entertaining some hopes of their flight, he waited four days without undertaking any thing, on purpose to give them time to retreat. During this interval, he used his utmost endeavours to gain and corrupt Leonidas, promising to make him master of Greece if he would espouse his interest. His offers being rejected with contempt and indignation, the king ordered him by a herald to deliver up his arms. Leonidas, in a style and with a spirit truly laconical, an­swered, “ Come thyself, and take them.” Xerxes, trans ported with rage at this reply, commanded the Medes and Cissians to march against them, seize them all alive, and bring them to him in fetters. The Medes, not able to stand the shock of the Greeks, soon betook themselves to flight. In their room, Hydames was ordered to advance with that body which was called *Immortal,* and consisted of 10,000 chosen men ; but when these assailed the Greeks, they succeeded no better than the Medes and Cissians, being obliged to retire with great slaughter. The next day the Persians, reflecting on the small number of their ene mies, and supposing so many of them to be wounded that they could not possibly maintain a second fight, resolved to make another attempt ; but, with all their efforts, they could not make the Greeks give way; on the contrary, they were themselves put to a shameful flight. The valour of the Greeks exerted itself in a manner so extraordinary, that Xerxes is said to have three times leaped from his throne, apprehending the entire destruction of his army.

Having lost all hopes of forcing his way through troops that were determined to conquer or die, he was extremely perplexed and doubtful what measures he should adopt in this posture of affairs, when one Epialtes, in expectation of a great reward, came to him, and discovered a secret passage to the top of the hill which overlooked and commanded the Spartan forces. The king immediately order ed Hydarnes thither with his select body of 10,000 Persians ; who, marching all night, arrived at break of day, and possessed themselves of that advantageous post. The Phocæans, who defended this pass, being overpowered by the enemy’s numbers, retired with precipitation to the very top of the mountain, prepared to die gallantly. But Hydarnes, neglecting to pursue them, marched down the mountain with all possible expedition, in order to attack in the rear those who defended the straits. Leonidas being now apprised that it was impossible to withstand the ene my, obliged the rest of his allies to retire; but he himself remained with the Thespians, Thebans, and 300 Lacedæmonians, all resolved to die with their leader ; who, being told by the oracle, that either Sparta should be destroyed or the king lose his life, determined, without the least hesitation, to sacrifice himself for his country. The Thebans indeed remained against their inclination, being detained by Leonidas as hostages ; for they were suspected to favour the Persians. The Thespians, with their leader Demophilus, could not be prevailed upon to abandon Leonidas and the Spartans. The augur Megis tias, who had foretold the event of this enterprise, being pressed by Leonidas to retire, sent home his only son ; but he remained himself, and died by Leonidas. Those who were left did not indulge any hope of conquering or escap ing, but looked upon Thermopylæ as their grave ; and when Leonidas, exhorting them to take some nourishment, said, that they should all sup together with Pluto, they with one accord raised a shout of joy, as if they had been invited to the banquet.

Xerxes, after pouring out a libation at the rising of the sun, began to move with the whole body of his army, as he had been advised by Epialtes. Upon their approach, Leonidas advanced to the broadest part of the passage, and fell upon the enemy with such undaunted courage and re solution, that the Persian officers were obliged to stand behind the divisions which they commanded, in order to

prevent the flight of their men. Great numbers of the enemy falling into the sea, were drowned ; others were trampled under foot by their companions, and very many killed by the Greeks ; who, knowing they could not avoid death upon the arrival of those who were advancing to fall upon their rear, made prodigious efforts of valour. In this action fell the brave Leonidas ; which Abrocomes and Hyperanthes, two of the brothers of Xerxes, observing, advanced with great resolution to seize his body, and carry it in triumph to Xerxes. But the Lacedæmonians, more eager to defend it than their own lives, repulsed the ene my four times, killed both the royal brothers, with many other commanders of distinction, and rescued the body of their beloved general out of the enemy’s hands. But in the mean time, the army that was led by the treacherous Epialtes, advancing to attack their rear, they retired to the narrowest part of the passage, and all drawing together, except the Thebans, posted themselves on a rising ground. In this place they made head against the Persians, who assaulted them on all sides, till at length, not vanquished, but oppressed and overwhelmed by numbers, they all fell, except one who escaped to Sparta, where he was treated as a coward and traitor to his country ; but he afterwards made a glorious reparation in the battle of Platæa, where he distinguished himself in an extraordinary manner. Some time after, a magnificent monument was erected at Thermopylæ, in honour of those brave defenders of Greece, with two inscriptions ; the one general, and relating to all those who died on this occasion, importing, that the Greeks of Peloponnesus, to the number only of 4000, made head against the Persian army, consisting of 3,000,000. The other related to the Spartans in particular, and was corn posed by the poet Simonides, to this purport: “Go, passen ger, and acquaint the Spartans that we died here in obedience to their just commands.” At those tombs a funeral oration was yearly pronounced in honour of the departed heroes, and public games were celebrated with great solemnity. In these none but the Lacedæmonians and Thespians had any share, to show that they alone were concern ed in the glorious defence of Thermopylæ.

At the end of the 77th Olympiad, a most dreadful earth quake happened at Sparta, in which, according to Diodorus, 20,000 persons lost their lives ; and Plutarch avers, that only five houses were left standing in the whole city. On this occasion the Helotes, or slaves, whom the Spartans had all along treated with the utmost cruelty, attempted to revenge themselves, by taking up arms, and marching directly to the ruins of the city, in hopes of cutting off at once those who had escaped from the earthquake. But their attempt was defeated by the prudence of the Spartan king Archidamus ; for observing that the citizens were more desirous of preserving their effects than taking care of their own lives, he caused an alarm to be sounded, as if he had known that an enemy was at hand. On this the citizens armed themselves in haste with such weapons as they could come at; and having marched a little way from the city, met the Helotes, whom they soon compelled to retire. The latter however knowing that they had now no mercy to expect from those who had already treated them with such cruelty, resolved to defend themselves to the last Having therefore seized a seaport town in Mes senia, they from thence made such incursions into the Spartan territories, that they compelled those imperious masters to ask assistance from the Athenians. This was immediately granted ; but when the Spartans saw that the skill of the Athenians in besieging towns was much greater than their own, they became jealous, and dismissed their allies, declaring that they had now no further occasion for their services. On this the Athenians left them in dis gust ; and as the Helotes and Messenians did not choose to come to an engagement with a Spartan army in the