**SYRACUSE** (Gr. Συρώωυσαι; Lat. *Syracusae,* Ital. *Siracusa),* a city of Sicily, the capital of a province of the same name, situated on the east coast of the island, 54 m. by rail S. by E. of Catania, and about 32 m. direct. Pop. (1881), 21,739; (1906), 23,250 (town), 35,000 (commune).

*History.—*Syracuse was the chief Greek city of ancient Sicily, and one of the earliest Greek settlements in the island. Accord­ing to Strabo (vi. 4, p. 269) Chersicrates and Archias of Corinth, both Hcraclidae, left their native city together with a band of colonists, the former stopping with half the force at Corcyra, where he expelled the Liburnians and occupied the island, while Archias proceeded to Syracuse.@@1 Thucydides (vi. 3) gives the

date as the year after the foundation of Naxos *(i.e.* 734 b c.), and mentions that Archias expelled the Sicel inhabitants from the island. Their presence there was definitely proved by the discovery in 1905 of a rock-cut tomb of the beginning of the second Sicel period (see Sicily) on the west side of the island (Orsi in *Noiizie degli Scavi,* 1905, 381), while similar tombs may be seen both on the north and south edges of the terrace of Epi- polae, and on the peninsula of Plemmyrium. There is, on the other hand, no conclusive evidence for the previous existence of a

Phoenician settlement on the island,@@2 though it is certainly such a place as Thucydides (vi. 2) describes as occupied by them for purposes of trade with the Sicels. The name of the island, Ortygia (δpτυξ, a quail), has, again, been held to point to the possible existence of an Aetolian settlement on the island before Archias came. But it is more probable that the name was given to the island owing to the establishment there by the first settlers of a special cult of Artemis (the name Ortygia appears in Homer, *Odyssey,* v. 123, as an island sacred to Artemis, though the identification with Delos *(q.v.)* is not certain), though why Corinthians should have worshipped Artemis in preference to any other deity is not clear.

Till the beginning of the 5th century b.c. our notices of Syracusan hist­ory are quite fragmentary. Almost the only question is whether, as some stray notices (see Freeman, *History of Sicily,* xi. 431) might suggest, the primi­tive kingship was retained or renewed at Syracuse, as it certainly was in some other Greek colonies. A king Pollis is spoken of; but nothing is known of his actions. It is far more certain that Syracuse went through the usual revolu­tions of a Greek city. The descendants of the original settlers kept the land in their own hands, and they gradually brought the Sicel inhabitants to a state not unlike villenage. Presently other settlers, perhaps not always Greek, gathered round the origi­nal Syracusan people; they formed a distinct body, *δημος* or *plebs,* per­sonally free, but with an inferior political franchise or none at all. The old citizens thus gradually grew into an exclusive or aristocratic body, called γαμόροι or Landowners. We hear incidentally of disputes, seditions and changes, among others the expulsion of the Gamori early in the 5th century b.c. (Thuc. v. 5 ; Arist. *Pol.* v. 3, 5; 4,1). In its external development Syracuse differed somewhat from other Sicilian cities. Although it lagged in early times behind both Gela and Acragas (Agrigentum), it very soon began to aim at a combination of land and sea power.@@3 In 663 it founded the settlement of Acrae, in 643 Casmenae,@@4 and in 598 Camarina, of which the first was unusually far inland. The three together secured for Syracuse a continuous dominion to the south-east

@@@1 Strabo goes on to say that Archias fell in with certain men who had come from the Sicilian Megara, and took them with him to share in his enterprise. But this version implies that Megara was founded before Syracuse, which is contrary to all other authorities. The whole question of the various tales relating to the foundation of Syracuse is discussed by E. A. Freeman, *History of Sicily,* i. 335 sqq., 572 sqq.

@@@2 The origin of the name *∑vpiκovσai* is quite uncertain. It has been suggested that it may be Phoenician: and, again, the plural form has been thought to point perhaps to “ the union of two originally distinct posts,” one on the island, the other on the mainland on the hill where the ruins of the Olympieum stand, known as ιroλiχπ, —the latter being the original Syracuse.

@@@3 Netum (Noto) and Helorum, both to the S.S.W. of .Syracuse, must have been among its earliest settlements (Freeman ii. 17).

@@@4 The site of Casmenae is uncertain; it was to the south-west of Syracuse, and not improbably at Spaccaforno (Freeman ii. 25).