

344 B. C., its people sent a despairing appeal to Corinthus (the mother-city of Syracuse) for help. The Corinthians responded by despatching to Sicily a small fleet of ten triremes and a meagre army of 1,200 men, under Timoleon. It is the first appearance in history of a name which soon shone with immortality; for Timoleon proved himself to be one of the greatest and the noblest of Greeks. He found affairs in Sicily complicated by an invasion of Carthaginians, co-operating with one Hiketas, who had made himself despot of Leontini and who hoped to become master of Syracuse. By skilfully using the good fortune which the gods were believed to have lavished upon his enterprise, Timoleon, within a few months, had defeated Hiketas in the field; had accepted the surrender of Dionysius in Ortygia and sent the fallen tyrant to Corinthus; had caused such discouragement to the Carthaginians that they withdrew fleet and army and sailed away to Africa. The whole city now fell quickly into his hands. His first act was to demolish the stronghold of tyranny in Ortygia and to erect courts of justice upon its site. A free constitution of government was then re-established, all exiled citizens recalled, a great immigration of Greek inhabitants invited, and the city revivified with new currents of life. The tyranny in other cities was overthrown and all Sicily regenerated. The Carthaginians returning were defeated with fearful losses in a great battle on the Krimesus, and a peace made with them which narrowed their dominion in Sicily to the region west of the Italykus. All these great achievements completed, Timoleon resigned his generalship, declined every office, and became a simple citizen of Syracuse, living only a few years, however, to enjoy the grateful love and respect of his people.—G. Grote, *Hist. of Greece*, pt. 2, ch. 84-85.

Also in: Plutarch, *Timoleon*.

B. C. 317-289.—Under Agathokles.—A little more than twenty years after Timoleon expelled the brood of the tyrant Dionysius from Syracuse, and liberated Sicily, his work was entirely undone and a new and worse despot pushed himself into power. This was Agathokles, who rose, like his prototype, from a humble grade of life, acquired wealth by a lucky marriage, was trusted with the command of the Syracusan army—of mercenaries, chiefly—obtained a complete ascendancy over these soulless men, and then turned them loose upon the city, one morning at daybreak (B. C. 317), for a carnival of unrestrained riot and massacre. "They broke open the doors of the rich, or climbed over the roofs, massacred the proprietors within, and ravished the females. They chased the unsuspecting fugitives through the streets, not sparing even those who took refuge in the temples. . . . For two days Syracuse was thus a prey to the sanguinary, rapacious, and lustful impulses of the soldiery; 4,000 citizens had been already slain, and many more were seized as prisoners. The political purposes of Agathokles, as well as the passions of the soldiers, being then satiated, he arrested the massacre. He concluded this bloody feat by killing such of his prisoners as were most obnoxious to him, and banishing the rest. The total number of expelled or fugitive Syracusans is stated at 6,000." In a city so purged and terrorized, Agathokles had no difficulty in getting himself proclaimed by acclama-

tion sole ruler or autocrat, and he soon succeeded in extending his authority over a large part of Sicily. After some years he became involved in war with the Carthaginians, and suffered a disastrous defeat on the Himera (B. C. 310). Besieged in Syracuse, as a consequence, he resorted to bolder tactics than had been known before his time and "carried the war into Africa." His invasion of Carthage was the first that the Punic capital ever knew, and it created great alarm and confusion in the city. The Carthaginians were repeatedly beaten, Tunes, and other dependent towns, as well as Utica, were captured, the surrounding territory was ravaged, and Agathokles became master of the eastern coast. But all his successes gained him no permanent advantage, and, after four years of wonderful campaigning in Africa, he saw no escape from the difficulties of his situation except by basely stealing away from his army, leaving his two sons to be killed by the furious soldiers when they discovered his flight. Returning to Sicily, the wonderfully crafty and unscrupulous abilities which he possessed enabled him to regain his power and to commit outrage after outrage upon the people of Syracuse, Egesta, and other towns, until his death in 289 B. C.—G. Grote, *Hist. of Greece*, pt. 2, ch. 97.

B. C. 212.—Siege by the Romans. See PUNIC WARS: THE SECOND.

A. D. 279.—Sacked by Franks.—The Emperor Probus, who expelled from Gaul, A. D. 277, the invaders then beginning to swarm upon the hapless province, removed a large body of captive Franks to the coast of Pontus, on the Euxine, and settled them there. The restive barbarians soon afterwards succeeded (A. D. 279) in capturing a fleet of vessels, in which they made their way to the Mediterranean, plundering the shores and islands as they passed towards the west. "The opulent city of Syracuse, in whose port the navies of Athens and Carthage had formerly been sunk, was sacked by a handful of barbarians, who massacred the greatest part of the trembling inhabitants." This was the crowning exploit of the escaping Franks, after which they continued their voyage.—E. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. 42.

A. D. 878.—Siege and capture by the Saracens. See SICILY: A. D. 827-878.

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY. See EDUCATION, MODERN: AMERICA: A. D. 1769-1884.

SYRIA.—"Between the Arabian Desert and the eastern coast of the Levant there stretches—along almost the full extent of the latter, or for nearly 400 miles—a tract of fertile land varying from 70 to 100 miles in breadth. This is so broken up by mountain range and valley, that it has never all been brought under one native government; yet its well-defined boundaries—the sea on the west, Mount Taurus on the north, and the desert to east and south—give it a certain unity, and separate it from the rest of the world. It has rightly, therefore, been covered by one name, Syria. Like that of Palestine, the name is due to the Greeks, but by a reverse process. As 'Palestina,' which is really Philistina, was first the name of only a part of the coast, and thence spread inland to the desert, so Syria, which is a shorter form of Assyria, was originally applied by the Greeks to the whole of the Assyrian Empire from the Caucasus to the