The British historian, George W. Cox writes that the "whole duration of the Athenian empire extends over little more than two generations." This confederation of Greek city states with Athens at its head was an attempt to present a unified front to the Persian Empire. But ultimately, the strife between democratic and oligarchic factions within each polis, combined with the tangle of alliances between the various city states, led to the ruinous and protracted Peloponnesian War. In this short work, Cox describes the battles on land and sea, and such personalities as the Athenian general, Nikias, his Spartan counterpart, Agis, and, above all, unprincipled, charismatic Alcibiades. (Summary by Pamela Nagami, M.D.)

Read by Pamela Nagami. Total running time: 07:49:10

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