of partiality for the Spartans, in not purſuing his advantage over them, and making a greater slaughter of them when he had it in his power ; whilſt his enemies made it amount to no less than treachery to his country : ſo that their brave general was once more deprived of the government of Bœotia, and reduced to the condition of a private man. He did not continue long under this disgrace, before an occaſion offered to make his ſervices again of ſuch neceſſity to the ſtate, as to give him an opportunity to retrieve his fame, and wipe off the ſtain which his enemies had thrown upon him.

The Theſſalians, who had groaned ſome time under the tyranny of the uſurper Alexander, ſurnamed the *Pheraean,* lent an embaſſy to Thebes to implore their aid and protec­tion ; upon which Pelopidas was immediately ſent as ambaſſador to expoſtulate with him on their behalf. He was then in Macedon, from whence he took the young prince Philip, afterwards the celebrated monarch, in order to protect and educate him ; and, upon his return, marched di­rectly to Pharsalus in Thessaly, in order to puniſh the trea­chery of ſome mercenaries, who had deſerted the Thebans in that expedition ; but when he came thither, he was ſurpriſed to be met by the tyrant at the head of a numerous army before that city, whilſt his own was but as an hand­ful of men in compariſon of it. However, whether he ſuppoſed, or would be thought to do ſo, that Alexander came thither to juſtify himſelf, and anſwer to the complaints al­leged againſt him, he went, with Iſmenias his colleague, to him 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 in his hands, than he cauſed them to be ſeized, and ſent priſoners to Pheræ.

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 Pheræan 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 intreaties, 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 loot, 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.

However, as the army had suffered ſuch loſs before as not to be able to purſue them in their turn, he was obliged to return with them to Thebes, with their puſillanimous generals ; where the latter were fined 12,000 drachms each, and the former was reinſtated in the command, and ſent with a new reinforcement to repair the late diſhonour, and proſecute their revenge. The news of his being in full march on this errand greatly alarmed the tyrant ; but Epa­minondas, preferring the ſafety of his impriſoned colleague to all other conſiderations, forbore puſhing hoſtilities to ex­tremes, ſor fear of provoking the enemy to wreak all his fu­ry on him : to prevent which, 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 30 days, and to reſtore Pelopidas and Ismenias to him : upon which he 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 farther growth ; ſo that not being able now to procure many allies at home, they made no difficul­ty to seek for them abroad ; and the Lacedæmonians, by leading the van, gave them a plauſible pretence to follow their ſteps, and to 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 preſerred, Sparta, Athens, or Thebes. At the same time, the Thebans propoſed to their new confederates to ſend likewiſe proper deputies to the Persian court, in or­der to ſupport their reſpective intereſts ; which they readily agreed to. Theſe were the Arcadians, Eleans, and Argives ; at the head or whoſe deputation Pelopidas was ſent on the behalf of the Thebans ; which the Athenians being appriſed of, appointed two on their part. Theſe being all arrived at the Perſian court, began to purſue each their reſpective intereſts; but Pelopidas had by that time gained ſuch credit there, 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 the moſt 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, 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 Perfia.

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 obtained it in a great meaſure 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 be a diſgrace now to Thebes to ſuffer two ſuch republics to engroſs the empire of ſo extensive an element, without putting in at leaſt for their ſhare of it. The people readily came into his proposal, not without extraordinary applauſe, and immedi­ately ordered 100 galleys to be equipped ; and in the mean­while ſent him to Rhodes, Chios, and Byzantium, to ſecure thoſe ſtates in their intereſt, and get what aſſiſtance he could from them. His negotiations 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 that they found for him at land, and the obliging the Thebans to take part in the quarrels that then reigned among their neighbours : ſo that whatever projects they had concerted, proved abortive ſor 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