Demosthenes, volume I,
J. H. Vince (tr.), London, 1962.

DEMOSTHENES

I. FIRST OLYNTHIAC

You would, I expect, men of Athens, accept it as the equivalent of a large amount of money, if it could be made clear to you what will prove our best policy in the matters now under discussion. This then being so, you are bound to give an eager hearing to all who offer advice. For not only if someone comes forward with a well-considered plan, could you hear and accept it, but also I count it part of your good fortune that more than one speaker may be inspired with suitable suggestions on the spur of the moment, so that out of the multitude of proposals the choice of the best should not be difficult.

The present crisis, Athenians, calls on you, almost with an audible voice, to take into your own hands the control of your interests in the North, if you are really anxious to safeguard them. But, I confess, our attitude puzzles me. My own idea would be to vote an expedition at once, to make instant preparation for its dispatch, thus avoiding our previous blunder, and to send ambassadors to state our intentions and watch events. Our chief ground for alarm is that this man, so unscrupulous, so quick to seize

his opportunity, now yielding a point when it suits his purpose, now threatening—and his threats may well carry conviction—now misrepresenting us and our failure to intervene, may divert to his own purpose and wrest from us something of vital importance. And yet, men of Athens, it is reasonable to suggest that the very thing which makes Philip's position most redoubtable is also most encouraging for you. For the swift and opportune movements of war he has an immense advantage over us in the fact that he is the sole director of his own policy, open or secret, that he unites the functions of a general, a ruler and a treasurer, and that he is always at the head of his army; but when it comes to a composition such as he would gladly make with Olynthus, the tables are turned. The eyes of the Olynthians are opened to the fact that they are now fighting not for glory, not for a strip of territory, but to avert the overthrow and enslavement of their fatherland. They know how he treated those Amphipolitans who betrayed their city and those Pydnaeans who opened their gates to him. And a despotism, I take it, is as a rule mistrusted by free constitutions, especially when they are near neighbours. I bid you grasp these facts, men of Athens, and weigh well all the important considerations. Make up your minds; rouse your spirits; put your heart into the war, now or never. Pay your contributions cheerfully; serve in person; leave nothing to chance. You have no longer the shadow of an excuse for shirking your duty. It was long the common talk that the Olynthians must be made to fight Philip; and now it has come about in the natural course, and that too in a way that

[a] ἐκπολεμῆσαι Dindorf with S.

suits you admirably. For if they had plunged into war in reliance on your advice, they would perhaps have proved uncertain allies and only half-hearted in their resolve; but now that their hatred of Philip is the outcome of their own grievances, it is natural that their hostility should have a firm base in their apprehensions and their experiences. Men of Athens, you must not let slip the opportunity that offers, nor make the blunder you have so often made before. When we returned from the Euboean expedition [a] and Hierax and Stratocles, the envoys of Amphipolis, mounted this platform and bade you sail and take over their city, if we had shown the same earnestness in our own cause as in defence of the safety of Euboea, Amphipolis would have been yours at once and you would have been relieved of all your subsequent difficulties. Once again, when news came of the siege of Pydna, of Potidaea, of Methone, of Pagasae,[b] and of the rest of them—not to weary you with a complete catalogue—if we had at that time shown the required zeal in marching to the help of the first that appealed, we should have found Philip to-day much more humble and accommodating. Unfortunately we always neglect the present chance and imagine that the future will right itself, and so, men of Athens, Philip has us to thank for his prosperity. We have raised him to a greater height than ever king of Macedonia reached before. To-day this opportunity comes to us from the Olynthians unsought, a fairer opportunity than we have ever had before.

Men of Athens, let anyone fairly reckon up the

[a] The Athenians took Euboea from the Thebans in 357.
[b] In 357, 356, 354, and 352 respectively.

blessings we have received of the gods, and though much is amiss, none the less his gratitude will be great—and rightly so: for our many losses in the war [a] may be justly imputed to our own supineness; that we did not suffer these losses long ago and that this opportunity of alliance affords us some compensation, if we choose to accept it, this I for my part should put down as a signal instance of the favour of the gods. I suppose it is with national as with private wealth. If a man keeps what he gains, he is duly grateful to fortune; if he loses it by his own imprudence, he loses along with it the sense of gratitude. So in national affairs, those who fail to use their opportunities aright, fail also to acknowledge the good that the gods have given; for every advantage in the past is judged in the light of the final issue. It is therefore our duty, men of Athens, to keep a careful eye on the future, that by restoring our prosperity we may efface the discredit of the past. But if we leave these men too in the lurch, Athenians, and then Olynthus is crushed by Philip, tell me what is to prevent him from marching henceforward just where he pleases. I wonder if any one of you in this audience watches and notes the steps by which Philip, weak at first, has grown so powerful. First he seized Amphipolis, next Pydna, then Potidaea, after that Methone, lastly he invaded Thessaly. Then having settled Pherae, Pagasae, Magnesia, and the rest of that country to suit his purposes, off he went to Thrace, and there, after evicting some of the chiefs and installing others, he

[a] *i.e.* the war about the possession of Amphipolis.

[1] *πρὶν ὑπ.* S: *προϋπαρξάντων* vulg. Dindorf.

fell sick. On his recovery, he did not relapse into inactivity, but instantly assailed Olynthus. His campaigns against Illyrians and Paeonians and King Arybbas and any others that might be mentioned, I pass over in silence.

"Well," some of you may say, "why tell us this now?" Because, men of Athens, I want you to know and realize two things: first, what an expensive game it is to squander your interests one by one; and secondly, the restless activity which is ingrained in Philip's nature, and which makes it impossible for him ever to rest on his laurels. But if Philip adopts the principle that he ought always to be improving his position, and you the principle of never facing your difficulties resolutely, just reflect what is likely to be the end of it all. Seriously, is anyone here so foolish as not to see that our negligence will transfer the war from Chalcidice to Attica? Yet if that comes to pass, I am afraid, men of Athens, that just as men who borrow money recklessly at high interest enjoy a temporary accommodation only to forfeit their estates in the end, so we may find that we have paid a heavy price for our indolence, and because we consult our own pleasure in everything, may hereafter come to be forced to do many of the difficult things for which we had no liking, and may finally endanger our possessions here in Attica itself.

Now someone may tell me that to find fault is easy and in any one's power, but that it needs a statesman to expound the policy demanded by our circumstances. But I am not unaware, men of Athens, that if anything goes wrong, you often

by Priscian. Probably we should read with Weil *ἐπὶ τόκοις μεγάλοις*.

vent your disappointment, not on the responsible agents, but on those who happen to have addressed you last. I shall not, however, consult my own safety by keeping back what I believe to be for your true interests. I suggest then that the case calls for two distinct expeditions; one military force must be dispatched to rescue their cities for the Olynthians, and a second force, both naval and military, to ravage Philip's territory. If you neglect either of them, I am afraid your campaign will prove abortive. For if you send a marauding expedition, he will stand on the defensive until he has made himself master of Olynthus, and then he will easily march to the relief of his own territory; or if you confine yourselves to helping Olynthus, he will know that his base is secure and will give close and undivided attention to his operations, until at last he overcomes the resistance of the besieged. Our expedition, you see, must be on a large scale and twofold.

Such are my views on the expeditionary force. With regard to the supply of money, you *have* money, men of Athens; you have more than any other nation has for military purposes. But you appropriate it yourselves, to suit your own pleasure. Now if you will spend it on the campaign, you have no need of a further supply; if not, you have —or rather, you have no supply at all. "What!" someone will cry, "do you actually move to use this money for military purposes?" Of course I do not. Only it is my opinion that we must provide soldiers and that there must be one uniform system of pay in return for service. Your opinion, however, is that you should, without any trouble, just appropriate the money for your festivals.[a] Then the only alternative is a war-tax, heavy or light, as circumstances demand. Only money we must have, and without money nothing can be done that ought to be done. There are other proposals before you for raising supplies; choose whichever of them you think expedient, and, while there is yet time, grapple with the problem.

[1] These words, in all MSS., are omitted by Dindorf and most edd. since Dobree.

It is worth while, however, to observe and consider how Philip stands to-day. His present prospects are not so bright or satisfactory as they seem and as a superficial observer might pronounce them; nor would he ever have provoked this war had he thought that he would be bound to fight himself. He hoped that on his first entry he would carry all before him, and he finds himself completely mistaken. This unforeseen result confounds and discourages him; and besides there is the question of Thessaly. The Thessalians were always, of course, born traitors, and Philip finds them to-day just what everyone has found them in the past. They have formally resolved to demand the restitution of Pagasae and have hindered him from fortifying Magnesia. I have also been informed that they will no longer hand over to him the profits of their harbours and markets, on the ground that this sum ought to be applied to the

[a] by means of an extraordinary levy or εἰσφορά. Either in 350, or perhaps in 349 before the delivery of the third Olynthiac, an attempt to revert to the earlier arrangement was followed by the usual γραφὴ παρανόμων, and Eubulus is alleged to have confirmed the bad system by making it a capital offence even to propose a diversion of the fund. Demosthenes approaches the subject with a studied show of embarrassment.

government of Thessaly and not find its way into Philip's coffers. Now if he is deprived of this source of revenue, he will be hard put to it to pay for the maintenance of his mercenaries. But surely we must assume that your Paeonian or Illyrian or any other of these tribes would prefer freedom and independence to slavery. They are not accustomed to acknowledge a master, and Philip is by all accounts a particularly harsh one. And indeed that is not surprising. Undeserved success engenders folly in unbalanced minds, and therefore it often proves harder to keep than to win prosperity. Look then, Athenians, upon his difficulties as your opportunity. Be prompt to take up the challenge. Send embassies when necessary. Take the field in person. Rouse all the other states. Reflect how eagerly Philip would march against you, if he had such a chance as we have, and if the war were on our frontiers. Are you not ashamed if, having the opportunity, you lack the courage to do to him what he would certainly do to you if he could?

One point more, men of Athens. Do not forget that you can to-day choose whether you must fight there or Philip must fight here. If Olynthus holds out, you will fight there, to the detriment of his territory, while you enjoy in security the land that is your home. But if Philip takes Olynthus, who is to prevent his marching hither? The Thebans? It may be an unduly harsh thing to say, but they will join heartily in the invasion. The Phocians

then? What! the men who cannot protect their own country without your help? Any others? "But, my friend," cries someone, "he will not wish to attack us." Nay, it would be a crowning absurdity if, having the power, he should lack the will to carry out the threat which to-day he utters at the risk of his reputation for sanity. But indeed I think you want no speech to prove how vast is the difference between a war here and a war yonder. Why, if you were obliged to take the field yourselves for a bare month, drawing from Attica the necessary supplies—I am assuming that there is no enemy in this country—I suppose your farmers would lose more than the sum spent upon the whole of the previous war.[a] But if war comes within our borders, at what figure must we assess our losses? And you must add the insolence of the enemy and the ignominy of our position, greater than any loss in a wise man's estimation.

It is the duty of all of you to grasp the significance of these facts, and to send out an expedition that shall thrust back the war into Macedonia: it is the duty of the well-to-do, that spending but a fraction of the wealth they so happily possess, they may enjoy the residue in security; of our fighters, that gaining experience of war on Philip's soil, they may prove the formidable guardians of an inviolate fatherland; of the statesmen, that they may give a ready account of their stewardship, for as is the issue of these events, so will be your judgement of their policy. On every ground may that issue be prosperous!

[a] The war about Amphipolis. Demosthenes reckons its cost at 1500 talents (*Ol.* ii. 28).

II. SECOND OLYNTHIAC

On many occasions, men of Athens, one may, I think, recognize the manifest favour of heaven towards our city, and not least at the present crisis. That Philip has found men willing to fight him, situated on his frontiers and possessed of considerable power, above all so determined that they regard any accommodation with him as both delusive and fatal to their own country—this has all the appearance of a superhuman, a divine beneficence. So the time has come, men of Athens, to look to it that we do not prove more unfriendly to ourselves than circumstances have been, for we shall show ourselves the meanest of mankind, if we abandon not only the cities and the places which we once called our own, but the very allies that fortune has raised up for us and the chances she throws in our way.

Now I do not choose, Athenians, to enumerate the resources of Philip and by such arguments to call on you to rise to the occasion. Do you ask why? Because it seems to me that any dissertation on that topic is a tribute to his enterprise, but a record of our failure. For the higher he has raised himself above his proper level, the more he wins the admira-

tion of the world; but the more you have failed to improve your opportunities, the greater is the discredit that you have incurred. All this then I will waive. For an impartial investigation, men of Athens, would trace the source of Philip's greatness not to himself, but to this very platform. Of transactions, then, for which Philip should be grateful to those whose policy has served his interests, and for which you might well demand satisfaction, I do not find this the proper time for speaking. There are, however other topics open to me; you will be the better for having heard them, and if you will consent to scrutinize them accurately, men of Athens, you will find in them grave charges against Philip. On these topics I shall endeavour to address you.

Now to call a man perjured and faithless, without drawing attention to his acts, might justly be termed mere abuse; but to describe his conduct in detail and convict him on the whole count fortunately requires only a short speech. Moreover, I have two reasons for thinking the story worth the telling: Philip shall appear as worthless as he really is, and those who stand aghast at his apparent invincibility shall see that he has exhausted all the arts of chicanery on which his greatness was founded at the first, and that his career has now reached its extreme limit. For my own part, Athenians, I too should be inclined to regard Philip with mingled fear and admiration, if I saw that his success had crowned a career of integrity. But when I consider him attentively, I find that at the outset, when the Olynthians were anxious to consult you, but certain persons were for excluding them from our Assembly, he won our simple hearts by promising to hand over Amphipolis

to us and by negotiating that secret treaty [a] once so much talked about. I find that next he won the friendship of the Olynthians by capturing Potidaea, which was yours, and thus wronging you, his former allies,[b] in presenting it to them. Lastly he has won over the Thessalians by promising to bestow Magnesia upon them and by undertaking to conduct the Phocian war [c] in their interests. In a word, he has hoodwinked everyone that has had any dealings with him; he has played upon the folly of each party in turn and exploited their ignorance of his own character. That is how he has gained his power. Now even as he has raised himself by these arts, while every community imagined that they were to be the recipients of his favours, so by these same arts he is bound to be brought low again now that the utter selfishness of his conduct has been amply demonstrated. Yes, men of Athens, this is the turning-point of Philip's career. If not, let someone step up and prove to me—or rather to you—that my words are untrue, or that those who have been once deceived will continue to trust him, or that the Thessalians who stooped to become his slaves would not now welcome their emancipation.

Again, if anyone here admits the truth of this, but fancies that Philip will remain master of the situation, being already in possession of the fortresses and harbours and other points of vantage, he is mistaken. For when a league is knit together by goodwill, when all the allied states have the same interests, then the individual members are willing

of alliance with Athens ten years before. But perhaps we should omit ὑμᾶς with Blass. The allies will then be the Potidaeans, as the Scholiast explains.

[c] The Sacred War of 355–346.

to remain steadfast, sharing the toil and enduring the hardships; but when a man has gained power, as Philip has, by rapacity and crime, then the first pretext, some trifling slip, overthrows and shatters all. It is impossible, men of Athens, impossible to gain permanent power by injustice, perjury, and falsehood. Once in a way and for a brief season such things endure, and fed with hopes make, it may be, a brave show of blossom, but at the last they are detected and fall to pieces. For a house, I take it, or a ship or anything of that sort must have its chief strength in its substructure; and so too in affairs of state the principles and the foundations must be truth and justice. There is no vestige of these to-day in the power that Philip has built up.

I urge you strongly to send help to Olynthus, and the best and quickest method that anyone can suggest will please me most. To the Thessalians you must send an embassy to inform some of them of our intentions and to stir up the others; for they have already decided to demand the restoration of Pagasae and to protest against the occupation of Magnesia. But you must make sure, men of Athens, that our envoys do not confine themselves to words; they must be able to give some practical proof that we have taken the field in a way worthy of our city and that we are really grappling with the situation. All words, apart from action, seem vain and idle, especially words from Athenian lips; for the greater our reputation for a ready tongue, the greater the distrust it inspires in all men. You must indeed prove the thoroughness of your reformation and the importance of your change of policy by raising money, by serving in the field, and by doing every-

thing with a will, if you want anyone to take you seriously. If you consent to carry through the necessary reforms at once, not only will Philip's alliances, men of Athens, prove unstable and untrustworthy, but the weakness of his native power and sovereignty will be completely exposed.

Yes, the power and sovereignty of Macedonia is indeed, as an adjunct, no slight contribution, as you found it when on your side against Olynthus in the days of Timotheus.[a] On another occasion, in dealing with Potidaea, the Olynthians found its co-operation of some value; and lately it came to the help of the Thessalians in their factions and feuds against the ruling house. The accession, I suppose, even of a small force is in every way helpful; but by itself Macedonia is weak and full of defects. For indeed Philip by all that might be deemed to constitute his greatness, by his wars and his campaigns, has only reduced his country below its natural level of insecurity. You must not imagine, men of Athens, that his subjects share his tastes. No: glory is his sole object and ambition; in action and in danger he has elected to suffer whatever may befall him, putting before a life of safety the distinction of achieving what no other king of Macedonia ever achieved. But his subjects have no share in the glory that results. They are perpetually buffeted and wearied and distressed by these expeditions north and south, never suffered to give their time to their business or their private affairs, never able to dispose of such produce as they can raise, because

[a] Perdiccas, king of Macedonia, in an attack on the Olynthian confederacy.

the war has closed all the markets in their land. Hence it is not difficult to see how the majority of the Macedonians regard Philip. As for his household troops and footguards, they have indeed the name of admirable soldiers, well grounded in the science of war; but one who has lived on the spot, a man incapable of falsehood, has informed me that they are no better than other soldiers. If there is anyone among them who can be described as experienced in war and battle, I was told that Philip from jealousy keeps all such in the background, because he wants to have the credit himself of every action, among his many faults being an insatiable ambition. Any fairly decent or honest man, who cannot stomach the licentiousness of his daily life, the drunkenness and the lewd dancing, is pushed aside as of no account. All the rest about his court, he said, are robbers and toadies, men capable of getting drunk and performing such dances as I hesitate to name to you here. This report is obviously true, for the men who were unanimously expelled from Athens, as being of far looser morals than the average mountebank—I mean Callias the hangman and fellows of that stamp, low comedians, men who compose ribald songs to raise a laugh against their boon companions—these are the men he welcomes and loves to have about him. These are perhaps trivial things, and yet, Athenians, to wise men they afford an important proof of the infatuation of his character. For the present, however, his prosperity throws all this into the shade (for success is apt to cover a multitude of faults); but if he trips, then we shall know all about his vices. And it seems to me,

Athenians, that we shall not have to wait long for the exposure, if heaven wills and you so resolve. For just as in our bodies, so long as a man is in sound health, he is conscious of no pain, but if some malady assails him, every part is set a-working, be it rupture or sprain or any other local affection; even so is it with states and monarchies; as long as their wars are on foreign soil, few detect their weaknesses, but when the shock of battle is on their frontiers, it makes all their faults perfectly clear.

But if any of you, Athenians, seeing Philip's good fortune, thinks that he is in that respect a formidable antagonist, he reasons like a prudent man. For fortune is indeed a great weight in the scales; I might almost say it is everything in human affairs. All the same, if you gave me the choice, I should prefer the fortune of Athens to Philip's, provided that you are willing to do your duty yourselves, even to a limited extent; for I am sure you have far greater claims than he upon the favour of the gods. Yet, I think, we sit here doing nothing. But one who is himself idle cannot possibly call upon his friends, much less upon the gods, to work for him. No wonder that Philip, sharing himself in the toils of the campaign, present at every action, neglecting no chance and wasting no season, gets the better of us, while we procrastinate and pass resolutions and ask questions. I cannot wonder at this: the contrary would rather surprise me, that we, performing no single duty of a combatant, should overcome the man who fulfils them all. Nay, I am surprised that you, men of Athens, who once withstood the

[1] So Blass: *μηδένα καιρὸν μηδ'* Dindorf and vulg.: *μηδὲ καιρὸν μηδὲ* S.

Lacedaemonians in defence of the rights of Hellas, who spurned the opportunity, repeatedly offered, of self-aggrandizement, who lavished your treasure and jeoparded your lives in the field that others might enjoy their rights, now shrink from service and grudge to pay your contributions for the sake of your own possessions. I am surprised that you, who have so often saved the other states, both all of them together and each separately in turn, should sit down under the loss of what is your own. All this I wonder at, and at another thing besides. I wonder that no one here, men of Athens, can count up how many years you have been at war with Philip, and what you have been doing all that long time. Surely you must know that all that time you have been hesitating, hoping that some other state would take action, accusing and sitting in judgement on one another, and still hoping, hoping—doing in fact pretty much what you are doing now. And are you so unintelligent, men of Athens, as to hope that the same policy that has brought our state from success to failure will raise us from failure to success? Surely that is neither reasonable nor natural; for in all things it is much easier to keep than to gain. But, in the present instance, of what was once ours the war has left us nothing to keep and everything to gain. This, then, is our own task to-day. I say it is your duty to serve cheerfully in person and to reserve your censures till you are masters of the situation. Then, judging all on their merits, assign praise to the deserving and punishment to the wrong-doers, and render excuse impossible by mending your own deficiencies; for you have no right to be severe

critics of others' conduct, unless you first set your own house in order. Why is it, think you, men of Athens, that all the generals you dispatch—if I am to tell you something of the truth about them—leave this war to itself and pursue little wars of their own? It is because in this war the prizes for which you contend are your own—(if, for instance, Amphipolis is captured, the immediate gain will be yours)—while the officers have all the dangers to themselves and no remuneration; but in the other case the risks are smaller and the prizes fall to the officers and the soldiers—Lampsacus, for example, and Sigeum, and the plunder of the merchant-ships. So they turn aside each to what pays him best. But you, whenever you turn your attention to your reverses, sit in judgement on your officers, but acquit them whenever in defence they plead their necessities. Hence the outcome is strife and contention among yourselves, some taking this side and some that, while the interests of the state suffer. You conduct your party-politics, Athenians, as you used to conduct your tax-paying—by syndicates.[a] Each syndicate has an orator for chairman, with a general under him and three hundred to do the shouting. The rest of you are attached now to one party and now to another. Surely this system must

into the exchequer and then recovered the money due from the less wealthy classes—a system which produced the abuses remedied by Demosthenes in 340. The richest man in a symmory was called the ἡγεμών or chairman and had under him an ἐπιμελητής or director. The comparison here is only a rough-and-ready one. Each political party in the Assembly has an orator (=ἡγεμών) at its head, a favourite general (=ἐπιμελητής) whose claims it supports, and a group of backers who applaud (=the 300 who pay).

be abandoned. You must be once more your own masters, and must give to all alike the same chance to speak, to counsel, to act. But if you authorize one class of men to issue orders like absolute monarchs, and force another class to equip the galleys and pay the war-tax and serve in the field, while yet a third class has no other public duty than to vote the condemnation of the latter, you will never get anything essential done at the right time. There will always be some class with a grievance, who will fail you, and then it will be your privilege to punish them instead of the enemy.

To sum up, I propose that all should contribute equitably, each according to his means, that all should serve in turn until all have taken part in the campaign, that all who wish to address you should have a fair hearing, and that you should adopt the best advice offered, not just what this man or that man is pleased to suggest. If you do this, you will be able to congratulate the speaker at once and yourselves later on, when you find the cause of the nation prospering.

III. THIRD OLYNTHIAC

VERY different, men of Athens, are the thoughts suggested to me by the contemplation of public affairs and by the speeches to which I listen. I observe that the speeches are all about punishing Philip, while our affairs have reached a stage at which it must be our first concern to avoid disaster ourselves. Hence these speakers seem to me to make precisely the mistake of submitting to you the wrong subject for deliberation. But for myself I am perfectly well aware that Athens once had the chance both of establishing her power and of punishing Philip; for within my own memory and not long ago, both these objects were within our grasp. Now, however, I am persuaded that we must be content to secure the first, that of saving our allies. If once we can be sure of that, then we can go on to consider who is to be punished and how it is to be done; but until that foundation is well and truly laid, it is idle, in my opinion, to say a word about our ultimate object.

Never was there a crisis that demanded more careful handling than the present. But the difficulty lies, I think, not in proposing a plan to meet the case: what puzzles me, men of Athens, is how to put it

before you. For what I have seen and heard convinces me that most of your chances have escaped us rather from a disinclination to do our duty than from a failure to understand it. I must ask you to bear with me if I speak frankly, considering only whether I am speaking the truth, and speaking with the object that things may go better in the future; for you see how the popularity-hunting of some of our orators has led us into this desperate predicament.

I must first refresh your memory with a little history. You remember, men of Athens, when news came three or four years ago that Philip was in Thrace besieging the fortress of Heraeum. Well, it was the month of Maemacterion, and there was a long and excited debate in the Assembly, and you finally decided to launch a fleet of forty vessels, manned by citizens under the age of forty-five, and to raise forty talents by a special tax. That year passed and Hecatombaeon came and Metageitnion and Boëdromion. In that month, with a great effort, after the celebration of the Mysteries [a] you dispatched Charidemus with ten ships, unmanned, and a sum of five talents of silver. When news came that Philip was ill or dead—both reports reached us—you, Athenians, thinking that help was no longer needed, abandoned the expedition. But that was just your opportunity. If we had carried out our resolution in earnest and sailed to Thrace then, Philip would not have survived to trouble us to-day.

misprint - 60 talents is the correct reading

Well, what is done cannot be undone; but now

[a] The Eleusinian Mysteries, celebrated between the 13th and 24th of Boëdromion, *i.e.* about the beginning of October.

comes the opportunity of another war. That was why I have referred to the past, that you may not make the same mistake again. What use, men of Athens, are we to make of our opportunity? For if you do not send help "in full muster, whereto your power shall extend," [a] observe how all your generalship will make for Philip's success. We could count [b] on the Olynthians with their considerable resources; and the position of affairs was that Philip did not trust them, nor they Philip. We had negotiated a peace with them that hampered Philip sorely; for here was a powerful state, reconciled to us and watching for him to give them an opening. We thought that we ought by all means to embroil them with him; and what was then common talk has to-day somehow or other come to pass. What remains then, men of Athens, but to help them with all your power and energy? I see no alternative. For, quite apart from the disgrace that we should incur if we shirk our responsibilities, I see not a little danger, men of Athens, for the future, if the Thebans maintain their present attitude towards us, and the Phocians have come to the end of their money, and there is nothing to hinder Philip, when he has crushed his present foe, from turning his arms against Attica. But surely if anyone of you would postpone the necessary action till then, he must prefer to see danger at his very doors, rather than hear of it far away, and to beg help for himself, when he might be lending help to others now; for I suppose we all

[a] the omission of connecting particles in three successive sentences. Demosthenes is telling off on his fingers the advantages which the Athenians already had before the debate began.

realize that that is what it will come to, if we throw away our present chances.

Perhaps you will say, "Of course we all know that we must send an expedition, and we are willing to do so; but tell us how." Then do not be surprised, Athenians, if my answer comes as a shock to most of you. Appoint a legislative commission. Do not use it to frame new laws—you have laws enough for your purpose—but repeal those which hamper us in the present crisis. In plain language I mean the laws for administering the Theoric Fund, and also some of the service regulations. The former distribute the military funds as theatre-money among those who remain in the city; the latter give impunity to deserters and in consequence discourage those willing to serve. When you have repealed these laws and made the way safe for wise counsel, then look round for someone who will propose what you all know to be salutary measures. But until you have done this, do not expect to find a statesman who will propose measures for your benefit, only to be ruined by you for his pains. You will never find one, especially as the only result would be that the proposer would get into trouble without improving the situation, and his fate would also make good advice more dangerous for the future. Yes, men of Athens, and you ought to insist that those who made these laws should also repeal them. It is not fair that those legislators should enjoy a popularity which has cost the community dear, but that the patriotic reformer should be penalized by the odium of proposals by which we may all be benefited. Until you have set this right, Athenians, do not expect to find

[1] *ἱκανοὶ ὑμῖν* Dindorf with S.

anyone so influential among you that he can break these laws with impunity, or so wanting in discretion as to run open-eyed into danger.

At the same time, Athenians, you must not forget this, that a mere decree is worthless without a willingness on your part to put your resolutions into practice. If decrees could automatically compel you to do your duty, or could accomplish the objects for which they were proposed, you would not have passed such an array of them with little or no result, and Philip would not have had such a long career of insolent triumph. Long ago, if decrees counted for anything, he would have suffered for his sins. But that is not so. For in order of time action is subsequent to speaking and voting, but in importance it comes first and ranks higher. It is action, then, that must be added: of all else we have enough. You have among you, Athenians, men competent to say the right thing, no nation is quicker-witted to grasp the meaning of speech, and you will at once be able to translate it into action, if only you do your duty. Why, what better time or occasion could you find than the present, men of Athens? When will you do your duty, if not now? Has not your enemy already captured all our strongholds, and if he becomes master of Chalcidice, shall we not be overwhelmed with dishonour? Are not those states actually at war which we so readily engaged in that event to protect? Is not Philip our enemy? And in possession of our property? And a barbarian? Is any description too bad for him? But, in the name of the gods, when we have abandoned all these places and almost helped Philip to gain them, shall we then ask who is to blame? For I am sure we

shall never admit that it is ourselves. In the panic of battle the runaway never blames himself; it is always his general's fault, or his comrades', anyone's rather than his own. Yet surely to the runaways collectively the defeat is due; for he might have stood firm who now blames the others, and if every man had stood, the battle would have been won. So now: someone's suggestion is not the best possible. Then let someone else get up and make a better, not blame the first speaker. Suppose the second suggestion is an improvement. Then act upon it, and success attend it! But, you say, it is not a pleasant one. The speaker is not to blame for that—unless he leaves out the necessary prayer![a] Yes, men of Athens, it is easy to pray, cramming all our wants into one short petition. But to choose, when choice of action is put before you, is no such child's-play, because you have to choose the best course rather than the pleasantest, if you cannot have both at once. "But what if someone can leave our Theoric Fund untouched and name other sources for our military budget? Is not he the better statesman?" says someone. I grant you, men of Athens—if the thing is possible. But I wonder if any mortal, after spending all his existing wealth on superfluities, ever did or ever will find himself with a surplus for necessaries from his vanished funds. I think that in such proposals the wish is father to the thought, and that is why nothing is easier than self-deceit. For what each man wishes, that he also believes to be true. Unfortunately it is not often so in practical politics. Now I want you, Athenians, to consider the possibilities of the case, and see how you can both serve and receive your pay. Surely it is

not like men of sense and spirit to shirk your military duty because the pay is not forthcoming, thinking lightly of the shame of it all; or to snatch up arms and march against Corinth or Megara,[a] but to let Philip enslave Greek cities, because you are short of rations for a campaign.

I am not talking for the idle purpose of quarrelling with anyone here. I am not such a misguided fool as to pick a quarrel deliberately when I see no advantage from it. But I consider it right as a citizen to set the welfare of the state above the popularity of an orator. Indeed I am given to understand—and so perhaps are you—that the orators of past generations, always praised but not always imitated by those who address you, adopted this very standard and principle of statesmanship. I refer to the famous Aristides, to Nicias, to my own namesake,[b] and to Pericles. But ever since this breed of orators appeared who ply you with such questions as "What would you like? What shall I propose? How can I oblige you?" the interests of the state have been frittered away for a momentary popularity. The natural consequences follow, and the orators profit by your disgrace. Yet reflect, men of Athens, on what might be named as the outstanding achievements of the days of your ancestors and those of your own time. I will give you a summary of familiar facts, for you need not go abroad for examples to teach you how to win success. Now your ancestors, whom their orators, unlike ours to-day, did not caress or flatter,

and on Megara in 431 (Thuc. i. 105, ii. 31); but probably the reference is to some later and obscurer events.

[b] Demosthenes, the general, who perished with Nicias in the Sicilian expedition. He is not elsewhere described as an orator.

for five and forty years[a] commanded the willing obedience of the Greeks; more than ten thousand talents did they accumulate in our Acropolis; the then king of Macedonia[b] was their subject, even as a barbarian ought to be subject to Greeks; many honourable trophies for victory on sea and land did they erect, themselves serving in the field; and they alone of mankind left behind them by their deeds a renown greater than all detraction. Such was their rank in the world of Hellas: what manner of men they were at home, in public or in private life, look round you and see. Out of the wealth of the state they set up for our delight so many fair buildings and things of beauty, temples and offerings to the gods, that we who come after must despair of ever surpassing them; yet in private they were so modest, so careful to obey the spirit of the constitution, that the houses of their famous men, of Aristides or of Miltiades, as any of you can see that knows them, are not a whit more splendid than those of their neighbours. For selfish greed had no place in their statesmanship, but each thought it his duty to further the common weal. And so by their good faith towards their fellow Greeks, their piety towards the gods, and their equality among themselves, they deserved and won a great prosperity.

Such was their condition in those days under the leaders I have named; and what is our condition to-day, thanks to our worthy statesmen? Is it the same or anything like the same? Why, we—I pass over much that I might mention, but you all see

[a] The interval between the Persian and Peloponnesian wars.

[b] Perdiccas II.; a pardonable exaggeration.

what a clear field we had got, with the Lacedaemonians crushed, the Thebans fully occupied, and no other city fit to dispute the supremacy with us, while we might have been both the vindicators of our own rights and the umpires of the rights of others; and yet we have been robbed of our own soil, we have wasted on unnecessary objects more than fifteen hundred talents, our statesmen in peace have lost us the allies we gained in war, and we have provided a training-ground for this formidable rival. If not, let someone come forward and tell me who but ourselves has made Philip powerful. "But," says an objector, "if our foreign policy has failed, there is great improvement in domestic affairs." And to what can you point in proof? To the walls we are whitewashing, the streets we are paving, the waterworks, and the balderdash? Look rather at the men whose statesmanship has produced these results: some of them were poor and now are rich, some were obscure and now are eminent, some have reared private houses more stately than our public buildings, while the lower the fortunes of the city have sunk, the higher have their fortunes soared.

What is the cause of all this, and why, pray, did everything go well then that now goes amiss? Because then the people, having the courage to act and to fight, controlled the politicians and were themselves the dispensers of all favours; the rest were well content to accept at the people's hand honour and authority and reward. Now, on the

[2] *τὸ μὲν πρῶτον* MSS.: *τὸ μὲν πρότερον* Dindorf. *τότε* is the reading of Hermogenes, and *πράττειν* is a correction of Rehdantz.

contrary, the politicians hold the purse-strings and manage everything, while you, the people, robbed of nerve and sinew, stripped of wealth and of allies, have sunk to the level of lackeys and hangers-on, content if the politicians gratify you with a dole from the Theoric Fund or a procession at the Boëdromia, and your manliness reaches its climax when you add your thanks for what is your own. They have mewed you up in the city and entice you with these baits, that they may keep you tame and subservient to the whip. You cannot, I suppose, have a proud and chivalrous spirit, if your conduct is mean and paltry; for whatever a man's actions are, such must be his spirit. By our Lady, I should not wonder if I got rougher treatment from you for pointing out these faults than the men who are responsible for them. For you do not allow liberty of speech on every subject, and indeed I am surprised that you have allowed it now.

If, therefore, even at the eleventh hour, you can shake off these habits, and consent to fight and act as becomes Athenians and to devote the abundant resources that you have at home to the attainment of success abroad, perhaps, men of Athens, perhaps you may gain some important and unqualified advantage and may be quit of these paltry perquisites. Like the diet prescribed by doctors, which neither restores the strength of the patient nor allows him to succumb, so these doles that you are now distributing neither suffice to ensure your safety nor allow you to renounce them and try something else; they only confirm each citizen in his apathy. You will ask me if I mean pay for military service. Not

only that, men of Athens, but also the immediate adoption of a uniform system, so that each citizen, receiving his quota from the public funds, may fill his proper place in the service of the state. If peace can be preserved, he is better off at home, safe from temptations into which want might lead him. If some such contingency as the present arises, then it is better for him to serve his country in person, as indeed he ought, supported by these same contributions. If anyone is too old to fight, then as overseer or manager of some indispensable work, let him be paid on an equitable system the wages that he now receives without benefit to the state. In a word, without increasing or lessening our expenditure by more than a trifle, I claim to have removed anomalies and introduced order into the state, establishing a uniform system of pay and of service, whether in the field or in the law-courts or wherever each man finds a task suited to his own age and to the needs of the occasion. Never have I suggested that we should give the worker's wages to the drone, or that we should ourselves remain inactive, idle, and helpless, and only learn by report that So-and-so's mercenaries have won a victory. For that is what happens now. I am not indeed blaming the man who does your duty for you, but I call on you to do that for yourselves which you reward others for doing, and not to desert that post of honour, men of Athens, which your ancestors through many glorious hazards won and bequeathed to you.

I have now said almost all that I consider suitable. It is for you to choose what is likely to benefit the city and all of you.