bans iri that expedition ; but when he came thither he was surprised to be met by the tyrant nt the head of a numerous army before that city, while he himself was only accompa­nied by a very small band. Acting as if he had supposed that Alexander came hither to justify himself, and answer to the complaints alleged against him, he advanced, with Ismenias his colleague, unarmed and unattended, not doubt­ing but his character as ambassador from so powerful a re­public, joined to his own character and authority, would protect them from insult or violence; but he found him­self mistaken, for Alexander had no sooner got them into his hands, than he caused them to be seized and sent priso­ners to Pheræa.

The Thebans highly resenting the indignity offered to their ambassadors, sent immediately an army into Thessaly ; but the generals were repulsed with great loss by the usurp­er ; and it was owing to Epaminondas, who was among them only as a private centinel, that they were not totally cut off. For the Thebans, finding themselves in such imminent danger, which they attributed to the incapacity of their generals, had immediately recourse to him, whose valour and experience had been so often tried ; and, partly by persuasions and entreaties, and partly by threats, obliged him to take the command. This soon gave a different turn to their affairs, and converted their flight into a safe and regular retreat ; for he took the horse and light-armed foot, and placed himself at their head in the rear, and charged the enemy with such vigour and bravery, that he obliged them to desist from their pursuit.

As the army had suffered such loss as not to be able to pursue them in their turn, he was obliged to march for Thebes, accompanied by the pusillanimous generals. They were fined 12,000 drachms each, and Epaminondas was reinstated in the command, and sent with a new reinforcement to re- pair the late dishonour, and prosecute their revenge. The news of his being in full march greatly alarmed Alexander; but the general, preferring the safety of his imprisoned col­league to all other considerations, forbore pushing hostilities to extremes, for fear of provoking the enemy to wreak all his fury on him. He contented himself for a while hover­ing about with his army, and now and then with such slight skirmishes as should intimidate the tyrant, and bring him the sooner to make some satisfactory offers. Alexander being fully convinced of the superiority of the Theban ge­neral, was glad to accept of a truce of thirty days, and to release Pelopidas and Ismenias ; upon which Epaminondas immediately withdrew his forces, and returned with them to Thebes.

By this time Thebes was raised to a sufficient height of reputation and glory to begin to aim in earnest at the sove­reignty of Greece. The main obstacle to it was, that the other states grew so jealous of her present greatness, as to enter into the strongest alliances and confederacies to pre­vent its further growth ; so that being now unable to pro­cure many allies at home, they made no difficulty to seek for them abroad ; and the Lacedaemonians, by setting the example, gave them a plausible pretence to follow their steps, and procure an alliance with Persia, which at that time they found was ready to accept of the offers on any terms ; the only question was, which of the three states should be preferred, Sparta, Athens, or Thebes. At the same time the Thebans proposed to their new confederates to send proper deputies to the Persian court, in order to support their respective interests. These were the Arca­dians, Eleans, and Argives, at the head of whose deputa­tion Pelopidas was sent on behalf of the Thebans ; and the Athenians being apprized of these proceedings, likewise sent two deputies. Being all arrived at the Persian court, they began to pursue each their respective interests ; but Pelo­pidas had by that time gained such credit, both for his sin­gular address and his extraordinary exploits, that he was distinguished in a particular manner from all the other de­puties, and was received by the king with manifest marks of honour and esteem, who freely owned himself convinced that the Thebans were the people on whom he could most safely depend ; and after having greatly applauded the equity of his demands, he ratified and confirmed them with great readiness, to the no small mortification of the other states. The substance of them was, that the liberties formerly granted to the other towns of Greece should be confirmed, that Messenia in particular should continue free and inde­pendent on the jurisdiction of Sparta ; that the Athenians should lay up their fleet ; and that the Thebans should be looked upon as the ancient and hereditary friends of Persia.

The Thebans took advantage of the dissensions which prevailed among the Greeks as a pretence for increasing their forces ; and Epaminondas thought it a proper oppor­tunity for his countrymen to make a bold effort to obtain the dominion at sea, as they had in a great measure obtain­ed it at land. He proposed it to them in a public assem­bly, and encouraged their hopes from the experience of the Lacedaemonians, who in Xerxes’s time had, with ten ships only at sea, gained the superiority over the Athenians, who had no fewer than 200 ; and added, that it would now be a disgrace to Thebes to suffer two such republics to engross the command of so extensive an element. The people readily adopted his proposal, not without extraordinary ap­plause, and immediately ordered 100 galleys to be equipped ; and in the mean while sent him to Rhodes, Chios, and By­zantium, to secure those states in their interest, and procure what assistance he could from them. His negociations had all the success that could be wished for, notwithstanding the strenuous opposition of the Athenians, and of their admiral Laches, who was sent with a powerful squadron against him. But what more effectually thwarted all his measures, was the work which they found for him by land, and the oblig­ing the Thebans to take part in the quarrels which then reigned among their neighbours ; so that whatever projects they had concerted proved abortive for the present ; and the death of Epaminondas, which happened not long after, put an effectual stop to them.

During the absence of that general, and of his colleague Pelopidas, the Orchomenians, being incited by some The­ban fugitives, had formed a design to change the Theban government into an aristocracy ; and 300 horsemen of the former had been actually despatched to carry it into execu­tion. Their project, however, was seasonably discovered by the vigilance of the magistrates, who caused them to be seized and immediately put to death. They next sent a sufficient force against the city of Orchomenos, with orders to slay all the men, and to sell all the women and children for slaves, which was punctually done ; after which they razed that noble city to the ground. Pelopidas was then on his way to Thessaly at the head of a powerful army, whi­ther he had been sent to assist the Thessalians, who still· groaned under the tyranny of Alexander the Pheræan, and had made several brave efforts to recover their liberty, but had been still overpowered by that usurper. Being joined by the Thessalians, he encamped in the face of the enemy, though far superior in number, and consisting of above 20,000 men. A fierce engagement soon ensued, in which both sides fought with uncommon bravery. The place where the battle was fought was called Cynocephala, from several little hills on it, between which there ran a large plain. Both armies endeavoured at first to post themselves on these eminences with their foot, while Pelopidas ordered his cavalry to charge that of the enemy below ; which they did with such success that they soon put them to the rout, and pursued them over the plain. This obliged the tyrant to gain the tops of the hills, where he greatly annoyed the Thessalians that endeavoured to force those ascents ; so