

BOOK IX.

SUMMARY.

Continuation of the geography of Greece. A panegyric account of Athens.
A description of Bœotia and Thessaly, with the sea-coast.

CHAPTER I.

1. HAVING completed the description of Peloponnesus, which we said was the first and least of the peninsulas of which Greece consists, we must next proceed to those which are continuous with it.¹

We described the second to be that which joins Megaris to the Peloponnesus [so that Crommyon belongs to Megaris, and not to the Corinthians];² the third to be that which is situated near the former, comprising Attica and Bœotia, some part of Phocis, and of the Locri Epicnemidii. Of these we are now to speak.

Eudoxus says, that if we imagine a straight line to be drawn towards the east from the Ceraunian Mountains to Sunium, the promontory of Attica, it would leave, on the right hand, to the south, the whole of Peloponnesus, and on the left, to the north, the continuous coast from the Ceraunian

¹ The peninsulas described by Strabo, are :

1. The Peloponnesus, properly so called, bounded by the Isthmus of Corinth.

2. The peninsula bounded by a line drawn from Pagæ to Nisæa, and including the above.

3. The peninsula bounded by a line drawn from the recess of the Crissæan Gulf, properly so called, (the Bay of Salona,) to Thermopylæ, and includes the two first.

4. The peninsula bounded by a line drawn from the Ambracic Gulf to Thermopylæ and the Maliac Gulf, and includes the three former.

5. The peninsula bounded by a line drawn from the Ambracic Gulf to the recess of the Thermaic Gulf, and contains the former four peninsulas.

² These words are transposed from after the word Epicnemidii, as suggested by Cramer.

Mountains to the Crissæan Gulf, and the whole of Megaris and Attica. He is of opinion that the shore which extends from Sunium to the Isthmus, would not have so great a curvature, nor have so great a bend, if, to this shore, were not added the parts continuous with the Isthmus and extending to the Hermionic Bay and Acté; that in the same manner the shore, from the Ceraunian Mountains to the Gulf of Corinth, has a similar bend, so as to make a curvature, forming within it a sort of gulf, where Rhium and Antirrhium contracting together give it this figure. The same is the case with the shore about Crissa and the recess, where the Crissæan Sea terminates.¹

2. As this is the description given by Eudoxus, a mathematician, skilled in the delineations of figures and the inclinations of places, acquainted also with the places themselves, we must consider the sides of Attica and Megaris, extending from Sunium as far as the Isthmus, to be curved, although slightly so. About the middle of the above-mentioned line² is the Piræus, the naval arsenal of the Athenians. It is distant from Schœnus, at the Isthmus, about 350 stadia; from Sunium 330. The distance from the Piræus to Pagæ³ and from the Piræus to Schœnus is nearly the same, yet the former is said to exceed the latter by 10 stadia. After having doubled Sunium, the navigation along the coast is to the north with a declination to the west.

3. Acte (Attica) is washed by two seas; it is at first narrow, then it widens towards the middle, yet it, nevertheless, takes a lunated bend towards Oropus in Bœotia, having the convex side towards the sea. This is the second, the eastern side of Attica.

The remaining side is that to the north, extending from the territory of Oropus towards the west, as far as Megaris, and consists of the mountainous tract of Attica, having a variety of names, and dividing Bœotia from Attica; so that, as I have before remarked, Bœotia, by being connected with

¹ The Crissæan Gulf, properly so called, is the modern Bay of Salona. But probably Strabo (or rather Eudoxus, whose testimony he alleges) intended to comprehend, under the denomination of Crissæan, the whole gulf, more commonly called Corinthian by the ancients, that is, the gulf which commenced at the strait between Rhium and Antirrhium, and of which the Crissæan Gulf was only a portion. The text in the above passage is very corrupt.

² From Sunium to the Isthmus.

³ Libadostani.

two seas, becomes the Isthmus of the third peninsula, which we have mentioned before, and this Isthmus includes within it the *Peloponnesus*, *Megaris*, and *Attica*. For this reason therefore the present *Attica* was called by a play upon the words *Acta* and *Actica*, because the greatest part of it lies under the mountains, and borders on the sea; it is narrow, and stretches forwards a considerable length as far as *Sunium*. We shall therefore resume the description of these sides, beginning from the sea-coast, at the point where we left off.

4. After *Crommyon*, rising above *Attica*, are the rocks called *Scironides*, which afford no passage along the sea-side. Over them, however, is a road which leads to *Megara* and *Attica* from the Isthmus. The road approaches so near the rocks that in many places it runs along the edge of precipices, for the overhanging mountain is of great height, and impassable.

Here is laid the scene of the fable of *Sciron*, and the *Pityocamptes*, or the pine-breaker, one of those who infested with their robberies the above-mentioned mountainous tract. They were slain by *Theseus*.

The wind *Argestes*,¹ which blows from the left with violence, from these summits is called by the Athenians *Sciron*.

After the rocks *Scironides* there projects the promontory *Minoa*, forming the harbour of *Nisæa*. *Nisæa* is the arsenal of *Megara*, and distant 18 stadia from the city; it is joined to it by walls on each side.² This also had the name of *Minoa*.

5. In former times the Ionians occupied this country, and were also in possession of *Attica*, before the time of the building of *Megara*, wherefore the poet does not mention these places by any appropriate name, but when he calls all those dwelling in *Attica*, Athenians, he comprehends these also in the common appellation, regarding them as Athenians; so when, in the Catalogue of the Ships, he says,

“And they who occupied Athens, a well-built city,”³

¹ N. W. by W., $\frac{1}{4}$ W.

² Literally, “by legs on each side.” *Nisæa* was united to *Megara*, as the *Piræus* to Athens, by two long walls.

³ Il. ii. 546.

we must understand the present Megarenses also, as having taken a part in the expedition. The proof of this is, that Attica was, in former times, called Ionia, and Ias, and when the poet says,

“There the Bœoti, and Iacones,”¹

he means the Athenians. But of this Ionia Megaris was a part.

6. Besides, the Peloponnesians and Ionians having had frequent disputes respecting their boundaries, on which Crommyonia also was situated, assembled and agreed upon a spot of the Isthmus itself, on which they erected a pillar having an inscription on the part towards Peloponnesus,

“THIS IS PELOPONNESUS, NOT IONIA;”

and on the side towards Megara,

“THIS IS NOT PELOPONNESUS, BUT IONIA.”

Although those, who wrote on the history of Attica,² differ in many respects, yet those of any note agree in this, that when there were four Pandionidæ, Ægeus, Lycus, Pallas, and Nisus; and when Attica was divided into four portions, Nisus obtained, by lot, Megaris, and founded Nisæa. Philochorus says, that his government extended from the Isthmus to Pythium,³ but according to Andron, as far as Eleusis and the Thriasian plain.

Since, then, different writers give different accounts of the division of the country into four parts, it is enough to adduce these lines from Sophocles where Ægeus says,

“My father determined that I should go away to Acte, having assigned to me, as the elder, the best part of the land; to Lycus, the opposite garden of Eubœa; for Nisus he selects the irregular tract of the shore of Sciron; and the rugged Pallas, breeder of giants, obtained by lot the part to the south.”⁴

Such are the proofs which are adduced to show that Megaris was a part of Attica.

7. After the return of the Heraclidæ, and the partition of the country, many of the former possessors were banished from their own land by the Heraclidæ, and by the Dorians, who came with them, and migrated to Attica. Among these was Melanthus, the king of Messene. He was voluntarily ap-

¹ Il. xiii. 685.

² See note to vol. i. page 329.

³ This place is unknown.

⁴ From a lost tragedy of Sophocles.

pointed king of the Athenians, after having overcome in single combat, Xanthus, the king of the Bœotians. When Attica became populous by the accession of fugitives, the Heraclidæ were alarmed, and invaded Attica, chiefly at the instigation of the Corinthians and Messenians; the former of whom were influenced by proximity of situation, the latter by the circumstance that Codrus, the son of Melanthus, was at that time king of Attica. They were, however, defeated in battle and relinquished the whole of the country, except the territory of Megara, of which they kept possession, and founded the city Megara, where they introduced as inhabitants Dorians in place of Ionians. They destroyed the pillar also which was the boundary of the country of the Ionians and the Peloponnesians.

8. The city of the Megarenses, after having experienced many changes, still subsists. It once had schools of philosophers, who had the name of the Megaric sect. They succeeded Euclides, the Socratic philosopher, who was by birth a Megarensian, in the same manner as the Eleiaci, among whom was Pyrrhon, who succeeded Phædon, the Eleian, who was also a Socratic philosopher, and as the Eretriaci succeeded Menedemus the Eretrian.

Megaris, like Attica, is very sterile, and the greater part of it is occupied by what are called the Oneii mountains, a kind of ridge, which, extending from the Scironides rocks to Bœotia and to Cithæron, separates the sea at Nisæa from that near Pagæ, called the Alcyonian Sea.

9. In sailing from Nisæa to Attica there lie, in the course of the voyage, five small islands. Then succeeds Salamis, which is about 70, and according to others, 80, stadia in length. It has two cities of the same name. The ancient city, which looked towards Ægina, and to the south, as Æschylus has described it ;

“ Ægina lies towards the blasts of the south : ”

it is uninhabited. The other is situated in a bay on a spot of a peninsular form contiguous to Attica. In former times it had other names, for it was called Sciras, and Cychreia, from certain heroes ; from the former Minerva is called Sciras ; hence also Scira, a place in Attica ; Episcirosis, a religious rite ; and Scirophorion, one of the months. From Cychreia

the serpent Cychrides had its name, which Hesiod says Cychreus bred, and Eurylochus ejected, because it infested the island, but that Ceres admitted it into Eleusis, and it became her attendant. Salamis was called also Pityussa from "pitys," the pine tree. The island obtained its renown from the Æacidæ, who were masters of it, particularly from Ajax, the son of Telamon, and from the defeat of Xerxes by the Greeks in a battle on the coast, and by his flight to his own country. The Æginetæ participated in the glory of that engagement, both as neighbours, and as having furnished a considerable naval force. [In Salamis is the river Bocarus, now called Bocalia.]¹

10. At present the Athenians possess the island Salamis. In former times they disputed the possession of it with the Megarians. Some allege, that Pisistratus, others that Solon, inserted in the Catalogue of Ships immediately after this verse,

" Ajax conducted from Salamis twelve vessels,"²

the following words,

" And stationed them by the side of the Athenian forces;"

and appealed to the poet as a witness, that the island originally belonged to the Athenians. But this is not admitted by the critics, because many other lines testify the contrary. For why does Ajax appear at the extremity of the line not with the Athenians, but with the Thessalians under the command of Protesilaus;

" There were the vessels of Ajax, and Protesilaus."³

And Agamemnon, in the Review⁴ of the troops,

" found the son of Peteus, Menestheus, the tamer of horses, standing, and around were the Athenians skilful in war: near stood the wily Ulysses, and around him and at his side, the ranks of the Cephalleni;"⁴

and again, respecting Ajax and the Salaminii;

" he came to the Ajaces,"⁵

and near them,

" Idomeneus on the other side amidst the Cretans,"⁶

not Menestheus. The Athenians then seem to have alleged

¹ Probably interpolated.

² Il. ii. 557.

³ Il. xiii. 681.

⁴ Il. iv. 327.

⁵ Il. iv. 273.

⁶ Il. iii. 230.

some such evidence as this from Homer as a pretext, and the Megarians to have replied in an opposite strain of this kind; "Ajax conducted ships from Salamis, from Polichna, from Ægirussa, from Nisæa, and from Tripodes,"¹

which are places in Megaris, of which Tripodes has the name of Tripodiscium, situated near the present forum of Megara.

11. Some say, that Salamis is unconnected with Attica, because the priestess of Minerva Polias, who may not eat the new cheese of Attica, but the produce only of a foreign land, yet uses the Salaminian cheese. But this is a mistake, for she uses that which is brought from other islands, that are confessedly near Attica, for the authors of this custom considered all produce as foreign which was brought over sea.

It seems as if anciently the present Salamis was a separate state, and that Megara was a part of Attica.

On the sea-coast, opposite to Salamis, the boundaries of Megara and Attica are two mountains called Cerata, or Horns.²

12. Next is the city Eleusis,³ in which is the temple of the Eleusinian Ceres, and the Mystic Enclosure (Secos),⁴ which Ictinus built,⁵ capable of containing the crowd of a theatre. It was this person that built⁶ the Parthenon in the Acropolis, in honour of Minerva, when Pericles was the superintendent of the public works. The city is enumerated among the demi, or burghs.

13. Then follows the Thriasian plain, and the coast, a demus of the same name,⁷ then the promontory Amphiale,⁸ above which is a stone quarry; and then the passage across the sea to Salamis, of about 2 stadia, which Xerxes endeavoured to fill up with heaps of earth, but the sea-fight and the flight of the Persians occurred before he had accomplished it.

¹ Il. ii. 557.

² These horns, according to Wheler, are two pointed rocks on the summit of the mountain situated between Eleusis and Megara. On one of these rocks is a tower, called by the modern Greeks Cerata or Kerata-Pyrge.

³ Lepsina.

⁴ Σηκός.

⁵ κατεσκεύασεν.

⁶ ἐποίησε. Ictinus was also the architect of the temple of Apollo Epicurius near Phigalia in Arcadia.

⁷ Thria.

⁸ Scaramandra; from the height above Ægaleos, Xerxes witnessed the battle of Salamis.

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