

BOOK IV.—MESSENTIA.

CHAPTER I.

THE border of Messenia towards Laconia, as fixed by Augustus, is at Gerenia, and in our time is called the Choerian dell. This country, originally without inhabitants, is described to have been inhabited by the first colonists in the following manner. After the death of Lelex, who reigned in what is now called Laconia, but was then called Lelegia after him, Myles who was the elder of his sons succeeded him, and Polycaon the younger was only a private person till he married the Argive Messene, the daughter of Triopas, the son of Phorbas. But Messene, being full of pride owing to her father, who was foremost of all the Greeks in merit and power, did not think it tolerable that her husband should be a private person. So they gathered together an army from Argos and Lacedæmon and invaded this country, and the whole district was called Messene from her. And several other cities were built, as well as the place where the royal head-quarters were established, viz. Andania. Before the battle which the Thebans fought with the Lacedæmonians at Leuctra, and the building of Messene in our day close to Ithome, I know of no city that was previously called Messene. My inference is very much confirmed by Homer. For in the catalogue of those who went to Ilium, when enumerating Pylos and Arene and other cities, he mentions no Messene. And in the *Odyssey* he shews that by this time the Messenians were a race and not a city,

‘For the Messenians took cattle from Ithaca,’<sup>1</sup>  
and clearer still in speaking of the bow of Iphitus,

<sup>1</sup> *Odyssey*, xxi. 18.

‘They two in Messene met one another,  
In the house of Ortilochus.’<sup>1</sup>

By the house of Ortilochus in Messene he meant the town of Pheræ, as he has shewn in the visit of Pisistratus to Menelaus,

‘They went to Pheræ to the house of Diocles,  
The son of Ortilochus.’<sup>2</sup>

However the first rulers of this country were Polycaon (the son of Lelex) and his wife Messene. Caucon, the son of Celænus, the son of Phlyus, introduced here from Eleusis the mysteries of the Great Goddesses. Phlyus was according to the Athenian tradition the son of Mother Earth. And this tradition of theirs is confirmed by the Hymn of Musæus made for the Lycomidæ in honour of Demeter. And the rites of the Great Goddesses were held in greater honour many years afterwards, owing to Lycus the son of Pandion, than in Caucon’s days. And they still call the place where he purged the initiated the oak coppice of Lycus. That there is an oak-coppice in this land called Lycus’ is also borne out by Rhianus the Cretan,

‘By rocky Elæum and beyond the oak-coppice of Lycus.’

And that this Lycus was the son of Pandion is plain by the inscription on the statue of Methapus. This Methapus reformed some of the rites. He was an Athenian by race, an organizer of all sorts of mystic rites. He it was who established also among the Thebans the rites of the Cabiri. And he erected near the enclosure of the Lycomidæ a statue with an inscription which confirms my account. “I have purified the home and paths of Hermes and the firstborn daughter of Demeter, where they say Messene established games to the Great Goddesses, owing to the son of Caucon, the illustrious descendant of Phlyus. But I wonder that Lycus the son of Pandion should establish the sacred rites of Atthis in venerable Andania.” This inscription shews that Caucon who came to Messene was the descendant of Phlyus, and confirms all the other facts about Lycus, and that the

<sup>1</sup> *Odyssey*, xxi. 15, 16.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* iii. 488, 489.

mysteries in ancient times were celebrated at Andania. And it seems also common sense that Messene would not establish the mysteries in any other place than where she and Polycaon lived.

## CHAPTER II.

AND being very anxious to know accurately who the sons of Polycaon were by Messene, I perused the poem called *the Great Eœæ* and the Naupactian poems, and also all the genealogical information of Cinæthon and Asius. And yet I did not discover anything in them except that *the Great Eœæ* say that Polycaon the son of Butes married Euæchme, the daughter of Hyllus the son of Hercules, but they make no mention of either Messene or her husband. But in after time, when none of the descendants of Polycaon survived, they continued five generations and no more, they introduced as King Perieres the son of Æolus. To his court came as the Messenians say Melaneus, a skilful archer and for that reason thought to be the son of Apollo, and Perieres assigned to him Carnasium to dwell in, which was formerly called Cœchalia from the wife of Melaneus. But the Thessalians and Eubœans—for there are almost always disputed accounts of most Grecian events—give different accounts. The former say that Eurytium a place deserted in our days was a city in old times and called Cœchalia: but Creophylus in his *Heraclea* has written what corresponds with the account of the Eubœans. And Hecateus the Milesian writes that Cœchalia is in Scium a part of Eretria. But the Messenians seem to me to give the most probable account, especially about the bones of Eurytus, which I shall touch upon later. And Perieres had by Gorgophone the daughter of Perseus Aphareus and Leucippus who, on his death, succeeded their father as kings of the Messenians, but Aphareus had most power. During his reign he built the city Arene which got its name from the daughter of Cœbalus, his wife and uterine sister. For Gorgophone was married to Cœbalus, as I have already mentioned, in my account of Argolis, and also in

my account of Laconia. Aphareus then built the city Arene in Messenia, and received into his house his cousin Neleus, the son of Cretheus, the son of Æolus (who was surnamed Poseidon), when he fled from Pelias at Iolcus, and gave him the maritime parts of the land, among which were several other cities besides Pylos, where Neleus dwelt, and made it his seat of government. And Lycus the son of Pandion came also to Arene, when he also fled from Athens from his brother Ægeus. And he taught the mysteries of the Great Goddesses to Aphareus and his sons and his wife Arene. And he introduced them into Andania, for Caucon there initiated Messene. And the elder and more manly of Aphareus' children was Idas, and the younger was Lynceus, of whom Pindar said, believe it who will, that he had such keen eyesight that he could see through the trunk of a tree. We do not know of Lynceus having had a son, but Idas had by Marpessa a daughter Cleopatra, who married Meleager. And the writer of the Cyprian Poems says that the wife of Protesilaus (who when the Greeks got to the Troad was the first who ventured to land), was by name Polydora, and he also says that she was the daughter of Meleager the son of Ceneus. If this be correct then all these three women, beginning with Marpessa, committed suicide after the death of their husbands.

## CHAPTER III.

**B**UT when between the sons of Aphareus and Castor and Pollux (their uncles) a quarrel arose about cattle, and Lynceus was slain by Pollux, while Idas died smitten with lightning, the house of Aphareus was entirely deprived of male offspring, and upon Nestor the son of Neleus devolved the kingdom of the Messenians, over all whom Idas reigned over and others besides, except those who followed the sons of Æsculapius. For they say that the sons of Æsculapius that went on the expedition to Ilium were Messenians: for Æsculapius was the son of Arsinoe the daughter of Leucippus, and not the son of Coronis. And they call a deserted place in Messenia Tricca, it is men-

tioned by Homer in the passage where Nestor is consoling Machaon, who was wounded with an arrow. He would not have exhibited such kindness except to a neighbour and king of the same tribe. They confirm also greatly this account about the children of Æsculapius by showing at Gerenia the monument of Machaon, and at Pharæ the temple of the sons of Machaon.

And after the end of the war against Ilium, and the death of Nestor after his return home, the expedition of the Dorians and return of the Heraclidæ two generations afterwards drove out the descendants of Neleus from Messenia. And this was as it were the climax of the doings of Temenus which I have already described. But I will narrate this much more. When the Dorians assigned Argos to Temenus, Cresphontes asked of them Messenia, on the ground that he was older than Aristodemus, who had just died. But Theras the son of Autesion vehemently opposed Cresphontes; he was of Theban ancestry and fifth descendant of Polynices the son of Œdipus, and at this time Guardian of Aristodemus' sons, as he was their uncle on the mother's side, for Aristodemus had married the daughter of Autesion, whose name was Argia. But Cresphontes, for he was determined to have Messenia, begged of Temenus to decide the question by lots. And Temenus put into a water-pot which had water in it the lots of Cresphontes and the sons of Aristodemus separately, so that he who's lot came up first should have Messenia. Temenus prepared both the lots, the lot of the sons of Aristodemus he made of clay dried in the sun, and Cresphontes' lot of clay that had been baked in the furnace: and the lot of the sons of Aristodemus melted, and stuck to the bottom of the water-pot, so that Cresphontes (for his lot came out) got possession in this way of Messenia. And the old Messenians were not turned out by the Dorians, but agreed to Cresphontes being their king, and to the partition of the land among the Dorians. And they were brought over to this compliance by suspicion of their former kings, because they were Minyæ who had originally sprung from Iolcus. And the wife of Cresphontes was Merope the daughter of Cypselus (who was at that time king of the

Arcadians), by whom he had several children and the name of the youngest was Æpytus. And his palace, where he himself and his sons meant to live, he built at Stenyclerus: for in ancient times Perieres and the other kings lived at Andania, and after Aphareus had built Arene he and his sons lived there, and in the reign of Nestor and his descendants the Court lived at Pylos, but Cresphontes changed the royal residence to Stenyclerus. And, as he chiefly ingratiated himself with the people, the wealthy classes rose up in insurrection against him and killed him and all his sons except Æpytus, who being quite a boy was brought up by Cypselus, and alone survived of all the house, and when he grew to man's estate the Arcadians restored him to Messene. And the other kings of the Dorians, the sons of Aristodemus, and Isthmius the son of Temenus, joined in bringing him back. And when Æpytus became king he punished his father's murderers, and all those who had instigated the crime: and bringing over to his side by his attentions those who were in high position among the Messenians, and the populace by gifts, he arrived at such a pitch of honour that his descendants were called Æpytidæ instead of Heraclidæ.

And Glaucus the son of Æpytus, who succeeded his father, in all other respects imitated his father both in public and private, but far exceeded him in piety. For when the sacred enclosure of Zeus on the summit of Ithome did not receive honours among the Dorians, through the neglect of Polycaon and Messene, Glaucus restored his worship: and was the first to sacrifice to Machaon the son of Æsculapius at Gerenia, and awarded such gifts to Messene the daughter of Triopas as are usually bestowed on heroes. And Isthmius Glaucus' son also built a temple to Gorgasus and Nicomachus at Pharæ. And the son of Isthmius was Dotadas, who, though Messenia had several other havens, constructed one at Mothone. And Sybotas the son of Dotadas decreed that annually the king should sacrifice by the river Pamisus, and offer victims to Eurytus the son of Melaneus in Cechalia, before the rites of the Great Goddesses that are still celebrated in Andania.

## CHAPTER IV.

AND in the reign of Phintas, the son of Sybotas, the Messenians first sent to Apollo at Delos sacrifices and a choir of men. And their processional Hymn to the god was composed by Eumelus, and these are considered the only genuine lines of Eumelus. It was during the reign of this Phintas that a disagreement for the first time came about between the Lacedæmonians and the Messenians. The cause is doubtful, but is traditionally as follows. On the borders of Messenia is a temple of Artemis Limnas, in which the Messenians and Lacedæmonians were the only Dorians that had a share. The Lacedæmonians say that some maidens of theirs who were present at the feast were violated by some Messenians, and that their king Teleclus, (the son of Archelaus, the son of Agesilaus, the son of Doryssus, the son of Labotas, the son of Echestratus, the son of Agis,) was slain in endeavouring to prevent this outrage. They also say that the maidens who were violated put themselves to death from shame. But the Messenian account is that Teleclus plotted against their persons of quality that came to the temple, on account of the excellence of the Messenian soil, and picked out some beardless Spartans, and, dressing them in female attire and ornaments like maidens, introduced them armed with daggers among some of the Messenians who were resting: but the other Messenians came up to the rescue, and killed the beardless young men and Teleclus himself. And the Lacedæmonians—for their king had not contrived all this without the common consent—knowing that they had begun the wrong, did not demand vengeance for the murder of Teleclus. These are the different accounts the two nations give, let everyone accept the view he prefers.

And a generation afterwards, when Alcamenes the son of Teleclus was king at Lacedæmon, and the king of the other family was Theopompus, the son of Nicander, the son of Charillus, the son of Polydectes, the son of Eunomus, the son of Prytanis, the son of Eurypon, and Antiochus and Androcles the sons of Phintas were kings of the Messenians,

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