complete, and the Athenian fleet had at the same time entered the Great Harbour. The citizens began to think of surrender, and Nicias was so confident that he neglected to push his advan­tages. He left a gap to the north of the circular fort which formed the centre of the Athenian lines, the point where Epipolae slopes down to the sea, and he omitted to occupy Euryelus.

The second act of the drama may be said to open with the irretrievable blunder of Nicias in letting the Spartan Gylippus first land in Sicily, and then march at the head of a small army, partly levied on the spot, across the island, and enter Syracuse by way of Epipolae, past Euryelus. Gylippus was felt to be the representative of Sparta, and of the Peloponnesian Greeks generally, and his arrival inspired the Syracusans with the fullest confidence. Just before his arrival a few ships from Corinth had made their way into the harbour with the news that a great fleet was already on its way to the relief of the city. The tables were now completely turned, and we hear of nothing but defeat and disaster for the besiegers till their final overthrow. The military skill of Gylippus enabled the Syracusan militia to meet the Athenian troops on equal terms, to wrest from them their fortified position on Plemmyrium, which Nicias had occupied as a naval station shortly after Gylippus’s arrival, and thus to drive them to keep their ships on the low beach between their double walls, to take Labdalum, an Athenian fort on the northern edge of Epipolae, and make a third counter-work right along Epipolae in a westerly direction, to the north of the circular fort. The Athenians were thus reduced to such a plight that, as Nicias said in his despatch towards the close of 414, they were themselves besieged rather than besieging. The naval prepara­tions of the Syracusans, under the advice of Hermocrates, had led them, too, to confidence in their powers of giving battle to the Athenian fleet. In the first sea-fight, which took place simultaneously with the capture of Plemmyrium, they ha<tbeen unsuccessful; but in the spring of 413 they actually won a victory over the Athenians in their own element.

On the very next day, however, a second Athenian fleet arrived under Demosthenes and Eurymedon, with seventy-three ships of war and a large force of heavy infantry and light troops. The despatch of this expedition seems to prove an almost blind confidence in Nicias, whose request to be superseded the Athenian people refused to grant. Demosthenes decidcd at once to make a grand attack on Epipolae, with a view to recovering the Athenian blockading lines and driving the Syracusans back within the city walls. The assault was made by night by way of Euryelus under the uncertain light of the moon, and this circumstance turned what was very nearly a successful surprise into a ruinous defeat. The affair seems to have been well planned up to a certain point, and well executed; but the Athenian van, flushed with a first success, their ranks broken and dis­ordered by a pursuit of the enemy over rough ground, were repulsed with great loss by a body of heavy-armed Boeotians, and driven back in disorder. The confusion spread to the troops behind them, and the action ended in wild flight and slaughter. The army was now thoroughly out of heart, and Demosthenes was for at once breaking up the camp, embarking the troops, and sailing back to Athens. (It must be remembered that the Spartans were all this time in occupation of Deceleia; see Pelo­ponnesian War.) But Nicias could not bring himself to face the Athenian people at home, nor could he be prevailed on to retire promptly to some position on the coast, such as Catania or Thapsus. He dallied till the end of August, many weeks after the defeat, when the coining of Syracusan reinforcements decided him to depart ; but on the 27th of that month was an eclipse of the moon, on the strength of which he insisted on a delay of almost another month. His fleet, too, lingered uselessly in the harbour, till after a defeat in which Eurymedon perished, though the simultaneous land attack was unsuccessful. The Syracusans now blocked the mouth of the Great Harbour, and the Athenian fleet, after a frantic effort to break out and a desperate conflict, was utterly defeated and half destroyed. The broken and demoralized army, its ranks thinned by fever and sickness, at last began its hopeless retreat, attempting to reach Catania by a circuitous route; but, harassed by the numer­ous Syracusan cavalry and darters, after a few days of dreadful suffering, it was-forced to lay down its arms. The Syracusans sullied the glory of their triumph by putting Nicias and Demos­thenes to death, and huddling their prisoners into their stone­quarries—a living death, dragged out, for the allies from Greece proper to the space of seventy days, for the Athenians themselves and the Greeks of Sicily and Italy for six months longer. Games called Assinarían, from the name of the river at which the final surrender occurred, were instituted to commemorate it.

Iler great deliverance and victory naturally stirred up the energies of Syracuse at home and abroad. Syracusan and Selinuntine ships under Hermocrates now play a distinguished part in the warfare between Sparta and Athens on the coast of Asia. Under the influence of Diodes the constitution became a still more confirmed democracy, some at least of the magistracies being filled by lot, as at Athens (Diod. xiii. 31, 35; Λrist. *Pol.* v. 3-6). Diodes appears also as the author of a code of laws of great strictness, which was held in such esteem that later lawgivers were deemed only its expounders. Under these influences Hermocrates was banished in 409; he submitted to the sentence, notwithstanding the wishes of his army. He went back to Sicily, warred with Carthage on his own account, and brought back the bones of the unburied Syracusans from ITimera, but was still so dreaded that the people banished Diodes without restoring him. In 407 he was slain in an attempt to enter the city, and with him was wounded one who was presently to outstrip both rivals.

This was Dionysius (the “ Elder ”), son of another Hermocrates and an adherent of the aristocratic party, but soon afterwards a demagogue, though supported by some men of rank, among them the historian Philistus (Diod. xiii. 91, 92). By accusing the generals engaged at Acragas in the war against Carthage, by obtaining the restoration of exiles (no doubt others of the partisans of Hermocrates), by high-handed proceedings at Gela, he secured his own election first as one of the generals, then as sole general (or with a nominal colleague), with special powers. He next, by another trick, procured from a military assembly at Leontini a vote of a bodyguard; he hired mercenaries and in 406-405 came back to Syracuse as tyrant of the city (Diod. xiii. 91-96). Dionysius kept his power till his death thirty- eight years later (367). But it was well-nigh overthrown before he had fully grasped it. His defeat before Gela and his conse­quent decision that both Gela and Camarina should be evacuated, and left for the Carthaginians to plunder, were no doubt due to previous arrangement with the latter. His enemies in the army, chiefly the horsemen, reached Syracuse before him, plundered his house, and horribly maltreated his wife. He came and took his vengeance, slaying and driving out his enemies, who established themselves at Aetna (Diod. xiíi. 113). In 397 Syracuse had to stand a siege from the Carthaginians under Himilco, who took up his quarters at the 01ympieum, but his troops in the marshes below suffered from pestilence, and a masterly combined attack by land and sea by Dionysius ended in his utter defeat. Dionysius, however, allowed him to depart without further pressing his advantage. This revolution and the peace with the Carthaginians confirmed Dionysius in the possession of Syracuse, but of no great territory beyond, as Leontini was again a separate dty. It left Syracuse the one great Hellenic city of Sicily, which, however enslaved at home, was at least independent of the barbarian. Dionysius was able, like Gelo, though with less success and less honour, to take up the lôle of the champion of Hellas.

During the long tyranny of Dionysius the city grew greatly in size, population and grandeur. In fact the free Greek cities and communities, in both Sicily and southern Italy, were sacri­ficed to Syracuse; there the greatness and glory of the Greek world in the West were concentrated. The mass of the popula­tion of Gela and Camarina in the disastrous year 405 had, at the prompting of Dionysius, taken refuge at Syracuse. Gela had in the previous year received the fugitive inhabitants of Acragas (Agrigentum), which had been sacked by the