Epeiros, Akrotatos, Kleonymos, all unsuccessfully attempted this work in Italy; it was only Pyrrhos, the last and greatest of the series, who played any great part in Sicily. And before he came, Sicily had become the seat of a greater native power than ever. Never till the Norman came was any Sicilian dominion so famous in the world as that of the Syracusan tyrant or king Agathokles.

We have unluckily no intelligible account of Sicily during the twenty years after the death of Timoleon (337- 317). His deliverance is said to have been followed by great immediate prosperity, but wars and dissensions very soon began again. Agathokles won his first fame in war between Syracuse and Akragas. The Carthaginians played off one city and party against another, and Agathokles, following the same policy, became in 317, by treachery and massacre, undisputed tyrant of Syracuse, and spread his dominion over many other cities. Akragas, strengthened by Syracusan exiles, now stands out again as the rival of Syracuse. The Carthaginian Hamilkar, by conduct which contrasted with the cruelty of Agathokles, won many Greek cities to the Punic alliance. Defeated in battle, with Syracuse blockaded by a Carthaginian fleet, Agathokles formed the bold idea of carrying the war into Africa. He set the model for Regulus and Scipio, and not a few later rulers of Sicily.

For more than three years (310-307) each side carried on warfare in the land of the other. Carthage was hard pressed by Agathokles, while Syracuse was no less hard pressed by Hamilkar. The force with which Agathokles invaded Africa was far from being wholly Greek; but it was representatively European. Gauls, Samnites, Tyrrhenians, fought for him, while mercenary Greeks and Syracusan exiles fought for Carthage. He won many battles and towns; he quelled mutinies of his own troops; by inviting and murdering Ophellas lord of Kyrene (Cyrene) he doubled his army and brought Carthage near to despair. Mean­while Syracuse, all but lost, had driven back Hamilkar, and had taken and slain him when he came again with the help of the Syracusan exile Deinokrates. Meanwhile Akragas, deeming Agathokles and the barbarians alike weakened, proclaimed freedom for the Sicilian cities under her own headship. Many towns, both Greek and Sikel, joined the confederacy. It has now become impossible to distinguish the two races; Henna and Erbessos are now the fellows of Kamarina and Leontinoi. But the hopes of Akragas were checked when Agathokles suddenly came back from Africa, landed at Selinous, and marched to Syracuse, taking one town after another. A new scheme of Sicilian union was taken up by Deinokrates, which cut short his dominion. But he now relieved Syracuse from the Carthaginian blockade; his mercenaries gained a victory over Akragas; and he sailed again for Africa, where fortune had turned against his son Archagathos, as it now did against himself. He left his sons and his army to death, bondage, or Carthaginian service, and came back to Sicily almost alone. Yet he could still gather a force which en­abled him to seize Segesta, to slay or enslave the whole popu­lation, and to settle the city with new inhabitants. This change amounts to the extinction of one of the elements in the old population of Sicily. We hear no more of Elymoi; indeed Segesta has been practically Greek long before this. Deinokrates and Agathokles came to a kind of partnership, and a peace with Carthage, with the old boundary, secured Agathokles in the possession of Syracuse and eastern Sicily (301).

At some stage of his African campaigns Agathokles had taken the title of king. Earlier tyrants were well pleased to be spoken of as kings; but no earlier rulers of Sicily put either their heads or their names on the coin. Agathokles now put his name, first without, and then with,

the kingly title. This was in imitation of the Macedonian leaders who divided the dominion of Alexander. The relations between the eastern and western Greek worlds are drawing closer. Agathokles in his old age took a wife of the house of Ptolemy; he gave his daughter Lanassa to Pyrrhos, and established his power east of Hadria, as the first Sicilian ruler of Korkyra. He carried on wars in the Liparæan Islands and in southern Italy, and died in 289 b.c., poisoned, some said, by his own grandson. Alike more daring and more cruel than any ruler before him, he carried the arms of Sicily further afield, and made the island the seat of a greater power than any of them.

This time was not favourable to the intellectual life of Sicily. Hitherto the island had attracted men of letters from old Greece. Now several distinguished Sicilian writers either chose or were driven to find homes else­where. Tinaios of Tauromenion, scorned by Polybios, but whose great Sicilian history is none the less a loss, was banished by Agathokles, and made Athens his headquarters for the last fifty years of his long life (356-*c*. 260 b.c.). Dikaiarchos (Dicæarchus) of Messana, geographer and phil­osopher and author of the *Life of Greece,* lived mainly in Peloponnesos till about 285 b.c. Euhemeros (Evemerus), despiser of the gods, who is claimed by more than one birthplace besides Messana, lived in the service and friend­ship of the Macedonian Kassandros. Philemon too, the long-lived writer of comedy (361-262 b.c.), is claimed for Syracuse, and it was only as an adopted citizen that he spent most of his life at Athens.

On the death of Agathokles tyrants sprang up in various cities. Akragas, under its king Phintias, won back for the moment somewhat of its old greatness. By a new depopulation of Gela, he founded the youngest of Sikeliot cities, Phintias, by the mouth of the southern Himera. And Hellas was cut short by the seizure of Messana by the disbanded Campanian mercenaries of Agathokles (c. 282). They slew the men, took the women as wives, and proclaimed themselves a new people in a new city by the name of Mamertines, children of Mamers or Mars. Messana became an Italian town; hence­forth its formal name was “ Mamertina civitas.”

The Campanian occupation of Messana is the first of the chain of events which led to the Roman dominion in Sicily. As yet Rome has hardly been mentioned in Sicilian story, either for friendship or for enmity. The Mamertine settlement, the war with Pyrrhos, bring us on quickly. Pyrrhos came as the champion of the western Greeks against all barbarians, whether Romans in Italy or Cartha­ginians in Sicily. His Sicilian war (278-276) was a mere interlude between the two acts of his war with Rome. As son-in-law of Agathokles, he claimed to be specially king of Sicily, and he held the Sicilian conquest of Korkyra as the dowry of Lanassa. With such a deliverer, deliver­ance meant submission. Pyrrhos is said to have dreamed of kingdoms of Sicily and of Italy for his two sons, the grand­sons of Agathokles, and he himself reigned for two years in Sicily as a king who came to be no less hated than the tyrants. Still as Hellenic champion in Sicily he has no peer. As European champion he has none till Roger of Hauteville. Eryx was won from the Phoenician; Panormos first became a city of Europe; if he failed before Lilybaion, that fortress and Messana were all that was left in bar­barian hands through the whole island.

All this was but for a moment. The Greek king, on his way back to fight for Tarentum against Rome, had to cut his way through Carthaginians and Mamertines in Roman alliance. His saying that he left Sicily as a wrestling-ground for Romans and Carthaginians was the very truth of the matter. Very soon came the first war