power collapsed before the united action of Athens and Persia. In the Peloponnesus Sparta was still supreme, but Thebes, she felt, might become a dangerous rival and must be humbled. She insisted that the townships of Bœotia must be “ autonomous ” and independent of Thebes, and so contrived to pick a quarrel with that state, which to Sparta’s cost had at that time the famous Epaminondas, the greatest, perhaps, of Greek generals, among her lead­ing citizens. In 371 came Sparta’s crushing defeat at Leuctra, a blow from which she never really recovered, though her courage and military discipline long survived it. But her prestige was gone. Epaminondas carried the war into the heart of Laconia and penetrated to Sparta itself. His victory at Mantinea in 362 gave independence to Mes­sene, and Sparta was now politically ignored by her old allies.

From this time Sparta almost drops out of Greek his­tory. She took no part in the struggle against Macedon ; no Spartan soldier stood by the side of the Athenians and Thebans at Chæronea. She seems to have sunk into polit­ical apathy; very possibly she may have had to concentrate all her remaining strength and energy in keeping down her Helots and the native population of Laconia. When Alexander was winning his victories in Asia, she intrigued feebly against Macedon, and she would take no part in the congress of the Greek states at Corinth which declared Alexander “ Leader of the Greeks.”

She appears once again, but as not much more than the ghost of her former self, in the 3d century b.c., attempting vainly in 281 to unite Greece against the Macedonian Antigonus, and repulsing Pyrrhus from her walls in 272, Spartan women working at the city’s defence, and a few Spartan warriors driving back the formidable soldier- king. There was still the old spirit about her, but the number of her citizens is said to have dwindled down to 700, and in her last days, with a wealthy few in the midst of a poor and needy people, Sparta had shrunk into the narrowest and feeblest of oligarchies. In the latter half of the 3d century B.c., in the days of the Achæan league, a vigorous but unsuccessful attempt at internal reforms and a restoration of the old discipline of Lycurgus was made by two of her kings, Cleomenes and Agis. She sank finally, we know not how, under the degrading dominion of a sort of robber chief, Nabis, who fastened his tyranny upon her by the support of emancipated slaves and mercenaries of the lowest class. Her best citizens were put to death or banished, and she was debased into a refuge of pirates and robbers. Nabis and his vile gang were put down by Philopœmen in the name of the Achæan league, and Philopœmen completed his work by razing the walls of Sparta and abolishing her old institutions. Rome simply looked on, knowing well that she was mistress of the situation, and let matters drag on till 146, when she captured Corinth, and closed the page of Greek history. (w. j. b.)

SPARTACUS, the leader of a formidable insurrection of slaves against Rome in the 1st century b.c., was a Thracian by birth, and perhaps a descendant of the kings of Panticapæum whose name he bore. He served in the Roman army, but seems to have deserted, for we are told that he was taken prisoner and sold as a slave. Destined for the arena, he, with a band of his fellow-gladiators, broke out of a training-school at Capua and took refuge on Mount Vesuvius (73 b.c.). Here he maintained himself as a captain of brigands, his lieutenants being Crixus and Œnomaus, who like himself had been gladiators. Their numbers soon swelled through the accession of runaway slaves and desperados from the neighbourhood. A hastily- collected force of 3000 men under Claudius endeavoured to besiege and starve out the rebels, but the latter clambered down the precipices and put the Romans to

flight. Swarms of hardy and desperate men now joined the rebels, and when the prætor Publius Varinius took the field against them he found them entrenched like a regular army on the plain. But they gave him the slip, and when he advanced to storm their lines he found them deserted. From Campania the rebels marched into Lucania, a country better suited for guerilla warfare. Here, in spite of the commands and entreaties of Spartacus, the slaves committed excesses of lust and cruelty. Varinius followed him, but was defeated in several engagements and narrowly escaped being taken prisoner. Spartacus, whose heart was “ where his rude cottage by the Danube lay,” now endeavoured to push northward. His object was to cross the Alps and allow the slaves, who were mostly Thracians, Germans, and Gauls, to disperse to their homes. But intoxicated by success his wild followers refused to listen to him ; their thoughts were all of plunder, and their track was marked by the devastation of Italy. Vola, Nuceria, Thurii, Metapontum, were sacked with every circumstance of savage cruelty. In this serious position of affairs the senate despatched both consuls against the rebels (72 b.c.). The German slaves under Crixus, who had separated from the rest, were defeated and cut in pieces at Mount Gargarus in Apulia by the prætor Arrius. But Spartacus overthrew both consuls, one after the other, and then pressed towards the Alps. Cassius, governor of Cisalpine Gaul, and the prætor Manlius flung themselves in his way at the head of 20,000 men, but were trampled under foot. Freedom was within sight, but with fatal infatuation the slaves declined to abandon Italy. Spartacus led them against Rome, but their hearts seem to have failed them, for the capital was not attacked. Spartacus then occu­pied the port of Thurii and tried to procure supplies of iron and bronze, probably through the pirates. He also endeavoured by means of the herds of horses captured in southern Italy to form a body of cavalry. The conduct of the war against Spartacus, together with eight legions, was now committed to the prætor Marcus Crassus. He restored discipline by decimating the first troops that ran before the enemy. In the next battle Spartacus was worsted and retreated towards the straits of Messina, intending to cross into Sicily, where he would have been welcomed by fresh hordes of slaves ; but the pirates who had agreed to transport his army proved faithless. Crassus endeavoured to shut in the rebels by carrying a ditch and rampart right across the peninsula, a distance of 32 miles. But on a wintry night Spartacus forced the lines, and once more Italy lay at his feet. Disunion, however, was at work in the rebel camp. The Gauls and Germans had again drawn off from the main body. Crassus attacked and destroyed them. Spartacus was now fain to secure a retreat into the mountains of Petelia (near Strongoli∙ in Calabria), and succeeded in inflicting a reverse on the pursuing army. But his men refused to retreat farther, and in a pitched battle which followed soon afterwards the rebel army was annihilated. Spartacus, who had stabbed his horse before the battle began, fell sword in hand. A body of the rebels which had escaped from the field was met and cut in pieces by Pompey, who, with his usual knack of reaping where other men had sowed, claimed and received the credit of having put an end to the war (71 b.c.). Six thousand slaves, who had not found a soldier’s death, were crucified along the high road from Capua to Rome.

A history of the war against Spartacus has to he pieced together with much uncertainty from the vague, scrappy, and somewhat dis­crepant accounts of Plutarch *{Crassus,* 8-11), Appian (*Bell. Civ.,* i. 116-120), Florus (ii. 8 [iii. 20]), Livy (*Epit.*, xcv., xcvi., xcvii.), and Sallust (fragments of the *Histories).* Sallust’s description seems to have been full and graphic, but unfortunately only a few frag­ments of it remain.