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The Story of the Nations.

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THE THEATRE, SYRACUSE. (*See page 294.*)

SICILY

PHOENICIAN, GREEK, & ROMAN

BY

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PREFACE.

IN undertaking "to contribute a short History of Sicily to the series called *The Story of the Nations*," Mr. Freeman says, in the Preface to his greater work on the same subject, that he did so "on the express ground that Sicily never was the home of any nation, but rather the meeting-place of many." The original suggestion had been that he should write a volume on Norman Sicily. But in view of the necessity of first introducing his readers to the earlier stages of Sicilian History, this suggestion finally ripened into the proposal to write the whole story of Sicily, from the earliest days of the Greek colonisation to the time of Frederick the Second.

The idea grew. It had for many years been a favourite saying of Mr. Freeman that "in order to write a small history you must first write a large one."

In this way the "Little History of Sicily" gave birth to the larger one, of which three volumes, reaching down to the time of the Athenian siege and the tyranny of Dionysios, have already been issued by the Clarendon Press. Besides this, there exist materials for a continuation of the larger history down to the period of the Roman Conquest and for a later volume on Norman Sicily. But, unhappily for his readers, he has not been spared to bring the work, either in its greater or lesser form, to completion.

With the exception of the headings from p. 297 onwards and the Index, which has been drawn up as far as possible on the lines of those made by the author himself for his greater work, the whole of the sheets had been passed for press by Mr. Freeman before he left England on his last journey—a journey to Spain, undertaken with a special view to the better understanding of the later parts of his great work. The present volume goes down to the end of the Roman dominion, and the last part of the book, which deals with Sicily as a Roman Province, covers a period which, in contradistinction to his usual practice, he had not yet written in the larger form. It had been his intention to add to the present a second volume, beginning with the coming of the Saracens, and which should, according to the hopes

expressed in his greater work, have been at any rate carried on "till the Wonder of the World is laid in his tomb at Palermo," or, it may be, carried on yet further to the time when the "island story" should be merged in that of the new Italian Kingdom.

But it was not so to be. The "life and strength" that he had hoped for failed him before their time, and, in the language of the Psalmist, whose words were ever on his lips and in his writings, his strength was brought down in his journey, his days were shortened. He died at Alicante on March 16, 1892.

A. J. E. AND M. E.





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