31 When this summer was turning to autumn the Athenians invaded the territory of Megara with their full force of citizens and metics, commanded by Pericles the son of Xanthippus. The hundred ships of the Peloponnesian expedition were now at Aegina on their voyage home, and when these Athenians heard that the entire army from Athens was in Megara they sailed there and joined them. This was the largest combined Athenian armament ever assembled (the city was still at its height, and the plague had not yet struck). The Athenians themselves numbered at least ten thousand hoplites (a further three thousand were in Potidaea): there were also at least three thousand metic hoplites in the invading force, and in addition a substantial body of light-armed troops. They laid waste most of the land and then returned. The Athenians made further invasions of the Megarid, either with cavalry or with their full force, every year throughout the war until their capture of Nisaea.

32 Also at the end of this summer the Athenians fortified Atalante, a previously uninhabited island off the coast of Opuntian Locris, as a garrison-post to prevent pirates sailing out from Opus and the rest of Locris to raid Euboea.

Such were the events of this summer after the Peloponnesians had withdrawn from Attica.

33 In the following winter Evarchus the Acarnanian, intent on his reinstatement to Astacus, persuaded the Corinthians to sail with forty ships and fifteen hundred hoplites to restore him, and he himself hired some mercenary help. The leaders of the Corinthian force were Euphamidas the son of Aristonymus, Timoxenus the son of Timocrates, and Eumachus the son of Chrysis. The result of this expedition was that they did reinstate Evarchus: there were other places along the coast of Acarnania which they wanted to win over, but when their attempts failed they sailed for home. On their return voyage round the coast they put in at Cephallenia, and their troops went ashore in the territory of Cranii. An apparent agreement was reached which the Cranians then broke with an unexpected attack. The Corinthians lost some of their men, and had to fight back to their ships before they could set sail again and return home.

34 In the same winter, following their traditional institution, the Athenians held a state funeral for those who had been the first to die in this war. The ceremony is as follows. They erect a tent in which, two days before the funeral, the bones of the departed are laid out, and people can bring offerings to their own dead. On the day of the

funeral procession coffins of cypress wood are carried out on wagons, one coffin for each tribe, with each man's bones in his own tribe's coffin. One dressed but empty bier is carried for the missing whose bodies could not be found and recovered. All who wish can join the procession, foreigners as well as citizens, and the women of the bereaved families come to keen at the grave. Their burial is in the public cemetery, situated in the most beautiful suburb of the city, where the war dead are always buried, except those who died at Marathon, whose exceptional valour was judged worthy of a tomb where they fell.

When the earth has covered them, an appropriate eulogy is spoken over them by a man of recognized intellectual ability and outstanding reputation, chosen by the city; after this the people depart. This is how they conduct the funeral: and they followed this custom throughout the war whenever there was occasion.

Over these first dead the man chosen to give the address was Pericles the son of Xanthippus. When the moment arrived he walked forward from the grave and mounted the high platform which had been constructed there so that he could be heard as far among the crowd as possible. He then spoke like this:

35 'Most of those who have spoken here on previous occasions have commended the man who added this oration to the ceremony: it is right and proper, they have said, that there should be this address at the burial of those who died in our wars. To me it would seem enough that men who showed their courage in actions should have their tribute too expressed in actions, as you can see we have done in the arrangements for this state funeral; but the valour of these many should not depend for credence on the chance of one man's speech, who may speak well or badly. It is not easy to find the right measure of words when one cannot quite rely on a common perception of the truth. Those in the audience who are aware of the facts and are friends of the dead may well think that the speaker's account falls short of what they know and wish to hear; and the inexperienced may be jealous, and think there must be exaggeration, if told of anything beyond their own capacity. Eulogies of others are tolerated up to the point where each man still thinks himself capable of doing something of what he has heard praised: beyond that lies jealousy and therefore disbelief. But since this institution was sanctioned and approved by our predecessors, I too must follow the custom and attempt as far as possible to satisfy the individual wishes and expectations of each of you.

'I shall begin with our ancestors first of all. It is right, and also appropriate on such an occasion, that this tribute should be paid to their memory. The same race has always occupied this land, passing it on from generation to generation until the present day, and it is to these brave men that we owe our inheritance of a land that is free. They deserve our praise. Yet more deserving are our own fathers, who added to what they themselves had received and by their pains left to us, the present generation, the further legacy of the great empire which we now possess. We ourselves, those of us still alive and now mainly in the settled age of life, have strengthened this empire yet further in most areas and furnished the city with every possible resource for self-sufficiency in war and peace. I shall not mention our achievements in war, the campaigns which won us each addition to the empire, our own or our fathers' spirited resistance to the attacks of Greek or barbarian enemies—I have no wish to delay you with a long story which you know already. But before I pass on to the praise of the dead, I shall describe first the principles of public life which set us on our way, and the political institutions and national character which took us on to greatness. I think this a suitable subject for the present occasion, and it could be of benefit for this whole gathering, foreigners as well as citizens, to hear this account. 36

'We have a form of government which does not emulate the practice of our neighbours: we are more an example to others than an imitation of them. Our constitution is called a democracy because we govern in the interests of the majority, not just the few. Our laws give equal rights to all in private disputes, but public preferment depends on individual distinction and is determined largely by merit rather than rotation: and poverty is no barrier to office, if a man despite his humble condition has the ability to do some good to the city. We are open and free in the conduct of our public affairs and in the uncensorious way we observe the habits of each other's daily lives: we are not angry with our neighbour if he indulges his own pleasure, nor do we put on the disapproving look which falls short of punishment but can still hurt. We are tolerant in our private dealings with one another, but in all public matters we abide by the law: it is fear above all which keeps us obedient to the authorities of the day and to the laws, especially those laws established for the protection of the injured and those unwritten laws whose contravention brings acknowledged disgrace. 37

'Furthermore, as rest from our labours we have provided ourselves with a wealth of recreations for the spirit—games and festivals held 38

throughout the year, and elegantly appointed private houses, giving us a pleasure which dispels the troubles of the day. The size of our city attracts every sort of import from all over the world, so our enjoyment of goods from abroad is as familiar as that of our own produce.

39 'We differ too from our enemies in our approach to military matters. The difference is this. We maintain an open city, and never expel foreigners or prevent anyone from finding out or observing what they will—we do not hide things when sight of them might benefit an enemy: our reliance is not so much on preparation and concealment as on our own innate spirit for courageous action. In education also they follow an arduous regime, training for manliness right from childhood, whereas we have a relaxed lifestyle but are still just as ready as they to go out and face our equivalent dangers. I give you an example. The Spartans do not invade our land on their own, but they have all their allies with them: when we attack others' territory we do it by ourselves, and for the most part have no difficulty in winning the fight in a foreign country against men defending their own property. No enemy has yet met our full force, because we have been simultaneously maintaining our navy and sending out our men on a number of campaigns by land. If they do engage some part of our forces somewhere, a victory over just a few of us has them claiming the defeat of us all, and if they are beaten they pretend that they lost to our full strength. If then we choose to approach dangers in an easy frame of mind, not with constant practice in hardship, and to meet them with the courage which is born of character rather than compulsion, the result is that we do not have to suffer in advance the pain which we shall face later, and when we do face it we show ourselves just as courageous as those who have spent a lifetime of labour. This is one reason for the admiration of our city: and there are others too.

40 'We cultivate beauty without extravagance, and intellect without loss of vigour; wealth is for us the gateway to action, not the subject of boastful talk, and while there is no disgrace in the admission of poverty, the real disgrace lies in the failure to take active measures to escape it; our politicians can combine management of their domestic affairs with state business, and others who have their own work to attend to can nevertheless acquire a good knowledge of politics. We are unique in the way we regard anyone who takes no part in public affairs: we do not call that a quiet life, we call it a useless life. We are all involved in either the proper formulation or at least the proper review of policy, thinking that what cripples action is not talk, but

rather the failure to talk through the policy before proceeding to the required action. This is another difference between us and others, which gives us our exceptional combination of daring and deliberation about the objective—whereas with others their courage relies on ignorance, and for them to deliberate is to hesitate. True strength of spirit would rightly be attributed to those who have the sharpest perception of both terrors and pleasures and through that knowledge do not shrink from danger.

'We are at variance with most others too in our concept of doing good: we make our friends by conferring benefit rather than receiving it. The benefactor is the firmer friend, in that by further kindness he will maintain gratitude in the recipient as a current debt: the debtor is less keen, as he knows that any return of generosity will be something owed, not appreciated as an independent favour. And we are unique in the way we help others—no calculation of self-interest, but an act of frank confidence in our freedom.

41 'In summary I declare that our city as a whole is an education to Greece; and in each individual among us I see combined the personal self-sufficiency to enjoy the widest range of experience and the ability to adapt with consummate grace and ease. That this is no passing puff but factual reality is proved by the very power of the city: this character of ours built that power. Athens alone among contemporary states surpasses her reputation when brought to the test: Athens alone gives the enemies who meet her no cause for chagrin at being worsted by such opponents, and the subjects of her empire no cause to complain of undeserving rulers. Our power most certainly does not lack for witness: the proof is far and wide, and will make us the wonder of present and future generations. We have no need of a Homer to sing our praises, or of any encomiast whose poetic version may have immediate appeal but then fall foul of the actual truth. The fact is that we have forced every sea and every land to be open to our enterprise, and everywhere we have established permanent memorials of both failure and success.

'This then is the city for which these men fought and died. They were nobly determined that she should not be lost: and all of us who survive should be willing to suffer for her.

42 'This is why I have dwelt at length on the nature of our city, to demonstrate that in this contest there is more at stake for us than for those who have no comparable enjoyment of such advantages, and also to set out a clear base of evidence to support the praise of the

men I am now commemorating. Their highest praise is already implicit: I have sung the glories of the city, but it was the qualities of these men and others like them which made her glorious, and there can be few other Greeks whose achievements, as theirs do, prove equal to their praises. I consider that the way these have now met their end is the index of a man's worth, whether that be first glimpse or final confirmation. Even if some had their faults, it is right that the courage to fight and die for their country should outweigh them: they have erased harm by good, and the collective benefit they have conferred is greater than any damage done as individuals. None of these men set higher value on the continued enjoyment of their wealth and let that turn them cowards; none let the poor man's hope, that some day he will escape poverty and grow rich, postpone that fearful moment. For them victory over the enemy was the greater desire: this they thought the noblest of all risks, and were prepared to take that risk in the pursuit of victory, forsaking all else. The uncertainties of success or failure they entrusted to hope, but in the plain and present sight of what confronted them they determined to rely on themselves, and in the very act of resistance they preferred even death to survival at the cost of surrender. They fled from an ignominious reputation by withstanding the action with their lives. In the briefest moment, at the turning point of their fortune, they took their leave not of fear but of glory.

43 'Such were these men, and they proved worthy of their city. The rest of us may pray for a safer outcome, but should demand of ourselves a determination against the enemy no less courageous than theirs. The benefit of this is not simply an intellectual question. Do not simply listen to people telling you at length of all the virtues inherent in resisting the enemy, when you know them just as well yourselves: but rather look day after day on the manifest power of our city, and become her lovers. And when you realize her greatness, reflect that it was men who made her great, by their daring, by their recognition of what they had to do, and by their pride in doing it. If ever they failed in some attempt, they would not have the city share their loss, but offered her their courage as the finest contribution they could make. Together they gave their lives, and individually they took as their reward the praise which does not grow old and the most glorious of tombs—not where their bodies lie, but where their fame lives on in every occasion for speech and ceremony, an everlasting memory. Famous men have the whole earth as their tomb.

Their record is not only the inscription on gravestones in their own land, but in foreign countries too the unwritten memorial which lives in individual hearts, the remembrance of their spirit rather than their achievement.

'You should now seek to emulate these men. Realize that happiness is freedom, and freedom is courage, and do not be nervous of the dangers of war. The unfortunate, with no hope of improvement, have better reason to husband their lives than those who risk reversal of fortune if they live on and have the most to lose should they fail. To a man with any pride cowardice followed by disaster is more painful than a death which comes in the vigour of courage and the fellowship of hope, and is hardly felt.

44 'For that reason, to the parents of the dead here present I offer not sympathy so much as consolation. You know that you were born into a world of change and chance, where the true fortune is to meet with honour—the most honourable death for these we commemorate, the most honourable grief for you—and to enjoy a life whose measure of happiness fills both the living and the leaving of it. It is hard, I know, to convince you of this, since you will often have reminders of your sons when you see others blessed with the good fortune which was once your source of pride too: and grief is felt not for the deprivation of joys never experienced, but for the loss of a once familiar joy. Those of you who are still of an age to bear children should hold firm to the hope of further sons. In their own lives some will find that new children help them forget those they have lost, and for the city there will be double benefit—both maintenance of the population and also a safeguard, since those without children at stake do not face the same risks as the others and cannot make a balanced or judicious contribution to debate. Those of you who are past that age should consider it a gain that you have lived the greater part of your life in happiness and that what remains will be short: and you should take comfort in the glory of the dead. Love of honour alone does not age, and in the unproductive time of life the greater pleasure is not the accumulation of gain, as some say, but the enjoyment of honour.

45 'For those of you here who are sons or brothers of the dead I can see a formidable task. It is common experience that all speak highly of those who are gone, and however you excel in your own qualities you will struggle to be judged even a close second to them, let alone their equals. The living are exposed to the denigration of rivalry, but anything no longer present meets with warm and uncompetitive recognition.

'If I may speak also of the duty of those wives who will now be widows, a brief exhortation will say it all. Your great virtue is to show no more weakness than is inherent in your nature, and to cause least talk among males for either praise or blame.

46 'I have made this speech as custom demands, finding the most suitable words I could. The honour expressed in ceremony has now been paid to those we came to bury: and in further tribute to them the city will maintain their children at public expense from now until they come of age. This is the valuable crown which in contests such as these the city confers on the dead and those they leave behind. The state which offers the greatest prizes for valour also has the bravest men for citizens.

'And now it is time to leave, when each of you has made due lament for your own.'

47 Such was the funeral held in this winter: and with the passing of winter there ended the first year of this war.

At the very beginning of the next summer the Peloponnesians and their allies invaded Attica, with two-thirds of their forces as on the first occasion, under the command of Archidamus the son of Zeuxidamus, king of Sparta. They settled in and began to ravage the land.

They had not been in Attica for more than a few days when the plague first broke out in Athens. It is said that the plague had already struck widely elsewhere, especially in Lemnos and other places, but nowhere else was there recorded such virulence or so great a loss of life. The doctors could offer little help at first: they were attempting to treat the disease without knowing what it was, and in fact there was particularly high mortality among doctors because of their particular exposure. No other human skill could help either, and all supplications at temples and consultations of oracles and the like were of no avail. In the end the people were overcome by the disaster and abandoned all efforts to escape it.

48 The original outbreak, it is said, was in Ethiopia, the far side of Egypt: the plague then spread to Egypt and Libya, and over much of the King's territory. It fell on the city of Athens suddenly. The first affected were the inhabitants of the Peiraeus, who went so far as to allege that the Peloponnesians had poisoned the wells (at that time there were no fountains in the Peiraeus). Afterwards the plague reached the upper city too, and now the number of deaths greatly increased. Others, doctors or laymen, can give their individual opinions of the

likely origin of the plague, and of the factors which they think significant enough to have had the capacity to cause such a profound change. But I shall simply tell it as it happened, and describe the features of the disease which will give anyone who studies them some prior knowledge to enable recognition should it ever strike again. I myself caught the plague, and witnessed others suffering from it.

49 It so happened that this year was commonly agreed to have been particularly free from other forms of illness, though anyone with a previous condition invariably developed the plague. The other victims were in good health until, for no apparent cause, they were suddenly afflicted. The first symptoms were a high fever in the head and reddening and inflammation of the eyes; then internally the throat and tongue began to bleed and the breath had an unnaturally foul smell. There followed sneezing and hoarseness of voice, and shortly the affliction moved down to the chest accompanied by a violent cough. When it settled in the stomach the turmoil caused there led to the voiding of bile in every form for which the doctors have a name, all this with great pain. Most then suffered from an empty retching which brought violent spasms: in some this followed as soon as the vomiting had abated, in others much later.

The surface of the body was not particularly hot to the touch or pallid, but reddish and livid, breaking out in small pustules and ulcers. But the sensation of burning heat inside the body was so strong that sufferers could not bear the pressure of even the lightest clothing or sheets, or anything other than going naked, and their greatest wish was to plunge into cold water. Many who had no one to look after them did in fact throw themselves into cisterns, overcome by an insatiable thirst: but as a rule the quantity of water drunk made no difference. A constant infliction was desperate restlessness and the inability to sleep. Throughout the height of the disease there was no wasting of the body, but a surprising physical resilience to all the suffering, so that there was still some strength in them when the majority died from the internal fever after six to eight days. If they survived this period most others died from the consequent weakness when the disease spread down to the bowels causing heavy ulceration and the onset of completely liquid diarrhoea.

The disease first settled in the head then progressed throughout the whole body from the top downwards. If any survived the worst effects, symptoms appeared when the disease took hold in their extremities. It attacked genitals, fingers, and toes, and many lived on

with these parts lost: some too lost their sight. There were those who on recovery suffered immediate and total loss of memory, not knowing who they were and unable to recognize their friends.

50 Indeed the pathology of the disease defied explanation. Not only did it visit individuals with a violence beyond human endurance, but there was also this particular feature which put it in a different category from all other diseases with which we are familiar: although many bodies lay unburied, the birds and animals which prey on human flesh kept away from them, or, if they did eat, died of it. Evidence of this was the notable disappearance of carrion birds, nowhere to be seen in their usual or any other activity: the dogs, being domestic animals, allowed more immediate observation of this consequence.

51 This then, leaving aside the many variants in the way different individuals were affected, was the general character of the disease. Throughout this time there were no attacks of the usual illnesses: any that did occur ended in the plague.

Some died in neglect and others died despite constant care. Virtually no remedy was established as a single specific relief applicable in all cases: what was good for one was harmful to another. No particular constitution, strong or weak, proved sufficient in itself to resist, but the plague carried off all indiscriminately, and whatever their regime of care. The most dreadful aspects of the whole affliction were the despair into which people fell when they realized they had contracted the disease (they were immediately convinced that they had no hope, and so were much more inclined to surrender themselves without a fight), and the cross-infection of those who cared for others: they died like sheep, and this was the greatest cause of mortality. When people were afraid to visit one another, the victims died in isolation, and many households were wiped out through the lack of anyone to care for them. If they did visit the sick, they died, especially those who could claim some courage: these were people who out of a sense of duty disregarded their own safety and kept visiting their friends, even when ultimately the family members themselves were overwhelmed by the scale of the disaster and abandoned the succession of dirges for the dead. But the greatest pity for the dying and the distressed was shown by those who had had the disease and recovered. They had experience of what it was like and were now confident for themselves, as the plague did not attack the same person twice, or at least not fatally. These survivors were

congratulated by all, and in the immediate elation of recovery they entertained the fond hope that from now on they would not die of any other disease.

52 The suffering was made yet more acute by the influx from the country into the city, and the incomers suffered most of all. With no houses of their own, and forced to live in huts which at that time of year were stifling, they perished in chaotic conditions: the dead and the dying were piled on top of each other, and half-dead creatures staggered about the streets and round every fountain, craving for water. The sanctuaries in which they had encamped were full of corpses—people dying there were not moved: all sacred and secular constraints came to be ignored under the overwhelming impact of the disaster, which left men no recourse. All previously observed funeral customs were confounded, and burial was haphazard, any way that people could manage. Many were driven to shameful means of disposal for lack of friends to help them, so many of their friends already dead: they made use of other people's funeral pyres, either putting their own dead on a pyre constructed by others and quickly setting light to it, or bringing a corpse to a pyre already lit, throwing it on top of the other body in the flames, and then running away.

53 In other respects too the plague was the beginning of increased lawlessness in the city. People were less inhibited in the indulgence of pleasures previously concealed when they saw the rapid changes of fortune—the prosperous suddenly dead, and the once indigent now possessing their fortune. As a result they decided to look for satisfactions that were quick and pleasurable, reckoning that neither life nor wealth would last long. No one was prepared to persevere in what had once been thought the path of honour, as they could well be dead before that destination was reached. Immediate pleasure, and any means profitable to that end, became the new honour and the new value. No fear of god or human law was any constraint. Pious or impious made no difference in their view, when they could see all dying without distinction. As for offences against the law, no one expected to live long enough to be brought to justice and pay the penalty: they thought that a much heavier sentence had already been passed and was hanging over them, so they might as well have some enjoyment of life before it fell.

54 Such was the affliction which had come on the Athenians and was pressing them hard—people dying inside the city, and the devastation of their land outside. In this time of trouble, as tends to happen,

they recalled a verse which the old men said was being chanted long ago: 'A Dorian war will come, and bring a pestilence with it.' People had disputed whether the original word in the verse was *limos* ('famine') rather than *loimos* ('pestilence'): but not surprisingly in the present situation the prevailing view was that 'pestilence' was the word used. Men accommodate their memories to their current experience. I imagine that if at some time another 'Dorian war' comes after this one, with famine coinciding, the verse will in all likelihood be recited with that meaning.

Those who knew of it also remembered the oracle given to the Spartans, when they enquired whether they should go to war and the god answered that they would win if they fought in earnest, and said that he himself would take their side. The general surmise was that the facts fitted the oracle. The plague had indeed begun immediately after the Peloponnesians had invaded, and it never reached the Peloponnese to any significant extent, but spread particularly in Athens and later in other densely populated areas. So much for the facts of the plague.

55 Meanwhile the Peloponnesians, after ravaging the plain, moved on to the territory called the Coastal Region, penetrating as far as Laureium, the site of the Athenians' silver mines. They laid waste first the part of the territory facing the Peloponnese, then the area lying in the direction of Euboea and Andros.

Pericles was still general, and held to the same view he had taken in the previous invasion, that the Athenians should not go out to 56 offer battle. But while the Peloponnesians were still in the plain and before they had moved on to the coast, he was preparing an expedition of a hundred ships against the Peloponnese, and when all was ready he took them out to sea. He had with him four thousand Athenian hoplites on board the ships, and three hundred cavalry in horse-transports, constructed then for the first time out of old ships: and Chios and Lesbos contributed to the expedition with fifty ships. When this Athenian force set sail, they had left the Peloponnesians in the coastal region of Attica. Arriving at Epidaurus in the Peloponnese they ravaged most of the area, and in an attack on the city they came within hope of capturing it, but did not succeed. They then put out from Epidaurus and devastated the territory of Troezen, Halieis, and Hermione (all these are areas on the coast of the Peloponnese). Moving on from there they came to Prasiae, a coastal town in Laconia: they ravaged some of the land and also took and

sacked the town itself. After this they returned home, to find the Peloponnesians by now withdrawn and no longer in Attica.

57 For all the time that the Peloponnesians were in Athenian territory, and the Athenians were on their naval expedition, the plague continued to take lives both among the expeditionary force and in the city of Athens—so much so that it was even said that the Peloponnesians cut short their presence in the country for fear of the disease, when they heard from the deserters that there was plague in the city and could see for themselves evidence of the cremations. In fact on this invasion they spent their longest time in the country and ravaged the whole of it: they were in Attica for about forty days.

58 In the same summer two fellow generals of Pericles, Hagnon the son of Nicias and Cleopompus the son of Cleinias, took over the force which he had just commanded and set off immediately on an expedition against the Thraceward Chalcidians and also Potidaea, which was still under siege. On arrival they brought up siege-engines against Potidaea and tried every possible means of taking the place. But they did not achieve either the capture of the city or any other success consistent with the deployment of such a force, since the plague now broke out there too and took a punishing toll of the Athenian troops, with the original contingent of soldiers, in good health up till then, catching the disease from Hagnon's army. (Phormio and his sixteen hundred escaped, as they were no longer in the Chalcidice area.) So Hagnon returned with his fleet to Athens, having lost to the plague in about forty days one thousand and fifty from his four thousand hoplites: and the original contingent stayed where they were, maintaining the siege of Potidaea.

59 After the second Peloponnesian invasion, with their land devastated for the second time, and under the double burden of plague and war, the Athenians suffered a change of mind. They now began to blame Pericles for persuading them to war and held him responsible for the disasters that had befallen them: and they were ready to make terms with the Spartans—they did in fact send embassies to Sparta, without effect. Reduced to complete desperation, they turned on Pericles. He could see that they were resentful at the present situation and were reacting in all the ways which he had privately predicted: so he called a meeting (he was still general) with the intention of stiffening their resolve and drawing them away from anger to a more benign and confident frame of mind. He came forward and spoke like this:

60 'I was expecting this anger of yours against me (I can understand its causes), and I have called this assembly in order to refresh your memory and to suggest that you are wrong to criticize me or to give in to your present troubles.

'I take the view that the interest of private citizens is better served when the city as a whole is successful than if there is individual prosperity but collective failure. A man may be personally well off, but if his country is destroyed he shares in the general ruin: whereas private misfortune is much more easily survived in a country which itself enjoys good fortune. Since then the state can bear all individual troubles, but each individual cannot singly bear the troubles of the state, it follows—does it not?—that all should rally to the defence of the state, and not react as you are now: in the shock of the misfortunes in your own homes you are losing sight of our communal security, and blaming me as the advocate of war—and yourselves for consenting to it.

'Yet your anger with me is directed at a man who—though I say it myself—is the equal of any in the intelligence to see what is needed and the skill to expound it, a man who loves his country and is above corruption. Intelligence without clear communication is no better than an empty mind; a man with both these abilities but no loyalty to his country is less likely to speak for the interests of the community; let him have loyalty also, but if the man is venal this one fault puts all his other qualities up for sale. So if you accepted the case for war in the belief that in these respects I was at least to some extent better equipped than others, it is not reasonable that I should now bear the charge of doing wrong.

61 'Certainly if all else is well and people have the choice of war or peace, it is great folly to go to war. But if, as was the case, the stark choice is either to submit and endure instant subjection to others or to face the risks and win through, the greater blame lies in shirking the danger rather than standing up to it. For my own part, I remain the same and my position does not shift. It is you who are changing. What has happened is that your conviction when you were unharmed has turned to regret now that trouble is on you, and in your weakened state of morale that argument of mine now seems to you mistaken: the pain has already made itself felt by every individual, but the benefit for all of us is not yet clearly seen. And this major reversal of fortune, coming out of nowhere, has enfeebled your will to persevere in the policy you approved. Events which happen suddenly,

unforeseen, and quite beyond any reasonable prediction can enslave the spirit: and this is what the plague, coming on top of all else, has done to you. But you are the inhabitants of a great city, you were brought up to a way of life worthy of that city, and you should be prepared to stand firm even in the worst of misfortune and not let your reputation be obliterated. In men's eyes there is as much reason to blame those who lose their established prestige through feebleness as to resent those who brashly aspire to a prestige which they do not deserve. So you must put aside your private sorrows and concentrate on the effort for our communal security.

62 'As for the likely burden of the war, your suspicion that it will be heavy, and even so no guarantee of our survival, should be sufficiently disproved by the arguments I have already put forward on many other occasions. But I shall make this further point—an inherent advantage in the pure extent of our empire which I think has never yet been fully realized by you nor stressed in my previous speeches. It may seem quite an extravagant claim, and I would not mention it now if I did not see you discouraged without reason. You think of empire solely in terms of rule over our allies, but I can tell you that of the two elements open to man's exploitation, the land and the sea, you are the absolute masters of the whole of one of them, both in the present extent of your control and as far further as you wish to take it: with the naval resources you have at your disposal, no one, neither the King of Persia nor any other nation now on earth, can prevent you from sailing where you will. So this power is clearly of a different order from the utility of houses and land, the loss of which you consider a great deprivation. You should not take this loss so hard. Weigh these things against our naval power and you should come to think of them as no more than a back-garden, a mere accessory of wealth. You should recognize that they will easily be recovered if we keep hold of our freedom and preserve it, whereas submission to others usually brings the permanent loss of all that people had before, however long in their possession.

'You must not let yourselves be seen as doubly inferior to your fathers. They acquired these possessions not by inheritance from others, but through their own exertions, and furthermore kept them safe to hand on to you: and it is a greater disgrace to be robbed of what you possess than to fail in its acquisition. You must tackle the enemy, then, not only with conviction, but with the conviction of superiority. This is not the same as arrogance—even the coward can

be arrogant if his stupidity is combined with good luck: but the conviction I speak of derives from a reasoned confidence in superiority over the enemy, and that is what we have. Intelligent use of this confidence makes bold initiatives more secure, given equality of fortune: it does not rely on hope, which is a resort only when there is no other, but on a rational conclusion from the facts, which affords a firmer base for planning strategy.

63 'You all take pride in the prestige the city enjoys from empire, and you should be prepared to fight in defence of it. You cannot shirk the burden without abandoning also your pursuit of the glory. Do not think that the only issue at stake is slavery or freedom: there is also loss of empire, and the danger from the hatred incurred under your rule. You no longer have the option to abdicate from your empire, should anyone out of present fear affect this idea as a noble-sounding means of disengagement. The empire you possess is by now like a tyranny—perhaps wrong to acquire it, but certainly dangerous to let it go. If people of that sort managed to persuade the others they would quickly ruin a city, and even if they set up their own independent state somewhere they would ruin that too. The disengaged can survive only when men of action are ranked beside them. Their policy has no place in an imperial state, but it belongs in a subject city, and what it means is safe servitude.

64 'Do not let yourselves be influenced by that sort among your fellow citizens, and do not be angry with me, when you yourselves joined me in the decision to go to war. The enemy have attacked, as they were always going to do on your refusal to submit; we were prepared for all else, but not for the additional affliction of this plague, the only present circumstance which could not have been foreseen. I know that my increased unpopularity is largely due to the plague: but this is unfair, unless you will also give me the credit for any unexpected success. We should bear blows from the gods with resignation, and blows from the enemy with courage. This has always been the way of this city in the past, and should not now stop with you. You should recognize that Athens has the greatest name among all men because she does not yield to adversity, but has made the greatest sacrifice of lives and labour in war, and has acquired the greatest power of any city in history to the present time. Future generations will retain in perpetuity the memory of this power. Even if we do give a little ground at some point in our time (and it is a law of nature that all things are subject to decline), posterity will

remember that we had the widest empire of Greeks over Greeks, that we held firm in the greatest wars against their combined or separate forces, and that the city we inhabited was the most complete in every facility and the greatest of all.

'All this the disengaged may deplore, but those with their own ambitions will want to emulate us, and those who have failed to gain power will envy us. Hatred and resentment at the time have always been the fate of those who claimed empire over others: but if there must be unpopularity, it is best incurred in the pursuit of the greatest aims. Hatred does not last for long, but present glory and future fame endure for ever in men's memories. You must seek to achieve both, and you will do so if you presuppose a glorious future and a far from inglorious present, and summon all your determination now. You must not negotiate with the Spartans or give them any indication of being oppressed by your present troubles. Among both cities and individuals the strongest are those who in the face of misfortune suffer the least distress of spirit and offer the greatest resistance in action.'

65 With this sort of argument Pericles tried to dispel the Athenians' anger against himself and to lead their thought away from the terrible conditions of the present. As a political body they accepted his arguments: they stopped sending emissaries to Sparta, and concentrated their energy on the war. Individually, though, they still chafed at their sufferings. The common people were aggrieved to lose even the poor base from which they had started, and the powerful had lost their fine country estates and the grand houses expensively furnished: above all, they now had war in place of peace. The universal anger at Pericles among the Athenians did not subside until they had punished him with a fine. Not long afterwards, as is characteristic of crowd behaviour, they elected him general once more and entrusted all their affairs to his management. By now the individual pain of domestic loss was not so acute, and they considered him better qualified than any to meet the needs of the city as a whole.

Throughout Pericles' leadership of the city in peacetime his moderate policies ensured its preservation in safety, and under his guidance the city reached its greatest height: and when the war came, it is clear that he had provided for the strength of Athens in war too. He survived the outbreak of war by two years and six months. After his death the foresight he had shown in regard to the war could be recognized yet more clearly. He had advised that the Athenians

would win through if they kept patient, looked to the maintenance of their navy, and did not try to extend their empire during the war or take any risk that endangered the city. But they did the opposite of all this, and in other ways too which seemed to have no relevance to the war they pursued policies motivated by private ambition and private gain, to the detriment of Athens herself and her allies: any success was more to the honour and benefit of the individual initiator, but failure affected the whole city and harmed the war-effort. The reason for this change was the contrast with Pericles. His power was in his distinguished reputation and his intellect, and he was patently incorruptible. He controlled the mass of the people with a free hand, leading them rather then letting them lead him. He had no need to seek improper means of influence by telling them what they wanted to hear: he already had the influence of his standing, and was even prepared to anger them by speaking against their mood. For example, whenever he saw them dangerously over-confident, he would make a speech which shocked them into a state of apprehension, and likewise he could return them from irrational fear to confidence. What was happening was democracy in name, but in fact the domination of the leading man.

Pericles' successors were more on a level with one another, and because each was striving for first position they were inclined to indulge popular whim even in matters of state policy. The result—inevitable in a great city with an empire to rule—was a series of mistakes, most notably the Sicilian expedition. The error here was not so much a mistaken choice of enemy as the failure of those at home to relate their further decisions to the interests of the force they had sent out. Instead they allowed personal accusations made in the pursuit of political supremacy to blunt the effectiveness of the military, and for the first time there was factional discord in the city. And yet even though the disaster in Sicily lost them the greater part of their fleet as well as the other forces deployed, and there was now civil strife at home, the Athenians still held out for eight years against their original enemies, the Sicilians who joined them, the majority of their allies as they revolted, and the later intervention of Cyrus, the son of the King of Persia, who provided finance for the Peloponnesian navy. They did not give in until they had brought about their own fall by entangling themselves in internal disputes. This demonstrates the more than ample justification Pericles had at the time for his prediction that Athens would very easily win through in a war against the Peloponnesians on their own.