, during the first four centuries from the foundation of their empire, and very little even of what it was in the latter periods preceding its dissolution. They are celebrated, however, by Aristotle,* as possessing one of the most perfect

* Aristotle, whose account of this republic is, on the whole, very obscure,

constitutions among the ancient republics. They had, like the Romans, two chief magistrates, called *suffetes*, who were chosen annually, and had powers, probably, much akin to those of the consuls. They had likewise an elective senate, which deliberated on the most important business of the state: but unanimity was required to give effect to their decrees; for if there was a difference of opinion, the matter was immediately remitted to the assembly of the people. They had a tribunal of one hundred and four judges, chosen from the senate, to whom the generals of their armies were responsible for their conduct; and it was not unusual, as we are told, for this tribunal to punish an unsuccessful general with death. All the powers of government seem to have resided in the *suffetes* and senate, if concurring in opinion; for it was only in case of difference, as already said, that the sentiments of the popular assembly were consulted. Aristotle has noted two circumstances, as defects in the constitution of this republic: the one, that it was lawful for the same individual to exercise different offices of state at the same time; the other, that the poor were excluded from holding all offices of importance in the commonwealth. But the former of these may be found expedient and even necessary in the best regulated governments, and the latter appears to be agreeable to the soundest policy; for in offices of high trust, poverty might often prove too powerful an excitement to a deviation from duty.

The first settlements of the Carthaginians were entirely in the way of commerce. They traded with the nations on the coast of Spain for gold, and maintaining a constant intercourse with Phœnicia, their parent state, and with the other nations on the coasts of the Mediterranean, they became the commercial agents between the eastern and western parts of Europe. Their naval expeditions were not confined to the Mediterranean. They passed the Straits of Gibraltar, and coasting along the African shore, formed settlements even as far as the 25th degree of north latitude, that is, three degrees south of the Canary Islands, anciently called *Insula Fortunata*. Hanno, by order of the Carthaginian senate, sailed upon a voyage of discovery along the African coast to the southward, and wrote himself a very curious account of his navigation; an extract from which, or rather a fragment of a Greek translation of which, is still remaining, entitled the *Periplus* of Hanno. It is a valuable remnant of antiquity, written in the style of a plain narrative, without ostentation or embellishment, and very much resembling the journal of a modern navigator. The facts which he relates have nothing of the mar-

gives this strong proof of the excellence of the Carthaginian government, that from the origin of their state down to his own times, the age of Alexander "its tranquillity had never been disturbed either by domestic sedition or the tyranny of its government."—Arist. de Repub. lib. ii. cap. 2.

vellous, and agree very much with the accounts given by the moderns of the same countries. He observed from his fleet, that in the daytime there was nothing to be seen upon the land, but all was stillness and silence; but in the night he heard the sound of various musical instruments, and saw a great number of fires lighted along the coast: and we know that such is the appearance of a great part of the western coast of Africa at this day; that the savages in the daytime retire into the woods to avoid the heat of the sun; that they light great fires in the night to disperse the beasts of prey; and that they are extremely fond of music and dancing.

The Carthaginians pushed their maritime discoveries likewise to the north of the Straits: they carried on a trade with the ports of Gaul, and even with the southern coast of Britain, whence they drew tin, lead and copper. They had a settlement in the islands called *Cassiterides*, which are supposed to be the Scilly Islands, on the coast of Cornwall.

At the time of Hannibal it would appear that some degree of taste for Greek literature had prevailed at Carthage. That great man, as Cornelius Nepos informs us, composed several books in the Greek language.* He had for his preceptor in that language Sosilus, a Lacedæmonian. A Carthaginian, Silenus, is likewise mentioned by Cicero as a writer of history in Greek. Sallust, in his history of the Jugurthine war, mentions books written in the Carthaginian language,† which he had consulted in composing his history of that war. Further proof of Carthaginian learning may be found in the writings of the elder Pliny; and a specimen of the Carthaginian language is preserved in the *Pænulus* of Plautus.‡

The Carthaginians, enriched by commerce and increasing in population, soon found their original territory too small for them, and began to aim at extending it by conquest. They armed successively against the Mauritians, Numidians, and all the neighboring nations; but as the spirit of war was averse to the habits of an industrious and mercantile people, it was their constant practice to employ mercenary troops, which they levied not only from Africa, but from Spain, Italy, the Mediterranean Islands, from Gaul and even Greece. The first of the Carthaginian wars which authentic history records, is that with the Greek colonies of Sicily.

* Atque hic tantus vir, tantisque bellis distractus, nonnihil temporis tribuit litteris. Namque aliquot ejus libri sunt Græco sermone confecti: in his ad Rhodios de Cn. Manlii Volsonis in Asia rebus gestis. . . . Hujus bella gesta multi memoriæ prodiderunt: sed ex his duo, qui cum eo in castris fuerunt, simulque vixerunt, quamdiu fortuna passa est, Silenus et Sosilus Lacedæmonius. Atque hoc Sosilo Hannibal litterarum Græcarum usus est doctere.—C. Nepos in vit. Hannib.

† Ex libris Punicis qui regis Hiempsalis dicebantur, interpretatum nobis est. Sall. Bell. Jug. c. xx.

‡ Plaut. Pæn. Act v. sc. 1

They had certainly, however, long before this period, made settlements on that island. Darius, the son of Hystaspes, proposed an alliance with them against the Greeks, and they concluded that treaty with Xerxes, when he followed out the projects of his father. They engaged to attack the Greeks of Sicily, while he invaded the mother country.

The early periods of the history of Sicily are no less uncertain than those of Carthage. This country was termed *Trinacria*, from its triangular figure, and obtained afterwards the name of *Sicania*, from the *Sicāni*, who are said to have been originally a people of Spain. The Siculi, an Italian tribe, afterwards took possession of the greater part of the island; and from them it was named Sicily. The Phœnicians are reported to have sent some colonies into this fertile island, before the time of the Trojan war. The Greeks, a considerable while after this period, began to form settlements upon the coasts, and drove the Sicani and the Sicilians into the interior of the country. These Greek colonies brought with them the spirit and manners of their native land; the love of independence, and some knowledge of the arts and sciences.* A colony of the Corinthians founded Syracuse, which became the most illustrious of the Grecian cities of Sicily; and from Syracuse arose afterwards Agrigentum, Acra, Casmene, Camarine, and several other flourishing towns.

What was the most ancient form of the Syracusan government, we are much at a loss to know. But on the authority of ancient authors, we are assured that it was for a considerable tract of time monarchical; and might long have continued so, had all its sovereigns inherited the eminent virtues and abilities of Gelon, its first monarch, who, though severe in his manners, was one of the best of princes; but his successors abusing their power, and exercising the most despotic tyranny, at last drove their subjects to the necessity of abolishing the regal government; and, as if the example had been contagious, the whole Greek cities of Sicily expelled their tyrannic governors, and entered into a general confederacy to secure their individual freedom and independence.

Sixty years after this period, an obscure man of the name of Dionysius, by great address and the most various abilities, had so ingratiated himself with the people of Syracuse, while in the capacity of one of their magistrates, that he gradually usurped the supreme authority. He was a very able general, and successfully withstood the attempts of the Carthaginians to make themselves masters of Sicily. By his army, these formidable invaders, who had obtained possession of a great part of the island, were almo

* No country, of so narrow bounds, has in ancient times produced more learned men than Sicily. Æschylus, Diodorus Siculus, Empedocles, Gorgias, Euclid, Archimedes, Epicharmus, Theocritus, were all Sicilians by birth.

entirely extirpated. Dionysius supported his administration by military force, by extreme severity and the most rigid despotism; yet there were some features of his character which seemed to indicate a more generous nature. He was fond of literary pursuits, a liberal patron of learned men, and even himself a poet. He contended for the prize of poetry given at the feast of Bacchus, and obtained it; though, if we credit the story told of the poet Philoxenus, this must have been a very partial judgment. Philoxenus, it is said, being invited to dine with Dionysius, and to hear him recite some poetical composition, was the only one of the guests who took the liberty of censuring it; he was condemned to the mines; but being soon after set at liberty, and invited to hear another recitation, he held his peace when it came to his turn to give his opinion. "What," said Dionysius, "have you nothing to say on this occasion?" "Carry me back to the mines," said Philoxenus. Dionysius, we are told, was not displeased with the answer.

The character of this prince is, on the whole, ambiguous. It is not improbable that the hatred which the Greeks ever affected to bear to the name of tyrant, has made their historians blacken the character of Dionysius more than he deserved.* We read of the constant terror he was under of assassination; of his never venturing to harangue the people but from the top of a tower; of the dungeon he contrived for the imprisonment of state-criminals, constructed in the form of the cavity of the ear, which communicating with an aperture in his private apartment, he could distinctly hear any word that the prisoner uttered; of the horror he had of allowing himself to be shaved, and of his making his daughters sing off his beard with nut-shells. But how is all this consistent with the certain facts, of his commanding his armies in person; his overseeing his numerous artisans employed in the public works; his familiar intercourse with men of science, his magnificent entertainments, and, at length, his dying of a debauch at a public festival? Great allowance must be made for the prejudices of those writers who have given us the character of Dionysius.

After the death of Dionysius the elder, the crown of Syracuse passed, without opposition, to Dionysius his son, an idle, weak, and dissolute prince, whom his father, to repress any premature schemes of ambition, had kept in profound ignorance. Along with the tyrannical disposition of his father, he had the same passion, or at least the same affectation of a taste, for literature. The

* Dionysius having sent his brother to the Olympic games to contend in his name for the prize of poetry, the Greeks, who detested his name, hissed the reciters off the stage, and tore his brother's rich pavilion to pieces. Lysias, the orator, made a speech on the occasion, in which he undertook to prove that it was an affront to all Greece, and an insult on their sacred solemnities, to allow the compositions of a wicked tyrant to be publicly rehearsed.—Plutarch Mor.