

PROCOPIUS

HISTORY OF THE WARS

And

The Secret Story of the Court of  
Justinian

## I

Procopius of Caesarea has written the history of the wars which Justinian, Emperor of the Romans, waged against the barbarians of the East and of the West, relating separately the events of each one, to the end that the long course of time may not overwhelm deeds of singular importance through lack of a record, and thus abandon them to oblivion and utterly obliterate them. The memory of these events he deemed would be a great thing and most helpful to men of the present time, and to future generations as well, in case time should ever again place men under a similar stress. For men who purpose to enter upon a war or are preparing themselves for any kind of struggle may derive some benefit from a narrative of a similar situation in history, inasmuch as this discloses the final result attained by men of an earlier day in a struggle of the same sort, and foreshadows, at least for those who are most prudent in planning, what outcome present events will probably have. Furthermore he had assurance that he was especially competent to write the history of these events, if for no other reason, because it fell to his lot, when appointed adviser to the general Belisarius, to be an eye-witness of practically all the events to be described. It was his conviction that while cleverness is appropriate to rhetoric, and inventiveness to poetry, truth alone is appropriate to history. In accordance with this principle he has not concealed the failures of even his most intimate acquaintances, but has written down with complete accuracy everything which befell those concerned, whether it happened to be done well or ill by them.

It will be evident that no more important or mightier deeds are to be found in history than those which have been enacted in these wars,—provided one wishes to base his judgment on the truth. For in them more remarkable feats have been performed than in any other wars with which we are acquainted; unless, indeed, any reader of this narrative should give the place of honour to antiquity, and consider contemporary achievements unworthy to be counted remarkable. There are those, for example, who call the soldiers of the present day "bowmen," while to those of the most ancient times they wish to attribute such lofty terms as "hand-to-hand fighters," "shield-men," and other names of that sort; and they think that the valour of those times has by no means survived to the present,—an opinion which is at once careless and wholly remote from actual experience of these matters. For the thought has never occurred to them that, as regards the Homeric bowmen who had the misfortune to be ridiculed by this term derived from their art, they were neither carried by horse nor protected by spear or shield. In fact there was no protection at all for their bodies; they entered battle on foot, and were compelled to conceal themselves, either singling out the shield of some comrade, or seeking safety behind a tombstone on a mound, from which position they could neither save themselves in case of rout, nor fall upon a flying foe. Least of all could they participate in a decisive struggle in the open, but they always seemed to be stealing something which belonged to the men who were engaged in the struggle. And apart from this they were so indifferent in their practice of archery that they drew the bowstring only to the breast, so that the missile sent forth was naturally impotent and harmless to those whom it hit. Such, it is evident, was the archery of the past. But the bowmen of the present time go into battle wearing corselets and fitted out with greaves which extend up to the knee. From the right side hang their arrows, from the other the sword. And there are some who have a spear also attached to them and, at the shoulders, a sort of small shield without a grip, such as to cover the region of the face and neck. They are expert horsemen, and are able without difficulty to direct their bows to either side while riding at full speed, and to shoot an opponent whether in pursuit or in flight. They draw the bowstring along by the forehead about opposite the right ear, thereby charging the arrow with such an impetus as to kill whoever stands in the way, shield and corselet alike having no power to check its force. Still there are those who take into consideration none of these things, who reverence

and worship the ancient times, and give no credit to modern improvements. But no such consideration will prevent the conclusion that most great and notable deeds have been performed in these wars. And the history of them will begin at some distance back, telling of the fortunes in war of the Romans and the Medes, their reverses and their successes.

## II

408 A.D.

When the Roman Emperor Arcadius was at the point of death in Byzantium, having a male child, Theodosius, who was still unweaned, he felt grave fears not only for him but for the government as well, not knowing how he should provide wisely for both. For he perceived that, if he provided a partner in government for Theodosius, he would in fact be destroying his own son by bringing forward against him a foe clothed in the regal power; while if he set him alone over the empire, many would try to mount the throne, taking advantage, as they might be expected to do, of the helplessness of the child. These men would rise against the government, and, after destroying Theodosius, would make themselves tyrants without difficulty, since the boy had no kinsman in Byzantium to be his guardian. For Arcadius had no hope that the boy's uncle, Honorius, would succour him, inasmuch as the situation in Italy was already troublesome. And he was equally disturbed by the attitude of the Medes, fearing lest these barbarians should trample down the youthful emperor and do the Romans irreparable harm. When Arcadius was confronted with this difficult situation, though he had not shown himself sagacious in other matters, he devised a plan which was destined to preserve without trouble both his child and his throne, either as a result of conversation with certain of the learned men, such as are usually found in numbers among the advisers of a sovereign, or from some divine inspiration which came to him. For in drawing up the writings of his will, he designated the child as his successor to the throne, but appointed as guardian over him Isdigerdes, the Persian King, enjoining upon him earnestly in his will to preserve the empire for Theodosius by all his power and foresight. So Arcadius died, having thus arranged his private affairs as well as those of the empire. But Isdigerdes, the Persian King, when he saw this writing which was duly delivered to him, being even before a sovereign whose nobility of character had won for him the greatest renown, did then display a virtue at once amazing and remarkable. For, loyally observing the behests of Arcadius, he adopted and continued without interruption a policy of profound peace with the Romans, and thus preserved the empire for Theodosius. Indeed, he straightway dispatched a letter to the Roman senate, not declining the office of guardian of the Emperor Theodosius, and threatening war against any who should attempt to enter into a conspiracy against him.

441 A.D.

When Theodosius had grown to manhood and was in the prime of life, and Isdigerdes had been taken from the world by disease, Vararanes, the Persian King, invaded the Roman domains with a mighty army; however he did no damage, but returned to his home without accomplishing anything. This came about in the following way. Anatolius, General of the East, had, as it happened, been sent by the Emperor Theodosius as ambassador to the Persians, alone and unaccompanied; as he approached the Median army, solitary as he was, he leapt down from his horse, and advanced on foot toward Vararanes. And when Vararanes saw him, he enquired from those who were near who this man could be who was coming forward. And they replied that he was the general of the Romans. Thereupon the king was so dumbfounded by this excessive degree of respect that he himself wheeled his horse about and rode away, and the whole Persian host followed him. When he had reached his own

territory, he received the envoy with great cordiality, and granted the treaty of peace on the terms which Anatolius desired of him; one condition, however, he added, that neither party should construct any new fortification in his own territory in the neighborhood of the boundary line between the two countries. When this treaty had been executed, both sovereigns then continued to administer the affairs of their respective countries as seemed best to them.

### III

At a later time the Persian King Perozes became involved in a war concerning boundaries with the nation of the Ephthalitae Huns, who are called White Huns, gathered an imposing army, and marched against them. The Ephthalitae are of the stock of the Huns in fact as well as in name; however they do not mingle with any of the Huns known to us, for they occupy a land neither adjoining nor even very near to them; but their territory lies immediately to the north of Persia; indeed their city, called Gorgo, is located over against the Persian frontier, and is consequently the centre of frequent contests concerning boundary lines between the two peoples. For they are not nomads like the other Hunnic peoples, but for a long period have been established in a goodly land. As a result of this they have never made any incursion into the Roman territory except in company with the Median army. They are the only ones among the Huns who have white bodies and countenances which are not ugly. It is also true that their manner of living is unlike that of their kinsmen, nor do they live a savage life as they do; but they are ruled by one king, and since they possess a lawful constitution, they observe right and justice in their dealings both with one another and with their neighbors, in no degree less than the Romans and the Persians. Moreover, the wealthy citizens are in the habit of attaching to themselves friends to the number of twenty or more, as the case may be, and these become permanently their banquet-companions, and have a share in all their property, enjoying some kind of a common right in this matter. Then, when the man who has gathered such a company together comes to die, it is the custom that all these men be borne alive into the tomb with him.

Perozes, marching against these Ephthalitae, was accompanied by an ambassador, Eusebius by name, who, as it happened, had been sent to his court by the Emperor Zeno. Now the Ephthalitae made it appear to their enemy that they had turned to flight because they were wholly terrified by their attack, and they retired with all speed to a place which was shut in on every side by precipitous mountains, and abundantly screened by a close forest of wide-spreading trees. Now as one advanced between the mountains to a great distance, a broad way appeared in the valley, extending apparently to an indefinite distance, but at the end it had no outlet at all, but terminated in the very midst of the circle of mountains. So Perozes, with no thought at all of treachery, and forgetting that he was marching in a hostile country, continued the pursuit without the least caution. A small body of the Huns were in flight before him, while the greater part of their force, by concealing themselves in the rough country, got in the rear of the hostile army; but as yet they desired not to be seen by them, in order that they might advance well into the trap and get as far as possible in among the mountains, and thus be no longer able to turn back. When the Medes began to realize all this (for they now began to have a glimmering of their peril), though they refrained from speaking of the situation themselves through fear of Perozes, yet they earnestly entreated Eusebius to urge upon the king, who was completely ignorant of his own plight, that he should take counsel rather than make an untimely display of daring, and consider well whether there was any way of safety open to them. So he went before Perozes, but by no means revealed the calamity which was upon them; instead he began with a fable,

telling how a lion once happened upon a goat bound down and bleating on a mound of no very great height, and how the lion, bent upon making a feast of the goat, rushed forward with intent to seize him, but fell into a trench exceedingly deep, in which was a circular path, narrow and endless (for it had no outlet anywhere), which indeed the owners of the goat had constructed for this very purpose, and they had placed the goat above it to be a bait for the lion. When Perozes heard this, a fear came over him lest perchance the Medes had brought harm upon themselves by their pursuit of the enemy. He therefore advanced no further, but, remaining where he was, began to consider the situation. By this time the Huns were following him without any concealment, and were guarding the entrance of the place in order that their enemy might no longer be able to withdraw to the rear. Then at last the Persians saw clearly in what straits they were, and they felt that the situation was desperate; for they had no hope that they would ever escape from the peril. Then the king of the Ephthalitae sent some of his followers to Perozes; he upbraided him at length for his senseless foolhardiness, by which he had wantonly destroyed both himself and the Persian people, but he announced that even so the Huns would grant them deliverance, if Perozes should consent to prostrate himself before him as having proved himself master, and, taking the oaths traditional among the Persians, should give pledges that they would never again take the field against the nation of the Ephthalitae. When Perozes heard this, he held a consultation with the Magi who were present and enquired of them whether he must comply with the terms dictated by the enemy. The Magi replied that, as to the oath, he should settle the matter according to his own pleasure; as for the rest, however, he should circumvent his enemy by craft. And they reminded him that it was the custom among the Persians to prostrate themselves before the rising sun each day; he should, therefore, watch the time closely and meet the leader of the Ephthalitae at dawn, and then, turning toward the rising sun, make his obeisance. In this way, they explained, he would be able in the future to escape the ignominy of the deed. Perozes accordingly gave the pledges concerning the peace, and prostrated himself before his foe exactly as the Magi had suggested, and so, with the whole Median army intact, gladly retired homeward.

#### IV

Not long after this, disregarding the oath he had sworn, he was eager to avenge himself upon the Huns for the insult done him. He therefore straightway gathered together from the whole land all the Persians and their allies, and led them against the Ephthalitae; of all his sons he left behind him only one, Cabades by name, who, as it happened, was just past the age of boyhood; all the others, about thirty in number, he took with him. The Ephthalitae, upon learning of his invasion, were aggrieved at the deception they had suffered at the hands of their enemy, and bitterly reproached their king as having abandoned them to the Medes. He, with a laugh, enquired of them what in the world of theirs he had abandoned, whether their land or their arms or any other part of their possessions. They thereupon retorted that he had abandoned nothing, except, forsooth, the one opportunity on which, as it turned out, everything else depended. Now the Ephthalitae with all zeal demanded that they should go out to meet the invaders, but the king sought to restrain them at any rate for the moment. For he insisted that as yet they had received no definite information as to the invasion, for the Persians were still within their own boundaries. So, remaining where he was, he busied himself as follows. In the plain where the Persians were to make their irruption into the land of the Ephthalitae he marked off a tract of very great extent and made a deep trench of sufficient width; but in the centre he left a small portion of ground intact, enough to serve as a way for ten horses. Over the trench he placed reeds, and upon the reeds he scattered earth, thereby concealing the true surface. He then directed the forces



of the Huns that, when the time came to retire inside the trench, they should draw themselves together into a narrow column and pass rather slowly across this neck of land, taking care that they should not fall into the ditch. And he hung from the top of the royal banner the salt over which Perozes had once sworn the oath which he had disregarded in taking the field against the Huns. Now as long as he heard that the enemy were in their own territory, he remained at rest; but when he learned from his scouts that they had reached the city of Gorgo which lies on the extreme Persian frontier, and that departing thence they were now advancing against his army, remaining himself with the greater part of his troops inside the trench, he sent forward a small detachment with instructions to allow themselves to be seen at a distance by the enemy in the plain, and, when once they had been seen, to flee at full speed to the rear, keeping in mind his command concerning the trench as soon as they drew near to it. They did as directed, and, as they approached the trench, they drew themselves into a narrow column, and all passed over and joined the rest of the army. But the Persians, having no means of perceiving the stratagem, gave chase at full speed across a very level plain, possessed as they were by a spirit of fury against the enemy, and fell into the trench, every man of them, not alone the first but also those who followed in the rear. For since they entered into the pursuit with great fury, as I have said, they failed to notice the catastrophe which had befallen their leaders, but fell in on top of them with their horses and lances, so that, as was natural, they both destroyed them, and were themselves no less involved in ruin. Among them were Perozes and all his sons. And just as he was about to fall into this pit, they say that he realized the danger, and seized and threw from him the pearl which hung from his right ear,—a gem of wonderful whiteness and greatly prized on account of its extraordinary size—in order, no doubt, that no one might wear it after him; for it was a thing exceedingly beautiful to look upon, such as no king before him had possessed. This story, however, seems to me untrustworthy, because a man who found himself in such peril would have thought of nothing else; but I suppose that his ear was crushed in this disaster, and the pearl disappeared somewhere or other. This pearl the Roman Emperor then made every effort to buy from the Ephthalitae, but was utterly unsuccessful. For the barbarians were not able to find it although they sought it with great labour. However, they say that the Ephthalitae found it later and sold it to Cabades.

The story of this pearl, as told by the Persians, is worth recounting, for perhaps to some it may not seem altogether incredible. For they say that it was lodged in its oyster in the sea which washes the Persian coast, and that the oyster was swimming not far from the shore; both its valves were standing open and the pearl lay between them, a wonderful sight and notable, for no pearl in all history could be compared with it at all, either in size or in beauty. A shark, then, of enormous size and dreadful fierceness, fell in love with this sight and followed close upon it, leaving it neither day nor night; even when he was compelled to take thought for food, he would only look about for something eatable where he was, and when he found some bit, he would snatch it up and eat it hurriedly; then overtaking the oyster immediately, he would sit himself again with the sight he loved. At length a fisherman, they say, noticed what was passing, but in terror of the monster he recoiled from the danger; however, he reported the whole matter to the king, Perozes. Now when Perozes heard his account, they say that a great longing for the pearl came over him, and he urged on this fisherman with many flatteries and hopes of reward. Unable to resist the importunities of the monarch, he is said to have addressed Perozes as follows: "My master, precious to a man is money, more precious still is his life, but most prized of all are his children; and being naturally constrained by his love for them a man might perhaps dare anything. Now I intend to make trial of the monster, and hope to make you master of the pearl. And if I succeed in this struggle, it is plain that henceforth I shall be ranked among those who are counted blessed. For it is not unlikely that you, as King of Kings, will reward

me with all good things; and for me it will be sufficient, even if it so fall out that I gain no reward, to have shown myself a benefactor of my master. But if it must need be that I become the prey of this monster, your task indeed it will be, O King, to requite my children for their father's death. Thus even after my death I shall still be a wage-earner among those closest to me, and you will win greater fame for your goodness,—for in helping my children you will confer a boon upon me, who shall have no power to thank you for the benefit—because generosity is seen to be without alloy only when it is displayed towards the dead." With these words he departed. And when he came to the place where the oyster was accustomed to swim and the shark to follow, he seated himself there upon a rock, watching for an opportunity of catching the pearl alone without its admirer. As soon as it came about that the shark had happened upon something which would serve him for food, and was delaying over it, the fisherman left upon the beach those who were following him for this service, and made straight for the oyster with all his might; already he had seized it and was hastening with all speed to get out of the water, when the shark noticed him and rushed to the rescue. The fisherman saw him coming, and, when he was about to be overtaken not far from the beach, he hurled his booty with all his force upon the land, and was himself soon afterwards seized and destroyed. But the men who had been left upon the beach picked up the pearl, and, conveying it to the king, reported all that had happened. Such, then, is the story which the Persians relate, just as I have set it down, concerning this pearl. But I shall return to the previous narrative.

484 A.D.

Thus Perozes was destroyed and the whole Persian army with him. For the few who by chance did not fall into the ditch found themselves at the mercy of the enemy. As a result of this experience a law was established among the Persians that, while marching in hostile territory, they should never engage in any pursuit, even if it should happen that the enemy had been driven back by force. Thereupon those who had not marched with Perozes and had remained in their own land chose as their king Cabades, the youngest son of Perozes, who was then the only one surviving. At that time, then, the Persians became subject and tributary to the Ephthalitae, until Cabades had established his power most securely and no longer deemed it necessary to pay the annual tribute to them. And the time these barbarians ruled over the Persians was two years.

## V

486 A.D.

But as time went on Cabades became more high-handed in the administration of the government, and introduced innovations into the constitution, among which was a law which he promulgated providing that Persians should have communal intercourse with their women, a measure which by no means pleased the common people. Accordingly they rose against him, removed him from the throne, and kept him in prison in chains. They then chose Blases, the brother of Perozes, to be their king, since, as has been said, no male offspring of Perozes was left, and it is not lawful among the Persians for any man by birth a common citizen to be set upon the throne, except in case the royal family be totally extinct. Blases, upon receiving the royal power, gathered together the nobles of the Persians and held a conference concerning Cabades; for it was not the wish of the majority to put the man to death. After the expression of many opinions on both sides there came forward a certain man of repute among the Persians, whose name was Gousanastades, and whose office that of "chanaranges" (which would be the Persian term for general); his official province lay on the very frontier of the Persian territory in a district which adjoins the land of the

Ephthalitae. Holding up his knife, the kind with which the Persians were accustomed to trim their nails, of about the length of a man's finger, but not one-third as wide as a finger, he said: "You see this knife, how extremely small it is; nevertheless it is able at the present time to accomplish a deed, which, be assured, my dear Persians, a little later two myriads of mail-clad men could not bring to pass." This he said hinting that, if they did not put Cabades to death, he would straightway make trouble for the Persians. But they were altogether unwilling to put to death a man of the royal blood, and decided to confine him in a castle which it is their habit to call the "Prison of Oblivion." For if anyone is cast into it, the law permits no mention of him to be made thereafter, but death is the penalty for the man who speaks his name; for this reason it has received this title among the Persians. On one occasion, however, the History of the Armenians relates that the operation of the law regarding the Prison of Oblivion was suspended by the Persians in the following way.

There was once a truceless war, lasting two and thirty years, between the Persians and the Armenians, when Pacurius was king of the Persians, and of the Armenians, Arsaces, of the line of the Arsacidae. And by the long continuance of this war it came about that both sides suffered beyond measure, and especially the Armenians. But each nation was possessed by such great distrust of the other that neither of them could make overtures of peace to their opponents. In the meantime it happened that the Persians became engaged in a war with certain other barbarians who lived not far from the Armenians. Accordingly the Armenians, in their eagerness to make a display to the Persians of their goodwill and desire for peace, decided to invade the land of these barbarians, first revealing their plan to the Persians. Then they fell upon them unexpectedly and killed almost the whole population, old and young alike. Thereupon Pacurius, who was overjoyed at the deed, sent certain of his trusted friends to Arsaces, and giving him pledges of security, invited him to his presence. And when Arsaces came to him he showed him every kindness, and treated him as a brother on an equal footing with himself. Then he bound him by the most solemn oaths, and he himself swore likewise, that in very truth the Persians and Armenians should thenceforth be friends and allies to each other; thereafter he straightway dismissed Arsaces to return to his own country.

Not long after this certain persons slandered Arsaces, saying that he was purposing to undertake some seditious enterprise. Pacurius was persuaded by these men and again summoned him, intimating that he was anxious to confer with him on general matters. And he, without any hesitation at all, came to the king, taking with him several of the most warlike among the Armenians, and among them Bassicius, who was at once his general and counselor; for he was both brave and sagacious to a remarkable degree. Straightway, then, Pacurius heaped reproach and abuse upon both Arsaces and Bassicius, because, disregarding the sworn compact, they had so speedily turned their thoughts toward secession. They, however, denied the charge, and swore most insistently that no such thing had been considered by them. At first, therefore, Pacurius kept them under guard in disgrace, but after a time he enquired of the Magi what should be done with them. Now the Magi deemed it by no means just to condemn men who denied their guilt and had not been explicitly found guilty, but they suggested to him an artifice by which Arsaces himself might be compelled to become openly his own accuser. They bade him cover the floor of the royal tent with earth, one half from the land of Persia, and the other half from Armenia. This the king did as directed. Then the Magi, after putting the whole tent under a spell by means of some magic rites, bade the king take his walk there in company with Arsaces, reproaching him meanwhile with having violated the sworn agreement. They said, further, that they too must be present at the conversation, for in this way there would be witnesses of all that was said. Accordingly Pacurius straightway summoned Arsaces, and began to walk to and fro with him in the tent in the presence of the Magi; he enquired of the man why he had



disregarded his sworn promises, and was setting about to harass the Persians and Armenians once more with grievous troubles. Now as long as the conversation took place on the ground which was covered with the earth from the land of Persia, Arsaces continued to make denial, and, pledging himself with the most fearful oaths, insisted that he was a faithful subject of Pacurius. But when, in the midst of his speaking, he came to the centre of the tent where they stepped upon Armenian earth, then, compelled by some unknown power, he suddenly changed the tone of his words to one of defiance, and from then on ceased not to threaten Pacurius and the Persians, announcing that he would have vengeance upon them for this insolence as soon as he should become his own master. These words of youthful folly he continued to utter as they walked all the way, until turning back, he came again to the earth from the Persian land. Thereupon, as if chanting a recantation, he was once more a suppliant, offering pitiable explanations to Pacurius. But when he came again to the Armenian earth, he returned to his threats. In this way he changed many times to one side and the other, and concealed none of his secrets. Then at length the Magi passed judgment against him as having violated the treaty and the oaths. Pacurius flayed Bassicius, and, making a bag of his skin, filled it with chaff and suspended it from a lofty tree. As for Arsaces, since Pacurius could by no means bring himself to kill a man of the royal blood, he confined him in the Prison of Oblivion.

After a time, when the Persians were marching against a barbarian nation, they were accompanied by an Armenian who had been especially intimate with Arsaces and had followed him when he went into the Persian land. This man proved himself a capable warrior in this campaign, as Pacurius observed, and was the chief cause of the Persian victory. For this reason Pacurius begged him to make any request he wished, assuring him that he would be refused nothing by him. The Armenian asked for nothing else than that he might for one day pay homage to Arsaces in the way he might desire. Now it annoyed the king exceedingly, that he should be compelled to set aside a law so ancient; however, in order to be wholly true to his word, he permitted that the request be granted. When the man found himself by the king's order in the Prison of Oblivion, he greeted Arsaces, and both men, embracing each other, joined their voices in a sweet lament, and, bewailing the hard fate that was upon them, were able only with difficulty to release each other from the embrace. Then, when they had sated themselves with weeping and ceased from tears, the Armenian bathed Arsaces, and completely adorned his person, neglecting nothing, and, putting on him the royal robe, caused him to recline on a bed of rushes. Then Arsaces entertained those present with a royal banquet just as was formerly his custom. During this feast many speeches were made over the cups which greatly pleased Arsaces, and many incidents occurred which delighted his heart. The drinking was prolonged until nightfall, all feeling the keenest delight in their mutual intercourse; at length they parted from each other with great reluctance, and separated thoroughly imbued with happiness. Then they tell how Arsaces said that after spending the sweetest day of his life, and enjoying the company of the man he had missed most of all, he would no longer willingly endure the miseries of life; and with these words, they say, he dispatched himself with a knife which, as it happened, he had purposely stolen at the banquet, and thus departed from among men. Such then is the story concerning this Arsaces, related in the Armenian History just as I have told it, and it was on that occasion that the law regarding the Prison of Oblivion was set aside. But I must return to the point from which I have strayed.

## VI

While Cabades was in the prison he was cared for by his wife, who went in to him constantly and carried him supplies of food. Now the keeper of the prison began to make

advances to her, for she was exceedingly beautiful to look upon. And when Cabades learned this from his wife, he bade her give herself over to the man to treat as he wished. In this way the keeper of the prison came to be familiar with the woman, and he conceived for her an extraordinary love, and as a result permitted her to go in to her husband just as she wished, and to depart from there again without interference from anyone. Now there was a Persian notable, Seoses by name, a devoted friend of Cabades, who was constantly in the neighborhood of this prison, watching his opportunity, in the hope that he might in some way be able to effect his deliverance. And he sent word to Cabades through his wife that he was keeping horses and men in readiness not far from the prison, and he indicated to him a certain spot. Then one day as night drew near Cabades persuaded his wife to give him her own garment, and, dressing herself in his clothes, to sit instead of him in the prison where he usually sat. In this way, therefore, Cabades made his escape from the prison. For although the guards who were on duty saw him, they supposed that it was the woman, and therefore decided not to hinder or otherwise annoy him. At daybreak they saw in the cell the woman in her husband's clothes, and were so completely deceived as to think that Cabades was there, and this belief prevailed during several days, until Cabades had advanced well on his way. As to the fate which befell the woman after the stratagem had come to light, and the manner in which they punished her, I am unable to speak with accuracy. For the Persian accounts do not agree with each other, and for this reason I omit the narration of them.

Cabades, in company with Seoses, completely escaped detection, and reached the Ephthalitae Huns; there the king gave him his daughter in marriage, and then, since Cabades was now his son-in-law, he put under his command a very formidable army for a campaign against the Persians. This army the Persians were quite unwilling to encounter, and they made haste to flee in every direction. And when Cabades reached the territory where Gousanastades exercised his authority, he stated to some of his friends that he would appoint as chanaranges the first man of the Persians who should on that day come into his presence and offer his services. But even as he said this, he repented his speech, for there came to his mind a law of the Persians which ordains that offices among the Persians shall not be conferred upon others than those to whom each particular honour belongs by right of birth. For he feared lest someone should come to him first who was not a kinsman of the present chanaranges, and that he would be compelled to set aside the law in order to keep his word. Even as he was considering this matter, chance brought it about that, without dishonouring the law, he could still keep his word. For the first man who came to him happened to be Adergoudounbades, a young man who was a relative of Gousanastades and an especially capable warrior. He addressed Cabades as "Lord," and was the first to do obeisance to him as king, and besought him to use him as a slave for any service whatever.

488 A.D.

So Cabades made his way into the royal palace without any trouble, and, taking Blases destitute of defenders, he put out his eyes, using the method of blinding commonly employed by the Persians against malefactors, that is, either by heating olive oil and pouring it, while boiling fiercely, into the wide-open eyes, or by heating in the fire an iron needle, and with this pricking the eyeballs. Thereafter Blases was kept in confinement, having ruled over the Persians two years. Gousanastades was put to death and Adergoudounbades was established in his place in the office of chanaranges, while Seoses was immediately proclaimed "adrastadaran salanes,"—a title designating the one set in authority over all magistrates and over the whole army. Seoses was the first and only man who held this office in Persia; for it was conferred on no one before or after that time. And the kingdom was strengthened by Cabades and guarded securely; for in shrewdness and activity he was surpassed by none.

## VII

A little later Cabades was owing the king of the Ephthalitae a sum of money which he was not able to pay him, and he therefore requested the Roman emperor Anastasius to lend him this money. Whereupon Anastasius conferred with some of his friends and enquired of them whether this should be done; and they would not permit him to make the loan. For, as they pointed out, it was inexpedient to make more secure by means of their money the friendship between their enemies and the Ephthalitae; indeed it was better for the Romans to disturb their relations as much as possible. It was for this reason, and for no just cause, that Cabades decided to make an expedition against the Romans.

502 A.D.

First he invaded the land of the Armenians, moving with such rapidity as to anticipate the news of his coming, and, after plundering the greater part of it in a rapid campaign, he unexpectedly arrived at the city of Amida, which is situated in Mesopotamia, and, although the season was winter, he invested the town. Now the citizens of Amida had no soldiers at hand, seeing that it was a time of peace and prosperity, and in other respects were utterly unprepared; nevertheless they were quite unwilling to yield to the enemy, and showed an unexpected fortitude in holding out against dangers and hardships.

Now there was among the Syrians a certain just man, Jacobus by name, who had trained himself with exactitude in matters pertaining to religion. This man had confined himself many years before in a place called Endielon, a day's journey from Amida, in order that he might with more security devote himself to pious contemplation. The men of this place, assisting his purpose, had surrounded him with a kind of fencing, in which the stakes were not continuous, but set at intervals, so that those who approached could see and hold converse with him. And they had constructed for him a small roof over his head, sufficient to keep off the rain and snow. There this man had been sitting for a long time, never yielding either to heat or cold, and sustaining his life with certain seeds, which he was accustomed to eat, not indeed every day, but only at long intervals. Now some of the Ephthalitae who were overrunning the country thereabout saw this Jacobus and with great eagerness drew their bows with intent to shoot at him. But the hands of every one of them became motionless and utterly unable to manage the bow. When this was noised about through the army and came to the ears of Cabades, he desired to see the thing with his own eyes; and when he saw it, both he and the Persians who were with him were seized with great astonishment, and he entreated Jacobus to forgive the barbarians their crime. And he forgave them with a word, and the men were released from their distress. Cabades then bade the man ask for whatever he wished, supposing that he would ask for a great sum of money, and he also added with youthful recklessness that he would be refused nothing by him. But he requested Cabades to grant to him all the men who during that war should come to him as fugitives. This request Cabades granted, and gave him a written pledge of his personal safety. And great numbers of men, as might be expected, came flocking to him from all sides and found safety there; for the deed became widely known. Thus, then, did these things take place.

Cabades, in besieging Amida, brought against every part of the defences the engines known as rams; but the townspeople constantly broke off the heads of the rams by means of timbers thrown across them. However, Cabades did not slacken his efforts until he realized that the wall could not be successfully assailed in this way. For, though he battered the wall many times, he was quite unable to break down any portion of the defence, or even to shake it; so secure had been the work of the builders who had constructed it long before. Failing in this, Cabades raised an artificial hill to threaten the city, considerably overtopping the wall;

but the besieged, starting from the inside of their defences, made a tunnel extending under the hill, and from there stealthily carried out the earth, until they hollowed out a great part of the inside of the hill. However, the outside kept the form which it had at first assumed, and afforded no opportunity to anyone of discovering what was being done. Accordingly many Persians mounted it, thinking it safe, and stationed themselves on the summit with the purpose of shooting down upon the heads of those inside the fortifications. But with the great mass of men crowding upon it with a rush, the hill suddenly fell in and killed almost all of them. Cabades, then, finding no remedy for the situation, decided to raise the siege, and he issued orders to the army to retreat on the morrow. Then indeed the besieged, as though they had no thought of their danger, began laughingly from the fortifications to jeer at the barbarians. Besides this some courtesans shamelessly drew up their clothing and displayed to Cabades, who was standing close by, those parts of a woman's body which it is not proper that men should see uncovered. This was plainly seen by the Magi, and they thereupon came before the king and tried to prevent the retreat, declaring as their interpretation of what had happened that the citizens of Amida would shortly disclose to Cabades all their secret and hidden things. So the Persian army remained there.

Not many days later one of the Persians saw close by one of the towers the mouth of an old underground passage, which was insecurely concealed with some few small stones. In the night he came there alone, and, making trial of the entrance, got inside the circuit-wall; then at daybreak he reported the whole matter to Cabades. The king himself on the following night came to the spot with a few men, bringing ladders which he had made ready. And he was favoured by a piece of good fortune; for the defence of the very tower which happened to be nearest to the passage had fallen by lot to those of the Christians who are most careful in their observances, whom they call monks. These men, as chance would have it, were keeping some annual religious festival to God on that day. When night came on they all felt great weariness on account of the festival, and, having sated themselves with food and drink beyond their wont, they fell into a sweet and gentle sleep, and were consequently quite unaware of what was going on. So the Persians made their way through the passage inside the fortifications, a few at a time, and, mounting the tower, they found the monks still sleeping and slew them to a man. When Cabades learned this, he brought his ladders up to the wall close by this tower. It was already day. And those of the townsmen who were keeping guard on the adjoining tower became aware of the disaster, and ran thither with all speed to give assistance. Then for a long time both sides struggled to crowd back the other, and already the townsmen were gaining the advantage, killing many of those who had mounted the wall, and throwing back the men on the ladders, and they came very near to averting the danger. But Cabades drew his sword and, terrifying the Persians constantly with it, rushed in person to the ladders and would not let them draw back, and death was the punishment for those who dared turn to leave. As a result of this the Persians by their numbers gained the upper hand and overcame their antagonists in the fight. So the city was captured by storm on the eightieth day after the beginning of the siege.

Jan. 11 503 A.D.

There followed a great massacre of the townspeople, until one of the citizens—an old man and a priest—approached Cabades as he was riding into the city, and said that it was not a kingly act to slaughter captives. Then Cabades, still moved with passion, replied: "But why did you decide to fight against me?" And the old man answered quickly: "Because God willed to give Amida into your hand not so much because of our decision as of your valour." Cabades was pleased by this speech, and permitted no further slaughter, but he bade the Persians plunder the property and make slaves of the survivors, and he directed them to choose out for himself all the notables among them.

A short time after this he departed, leaving there to garrison the place a thousand men under command of Glonos, a Persian, and some few unfortunates among the citizens of Amida who were destined to minister as servants to the daily wants of the Persians; he himself with all the remainder of the army and the captives marched away homeward. These captives were treated by Cabades with a generosity befitting a king; for after a short time he released all of them to return to their homes, but he pretended that they had escaped from him by stealth; and the Roman Emperor, Anastasius, also showed them honour worthy of their bravery, for he remitted to the city all the annual taxes for the space of seven years, and presented all of them as a body and each one of them separately with many good things, so that they came fully to forget the misfortunes which had befallen them. But this happened in later years.

## VIII

At that time the Emperor Anastasius, upon learning that Amida was being besieged, dispatched with all speed an army of sufficient strength. But in this army there were general officers in command of every symmory, while the supreme command was divided between the following four generals: Areobindus, at that time General of the East, the son-in-law of Olyvrius, who had been Emperor in the West not long before; Celer, commander of the palace troops (this officer the Romans are accustomed to call "magister"); besides these still, there were the commanders of troops in Byzantium, Patricias, the Phrygian, and Hypatius, the nephew of the emperor; these four, then, were the generals. With them also was associated Justinus, who at a later time became emperor upon the death of Anastasius, and Patriciolus with his son Vitalianus, who raised an armed insurrection against the Emperor Anastasius not long afterwards and made himself tyrant; also Pharesmanes, a native of Colchis, and a man of exceptional ability as a warrior, and the Goths Godidisklus and Bessas, who were among those Goths who had not followed Theoderic when he went from Thrace into Italy, both of them men of the noblest birth and experienced in matters pertaining to warfare; many others, too, who were men of high station, joined this army. For such an army, they say, was never assembled by the Romans against the Persians either before or after that time. However, all these men did not assemble in one body, nor did they form a single army as they marched, but each commander by himself led his own division separately against the enemy. And as manager of the finances of the army Apion, an Aegyptian, was sent, a man of eminence among the patricians and extremely energetic; and the emperor in a written statement declared him partner in the royal power, in order that he might have authority to administer the finances as he wished.

Now this army was mustered with considerable delay, and advanced with little speed. As a result of this they did not find the barbarians in the Roman territory; for the Persians had made their attack suddenly, and had immediately withdrawn with all their booty to their own land. Now no one of the generals desired for the present to undertake the siege of the garrison left in Amida, for they learned that they had carried in a large supply of provisions; but they made haste to invade the land of the enemy. However they did not advance together against the barbarians but they encamped apart from one another as they proceeded. When Cabades learned this (for he happened to be close by), he came with all speed to the Roman frontier and confronted them. But the Romans had not yet learned that Cabades was moving against them with his whole force, and they supposed that some small Persian army was there. Accordingly the forces of Areobindus established their camp in a place called Arzamon, at a distance of two days' journey from the city of Constantina, and



those of Patricius and Hypatius in a place called Siphrios, which is distant not less than three hundred and fifty stades from the city of Amida. As for Celer, he had not yet arrived.

Areobindus, when he ascertained that Cabades was coming upon them with his whole army, abandoned his camp, and, in company with all his men, turned to flight and retired on the run to Constantina. And the enemy, coming up not long afterwards, captured the camp without a man in it and all the money it contained. From there they advanced swiftly against the other Roman army. Now the troops of Patricius and Hypatius had happened upon eight hundred Ephthalitae who were marching in advance of the Persian army, and they had killed practically all of them. Then, since they had learned nothing of Cabades and the Persian army, supposing that they had won the victory, they began to conduct themselves with less caution. At any rate they had stacked their arms and were preparing themselves a lunch; for already the appropriate time of day was drawing near. Now a small stream flowed in this place and in it the Romans began to wash the pieces of meat which they were about to eat; some, too, distressed by the heat, were bathing themselves in the stream; and in consequence the brook flowed on with a muddy current. But while Cabades, learning what had befallen the Ephthalitae, was advancing against the enemy with all speed, he noticed that the water of the brook was disturbed, and divining what was going on, he came to the conclusion that his opponents were unprepared, and gave orders to charge upon them immediately at full speed.

Aug. 503 A.D.

Straightway, then, they fell upon them feasting and unarmed. And the Romans did not withstand their onset, nor did they once think of resistance, but they began to flee as each one could; and some of them were captured and slain, while others climbed the hill which rises there and threw themselves down the cliff in panic and much confusion. And they say that not a man escaped from there; but Patricius and Hypatius had succeeded in getting away at the beginning of the onset. After this Cabades retired homeward with his whole army, since hostile Huns had made an invasion into his land, and with this people he waged a long war in the northerly portion of his realm. In the meantime the other Roman army also came, but they did nothing worth recounting, because, it seems, no one was made commander-in-chief of the expedition; but all the generals were of equal rank, and consequently they were always opposing one another's opinions and were utterly unable to unite. However Celer, with his contingent, crossed the Nymphius River and made some sort of an invasion into Arzanene. This river is one very close to Martyropolis, about three hundred stades from Amida. So Celer's troops plundered the country thereabout and returned not long after, and the whole invasion was completed in a short time.

## IX

After this Areobindus went to Byzantium at the summons of the emperor, while the other generals reached Amida, and, in spite of the winter season, invested it. And although they made many attempts they were unable to carry the fortress by storm, but they were on the point of accomplishing their object by starvation; for all the provisions of the besieged were exhausted. The generals, however, had ascertained nothing of the straits in which the enemy were; but since they saw that their own troops were distressed by the labour of the siege and the wintry weather, and at the same time suspected that a Persian army would be coming upon them before long, they were eager to quit the place on any terms whatever. The Persians, on their part, not knowing what would become of them in such terrible straits, continued to conceal scrupulously their lack of the necessities of life, and made it appear that they had an abundance of all provisions, wishing to return to their homes with the

reputation of honour. So a proposal was discussed between them, according to which the Persians were to deliver over the city to the Romans upon receipt of one thousand pounds of gold. Both parties then gladly executed the terms of the agreement, and the son of Glonos, upon receiving the money, delivered over Amida to the Romans. For Glonos himself had already died in the following manner.

When the Romans had not yet encamped before the city of Amida but were not far from its vicinity, a certain countryman, who was accustomed to enter the city secretly with fowls and loaves and many other delicacies, which he sold to this Glonos at a great price, came before the general Patricius and promised to deliver into his hands Glonos and two hundred Persians, if he should receive from him assurance of some requital. And the general promised that he should have everything he desired, and thus dismissed the fellow. He then tore his garments in a dreadful manner, and, assuming the aspect of one who had been weeping, entered the city. And coming before Glonos, and tearing his hair he said: "O Master, I happened to be bringing in for you all the good things from my village, when some Roman soldiers chanced upon me (for, as you know, they are constantly wandering about the country here in small bands and doing violence to the miserable country-folk), and they inflicted upon me blows not to be endured, and, taking away everything, they departed,—the robbers, whose ancient custom it is to fear the Persians and to beat the farmers. But do you, O Master, take thought to defend yourself and us and the Persians. For if you go hunting into the outskirts of the city, you will find rare game. For the accursed rascals go about by fours or fives to do their robbery." Thus he spoke. And Glonos was persuaded, and enquired of the fellow about how many Persians he thought would be sufficient for him to carry out the enterprise. He said that about fifty would do, for they would never meet more than five of them going together; however, in order to forestall any unexpected circumstance, it would do no harm to take with him even one hundred men; and if he should double this number it would be still better from every point of view; for no harm could come to a man from the larger number. Glonos accordingly picked out two hundred horsemen and bade the fellow lead the way for them. But he insisted that it was better for him to be sent first to spy out the ground, and, if he should bring back word that he had seen Romans still going about in the same districts, that then the Persians should make their sally at the fitting moment. Accordingly, since he seemed to Glonos to speak well, he was sent forward by his own order. Then he came before the general Patricius and explained everything; and the general sent with him two of his own body-guard and a thousand soldiers. These he concealed about a village called Thilasamon, forty stades distant from Amida, among valleys and woody places, and instructed them to remain there in this ambush; he himself then proceeded to the city on the run, and telling Glonos that the prey was ready, he led him and the two hundred horsemen upon the ambush of the enemy. And when they passed the spot where the Romans were lying in wait, without being observed by Glonos or any of the Persians, he roused the Romans from their ambuscade and pointed out to them the enemy. And when the Persians saw the men coming against them, they were astounded at the suddenness of the thing, and were in much distress what to do. For neither could they retire to the rear, since their opponents were behind them, nor were they able to flee anywhere else in a hostile land. But as well as they could under the circumstances, they arrayed themselves for battle and tried to drive back their assailants; but being at a great disadvantage in numbers they were vanquished, and all of them together with Glonos were destroyed. Now when the son of Glonos learned of this, being deeply grieved and at the same time furious with anger because he had not been able to defend his father, he fired the sanctuary of Symeon, a holy man, where Glonos had his lodging. It must be said, however, that with the exception of this one building, neither Glonos nor Cabades, nor indeed any

other of the Persians, saw fit either to tear down or to destroy in any other way any building in Amida at any rate, or outside this city. But I shall return to the previous narrative.

504 A.D.

Thus the Romans by giving the money recovered Amida two years after it had been captured by the enemy. And when they got into the city, their own negligence and the hardships under which the Persians had maintained themselves were discovered. For upon reckoning the amount of grain left there and the number of barbarians who had gone out, they found that rations for about seven days were left in the city, although Glonas and his son had been for a long time doling out provisions to the Persians more sparingly than they were needed. For to the Romans who had remained with them in the city, as I have stated above, they had decided to dispense nothing at all from the time when their enemy began the siege; and so these men at first resorted to unaccustomed foods and laid hold on every forbidden thing, and at the last they even tasted each other's blood. So the generals realized that they had been deceived by the barbarians, and they reproached the soldiers for their lack of self-control, because they had shewn themselves wanting in obedience to them, when it was possible to capture as prisoners of war such a multitude of Persians and the son of Glonas and the city itself, while they had in consequence attached to themselves signal disgrace by carrying Roman money to the enemy, and had taken Amida from the Persians by purchasing it with silver.

506 A.D.

After this the Persians, since their war with the Huns kept dragging on, entered into a treaty with the Romans, which was arranged by them for seven years, and was made by the Roman Celer and the Persian Aspebedes; both armies then retired homeward and remained at peace. Thus, then, as has been told, began the war of the Romans and the Persians, and to this end did it come. But I shall now turn to the narration of the events touching the Caspian Gates.

## X

The Taurus mountain range of Cilicia passes first Cappadocia and Armenia and the land of the so-called Persarmenians, then also Albania and Iberia and all the other countries in this region, both independent and subject to Persia. For it extends to a great distance, and as one proceeds along this range, it always spreads out to an extraordinary breadth and rises to an imposing height. And as one passes beyond the boundary of Iberia there is a sort of path in a very narrow passage, extending for a distance of fifty stades. This path terminates in a place cut off by cliffs and, as it seems, absolutely impossible to pass through. For from there no way out appears, except indeed a small gate set there by nature, just as if it had been made by the hand of man, which has been called from of old the Caspian Gates. From there on there are plains suitable for riding and extremely well watered, and extensive tracts used as pasture land for horses, and level besides. Here almost all the nations of the Huns are settled, extending as far as the Maeotic lake. Now if these Huns go through the gate which I have just mentioned into the land of the Persians and the Romans, they come with their horses fresh and without making any detour or encountering any precipitous places, except in those fifty stades over which, as has been said, they pass to the boundary of Iberia. If, however, they go by any other passes, they reach their destination with great difficulty, and can no longer use the same horses. For the detours which they are forced to make are many and steep besides. When this was observed by Alexander, the son of Philip, he constructed gates in the aforesaid place and established a fortress there. And this was held by many men in turn as time went on, and finally by Ambazouces, a Hun by birth, but a

friend of the Romans and the Emperor Anastasius. Now when this Ambazouces had reached an advanced age and was near to death, he sent to Anastasius asking that money be given him, on condition that he hand over the fortress and the Caspian Gates to the Romans. But the Emperor Anastasius was incapable of doing anything without careful investigation, nor was it his custom to act thus: reasoning, therefore, that it was impossible for him to support soldiers in a place which was destitute of all good things, and which had nowhere in the neighbourhood a nation subject to the Romans, he expressed deep gratitude to the man for his good-will toward him, but by no means accepted this proposition. So Ambazouces died of disease not long afterwards, and Cabades overpowered his sons and took possession of the Gates.

The Emperor Anastasius, after concluding the treaty with Cabades, built a city in a place called Daras, exceedingly strong and of real importance, bearing the name of the emperor himself. Now this place is distant from the city of Nisibis one hundred stades lacking two, and from the boundary line which divides the Romans from the Persians about twenty-eight. And the Persians, though eager to prevent the building, were quite unable to do so, being constrained by the war with the Huns in which they were engaged. But as soon as Cabades brought this to an end, he sent to the Romans and accused them of having built a city hard by the Persian frontier, though this had been forbidden in the agreement previously made between the Medes and the Romans. At that time, therefore, the Emperor Anastasius desired, partly by threats, and partly by emphasizing his friendship with him and by bribing him with no mean sum of money, to deceive him and to remove the accusation. And another city also was built by this emperor, similar to the first, in Armenia, hard by the boundaries of Persarmenia; now in this place there had been a village from of old, but it had taken on the dignity of a city by the favour of the Emperor Theodosius even to the name, for it had come to be named after him. But Anastasius surrounded it with a very substantial wall, and thus gave offence to the Persians no less than by the other city; for both of them are strongholds menacing their country.

## XI

Aug. 1, 518 A.D.

And when a little later Anastasius died, Justinus received the empire, forcing aside all the kinsmen of Anastasius, although they were numerous and also very distinguished. Then indeed a sort of anxiety came over Cabades, lest the Persians should make some attempt to overthrow his house as soon as he should end his life; for it was certain that he would not pass on the kingdom to any one of his sons without opposition. For while the law called to the throne the eldest of his children Caoses by reason of his age, he was by no means pleasing to Cabades; and the father's judgment did violence to the law of nature and of custom as well. And Zames, who was second in age, having had one of his eyes struck out, was prevented by the law. For it is not lawful for a one-eyed man or one having any other deformity to become king over the Persians. But Chosroes, who was born to him by the sister of Aspebedes, the father loved exceedingly; seeing, however, that all the Persians, practically speaking, felt an extravagant admiration for the manliness of Zames (for he was a capable warrior), and worshipped his other virtues, he feared lest they should rise against Chosroes and do irreparable harm to the family and to the kingdom. Therefore it seemed best to him to arrange with the Romans to put an end both to the war and the causes of war, on condition that Chosroes be made an adopted son of the Emperor Justinus; for only in this way could he preserve stability in the government. Accordingly he sent envoys to treat of this matter and a letter to the Emperor Justinus in Byzantium. And the letter was written

in this wise: "Unjust indeed has been the treatment which we have received at the hands of the Romans, as even you yourself know, but I have seen fit to abandon entirely all the charges against you, being assured of this, that the most truly victorious of all men would be those who, with justice on their side, are still willingly overcome and vanquished by their friends. However I ask of you a certain favour in return for this, which would bind together in kinship and in the good-will which would naturally spring from this relation not only ourselves but also all our subjects, and which would be calculated to bring us to a satiety of the blessings of peace. My proposal, then, is this, that you should make my son Chosroes, who will be my successor to the throne, your adopted son."

When this message was brought to the Emperor Justinus, he himself was overjoyed and Justinian also, the nephew of the emperor, who indeed was expected to receive from him the empire. And they were making all haste to perform the act of setting down in Writing the adoption, as the law of the Romans prescribes—and would have done so, had they not been prevented by Proclus, who was at that time a counsellor to the emperor, holding the office of quaestor, as it is called, a just man and one whom it was manifestly impossible to bribe; for this reason he neither readily proposed any law, nor was he willing to disturb in any way the settled order of things; and he at that time also opposed the proposition, speaking as follows: "To venture on novel projects is not my custom, and indeed I dread them more than any others; for where there is innovation security is by no means preserved. And it seems to me that, even if one should be especially bold in this matter, he would feel reluctance to do the thing and would tremble at the storm which would arise from it; for I believe that nothing else is before our consideration at the present time than the question how we may hand over the Roman empire to the Persians on a seemly pretext. For they make no concealment nor do they employ any blinds, but explicitly acknowledging their purpose they claim without more ado to rob us of our empire, seeking to veil the manifestness of their deceit under a shew of simplicity, and hide a shameless intent behind a pretended unconcern. And yet both of you ought to repel this attempt of the barbarians with all your power; thou, O Emperor, in order that thou mayst not be the last Emperor of the Romans, and thou, O General, that thou mayst not prove a stumbling block to thyself as regards coming to the throne. For other crafty devices which are commonly concealed by a pretentious shew of words might perhaps need an interpreter for the many, but this embassy openly and straight from the very first words means to make this Chosroes, whoever he is, the adopted heir of the Roman Emperor. For I would have you reason thus in this matter: by nature the possessions of fathers are due to their sons and while the laws among all men are always in conflict with each other by reason of their varying nature, in this matter both among the Romans and among all barbarians they are in agreement and harmony with each other, in that they declare sons to be masters of their fathers' inheritance. Take this first resolve if you choose: if you do you must agree to all its consequences."

Thus spoke Proclus; and the emperor and his nephew gave ear to his words and deliberated upon what should be done. In the meantime Cabades sent another letter also to the Emperor Justinus, asking him to send men of repute in order to establish peace with him, and to indicate by letter the manner in which it would be his desire to accomplish the adoption of his son. And then, indeed, still more than before Proclus decried the attempt of the Persians, and insisted that their concern was to make over to themselves as securely as possible the Roman power. And he proposed as his opinion that the peace should be concluded with them with all possible speed, and that the noblest men should be sent by the emperor for this purpose; and that these men must answer plainly to Cabades, when he enquired in what manner the adoption of Chosroes should be accomplished, that it must be of the sort befitting a barbarian, and his meaning was that the barbarians adopt sons, not by



a document, but by arms and armour. Accordingly the Emperor Justinus dismissed the envoys, promising that men who were the noblest of the Romans would follow them not long afterwards, and that they would arrange a settlement regarding the peace and regarding Chosroes in the best possible way. He also answered Cabades by letter to the same effect. Accordingly there were sent from the Romans Hypatius, the nephew of Anastasius, the late emperor, a patrician who also held the office of General of the East, and Rufinus, the son of Silvanus, a man of note among the patricians and known to Cabades through their fathers; from the Persians came one of great power and high authority, Seoses by name, whose title was adrastadaran salanes, and Mebodes, who held the office of magister. These men came together at a certain spot which is on the boundary line between the land of the Romans and the Persians: there they met and negotiated as to how they should do away with their differences and settle effectually the question of the peace. Chosroes also came to the Tigris River, which is distant from the city of Nisibis about two days journey, in order that, when the details of the peace should seem to both parties to be as well arranged as possible, he might betake himself in person to Byzantium. Now many words were spoken on both sides touching the differences between them, and in particular Seoses made mention of the land of Colchis, which is now called Lazica, saying that it had been subject to the Persians from of old and that the Romans had taken it from them by violence and held it on no just grounds. When the Romans heard this, they were indignant to think that even Lazica should be disputed by the Persians. And when they in turn stated that the adoption of Chosroes must take place just as is proper for a barbarian, it seemed to the Persians unbearable. The two parties therefore separated and departed homeward, and Chosroes with nothing accomplished was off to his father, deeply injured at what had taken place and vowing vengeance on the Romans for their insult to him.

After this Mebodes began to slander Seoses to Cabades, saying that he had proposed the discussion of Lazica purposely, although he had not been instructed to do so by his master, thereby frustrating the peace, and also that he had had words previously with Hypatius, who was by no means well-disposed toward his own sovereign and was trying to prevent the conclusion of peace and the adoption of Chosroes; and many other accusations also were brought forward by the enemies of Seoses, and he was summoned to trial. Now the whole Persian council gathered to sit in judgment moved more by envy than by respect for the law. For they were thoroughly hostile to his office, which was unfamiliar to them and also were embittered by the natural temper of the man. For while Seoses was a man quite impossible to bribe and a most exact respecter of justice, he was afflicted with a degree of arrogance not to be compared with that of any other. This quality, indeed, seems to be inbred in the Persian officials, but in Seoses even they thought that the malady had developed to an altogether extraordinary degree. So his accusers said all those things which have been indicated above, and added to this that the man was by no means willing to live in the established fashion or to uphold the institutions of the Persians. For he both revered strange divinities, and lately, when his wife had died, he had buried her, though it was forbidden by the laws of the Persians ever to hide in the earth the bodies of the dead. The judges therefore condemned the man to death, while Cabades, though seeming to be deeply moved with sympathy as a friend of Seoses, was by no means willing to rescue him. He did not, on the other hand, make it known that he was angry with him, but, as he said, he was not willing to undo the laws of the Persians, although he owed the man the price of his life, since Seoses was chiefly responsible both for the fact that he was alive and also that he was king. Thus, then, Seoses was condemned and was removed from among men. And the office which began with him ended also with him. For no other man has been made adrastadaran salanes. Rufinus also slandered Hypatius to the emperor. As a result of this the emperor reduced him from his office, and tortured most cruelly certain of his associates

only to find out that this slander was absolutely unsound; beyond this, however, he did Hypatius no harm.

## XII

Immediately after this, Cabades, though eager to make some kind of an invasion into the land of the Romans, was utterly unable to do so on account of the following obstacle which happened to arise. The Iberians, who live in Asia, are settled in the immediate neighbourhood of the Caspian Gates, which lie to the north of them. Adjoining them on the left towards the west is Lazica, and on the right towards the east are the Persian peoples. This nation is Christian and they guard the rites of this faith more closely than any other men known to us, but they have been subjects of the Persian king, as it happens, from ancient times. And just then Cabades was desirous of forcing them to adopt the rites of his own religion. And he enjoined upon their king, Gourgenes, to do all things as the Persians are accustomed to do them, and in particular not under any circumstances to hide their dead in the earth, but to throw them all to the birds and dogs. For this reason, then, Gourgenes wished to go over to the Emperor Justinus, and he asked that he might receive pledges that the Romans would never abandon the Iberians to the Persians. And the emperor gave him these pledges with great eagerness, and he sent Probus, the nephew of the late emperor Anastasius, a man of patrician rank, with a great sum of money to Bosphorus, that he might win over with money an army of Huns and send them as allies to the Iberians. This Bosphorus is a city by the sea, on the left as one sails into the so-called Euxine Sea, twenty days journey distant from the city of Cherson, which is the limit of the Roman territory. Between these cities everything is held by the Huns. Now in ancient times the people of Bosphorus were autonomous, but lately they had decided to become subject to the Emperor Justinus. Probus, however, departed from there without accomplishing his mission, and the emperor sent Peter as general with some Huns to Lazica to fight with all their strength for Gourgenes. Meanwhile Cabades sent a very considerable army against Gourgenes and the Iberians, and as general a Persian bearing the title of "varizes," Boes by name. Then it was seen that Gourgenes was too weak to withstand the attack of the Persians, for the help from the Romans was insufficient, and with all the notables of the Iberians he fled to Lazica, taking with him his wife and children and also his brothers, of whom Peranius was the eldest. And when they had reached the boundaries of Lazica, they remained there, and, sheltering themselves by the roughness of the country, they took their stand against the enemy. And the Persians followed after them but did nothing deserving even of mention since the circumstance of the rough country was against them.

Thereafter the Iberians presented themselves at Byzantium and Petrus came to the emperor at his summons; and from then on the emperor demanded that he should assist the Lazi to guard their country, even against their will, and he sent an army and Eirenaeus in command of it. Now there are two fortresses in Lazica which one comes upon immediately upon entering their country from the boundaries of Iberia, and the defence of them had been from of old in charge of the natives, although they experienced great hardship in this matter; for neither corn nor wine nor any other good thing is produced there. Nor indeed can anything be carried in from elsewhere on account of the narrowness of the paths, unless it be carried by men. However, the Lazi were able to live on a certain kind of millet which grows there, since they were accustomed to it. These garrisons the emperor removed from the place and commanded that Roman soldiers should be stationed there to guard the fortresses. And at first the Lazi with difficulty brought in provisions for these soldiers, but later they gave up the service and the Romans abandoned these forts,

whereupon the Persians with no trouble took possession of them. This then happened in Lazica.

And the Romans, under the leadership of Sittas and Belisarius, made an inroad into Persarmenia, a territory subject to the Persians, where they plundered a large tract of country and then withdrew with a great multitude of Armenian captives. These two men were both youths and wearing their first beards, body-guards of the general Justinian, who later shared the empire with his uncle Justinus. But when a second inroad had been made by the Romans into Armenia, Narses and Aratius unexpectedly confronted them and engaged them in battle. These men not long after this came to the Romans as deserters, and made the expedition to Italy with Belisarius; but on the present occasion they joined battle with the forces of Sittas and Belisarius and gained the advantage over them. An invasion was also made near the city of Nisibis by another Roman army under command of Libelarius of Thrace. This army retired abruptly in flight although no one came out against thorn.

527 A.D.

And because of this the emperor reduced Libelarius from his office and appointed Belisarius commander of the troops in Daras. It was at that time that Procopius, who wrote this history, was chosen as his adviser.

### XIII

Apr. 1, 527

Not long after this Justinus, who had declared his nephew Justinian emperor with him, died, and thus the empire came to Justinian alone.

Aug. 1

This Justinian commanded Belisarius to build a fortress in a place called Mindouos, which is over against the very boundary of Persia, on the left as one goes to Nisibis. He accordingly with great haste began to carry out the decision of the emperor, and the fort was already rising to a considerable height by reason of the great number of artisans. But the Persians forbade them to build any further, threatening that, not with words alone but also with deeds, they would at no distant time obstruct the work. When the emperor heard this, inasmuch as Belisarius was not able to beat off the Persians from the place with the army he had, he ordered another army to go thither, and also Coutzes and Bouzes, who at that time commanded the soldiers in Libanus. These two were brothers from Thrace, both young and inclined to be rash in engaging with the enemy. So both armies were gathered together and came in full force to the scene of the building operations, the Persians in order to hinder the work with all their power, and the Romans to defend the labourers. And a fierce battle took place in which the Romans were defeated, and there was a great slaughter of them, while some also were made captive by the enemy. Among these was Coutzes himself. All these captives the Persians led away to their own country, and, putting them in chains, confined them permanently in a cave; as for the fort, since no one defended it any longer, they razed what had been built to the ground.

After this the Emperor Justinian appointed Belisarius General of the East and bade him make an expedition against the Persians. And he collected a very formidable army and came to Daras. Hermogenes also came to him from the emperor to assist in setting the army in order, holding the office of magister; this man was formerly counsellor to Vitalianus at the time when he was at war with the Emperor Anastasius. The emperor also sent Rufinus

as ambassador, commanding him to remain in Hierapolis on the Euphrates River until he himself should give the word. For already much was being said on both sides concerning peace. Suddenly, however, someone reported to Belisarius and Hermogenes that the Persians were expected to invade the land of the Romans, being eager to capture the city of Daras. And when they heard this, they prepared for the battle as follows.

July, 530

Not far from the gate which lies opposite the city of Nisibis, about a stone's throw away, they dug a deep trench with many passages across it. Now this trench was not dug in a straight line, but in the following manner. In the middle there was a rather short portion straight, and at either end of this there were dug two cross trenches at right angles to the first; and starting from the extremities of the two cross trenches, they continued two straight trenches in the original direction to a very great distance. Not long afterwards the Persians came with a great army, and all of them made camp in a place called Ammodios, at a distance of twenty stades from the city of Daras. Among the leaders of this army were Pityaxes and the one-eyed Baresmanas. But one general held command over them all, a Persian, whose title was "mirranes" (for thus the Persians designate this office), Perozes by name. This Perozes immediately sent to Belisarius bidding him make ready the bath: for he wished to bathe there on the following day. Accordingly the Romans made the most vigorous preparations for the encounter, with the expectation that they would fight on the succeeding day.

At sunrise, seeing the enemy advancing against them, they arrayed themselves as follows. The extremity of the left straight trench which joined the cross trench, as far as the hill which rises here, was held by Bouzes with a large force of horsemen and by Pharas the Erulian with three hundred of his nation. On the right of these, outside the trench, at the angle formed by the cross trench and the straight section which extended from that point, were Sunicas and Aigan, Massagetae by birth, with six hundred horsemen, in order that, if those under Bouzes and Pharas should be driven back, they might, by moving quickly on the flank, and getting in the rear of the enemy, be able easily to support the Romans at that point. On the other wing also they were arrayed in the same manner; for the extremity of the straight trench was held by a large force of horsemen, who were commanded by John, son of Nicetas, and by Cyril and Marcellus; with them also were Germanus and Dorotheus; while at the angle on the right six hundred horsemen took their stand, commanded by Simmas and Ascan, Massagetae, in order that, as has been said, in case the forces of John should by any chance be driven back, they might move out from there and attack the rear of the Persians. Thus all along the trench stood the detachments of cavalry and the infantry. And behind these in the middle stood the forces of Belisarius and Hermogenes. Thus the Romans arrayed themselves, amounting to five-and-twenty thousand; but the Persian army consisted of forty thousand horse and foot, and they all stood close together facing the front, so as to make the front of the phalanx as deep as possible. Then for a long time neither side began battle with the other, but the Persians seemed to be wondering at the good order of the Romans, and appeared at a loss what to do under the circumstances.

In the late afternoon a certain detachment of the horsemen who held the right wing, separating themselves from the rest of the army, came against the forces of Bouzes and Pharas. And the Romans retired a short distance to the rear. The Persians, however, did not pursue them, but remained there, fearing, I suppose, some move to surround them on the part of the enemy. Then the Romans who had turned to flight suddenly rushed upon them. And the Persians did not withstand their onset and rode back to the phalanx, and again the forces of Bouzes and Pharas stationed themselves in their own position. In this skirmish seven of the Persians fell, and the Romans gained possession of their bodies; thereafter both

armies remained quietly in position. But one Persian, a young man, riding up very close to the Roman army, began to challenge all of them, calling for whoever wished to do battle with him. And no one of the whole army dared face the danger, except a certain Andreas, one of the personal attendants of Bouzes, not a soldier nor one who had ever practised at all the business of war, but a trainer of youths in charge of a certain wrestling school in Byzantium. Through this it came about that he was following the army, for he cared for the person of Bouzes in the bath; his birthplace was Byzantium. This man alone had the courage, without being ordered by Bouzes or anyone else, to go out of his own accord to meet the man in single combat. And he caught the barbarian while still considering how he should deliver his attack, and hit him with his spear on the right breast. And the Persian did not bear the blow delivered by a man of such exceptional strength, and fell from his horse to the earth. Then Andreas with a small knife slew him like a sacrificial animal as he lay on his back, and a mighty shout was raised both from the city wall and from the Roman army. But the Persians were deeply vexed at the outcome and sent forth another horseman for the same purpose, a manly fellow and well favoured as to bodily size, but not a youth, for some of the hair on his head already shewed grey. This horseman came up along the hostile army, and, brandishing vehemently the whip with which he was accustomed to strike his horse, he summoned to battle whoever among the Romans was willing. And when no one went out against him, Andreas, without attracting the notice of anyone, once more came forth, although he had been forbidden to do so by Hermogenes. So both rushed madly upon each other with their spears, and the weapons, driven against their corselets, were turned aside with mighty force, and the horses, striking together their heads, fell themselves and threw off their riders. And both the two men, falling very close to each other, made great haste to rise to their feet, but the Persian was not able to do this easily because his size was against him, while Andreas, anticipating him (for his practice in the wrestling school gave him this advantage), smote him as he was rising on his knee, and as he fell again to the ground dispatched him. Then a roar went up from the wall and from the Roman army as great, if not greater, than before; and the Persians broke their phalanx and withdrew to Ammodios, while the Romans, raising the pæan, went inside the fortifications; for already it was growing dark. Thus both armies passed that night.

#### XIV

On the following day ten thousand soldiers arrived who had been summoned by the Persians from the city of Nisibis, and Belisarius and Hermogenes wrote to the mirranes as follows: "The first blessing is peace, as is agreed by all men who have even a small share of reason. It follows that if any one should be a destroyer of it, he would be most responsible not only to those near him but also to his whole nation for the troubles which come. The best general, therefore, is that one who is able to bring about peace from war. But you, when affairs were well settled between the Romans and the Persians, have seen fit to bring upon us a war without cause, although the counsels of each king are looking toward peace, and although our envoys are already present in the neighbourhood, who will at no distant time settle all the points of dispute in talking over the situation together, unless some irreparable harm coming from your invasion proves sufficient to frustrate for us this hope. But lead away as soon as possible your army to the land of the Persians, and do not stand in the way of the greatest blessings, lest at some time you be held responsible by the Persians, as is probable, for the disasters which will come to pass". When the mirranes saw this letter brought to him, he replied as follows: "I should have been persuaded by what you write, and should have done what you demand, were the letter not, as it happens, from Romans, for whom the making of promises is easy, but the fulfilment of the promises in deed most



difficult and beyond hope, especially if you sanction the agreement by any oaths. We, therefore, despairing in view of your deception, have been compelled to come before you in arms, and as for you, my dear Romans, consider that from now on you will be obliged to do nothing else than make war against the Persians. For here we shall be compelled either to die or grow old until you accord to us justice in deed." Such was the reply which the mirranes wrote back. And again Belisarius and his generals wrote as follows: "O excellent mirranes, it is not fitting in all things to depend upon boasting, nor to lay upon one's neighbours reproaches which are justified on no grounds whatever. For we said with truth that Rufinus had come to act as an envoy and was not far away, and you yourself will know this at no remote time. But since you are eager for deeds of war, we shall array ourselves against you with the help of God, who will, we know, support us in the danger, being moved by the peaceful inclination of the Romans, but rebuking the boastfulness of the Persians and your decision to resist us when we invite you to peace. And we shall array ourselves against you, having prepared for the conflict by fastening the letters written by each of us on the top of our banners." Such was the message of this letter. And the mirranes again answered as follows: "Neither are we entering upon the war without our gods, and with their help we shall come before you, and I expect that on the morrow they will bring the Persians into Daras. But let the bath and lunch be in readiness for me within the fortifications." When Belisarius and his generals read this, they prepared themselves for the conflict.

On the succeeding day the mirranes called together all the Persians at about sunrise and spoke as follows: "I am not ignorant that it is not because of words of their leaders, but because of their individual bravery and their shame before each other that the Persians are accustomed to be courageous in the presence of dangers. But seeing you considering why in the world it is that, although the Romans have not been accustomed heretofore to go into battle without confusion and disorder, they recently awaited the advancing Persians with a kind of order which is by no means characteristic of them, for this reason I have decided to speak some words of exhortation to you, so that it may not come about that you be deceived by reason of holding an opinion which is not true. For I would not have you think that the Romans have suddenly become better warriors, or that they have acquired any more valour or experience, but that they have become more cowardly than they were previously; at any rate they fear the Persians so much that they have not even dared to form their phalanx without a trench. And not even with this did they begin any fighting, but when we did not join battle with them at all, joyfully and considering that matters had gone better for them than they had hoped, they withdrew to the wall. For this reason too it happened that they were not thrown into confusion, for they had not yet come into the dangers of battle. But if the fighting comes to close quarters, fear will seize upon them, and this, together with their inexperience, will throw them, in all probability, into their customary disorder. Such, therefore, is the case with regard to the enemy; but do you, O men of Persia, call to mind the judgment of the King of Kings. For if you do not play the part of brave men in the present engagement, in a manner worthy of the valour of the Persians, an inglorious punishment will fall upon you." With this exhortation the mirranes began to lead his army against the enemy. Likewise Belisarius and Hermogenes gathered all the Romans before the fortifications, and encouraged them with the following words: "You know assuredly that the Persians are not altogether invincible, nor too strong to be killed, having taken their measure in the previous battle; and that, although superior to them in bravery and in strength of body, you were defeated only by reason of being rather heedless of your officers, no one can deny. This thing you now have the opportunity to set right with no trouble. For while the adversities of fortune are by no means such as to be set right by an effort, reason may easily become for a man a physician for the ills caused by himself. If therefore you are willing to give heed to the orders given, you will straightway win for yourselves the

superiority in battle. For the Persians come against us basing their confidence on nothing else than our disorder. But this time also they will be disappointed in this hope, and will depart just as in the previous encounter. And as for the great numbers of the enemy, by which more than anything else they inspire fear, it is right for you to despise them. For their whole infantry is nothing more than a crowd of pitiable peasants who come into battle for no other purpose than to dig through walls and to despoil the slain and in general to serve the soldiers. For this reason they have no weapons at all with which they might trouble their opponents, and they only hold before themselves those enormous shields in order that they may not possibly be hit by the enemy. Therefore if you shew yourselves brave men in this struggle, you will not only conquer the Persians for the present, but you will also punish them for their folly, so that they will never again make an expedition into the Roman territory."

When Belisarius and Hermogenes had finished this exhortation, since they saw the Persians advancing against them, they hastily drew up the soldiers in the same manner as before. And the barbarians, coming up before them, took their stand facing the Romans. But the mirranes did not array all the Persians against the enemy, but only one half of them, while he allowed the others to remain behind. These were to take the places of the men who were fighting and to fall upon their opponents with their vigour intact, so that all might fight in constant rotation. But the detachment of the so-called Immortals alone he ordered to remain at rest until he himself should give the signal. And he took his own station at the middle of the front, putting Pityaxes in command on the right wing, and Baresmanas on the left. In this manner, then, both armies were drawn up. Then Pharas came before Belisarius and Hermogenes, and said: "It does not seem to me that I shall do the enemy any great harm if I remain here with the Eruli; but if we conceal ourselves on this slope, and then, when the Persians have begun the fight, if we climb up by this hill and suddenly come upon their rear, shooting from behind them, we shall in all probability do them the greatest harm." Thus he spoke, and, since it pleased Belisarius and his staff, he carried out this plan.

But up to midday neither side began battle. As soon, however, as the noon hour was passed, the barbarians began the fight, having postponed the engagement to this time of the day for the reason that they are accustomed to partake of food only towards late afternoon, while the Romans have their meal before noon; and for this reason they thought that the Romans would never hold out so well, if they assailed them while hungry. At first, then, both sides discharged arrows against each other, and the missiles by their great number made, as it were, a vast cloud; and many men were falling on both sides, but the missiles of the barbarians flew much more thickly. For fresh men were always fighting in turn, affording to their enemy not the slightest opportunity to observe what was being done; but even so the Romans did not have the worst of it. For a steady wind blew from their side against the barbarians, and checked to a considerable degree the force of their arrows. Then, after both sides had exhausted all their missiles, they began to use their spears against each other, and the battle had come still more to close quarters. On the Roman side the left wing was suffering especially. For the Cadiseni, who with Pityaxes were fighting at this point, rushing up suddenly in great numbers, routed their enemy, and crowding hard upon the fugitives, were killing many of them. When this was observed by the men under Sunicas and Aigan, they charged against them at full speed. But first the three hundred Eruli under Pharas from the high ground got in the rear of the enemy and made a wonderful display of valorous deeds against all of them and especially the Cadiseni. And the Persians, seeing the forces of Sunicas too already coming up against them from the flank, turned to a hasty flight. And the rout became complete, for the Romans here joined forces with each other, and there was a great slaughter of the barbarians. On the Persian right wing not fewer than three thousand perished in this action, while the rest escaped with difficulty to the

phalanx and were saved. And the Romans did not continue their pursuit, but both sides took their stand facing each other in line. Such was the course of these events.

But the mirranes stealthily sent to the left a large body of troops and with them all the so-called Immortals. And when these were noticed by Belisarius and Hermogenes, they ordered the six hundred men under Sunicas and Aigan to go to the angle on the right, where the troops of Simmas and Ascan were stationed, and behind them they placed many of Belisarius men. So the Persians who held the left wing under the leadership of Baresmanas, together with the Immortals, charged on the run upon the Romans opposite them, who failed to withstand the attack and beat a hasty retreat. Thereupon the Romans in the angle, and all who were behind them, advanced with great ardour against the pursuers. But inasmuch as they came upon the barbarians from the side, they cut their army into two parts, and the greater portion of them they had on their right, while some also who were left behind were placed on their left. Among these happened to be the standard bearer of Baresmanas, whom Sunicas charged and struck with his spear. And already the Persians who were leading the pursuit perceived in what straits they were, and, wheeling about, they stopped the pursuit and went against their assailants, and thus became exposed to the enemy on both sides. For those in flight before them understood what was happening and turned back again. The Persians, on their part, with the detachment of the Immortals, seeing the standard inclined and lowered to the earth, rushed all together against the Romans at that point with Baresmanas. There the Romans held their ground. And first Sunicas killed Baresmanas and threw him from his horse to the ground. As a result of this the barbarians were seized with great fear and thought no longer of resistance, but fled in utter confusion. And the Romans, having made a circle as it were around them, killed about five thousand. Thus both armies were all set in motion, the Persians in retreat, and the Romans in pursuit. In this part of the conflict all the foot-soldiers who were in the Persian army threw down their shields and were caught and wantonly killed by their enemy. However, the pursuit was not continued by the Romans over a great distance. For Belisarius and Hermogenes refused absolutely to let them go farther, fearing lest the Persians through some necessity should turn about and rout them while pursuing recklessly, and it seemed to them sufficient to preserve the victory unmarred. For on that day the Persians had been defeated in battle by the Romans, a thing which had not happened for a long time. Thus the two armies separated from each other. And the Persians were no longer willing to fight a pitched battle with the Romans. However, some sudden attacks were made on both sides, in which the Romans were not at a disadvantage. Such, then, was the fortune of the armies in Mesopotamia.

## XV

And Cabades sent another army into the part of Armenia which is subject to the Romans. This army was composed of Persarmenians and Sunitae, whose land adjoins that of the Alani. There were also Huns with them, of the stock called Sabiri, to the number of three thousand, a most warlike race. And Mermeroes, a Persian, had been made general of the whole force. When this army was three days' march from Theodosiopolis, they established their camp and, remaining in the land of the Persarmenians, made their preparations for the invasion. Now the general of Armenia was, as it happened, Dorotheus, a man of discretion and experienced in many wars. And Sittas held the office of general in Byzantium, and had authority over the whole army in Armenia. These two, then, upon learning that an army was being assembled in Persarmenia, straightway sent two bodyguards with instructions to spy out the whole force of the enemy and report to them. And both of these men got into the barbarian camp, and after noting everything accurately, they

departed. And they were travelling toward some place in that region, when they happened unexpectedly upon hostile Huns. By them one of the two, Dagaris by name, was made captive and bound, while the other succeeded in escaping and reported everything to the generals. They then armed their whole force and made an unexpected assault upon the camp of their enemy; and the barbarians, panic-stricken by the unexpected attack, never thought of resistance, but fled as best each one could. Thereupon the Romans, after killing a large number and plundering the camp, immediately marched back.

Not long after this Mermeroes, having collected the whole army, invaded the Roman territory, and they came upon their enemy near the city of Satala. There they established themselves in camp and remained at rest in a place called Octava, which is fifty-six stades distant from the city. Sittas therefore led out a thousand men and concealed them behind one of the many hills which surround the plain in which the city of Satala lies. Dorotheus with the rest of the army he ordered to stay inside the fortifications, because they thought that they were by no means able to withstand the enemy on level ground, since their number was not fewer than thirty thousand, while their own forces scarcely amounted to half that number. On the following day the barbarians came up close to the fortifications and busily set about closing in the town. But suddenly, seeing the forces of Sittas who by now were coming down upon them from the high ground, and having no means of estimating their number, since owing to the summer season a great cloud of dust hung over them, they thought they were much more numerous than they were, and, hurriedly abandoning their plan of closing in the town, they hastened to mass their force into a small space. But the Romans anticipated the movement and, separating their own force into two detachments, they set upon them as they were retiring from the fortifications; and when this was seen by the whole Roman army, they took courage, and with a great rush they poured out from the fortifications and advanced against their opponents. They thus put the Persians between their own troops, and turned them to flight. However, since the barbarians were greatly superior to their enemy in numbers, as has been said, they still offered resistance, and the battle had become a fierce fight at close quarters. And both sides kept making advances upon their opponents and retiring quickly, for they were all cavalry. Thereupon Florentius, a Thracian, commanding a detachment of horse, charged into the enemy's centre, and seizing the general's standard, forced it to the ground, and started to ride back. And though he himself was overtaken and fell there, hacked to pieces, he proved to be the chief cause of the victory for the Romans. For when the barbarians no longer saw the standard, they were thrown into great confusion and terror, and retreating, got inside their camp, and remained quiet, having lost many men in the battle; and on the following day they all returned homeward with no one following them up, for it seemed to the Romans a great and very noteworthy thing that such a great multitude of barbarians in their own country had suffered those things which have just been narrated above, and that, after making an invasion into hostile territory, they should retire thus without accomplishing anything and defeated by a smaller force.

At that time the Romans also acquired certain Persian strongholds in Persarmenia, both the fortress of Bolum and the fortress called Pharangium, which is the place where the Persians mine gold, which they take to the king. It happened also that a short time before this they had reduced to subjection the Tzanic nation, who had been settled from of old in Roman territory as an autonomous people; and as to these things, the manner in which they were accomplished will be related here and now.

As one goes from the land of Armenia into Persarmenia the Taurus lies on the right, extending into Iberia and the peoples there, as has been said a little before this, while on the left the road which continues to descend for a great distance is overhung by exceedingly



precipitous mountains, concealed forever by clouds and snow, from which the Phasis River issues and flows into the land of Colchis. In this place from the beginning lived barbarians, the Tzanic nation, subject to no one, called Sani in early times; they made plundering expeditions among the Romans who lived round about, maintaining a most difficult existence, and always living upon what they stole; for their land produced for them nothing good to eat. Wherefore also the Roman emperor sent them each year a fixed amount of gold, with the condition that they should never plunder the country thereabout. And the barbarians had sworn to observe this agreement with the oaths peculiar to their nation, and then, disregarding what they had sworn, they had been accustomed for a long time to make unexpected attacks and to injure not only the Armenians, but also the Romans who lived next to them as far as the sea; then, after completing their inroad in a short space of time, they would immediately betake themselves again to their homes. And whenever it so happened that they chanced upon a Roman army, they were always defeated in the battle, but they proved to be absolutely beyond capture owing to the strength of their fastnesses. In this way Sittas had defeated them in battle before this war; and then by many manifestations of kindness in word and in deed he had been able to win them over completely. For they changed their manner of life to one of a more civilized sort, and enrolled themselves among the Roman troops, and from that time they have gone forth against the enemy with the rest of the Roman army. They also abandoned their own religion for a more righteous faith, and all of them became Christians. Such then was the history of the Tzani.

Beyond the borders of this people there is a cañon whose walls are both high and exceedingly steep, extending as far as the Caucasus mountains. In it are populous towns, and grapes and other fruits grow plentifully. And this cañon for about the space of a three days' journey is tributary to the Romans, but from there begins the territory of Persarmenia; and here is the gold-mine which, with the permission of Cabades, was worked by one of the natives, Symeon by name. When this Symeon saw that both nations were actively engaged in the war, he decided to deprive Cabades of the revenue. Therefore he gave over both himself and Pharangium to the Romans, but refused to deliver over to either one the gold of the mine. And as for the Romans, they did nothing, thinking it sufficient for them that the enemy had lost the income from there, and the Persians were not able against the will of the Romans to force the inhabitants of the place to terms, because they were baffled by the difficult country.

At about the same time Narses and Aratius who at the beginning of this war, as I have stated above, had an encounter with Sittas and Belisarius in the land of the Persarmenians, came together with their mother as deserters to the Romans; and the emperor's steward, Narses, received them (for he too happened to be a Persarmenian by birth), and he presented them with a large sum of money. When this came to the knowledge of Isaac, their youngest brother, he secretly opened negotiations with the Romans, and delivered over to them the fortress of Bolum, which lies very near the limits of Theodosiopolis. For he directed that soldiers should be concealed somewhere in the vicinity, and he received them into the fort by night, opening stealthily one small gate for them. Thus he too came to Byzantium.

## XVI

Thus matters stood with the Romans. But the Persians, though defeated by Belisarius in the battle at Daras, refused even so to retire from there, until Rufinus, coming into the presence of Cabades, spoke as follows: "O King, I have been sent by thy brother, who



reproaches thee with a just reproach, because the Persians for no righteous cause have come in arms into his land. But it would be more seemly for a king who is not only mighty, but also wise as thou art, to secure a peaceful conclusion of war, rather than, when affairs have been satisfactorily settled, to inflict upon himself and his people unnecessary confusion. Wherefore also I myself have come here with good hopes, in order that from now on both peoples may enjoy the blessings which come from peace." So spoke Rufinus. And Cabades replied as follows: "O son of Silvanus, by no means try to reverse the causes, understanding as you do best of all men that you Romans have been the chief cause of the whole confusion. For we have taken the Caspian Gates to the advantage of both Persians and Romans, after forcing out the barbarians there, since Anastasius, the Emperor of the Romans, as you yourself doubtless know, when the opportunity was offered him to buy them with money, was not willing to do so, in order that he might not be compelled to squander great sums of money in behalf of both nations by keeping an army there perpetually. And since that time we have stationed that great army there, and have supported it up to the present time, thereby giving you the privilege of inhabiting the land unplundered as far as concerns the barbarians on that side, and of holding your own possessions with complete freedom from trouble. But as if this were not sufficient for you, you have also made a great city, Daras, as a stronghold against the Persians, although this was explicitly forbidden in the treaty which Anatolius arranged with the Persians; and as a result of this it is necessary for the Persian state to be afflicted with the difficulties and the expense of two armies, the one in order that the Massagetae may not be able fearlessly to plunder the land of both of us, and the other in order that we may check your inroads. When lately we made a protest regarding these matters and demanded that one of two things should be done by you, either that the army sent to the Caspian Gates should be sent by both of us, or that the city of Daras should be dismantled, you refused to understand what was said, but saw fit to strengthen your plot against the Persians by a greater injury, if we remember correctly the building of the fort in Mindouos. And even now the Romans may choose peace, or they may elect war, by either doing justice to us or going against our rights. For never will the Persians lay down their arms, until the Romans either help them in guarding the gates, as is just and right, or dismantle the city of Daras." With these words Cabades dismissed the ambassador, dropping the hint that he was willing to take money from the Romans and have done with the causes of the war. This was reported to the emperor by Rufinus when he came to Byzantium. Hermogenes also came thither not long afterwards, and the winter came to a close; thus ended the fourth year of the reign of the Emperor Justinian.

## XVII

531 A.D.

At the opening of spring a Persian army under the leadership of Azarethes invaded the Roman territory. They were fifteen thousand strong, all horsemen. With them was Alamoundaras, son of Saccice, with a very large body of Saracens. But this invasion was not made by the Persians in the customary manner; for they did not invade Mesopotamia, as formerly, but the country called Commagene of old, but now Euphratesia, a point from which, as far as we know, the Persians never before conducted a campaign against the Romans. But why the land was called Mesopotamia and why the Persians refrained from making their attack at this point is what I now propose to relate.

There is a mountain in Armenia which is not especially precipitous, two-and-forty stades removed from Theodosiopolis and lying toward the north from it. From this mountain issue two springs, forming immediately two rivers, the one on the right called the

Euphrates, and the other the Tigris. One of these, the Tigris, descends, with no deviations and with no tributaries except small ones emptying into it, straight toward the city of Amida. And continuing into the country which lies to the north of this city it enters the land of Assyria. But the Euphrates at its beginning flows for a short distance, and is then immediately lost to sight as it goes on; it does not, however, become subterranean, but a very strange thing happens. For the water is covered by a bog of great depth, extending about fifty stades in length and twenty in breadth; and reeds grow in this mud in great abundance. But the earth there is of such a hard sort that it seems to those who chance upon it to be nothing else than solid ground, so that both pedestrians and horsemen travel over it without any fear. Nay more, even wagons pass over the place in great numbers every day, but they are wholly insufficient to shake the bog or to find a weak spot in it at any point. The natives burn the reeds every year, to prevent the roads being stopped up by them, and once, when an exceedingly violent wind struck the place, it came about that the fire reached the extremities of the roots, and the water appeared at a small opening; but in a short time the ground closed again, and gave the spot the same appearance which it had had before. From there the river proceeds into the land called Celesene, where was the sanctuary of Artemis among the Taurians, from which they say Iphigenia, daughter of Agamemnon, fled with Orestes and Pylades, bearing the statue of Artemis. For the other temple which has existed even to my day in the city of Comana is not the one "Among the Taurians." But I shall explain how this temple came into being.

When Orestes had departed in haste from the Taurians with his sister, it so happened that he contracted some disease. And when he made inquiry about the disease they say that the oracle responded that his trouble would not abate until he built a temple to Artemis in a spot such as the one among the Taurians, and there cut off his hair and named the city after it. So then Orestes, going about the country there, came to Pontus, and saw a mountain which rose steep and towering, while below along the extremities of the mountain flowed the river Iris. Orestes, therefore, supposing at that time that this was the place indicated to him by the oracle, built there a great city and the temple of Artemis, and, shearing off his hair, named after it the city which even up to the present time has been called Comana. The story goes on that after Orestes had done these things, the disease continued to be as violent as before, if not even more so. Then the man perceived that he was not satisfying the oracle by doing these things, and he again went about looking everywhere and found a certain spot in Cappadocia very closely resembling the one among the Taurians. I myself have often seen this place and admired it exceedingly, and have imagined that I was in the land of the Taurians. For this mountain resembles the other remarkably, since the Taurus is here also and the river Sarus is similar to the Euphrates there. So Orestes built in that place an imposing city and two temples, the one to Artemis and the other to his sister Iphigenia, which the Christians have made sanctuaries for themselves, without changing their structure at all. This is called even now Golden Comana, being named from the hair of Orestes, which they say he cut off there and thus escaped from his affliction. But some say that this disease from which he escaped was nothing else than that of madness which seized him after he had killed his own mother. But I shall return to the previous narrative.

From Tauric Armenia and the land of Celesene the River Euphrates, flowing to the right of the Tigris, flows around an extensive territory, and since many rivers join it and among them the Arsinus, whose copious stream flows down from the land of the so-called Persarmenians, it becomes naturally a great river, and flows into the land of the people anciently called White Syrians but now known as the Lesser Armenians, whose first city, Melitene, is one of great importance. From there it flows past Samosata and Hierapolis and all the towns in that region as far as the land of Assyria, where the two rivers unite with each other into one stream which bears the name of the Tigris. The land which lies outside the

River Euphrates, beginning with Samosata, was called in ancient times Commagene, but now it is named after the river. But the land inside the river, that namely which is between it and the Tigris, is appropriately named Mesopotamia; however, a portion of it is called not only by this name, but also by certain others. For the land as far as the city of Amida has come to be called Armenia by some, while Edessa together with the country around it is called Osroene, after Osroes, a man who was king in that place in former times, when the men of this country were in alliance with the Persians. After the time, therefore, when the Persians had taken from the Romans the city of Nisibis and certain other places in Mesopotamia, whenever they were about to make an expedition against the Romans, they disregarded the land outside the River Euphrates, which was for the most part unwatered and deserted by men, and gathered themselves here with no trouble, since they were in a land which was their own and which lay very close to the inhabited land of their enemy, and from here they always made their invasions.

When the mirranes, defeated in battle and with the greater part of his men lost, came back to the Persian land with the remainder of his army, he received bitter punishment at the hands of King Cabades. For he took away from him a decoration which he was accustomed to bind upon the hair of his head, an ornament wrought of gold and pearls. Now this is a great dignity among the Persians, second only to the kingly honour. For there it is unlawful to wear a gold ring or girdle or brooch or anything else whatsoever, except a man be counted worthy to do so by the king.

Thereafter Cabades began to consider in what manner he himself should make an expedition against the Romans. For after the mirranes had failed in the manner I have told, he felt confidence in no one else. While he was completely at a loss as to what he should do, Alamoundaras, the king of the Saracens, came before him and said: "Not everything, O Master, should be entrusted to fortune, nor should one believe that all wars ought to be successful. For this is not likely and besides it is not in keeping with the course of human events, but this idea is most unfortunate for those who are possessed by it. For when men who expect that all the good things will come to them fail at any time, if it so happen, they are distressed more than is seemly by the very hope which wrongly led them on. Therefore, since men have not always confidence in fortune, they do not enter into the danger of war in a straightforward way, even if they boast that they surpass the enemy in every respect, but by deception and divers devices they exert themselves to circumvent their opponents. For those who assume the risk of an even struggle have no assurance of victory. Now, therefore, O King of Kings, neither be thus distressed by the misfortune which has befallen Mirranes, nor desire again to make trial of fortune. For in Mesopotamia and the land of Osroene, as it is called, since it is very close to thy boundaries, the cities are very strong above all others, and now they contain a multitude of soldiers such as never before, so that if we go there the contest will not prove a safe one; but in the land which lies outside the River Euphrates, and in Syria which adjoins it, there is neither a fortified city nor an army of any importance. For this I have often heard from the Saracens sent as spies to these parts. There too, they say, is the city of Antioch, in wealth and size and population the first of all the cities of the Eastern Roman Empire; and this city is unguarded and destitute of soldiers. For the people of this city care for nothing else than fêtes and luxurious living, and their constant rivalries with each other in the theatres. Accordingly, if we go against them unexpectedly, it is not at all unlikely that we shall capture the city by a sudden attack, and that we shall return to the land of the Persians without having met any hostile army, and before the troops in Mesopotamia have learned what has happened. As for lack of water or of any kind of provisions, let no such thought occur to thee; for I myself shall lead the army wherever it shall seem best."

When Cabades heard this he could neither oppose nor distrust the plan. For Alamoundaras was most discreet and well experienced in matters of warfare, thoroughly faithful to the Persians, and unusually energetic,—a man who for a space of fifty years forced the Roman state to bend the knee. For beginning from the boundaries of Aegypt and as far as Mesopotamia he plundered the whole country, pillaging one place after another, burning the buildings in his track and making captives of the population by the tens of thousands on each raid, most of whom he killed without consideration, while he gave up the others for great sums of money. And he was confronted by no one at all. For he never made his inroad without looking about, but so suddenly did he move and so very opportunely for himself, that, as a rule, he was already off with all the plunder when the generals and the soldiers were beginning to learn what had happened and to gather themselves against him. If, indeed, by any chance, they were able to catch him, this barbarian would fall upon his pursuers while still unprepared and not in battle array, and would rout and destroy them with no trouble; and on one occasion he made prisoners of all the soldiers who were pursuing him together with their officers. These officers were Timostratus, the brother of Rufinus, and John, the son of Lucas, whom he gave up indeed later, thereby gaining for himself no mean or trivial wealth. And, in a word, this man proved himself the most difficult and dangerous enemy of all to the Romans. The reason was this, that Alamoundaras, holding the position of king, ruled alone over all the Saracens in Persia, and he was always able to make his inroad with the whole army wherever he wished in the Roman domain; and neither any commander of Roman troops, whom they call "duces," nor any leader of the Saracens allied with the Romans, who are called "phylarchs," was strong enough with his men to array himself against Alamoundaras; for the troops stationed in the different districts were not a match in battle for the enemy.

531 A.D.

For this reason the Emperor Justinian put in command of as many clans as possible Arethas, the son of Gabalas, who ruled over the Saracens of Arabia, and bestowed upon him the dignity of king, a thing which among the Romans had never before been done. However Alamoundaras continued to injure the Romans just as much as before, if not more, since Arethas was either extremely unfortunate in every inroad and every conflict, or else he turned traitor as quickly as he could. For as yet we know nothing certain about him. In this way it came about that Alamoundaras, with no one to stand against him, plundered the whole East for an exceedingly long time, for he lived to a very advanced age.

## XVIII

This man's suggestion at that time therefore pleased Cabades, and he chose out fifteen thousand men, putting in command of them Azarethes, a Persian, who was an exceptionally able warrior, and he bade Alamoundaras lead the expedition. So they crossed the River Euphrates in Assyria, and, after passing over some uninhabited country, they suddenly and unexpectedly threw their forces into the land of the so-called Commagenae. This was the first invasion made by the Persians from this point into Roman soil, as far as we know from tradition or by any other means, and it paralyzed all the Romans with fear by its unexpectedness. And when this news came to the knowledge of Belisarius, at first he was at a loss, but afterwards he decided to go to the rescue with all speed. So he established a sufficient garrison in each city in order that Cabades with another hostile army might not come there and find the towns of Mesopotamia utterly unguarded, and himself with the rest of the army went to meet the invasion; and crossing the River Euphrates they moved forward in great haste. Now the Roman army amounted to about twenty thousand foot and



horse, and among them not less than two thousand were Isaurians. The commanders of cavalry were all the same ones who had previously fought the battle at Daras with Mirranes and the Persians, while the infantry were commanded by one of the body-guards of the Emperor Justinian, Peter by name. The Isaurians, however, were under the command of Longinus and Stephanacius. Arethas also came there to join them with the Saracen army. When they reached the city of Chalcis, they encamped and remained there, since they learned that the enemy were in a place called Gabboulon, one hundred and ten stades away from Chalcis. When this became known to Alamoundaras and Azarethes, they were terrified at the danger, and no longer continued their advance, but decided to retire homeward instantly. Accordingly they began to march back, with the River Euphrates on the left, while the Roman army was following in the rear. And in the spot where the Persians bivouacked each night the Romans always tarried on the following night. For Belisarius purposely refused to allow the army to make any longer march because he did not wish to come to an engagement with the enemy, but he considered that it was sufficient for them that the Persians and Alamoundaras, after invading the land of the Romans, should retire from it in such a fashion, betaking themselves to their own land without accomplishing anything. And because of this all secretly mocked him, both officers and soldiers, but not a man reproached him to his face.

Finally the Persians made their bivouac on the bank of the Euphrates just opposite the city of Callinicus. From there they were about to march through a country absolutely uninhabited by man, and thus to quit the land of the Romans; for they purposed no longer to proceed as before, keeping to the bank of the river. The Romans had passed the night in the city of Sura, and, removing from there, they came upon the enemy just in the act of preparing for the departure.

Ap. 19, A.D.

Now the feast of Easter was near and would take place on the following day; this feast is revered by the Christians above all others, and on the day before it they are accustomed to refrain from food and drink not only throughout the day, but for a large part of the night also they continue the fast. Then, therefore, Belisarius, seeing that all his men were passionately eager to go against the enemy, wished to persuade them to give up this idea (for this course had been counselled by Hermogenes also, who had come recently on an embassy from the emperor); he accordingly called together all who were present and spoke as follows: "O Romans, whither are you rushing? and what has happened to you that you are purposing to choose for yourselves a danger which is not necessary? Men believe that there is only one victory which is unalloyed, namely to suffer no harm at the hands of the enemy, and this very thing has been given us in the present instance by fortune and by the fear of us that overpowers our foes. Therefore it is better to enjoy the benefit of our present blessings than to seek them when they have passed. For the Persians, led on by many hopes, undertook an expedition against the Romans, and now, with everything lost, they have beaten a hasty retreat. So that if we compel them against their will to abandon their purpose of withdrawing and to come to battle with us, we shall win no advantage whatsoever if we are victorious,—for why should one rout a fugitive?—while if we are unfortunate, as may happen, we shall both be deprived of the victory which we now have, not robbed of it by the enemy, but flinging it away ourselves, and also we shall abandon the land of the emperor to lie open hereafter to the attacks of the enemy without defenders. Moreover this also is worth your consideration, that God is always accustomed to succour men in dangers which are necessary, not in those which they choose for themselves. And apart from this it will come about that those who have nowhere to turn will play the part of brave men even against their will, while the obstacles which are to be met by us in entering the engagement are



many; for a large number of you have come on foot and all of us are fasting. I refrain from mentioning that some even now have not arrived." So spoke Belisarius.

But the army began to insult him, not in silence nor with any concealment, but they came shouting into his presence, and called him weak and a destroyer of their zeal; and even some of the officers joined with the soldiers in this offence, thus displaying the extent of their daring. And Belisarius, in astonishment at their shamelessness, changed his exhortation and now seemed to be urging them on against the enemy and drawing them up for battle, saying that he had not known before their eagerness to fight, but that now he was of good courage and would go against the enemy with a better hope. He then formed the phalanx with a single front, disposing his men as follows: on the left wing by the river he stationed all the infantry, while on the right where the ground rose sharply he placed Arethas and all his Saracens; he himself with the cavalry took his position in the centre. Thus the Romans arrayed themselves. And when Azarethes saw the enemy gathering in battle line, he exhorted his men with the following words: "Persians as you are, no one would deny that you would not give up your valour in exchange for life, if a choice of the two should be offered. But I say that not even if you should wish, is it within your power to make the choice between the two. For as for men who have the opportunity to escape from danger and live in dishonour it is not at all unnatural that they should, if they wish, choose what is most pleasant instead of what is best; but for men who are bound to die, either gloriously at the hands of the enemy or shamefully led to punishment by your Master, it is extreme folly not to choose what is better instead of what is most shameful. Now, therefore, when things stand thus, I consider that it befits you all to bear in mind not only the enemy but also your own Lord and so enter this battle."

After Azarethes also had uttered these words of exhortation, he stationed the phalanx opposite his opponents, assigning the Persians the right wing and the Saracens the left. Straightway both sides began the fight, and the battle was exceedingly fierce. For the arrows, shot from either side in very great numbers, caused great loss of life in both armies, while some placed themselves in the interval between the armies and made a display of valorous deeds against each other, and especially among the Persians they were falling by the arrows in great numbers. For while their missiles were incomparably more frequent, since the Persians are almost all bowmen and they learn to make their shots much more rapidly than any other men, still the bows which sent the arrows were weak and not very tightly strung, so that their missiles, hitting a corselet, perhaps, or helmet or shield of a Roman warrior, were broken off and had no power to hurt the man who was hit. The Roman bowmen are always slower indeed, but inasmuch as their bows are extremely stiff and very tightly strung, and one might add that they are handled by stronger men, they easily slay much greater numbers of those they hit than do the Persians, for no armour proves an obstacle to the force of their arrows. Now already two-thirds of the day had passed, and the battle was still even. Then by mutual agreement all the best of the Persian army advanced to attack the Roman right wing, where Arethas and the Saracens had been stationed. But they broke their formation and moved apart, so that they got the reputation of having betrayed the Romans to the Persians. For without awaiting the oncoming enemy they all straightway beat a hasty retreat. So the Persians in this way broke through the enemy's line and immediately got in the rear of the Roman cavalry. Thus the Romans, who were already exhausted both by the march and the labour of the battle,—and besides this they were all fasting so far on in the day,—now that they were assailed by the enemy on both sides, held out no longer, but the most of them in full flight made their way to the islands in the river which were close by, while some also remained there and performed deeds both amazing and remarkable against the enemy. Among these was Ascan who, after killing many of the notables among the Persians, was gradually hacked to pieces and finally fell,

leaving to the enemy abundant reason to remember him. And with him eight hundred others perished after shewing themselves brave men in this struggle, and almost all the Isaurians fell with their leaders, without even daring to lift their weapons against the enemy. For they were thoroughly inexperienced in this business, since they had recently left off farming and entered into the perils of warfare, which before that time were unknown to them. And yet just before these very men had been most furious of all for battle because of their ignorance of warfare, and were then reproaching Belisarius with cowardice. They were not in fact all Isaurians but the majority of them were Lycaones.

Belisarius with some few men remained there, and as long as he saw Ascan and his men holding out, he also in company with those who were with him held back the enemy; but when some of Ascan's troops had fallen, and the others had turned to flee wherever they could, then at length he too fled with his men and came to the phalanx of infantry, who with Peter were still fighting, although not many in number now, since the most of them too had fled. There he himself gave up his horse and commanded all his men to do the same thing and on foot with the others to fight off the oncoming enemy. And those of the Persians who were following the fugitives, after pursuing for only a short distance, straightway returned and rushed upon the infantry and Belisarius with all the others. Then the Romans turned their backs to the river so that no movement to surround them might be executed by the enemy, and as best they could under the circumstances were defending themselves against their assailants. And again the battle became fierce, although the two sides were not evenly matched in strength; for foot-soldiers, and a very few of them, were fighting against the whole Persian cavalry. Nevertheless the enemy were not able either to rout them or in any other way to overpower them. For standing shoulder to shoulder they kept themselves constantly massed in a small space, and they formed with their shields a rigid, unyielding barricade, so that they shot at the Persians more conveniently than they were shot at by them. Many a time after giving up, the Persians would advance against them determined to break up and destroy their line, but they always retired again from the assault unsuccessful. For their horses, annoyed by the clashing of the shields, reared up and made confusion for themselves and their riders. Thus both sides continued the struggle until it had become late in the day. And when night had already come on, the Persians withdrew to their camp, and Belisarius accompanied by some few men found a freight-boat and crossed over to the island in the river, while the other Romans reached the same place by swimming. On the following day many freight-boats were brought to the Romans from the city of Callinicus and they were conveyed thither in them, and the Persians, after despoiling the dead, all departed homeward. However they did not find their own dead less numerous than the enemy's.

When Azarethes reached Persia with his army, although he had prospered in the battle, he found Cabades exceedingly ungrateful, for the following reason. It is a custom among the Persians that, when they are about to march against any of their foes, the king sits on the royal throne, and many baskets are set there before him; and the general also is present who is expected to lead the army against the enemy; then the army passes along before the king, one man at a time, and each of them throws one weapon into the baskets; after this they are sealed with the king's seal and preserved; and when this army returns to Persia, each one of the soldiers takes one weapon out of the baskets. A count is then made by those whose office it is to do so of all the weapons which have not been taken by the men, and they report to the king the number of the soldiers who have not returned, and in this way it becomes evident how many have perished in the war. Thus the law has stood from of old among the Persians. Now when Azarethes came into the presence of the king, Cabades enquired of him whether he came back with any Roman fortress won over to their side, for he had marched forth with Alamoundaras against the Romans, with the purpose of

subduing Antioch. And Azarethes said that he had captured no fortress, but that he had conquered the Romans and Belisarius in battle. So Cabades bade the army of Azarethes pass by, and from the baskets each man took out a weapon just as was customary. But since many weapons were left, Cabades rebuked Azarethes for the victory and thereafter ranked him among the most unworthy. So the victory had this conclusion for Azarethes.

## XIX

At that time the idea occurred to the Emperor Justinian to ally with himself the Aethiopians and the Homeritae, in order to injure the Persians. I shall now first explain what part of the earth these nations occupy, and then I shall point out in what manner the emperor hoped that they would be of help to the Romans. The boundaries of Palestine extend toward the east to the sea which is called the Red Sea. Now this sea, beginning at India, comes to an end at this point in the Roman domain. And there is a city called Aelas on its shore, where the sea comes to an end, as I have said, and becomes a very narrow gulf. And as one sails into the sea from there, the Egyptian mountains lie on the right, extending toward the south; on the other side a country deserted by men extends northward to an indefinite distance; and the land on both sides is visible as one sails in as far as the island called Iotabe, not less than one thousand stades distant from the city of Aelas. On this island Hebrews had lived from of old in autonomy, but in the reign of this Justinian they have become subject to the Romans. From there on there comes a great open sea. And those who sail into this part of it no longer see the land on the right, but they always anchor along the left coast when night comes on. For it is impossible to navigate in the darkness on this sea, since it is everywhere full of shoals. But there are harbours there and great numbers of them, not made by the hand of man, but by the natural contour of the land, and for this reason it is not difficult for mariners to find anchorage wherever they happen to be.

This coast immediately beyond the boundaries of Palestine is held by Saracens, who have been settled from of old in the Palm Groves. These groves are in the interior, extending over a great tract of land, and there absolutely nothing else grows except palm trees. The Emperor Justinian had received these palm groves as a present from Abochorabus, the ruler of the Saracens there, and he was appointed by the emperor captain over the Saracens in Palestine. And he guarded the land from plunder constantly, for both to the barbarians over whom he ruled and no less to the enemy, Abochorabus always seemed a man to be feared and an exceptionally energetic fellow. Formally, therefore, the emperor holds the Palm Groves, but for him really to possess himself of any of the country there is utterly impossible. For a land completely destitute of human habitation and extremely dry lies between, extending to the distance of a ten days' journey; moreover the Palm Groves themselves are by no means worth anything, and Abochorabus only gave the form of a gift, and the emperor accepted it with full knowledge of the fact. So much then for the Palm Groves. Adjoining this people there are other Saracens in possession of the coast, who are called Maddeni and who are subjects of the Homeritae. These Homeritae dwell in the land on the farther side of them on the shore of the sea. And beyond them many other nations are said to be settled as far as the man-eating Saracens. Beyond these are the nations of India. But regarding these matters let each one speak as he may wish.

About opposite the Homeritae on the opposite mainland dwell the Aethiopians who are called Auxomitae, because their king resides in the city of Auxomis. And the expanse of sea which lies between is crossed in a voyage of five days and nights, when a moderately favouring wind blows. For here they are accustomed to navigate by night also, since there are no shoals at all in these parts; this portion of the sea has been called the Red Sea by

some. For the sea which one traverses beyond this point as far as the shore and the city of Aelas has received the name of the Arabian Gulf, inasmuch as the country which extends from here to the limits of the city of Gaza used to be called in olden times Arabia, since the king of the Arabs had his palace in early times in the city of Petrae. Now the harbour of the Homeritae from which they are accustomed to put to sea for the voyage to Aethiopia is called Bulicas; and at the end of the sail across the sea they always put in at the harbour of the Adulitae. But the city of Adulis is removed from the harbour a distance of twenty stades (for it lacks only so much of being on the sea), while from the city of Auxomis it is a journey of twelve days.

All the boats which are found in India and on this sea are not made in the same manner as are other ships. For neither are they smeared with pitch, nor with any other substance, nor indeed are the planks fastened together by iron nails going through and through, but they are bound together with a kind of cording. The reason is not as most persons suppose, that there are certain rocks there which draw the iron to themselves (for witness the fact that when the Roman vessels sail from Aelas into this sea, although they are fitted with much iron, no such thing has ever happened to them), but rather because the Indians and the Aethiopians possess neither iron nor any other thing suitable for such purposes. Furthermore, they are not even able to buy any of these things from the Romans since this is explicitly forbidden to all by law; for death is the punishment for one who is caught. Such then is the description of the so-called Red Sea and of the land which lies on either side of it.

From the city of Auxomis to the Aegyptian boundaries of the Roman domain, where the city called Elephantine is situated, is a journey of thirty days for an unencumbered traveller. Within that space many nations are settled, and among them the Blemyes and the Nobatae, who are very large nations. But the Blemyes dwell in the central portion of the country, while the Nobatae possess the territory about the River Nile. Formerly this was not the limit of the Roman empire, but it lay beyond there as far as one would advance in a seven days' journey; but the Roman Emperor Diocletian came there, and observed that the tribute from these places was of the smallest possible account, since the land is at that point extremely narrow (for rocks rise to an exceedingly great height at no great distance from the Nile and spread over the rest of the country), while a very large body of soldiers had been stationed there from of old, the maintenance of which was an excessive burden upon the public; and at the same time the Nobatae who formerly dwelt about the city of Oasis used to plunder the whole region; so he persuaded these barbarians to move from their own habitations, and to settle along the River Nile, promising to bestow upon them great cities and land both extensive and incomparably better than that which they had previously occupied. For in this way he thought that they would no longer harass the country about Oasis at least, and that they would possess themselves of the land given them, as being their own, and would probably beat off the Blemyes and the other barbarians. And since this pleased the Nobatae, they made the migration immediately, just as Diocletian directed them, and took possession of all the Roman cities and the land on both sides of the river beyond the city of Elephantine. Then it was that this emperor decreed that to them and to the Blemyes a fixed sum of gold should be given every year with the stipulation that they should no longer plunder the land of the Romans. And they receive this gold even up to my time, but none the less they overrun the country there. Thus it seems that with all barbarians there is no means of compelling them to keep faith with the Romans except through the fear of soldiers to hold them in check. And yet this emperor went so far as to select a certain island in the River Nile close to the city of Elephantine and there construct a very strong fortress in which he established certain temples and altars for the Romans and these barbarians in common, and he settled priests of both nations in this fortress, thinking



that the friendship between them would be secure by reason of their sharing the things sacred to them. And for this reason he named the place Philae. Now both these nations, the Blemyes and the Nobatae, believe in all the gods in which the Greeks believe, and they also reverence Isis and Osiris, and not least of all Priapus. But the Blemyes are accustomed also to sacrifice human beings to the sun. These sanctuaries in Philae were kept by these barbarians even up to my time, but the Emperor Justinian decided to tear them down. Accordingly Narses, a Persarmenian by birth, whom I have mentioned before as having deserted to the Romans, being commander of the troops there, tore down the sanctuaries at the emperor's order, and put the priests under guard and sent the statues to Byzantium. But I shall return to the previous narrative.

## XX

At about the time of this war Hellesthaeus, the king of the Aethiopians, who was a Christian and a most devoted adherent of this faith, discovered that a number of the Homeritae on the opposite main-land were oppressing the Christians there outrageously; many of these rascals were Jews, and many of them held in reverence the old faith which men of the present day call Hellenic. He therefore collected a fleet of ships and an army and came against them, and he conquered them in battle and slew both the king and many of the Homeritae. He then set up in his stead a Christian king, a Homerite by birth, by name Esimiphaeus, and, after ordaining that he should pay a tribute to the Aethiopians every year, he returned to his home. In this Aethiopian army many slaves and all who were readily disposed to crime were quite unwilling to follow the king back, but were left behind and remained there because of their desire for the land of the Homeritae; for it is an extremely goodly land.

These fellows at a time not long after this, in company with certain others, rose against the king Esimiphaeus and put him in confinement in one of the fortresses there, and established another king over the Homeritae, Abramus by name. Now this Abramus was a Christian, but a slave of a Roman citizen who was engaged in the business of shipping in the city of Adulis in Aethiopia. When Hellesthaeus learned this, he was eager to punish Abramus together with those who had revolted with him for their injustice to Esimiphaeus, and he sent against them an army of three thousand men with one of his relatives as commander. This army, once there, was no longer willing to return home, but they wished to remain where they were in a goodly land, and so without the knowledge of their commander they opened negotiations with Abramus; then when they came to an engagement with their opponents, just as the fighting began, they killed their commander and joined the ranks of the enemy, and so remained there. But Hellesthaeus was greatly moved with anger and sent still another army against them; this force engaged with Abramus and his men, and, after suffering a severe defeat in the battle, straightway returned home. Thereafter the king of the Aethiopians became afraid, and sent no further expeditions against Abramus. After the death of Hellesthaeus, Abramus agreed to pay tribute to the king of the Aethiopians who succeeded him, and in this way he strengthened his rule. But this happened at a later time.

At that time, when Hellesthaeus was reigning over the Aethiopians, and Esimiphaeus over the Homeritae, the Emperor Justinian sent an ambassador, Julianus, demanding that both nations on account of their community of religion should make common cause with the Romans in the war against the Persians; for he purposed that the Aethiopians, by purchasing silk from India and selling it among the Romans, might themselves gain much money, while causing the Romans to profit in only one way, namely, that they be no longer



compelled to pay over their money to their enemy. (This is the silk of which they are accustomed to make the garments which of old the Greeks called Medic, but which at the present time they name "seric"). As for the Homeritae, it was desired that they should establish Caïsus, the fugitive, as captain over the Maddeni, and with a great army of their own people and of the Maddene Saracens make an invasion into the land of the Persians. This Caïsus was by birth of the captain's rank and an exceptionally able warrior, but he had killed one of the relatives of Esimiphaeus and was a fugitive in a land which is utterly destitute of human habitation. So each king, promising to put this demand into effect, dismissed the ambassador, but neither one of them did the things agreed upon by them. For it was impossible for the Aethiopians to buy silk from the Indians, for the Persian merchants always locate themselves at the very harbours where the Indian ships first put in, (since they inhabit the adjoining country), and are accustomed to buy the whole cargoes; and it seemed to the Homeritae a difficult thing to cross a country which was a desert and which extended so far that a long time was required for the journey across it, and then to go against a people much more warlike than themselves. Later on Abramus too, when at length he had established his power most securely, promised the Emperor Justinian many times to invade the land of Persia, but only once began the journey and then straightway turned back. Such then were the relations which the Romans had with the Aethiopians and the Homeritae.

## XXI

Hermogenes, as soon as the battle on the Euphrates had taken place, came before Cabades to negotiate with him, but he accomplished nothing regarding the peace on account of which he had come, since he found him still swelling with rage against the Romans; for this reason he returned unsuccessful. And Belisarius came to Byzantium at the summons of the emperor, having been removed from the office which he held, in order that he might march against the Vandals; but Sittas, as had been decreed by the Emperor Justinian, went to the East in order to guard that portion of the empire. And the Persians once more invaded Mesopotamia with a great army under command of Chanaranges and Aspebedes and Mermeroes. Since no one dared to engage with them, they made camp and began the siege of Martyropolis, where Bouzes and Bessas had been stationed in command of the garrison. This city lies in the land called Sophanene, two hundred and forty stades distant from the city of Amida toward the north; it is just on the River Nymphius which divides the land of the Romans and the Persians. So the Persians began to assail the fortifications, and, while the besieged at first withstood them manfully, it did not seem likely that they would hold out long. For the circuit-wall was quite easily assailable in most parts, and could be captured very easily by a Persian siege, and besides they did not have a sufficient supply of provisions, nor indeed had they engines of war nor anything else that was of any value for defending themselves. Meanwhile Sittas and the Roman army came to a place called Attachas, one hundred stades distant from Martyropolis, but they did not dare to advance further, but established their camp and remained there. Hermogenes also was with them, coming again as ambassador from Byzantium. At this point the following event took place.

It has been customary from ancient times both among the Romans and the Persians to maintain spies at public expense; these men are accustomed to go secretly among the enemy, in order that they may investigate accurately what is going on, and may then return and report to the rulers. Many of these men, as is natural, exert themselves to act in a spirit of loyalty to their nation, while some also betray their secrets to the enemy. At that time a certain spy who had been sent from the Persians to the Romans came into the presence of

the Emperor Justinian and revealed many things which were taking place among the barbarians, and, in particular, that the nation of the Massagetae, in order to injure the Romans, were on the very point of going out into the land of Persia, and that from there they were prepared to march into the territory of the Romans, and unite with the Persian army. When the emperor heard this, having already a proof of the man's truthfulness to him, he presented him with a handsome sum of money and persuaded him to go to the Persian army which was besieging the Martyropolitans, and announce to the barbarians there that these Massagetae had been won over with money by the Roman emperor, and were about to come against them that very moment. The spy carried out these instructions, and coming to the army of the barbarians he announced to Chanaranges and the others that an army of Huns hostile to them would at no distant time come to the Romans. And when they heard this, they were seized with terror, and were at a loss how to deal with the situation.

At this juncture it came about that Cabades became seriously ill, and he called to him one of the Persians who were in closest intimacy with him, Mebodes by name, and conversed with him concerning Chosroes and the kingdom, and said he feared the Persians would make a serious attempt to disregard some of the things which had been decided upon by him. But Mebodes asked him to leave the declaration of his purpose in writing, and bade him be confident that the Persians would never dare to disregard it. So Cabades set it down plainly that Chosroes should become king over the Persians. The document was written by Mebodes himself, and Cabades immediately passed from among men.

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And when everything had been performed as prescribed by law in the burial of the king, then Caoses, confident by reason of the law, tried to lay claim to the office, but Mebodes stood in his way, asserting that no one ought to assume the royal power by his own initiative but by vote of the Persian notables. So Caoses committed the decision in the matter to the magistrates, supposing that there would be no opposition to him from there. But when all the Persian notables had been gathered together for this purpose and were in session, Mebodes read the document and stated the purpose of Cabades regarding Chosroes, and all, calling to mind the virtue of Cabades, straightway declared Chosroes King of the Persians.

Thus then Chosroes secured the power. But at Martyropolis, Sittas and Hermogenes were in fear concerning the city, since they were utterly unable to defend it in its peril, and they sent certain men to the enemy, who came before the generals and spoke as follows: "It has escaped your own notice that you are becoming wrongfully an obstacle to the king of the Persians and to the blessings of peace and to each state. For ambassadors sent from the emperor are even now present in order that they may go to the king of the Persians and there settle the differences and establish a treaty with him; but do you as quickly as possible remove from the land of the Romans and permit the ambassadors to act in the manner which will be of advantage to both peoples. For we are ready also to give as hostages men of repute concerning these very things, to prove that they will be actually accomplished at no distant date." Such were the words of the ambassadors of the Romans. It happened also that a messenger came to them from the palace, who brought them word that Cabades had died and that Chosroes, son of Cabades, had become king over the Persians, and that in this way the situation had become unsettled. And as a result of this the generals heard the words of the Romans gladly, since they feared also the attack of the Huns. The Romans therefore straightway gave as hostages Martinus and one of the body-guards of Sittas, Senecius by name; so the Persians broke up the siege and made their departure promptly. And the Huns

not long afterward invaded the land of the Romans, but since they did not find the Persian army there, they made their raid a short one, and then all departed homeward.

## XXII

Straightway Rufinus and Alexander and Thomas came to act as ambassadors with Hermogenes, and they all came before the Persian king at the River Tigris. And when Chosroes saw them, he released the hostages. Then the ambassadors coaxed Chosroes, and spoke many beguiling words most unbecoming to Roman ambassadors. By this treatment Chosroes became tractable, and agreed to establish a peace with them that should be without end for the price of one hundred and ten "centenaria," on condition that the commander of troops in Mesopotamia should be no longer at Daras, but should spend all his time in Constantina, as was customary in former times; but the fortresses in Lazica he refused to give back, although he himself demanded that he should receive back from the Romans both Pharangium and the fortress of Bolum. (Now the "centenarium" weighs one hundred pounds, for which reason it is so called; for the Romans call one hundred "centum"). He demanded that this gold be given him, in order that the Romans might not be compelled either to tear down the city of Daras or to share the garrison at the Caspian Gates with the Persians. However the ambassadors, while approving the rest, said that they were not able to concede the fortresses, unless they should first make enquiry of the emperor concerning them. It was decided, accordingly, that Rufinus should be sent concerning them to Byzantium, and that the others should wait until he should return. And it was arranged with Rufinus that seventy days' time be allowed until he should arrive. When Rufinus reached Byzantium and reported to the emperor what Chosroes' decision was concerning the peace, the emperor commanded that the peace be concluded by them on these terms.

In the meantime, however, a report which was not true reached Persia saying that the Emperor Justinian had become enraged and put Rufinus to death. Chosroes indeed was much perturbed by this, and, already filled with anger, he advanced against the Romans with his whole army. But Rufinus met him on the way as he was returning not far from the city of Nisibis. Therefore they proceeded to this city themselves, and, since they were about to establish the peace, the ambassadors began to convey the money thither. But the Emperor Justinian was already repenting that he had given up the strong holds of Lazica, and he wrote a letter to the ambassadors expressly commanding them by no means to hand them over to the Persians. For this reason Chosroes no longer saw fit to make the treaty; and then it came to the mind of Rufinus that he had counselled more speedily than safely in bringing the money into the land of Persia. Straightway, therefore, he threw himself on the earth, and lying prone he entreated Chosroes to send the money back with them and not march immediately against the Romans, but to put off the war to some other time. And Chosroes bade him rise from the ground, promising that he would grant all these things. So the ambassadors with the money came to Daras and the Persian army marched back.

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Then indeed the fellow-ambassadors of Rufinus began to regard him with extreme suspicion themselves, and they also denounced him to the emperor, basing their judgment on the fact that Chosroes had been persuaded to concede him everything which he asked of him. However, the emperor showed him no disfavour on account of this. At a time not long after this Rufinus himself and Hermogenes were again sent to the court of Chosroes, and they immediately came to agreement with each other concerning the treaty, subject to the condition that both sides should give back all the places which each nation had wrested

from the other in that war, and that there should no longer be any military post in Daras; as for the Iberians, it was agreed that the decision rested with them whether they should remain there in Byzantium or return to their own fatherland. And there were many who remained, and many also who returned to their ancestral homes. Thus, then, they concluded the so-called "endless peace," when the Emperor Justinian was already in the sixth year of his reign. And the Romans gave the Persians Pharangium and the fortress of Bolum together with the money, and the Persians gave the Romans the strongholds of Lazica. The Persians also returned Dagaris to the Romans, and received in return for him another man of no mean station. This Dagaris in later times often conquered the Huns in battle when they had invaded the land of the Romans, and drove them out; for he was an exceptionally able warrior. Thus both sides in the manner described made secure the treaty between them.

### XXIII

Straightway it came about that plots were formed against both rulers by their subjects; and I shall now explain how this happened. Chosroes, the son of Cabades, was a man of an unruly turn of mind and strangely fond of innovations. For this reason he himself was always full of excitement and alarms, and he was an unfailing cause of similar feelings in all others. All, therefore, who were men of action among the Persians, in vexation at his administration, were purposing to establish over themselves another king from the house of Cabades. And since they longed earnestly for the rule of Zames, which was made impossible by the law by reason of the disfigurement of his eye, as has been stated, they found upon consideration that the best course for them was to establish in power his child Cabades, who bore the same name as his grandfather, while Zames, as guardian of the child, should administer the affairs of the Persians as he wished. So they went to Zames and disclosed their plan, and, urging him on with great enthusiasm, they endeavoured to persuade him to undertake the thing. And since the plan pleased him, they were purposing to assail Chosroes at the fitting moment. But the plan was discovered and came to the knowledge of the king, and thus their proceedings were stopped. For Chosroes slew Zames himself and all his own brothers and those of Zames together with all their male offspring, and also all the Persian notables who had either begun or taken part in any way in the plot against him. Among these was Aspebedes, the brother of Chosroes' mother.

Cabades, however, the son of Zames, he was quite unable to kill; for he was still being reared under the chanaranges, Adergoudounbades. But he sent a message to the chanaranges, bidding him himself kill the boy he had reared; for he neither thought it well to shew mistrust, nor yet had he power to compel him. The chanaranges, therefore, upon hearing the commands of Chosroes, was exceedingly grieved and, lamenting the misfortune, he communicated to his wife and Cabades' nurse all that the king had commanded. Then the woman, bursting into tears and seizing the knees of her husband, entreated him by no means to kill Cabades. They therefore consulted together, and planned to bring up the child in the most secure concealment, and to send word in haste to Chosroes that Cabades had been put out of the world for him. And they sent word to the king to this effect, and concealed Cabades in such a way that the affair did not come to the notice of any one, except Varrames, their own child, and one of the servants who seemed to them to be in every way most trustworthy. But when, as time went on, Cabades came of age, the chanaranges began to fear lest what had been done should be brought to light; he therefore gave Cabades money and bade him depart and save himself by flight wherever he could. At that time, then, Chosroes and all the others were in ignorance of the fact that the chanaranges had carried this thing through.

At a later time Chosroes was making an invasion into the land of Colchis with a great army, as will be told in the following narrative. And he was followed by the son of this same chanaranges, Varrames, who took with him a number of his servants, and among them the one who shared with him the knowledge of what had happened to Cabades; while there Varrames told the king everything regarding Cabades, and he brought forward the servant agreeing with him in every particular. When Chosroes learned this he was forthwith exceedingly angry, and he counted it a dreadful thing that he had suffered such things at the hand of a man who was his slave; and since he had no other means of getting the man under his hand he devised the following plan. When he was about to return homeward from the land of Colchis, he wrote to this chanaranges that he had decided to invade the land of the Romans with his whole army, not, however, by a single inroad into the country, but making two divisions of the Persian army, in order that the attack might be made upon the enemy on both sides of the River Euphrates. Now one division of the army he himself, as was natural, would lead into the hostile land, while to no one else of his subjects would he grant the privilege of holding equal honour with the king in this matter, except to the chanaranges himself on account of his valour. It was necessary, therefore, that the chanaranges should come speedily to meet him as he returned, in order that he might confer with him and give him all the directions which would be of advantage to the army, and that he should bid his attendants travel behind him on the road. When the chanaranges received this message, he was overjoyed at the honour shown him by the king, and in complete ignorance of his own evil plight, he immediately carried out the instructions. But in the course of this journey, since he was quite unable to sustain the toil of it (for he was a very old man), he relaxed his hold on the reins and fell off his horse, breaking the bone in his leg. It was therefore necessary for him to remain there quietly and be cared for, and the king came to that place and saw him. And Chosroes said to him that with his leg in such a plight it was not possible that he make the expedition with them, but that he must go to one of the fortresses in that region and receive treatment there from the physicians. Thus then Chosroes sent the man away on the road to death, and behind him followed the very men who were to destroy him in the fortress,—a man who was in fact as well as in name an invincible general among the Persians, who had marched against twelve nations of barbarians and subjected them all to King Cabades. After Adergoudounbades had been removed from the world, Varrames, his son, received the office of chanaranges. Not long after this either Cabades himself, the son of Zames, or someone else who was assuming the name of Cabades came to Byzantium; certainly he resembled very closely in appearance Cabades, the king. And the Emperor Justinian, though in doubt concerning him, received him with great friendliness and honoured him as the grandson of Cabades. So then fared the Persians who rose against Chosroes.

Later on Chosroes destroyed also Mebodes for the following reason. While the king was arranging a certain important matter, he directed Zaberganes who was present to call Mebodes. Now it happened that Zaberganes was on hostile terms with Mebodes. When he came to him, he found him marshalling the soldiers under his command, and he said that the king summoned him to come as quickly as possible. And Mebodes promised that he would follow directly as soon as he should have arranged the matter in hand; but Zaberganes, moved by his hostility to him, reported to Chosroes that Mebodes did not wish to come at present, claiming to have some business or other. Chosroes, therefore, moved with anger, sent one of his attendants commanding Mebodes to go to the tripod. Now as to what this is I shall explain forthwith. An iron tripod stands always before the palace; and whenever anyone of the Persians learns that the king is angry with him, it is not right for such a man to flee for refuge to a sanctuary nor to go elsewhere, but he must seat himself by this tripod and await the verdict of the king, while no one at all dares protect him. There



Mebodes sat in pitiable plight for many days, until he was seized and put to death at the command of Chosroes. Such was the final outcome of his good deeds to Chosroes.

#### XXIV

Jan. 1, 532

At this same time an insurrection broke out unexpectedly in Byzantium among the populace, and, contrary to expectation, it proved to be a very serious affair, and ended in great harm to the people and to the senate, as the following account will shew. In every city the population has been divided for a long time past into the Blue and the Green factions; but within comparatively recent times it has come about that, for the sake of these names and the seats which the rival factions occupy in watching the games, they spend their money and abandon their bodies to the most cruel tortures, and even do not think it unworthy to die a most shameful death. And they fight against their opponents knowing not for what end they imperil themselves, but knowing well that, even if they overcome their enemy in the fight, the conclusion of the matter for them will be to be carried off straightway to the prison, and finally, after suffering extreme torture, to be destroyed. So there grows up in them against their fellow men a hostility which has no cause, and at no time does it cease or disappear, for it gives place neither to the ties of marriage nor of relationship nor of friendship, and the case is the same even though those who differ with respect to these colours be brothers or any other kin. They care neither for things divine nor human in comparison with conquering in these struggles; and it matters not whether a sacrilege is committed by anyone at all against God, or whether the laws and the constitution are violated by friend or by foe; nay even when they are perhaps ill supplied with the necessities of life, and when their fatherland is in the most pressing need and suffering unjustly, they pay no heed if only it is likely to go well with their "faction"; for so they name the bands of partisans. And even women join with them in this unholy strife, and they not only follow the men, but even resist them if opportunity offers, although they neither go to the public exhibitions at all, nor are they impelled by any other cause; so that I, for my part, am unable to call this anything except a disease of the soul. This, then, is pretty well how matters stand among the people of each and every city.

But at this time the officers of the city administration in Byzantium were leading away to death some of the rioters. But the members of the two factions, conspiring together and declaring a truce with each other, seized the prisoners and then straightway entered the prison and released all those who were in confinement there, whether they had been condemned on a charge of stirring up sedition, or for any other unlawful act. And all the attendants in the service of the city government were killed indiscriminately; meanwhile, all of the citizens who were sane-minded were fleeing to the opposite mainland, and fire was applied to the city as if it had fallen under the hand of an enemy. The sanctuary of Sophia and the baths of Zeuxippus, and the portion of the imperial residence from the propylaea as far as the so-called House of Ares were destroyed by fire, and besides these both the great colonnades which extended as far as the market place which bears the name of Constantine, in addition to many houses of wealthy men and a vast amount of treasure. During this time the emperor and his consort with a few members of the senate shut themselves up in the palace and remained quietly there. Now the watch-word which the populace passed around to one another was Nika, and the insurrection has been called by this name up to the present time.

The praetorian prefect at that time was John the Cappadocian, and Tribunianus, a Pamphylian by birth, was counsellor to the emperor; this person the Romans call

"quaestor." One of these two men, John, was entirely without the advantages of a liberal education; for he learned nothing while attending the elementary school except his letters, and these, too, poorly enough; but by his natural ability he became the most powerful man of whom we know. For he was most capable in deciding upon what was needful and in finding a solution for difficulties. But he became the basest of all men and employed his natural power to further his low designs; neither consideration for God nor any shame before man entered into his mind, but to destroy the lives of many men for the sake of gain and to wreck whole cities was his constant concern. So within a short time indeed he had acquired vast sums of money, and he flung himself completely into the sordid life of a drunken scoundrel; for up to the time of lunch each day he would plunder the property of his subjects, and for the rest of the day occupy himself with drinking and with wanton deeds of lust. And he was utterly unable to control himself, for he ate food until he vomited, and he was always ready to steal money and more ready to bring it out and spend it. Such a man then was John. Tribunianus, on the other hand, both possessed natural ability and in educational attainments was inferior to none of his contemporaries; but he was extraordinarily fond of the pursuit of money and always ready to sell justice for gain; therefore every day, as a rule, he was repealing some laws and proposing others, selling off to those who requested it either favour according to their need.

Now as long as the people were waging this war with each other in behalf of the names of the colours, no attention was paid to the offences of these men against the constitution; but when the factions came to a mutual understanding, as has been said, and so began the sedition, then openly throughout the whole city they began to abuse the two and went about seeking them to kill. Accordingly the emperor, wishing to win the people to his side, instantly dismissed both these men from office. And Phocas, a patrician, he appointed praetorian prefect, a man of the greatest discretion and fitted by nature to be a guardian of justice; Basilides he commanded to fill the office of quaestor, a man known among the patricians for his agreeable qualities and a notable besides. However, the insurrection continued no less violently under them. Now on the fifth day of the insurrection in the late afternoon the Emperor Justinian gave orders to Hypatius and Pompeius, nephews of the late emperor, Anastasius, to go home as quickly as possible, either because he suspected that some plot was being matured by them against his own person, or, it may be, because destiny brought them to this. But they feared that the people would force them to the throne (as in fact fell out), and they said that they would be doing wrong if they should abandon their sovereign when he found himself in such danger. When the Emperor Justinian heard this, he inclined still more to his suspicion, and he bade them quit the palace instantly. Thus, then, these two men betook themselves to their homes, and, as long as it was night, they remained there quietly.

But on the following day at sunrise it became known to the people that both men had quit the palace where they had been staying. So the whole population ran to them, and they declared Hypatius emperor and prepared to lead him to the market-place to assume the power. But the wife of Hypatius, Mary, a discreet woman, who had the greatest reputation for prudence, laid hold of her husband and would not let go, but cried out with loud lamentation and with entreaties to all her kinsmen that the people were leading him on the road to death. But since the throng overpowered her, she unwillingly released her husband, and he by no will of his own came to the Forum of Constantine, where they summoned him to the throne; then since they had neither diadem nor anything else with which it is customary for a king to be clothed, they placed a golden necklace upon his head and proclaimed him Emperor of the Romans. By this time the members of the senate were assembling,—as many of them as had not been left in the emperor's residence,—and many expressed the opinion that they should go to the palace to fight. But Origenes, a man of the

senate, came forward and spoke as follows: "Fellow Romans, it is impossible that the situation which is upon us be solved in any way except by war. Now war and royal power are agreed to be the greatest of all things in the world. But when action involves great issues, it refuses to be brought to a successful conclusion by the brief crisis of a moment, but this is accomplished only by wisdom of thought and energy of action, which men display for a length of time. Therefore if we should go out against the enemy, our cause will hang in the balance, and we shall be taking a risk which will decide everything in a brief space of time; and, as regards the consequences of such action, we shall either fall down and worship Fortune or reproach her altogether. For those things whose issue is most quickly decided, fall, as a rule, under the sway of fortune. But if we handle the present situation more deliberately, not even if we wish shall we be able to take Justinian in the palace, but he will very speedily be thankful if he is allowed to flee; for authority which is ignored always loses its power, since its strength ebbs away with each day. Moreover we have other palaces, both Placillianae and the palace named from Helen, which this emperor should make his headquarters and from there he should carry on the war and attend to the ordering of all other matters in the best possible way." So spoke Origenes. But the rest, as a crowd is accustomed to do, insisted more excitedly and thought that the present moment was opportune, and not least of all Hypatius (for it was fated that evil should befall him) bade them lead the way to the hippodrome. But some say that he came there purposely, being well-disposed toward the emperor.

Now the emperor and his court were deliberating as to whether it would be better for them if they remained or if they took to flight in the ships. And many opinions were expressed favouring either course. And the Empress Theodora also spoke to the following effect: "As to the belief that a woman ought not to be daring among men or to assert herself boldly among those who are holding back from fear, I consider that the present crisis most certainly does not permit us to discuss whether the matter should be regarded in this or in some other way. For in the case of those whose interests have come into the greatest danger nothing else seems best except to settle the issue immediately before them in the best possible way. My opinion then is that the present time, above all others, is inopportune for flight, even though it bring safety. For while it is impossible for a man who has seen the light not also to die, for one who has been an emperor it is unendurable to be a fugitive. May I never be separated from this purple, and may I not live that day on which those who meet me shall not address me as mistress. If, now, it is your wish to save yourself, O Emperor, there is no difficulty. For we have much money, and there is the sea, here the boats. However consider whether it will not come about after you have been saved that you would gladly exchange that safety for death. For as for myself, I approve a certain ancient saying that royalty is a good burial-shroud." When the queen had spoken thus, all were filled with boldness, and, turning their thoughts towards resistance, they began to consider how they might be able to defend themselves if any hostile force should come against them. Now the soldiers as a body, including those who were stationed about the emperor's court, were neither well disposed to the emperor nor willing openly to take an active part in fighting, but were waiting for what the future would bring forth. All the hopes of the emperor were centred upon Belisarius and Mundus, of whom the former, Belisarius, had recently returned from the Persian war bringing with him a following which was both powerful and imposing, and in particular he had a great number of spearmen and guards who had received their training in battles and the perils of warfare. Mundus had been appointed general of the Illyrians, and by mere chance had happened to come under summons to Byzantium on some necessary errand, bringing with him Erulian barbarians.

When Hypatius reached the hippodrome, he went up immediately to where the emperor is accustomed to take his place and seated himself on the royal throne from which

the emperor was always accustomed to view the equestrian and athletic contests. And from the palace Mundus went out through the gate which, from the circling descent, has been given the name of the Snail. Belisarius meanwhile began at first to go straight up toward Hypatius himself and the royal throne, and when he came to the adjoining structure where there has been a guard of soldiers from of old, he cried out to the soldiers commanding them to open the door for him as quickly as possible, in order that he might go against the tyrant. But since the soldiers had decided to support neither side, until one of them should be manifestly victorious, they pretended not to hear at all and thus put him off. So Belisarius returned to the emperor and declared that the day was lost for them, for the soldiers who guarded the palace were rebelling against him. The emperor therefore commanded him to go to the so-called Bronze Gate and the propylaea there. So Belisarius, with difficulty and not without danger and great exertion, made his way over ground covered by ruins and half-burned buildings, and ascended to the stadium. And when he had reached the Blue Colonnade which is on the right of the emperor's throne, he purposed to go against Hypatius himself first; but since there was a small door there which had been closed and was guarded by the soldiers of Hypatius who were inside, he feared lest while he was struggling in the narrow space the populace should fall upon him, and after destroying both himself and all his followers, should proceed with less trouble and difficulty against the emperor. Concluding, therefore, that he must go against the populace who had taken their stand in the hippodrome—a vast multitude crowding each other in great disorder—he drew his sword from its sheath and, commanding the others to do likewise, with a shout he advanced upon them at a run. But the populace, who were standing in a mass and not in order, at the sight of armoured soldiers who had a great reputation for bravery and experience in war, and seeing that they struck out with their swords unsparingly, beat a hasty retreat. Then a great outcry arose, as was natural, and Mundus, who was standing not far away, was eager to join in the fight,—for he was a daring and energetic fellow—but he was at a loss as to what he should do under the circumstances; when, however, he observed that Belisarius was in the struggle, he straightway made a sally into the hippodrome through the entrance which they call the Gate of Death. Then indeed from both sides the partisans of Hypatius were assailed with might and main and destroyed. When the rout had become complete and there had already been great slaughter of the populace, Boraedes and Justus, nephews of the Emperor Justinian, without anyone daring to lift a hand against them, dragged Hypatius down from the throne, and, leading him in, handed him over together with Pompeius to the emperor. And there perished among the populace on that day more than thirty thousand. But the emperor commanded the two prisoners to be kept in severe confinement. Then, while Pompeius was weeping and uttering pitiable words (for the man was wholly inexperienced in such misfortunes), Hypatius reproached him at length and said that those who were about to die unjustly should not lament. For in the beginning they had been forced by the people against their will, and afterwards they had come to the hippodrome with no thought of harming the emperor. And the soldiers killed both of them on the following day and threw their bodies into the sea. The emperor confiscated all their property for the public treasury, and also that of all the other members of the senate who had sided with them. Later, however, he restored to the children of Hypatius and Pompeius and to all others the titles which they had formerly held, and as much of their property as he had not happened to bestow upon his friends. This was the end of the insurrection in Byzantium.



Tribunianus and John were thus deprived of office, but at a later time they were both restored to the same positions. And Tribunianus lived on in office many years and died of disease, suffering no further harm from anyone. For he was a smooth fellow and agreeable in every way and well able by the excellence of his education to throw into the shade his affliction of avarice. But John was oppressive and severe alike with all men, inflicting blows upon those whom he met and plundering without respect absolutely all their money; consequently in the tenth year of his office he rightly and justly atoned for his lawless conduct in the following manner.

The Empress Theodora hated him above all others. And while he gave offence to the woman by the wrongs he committed, he was not of a mind to win her by flattery or by kindness in any way, but he openly set himself in opposition to her and kept slandering her to the emperor, neither blushing before her high station nor feeling shame because of the extraordinary love which the emperor felt for her. When the queen perceived what was being done, she purposed to slay the man, but in no way could she do this, since the Emperor Justinian set great store by him. And when John learned of the purpose of the queen regarding him, he was greatly terrified. And whenever he went into his chamber to sleep, he expected every night that some one of the barbarians would fall upon him to slay him; and he kept peeping out of the room and looking about the entrances and remained sleepless, although he had attached to himself many thousands of spearmen and guards, a thing which had been granted to no prefect before that time. But at daybreak, forgetting all his fears of things divine and human, he would become again a plague to all the Romans both in public and in private. And he conversed commonly with sorcerers, and constantly listened to profane oracles which portended for him the imperial office, so that he was plainly walking on air and lifted up by his hopes of the royal power. But in his rascality and the lawlessness of his conduct there was no moderation or abatement. And there was in him absolutely no regard for God, and even when he went to a sanctuary to pray and to pass the night, he did not do at all as the Christians are wont to do, but he clothed himself in a coarse garment appropriate to a priest of the old faith which they are now accustomed to call Hellenic, and throughout that whole night mumbled out some unholy words which he had practised, praying that the mind of the emperor might be still more under his control, and that he himself might be free from harm at the hands of all men.

At this time Belisarius, after subjugating Italy, came to Byzantium at the summons of the emperor with his wife Antonina, in order to march against the Persians. And while in the eyes of all others he was an honoured and distinguished person, as was natural, John alone was hostile to him and worked actively against him, for no other reason than that he drew the hatred of all to himself, while Belisarius enjoyed an unequalled popularity. And it was on him that the hope of the Romans centred as he marched once more against the Persians, leaving his wife in Byzantium. Now Antonina, the wife of Belisarius, (for she was the most capable person in the world to contrive the impossible,) purposing to do a favour to the empress, devised the following plan. John had a daughter, Euphemia, who had a great reputation for discretion, but a very young woman and for this reason very susceptible; this girl was exceedingly loved by her father, for she was his only child. By treating this young woman kindly for several days Antonina succeeded most completely in winning her friendship, and she did not refuse to share her secrets with her. And on one occasion when she was present alone with her in her room she pretended to lament the fate which was upon her, saying that although Belisarius had made the Roman empire broader by a goodly measure than it had been before, and though he had brought two captive kings and so great an amount of wealth to Byzantium, he found Justinian ungrateful; and in other



respects she slandered the government as not just. Now Euphemia was overjoyed by these words, for she too was hostile to the present administration by reason of her fear of the empress, and she said: "And yet, dearest friend, it is you and Belisarius who are to blame for this, seeing that, though you have opportunity, you are not willing to use your power." And Antonina replied quickly: "It is because we are not able, my daughter, to undertake revolutions in camp, unless some of those here at home join with us in the task. Now if your father were willing, we should most easily organize this project and accomplish whatever God wills." When Euphemia heard this, she promised eagerly that the suggestion would be carried out, and departing from there she immediately brought the matter before her father. And he was pleased by the message (for he inferred that this undertaking offered him a way to the fulfilment of his prophecies and to the royal power), and straightway without any hesitation he assented, and bade his child arrange that on the following day he himself should come to confer with Antonina and give pledges. When Antonina learned the mind of John, she wished to lead him as far as possible astray from the understanding of the truth, so she said that for the present it was inadvisable that he should meet her, for fear lest some suspicion should arise strong enough to prevent proceedings; but she was intending straightway to depart for the East to join Belisarius. When, therefore, she had quit Byzantium and had reached the suburb (the one called Rufiniana which was the private possession of Belisarius), there John should come as if to salute her and to escort her forth on the journey, and they should confer regarding matters of state and give and receive their pledges. In saying this she seemed to John to speak well, and a certain day was appointed to carry out the plan. And the empress, hearing the whole account from Antonina, expressed approval of what she had planned, and by her exhortations raised her enthusiasm to a much higher pitch still.

When the appointed day was at hand, Antonina bade the empress farewell and departed from the city, and she went to Rufiniana, as if to begin on the following day her journey to the East; hither too came John at night in order to carry out the plan which had been agreed upon. Meanwhile the empress denounced to her husband the things which were being done by John to secure the tyranny, and she sent Narses, the eunuch, and Marcellus, the commander of the palace guards to Rufiniana with numerous soldiers, in order that they might investigate what was going on, and, if they found John setting about a revolution, that they might kill the man forthwith and return. So these departed for this task. But they say that the emperor got information of what was being done and sent one of John's friends to him forbidding him on any condition to meet Antonina secretly. But John (since it was fated that he should fare ill), disregarding the emperor's warning, about midnight met Antonina, close by a certain wall behind which she had stationed Narses and Marcellus with their men that they might hear what was said. There, while John with unguarded tongue was assenting to the plans for the attack and binding himself with the most dread oaths, Narses and Marcellus suddenly set upon him. But in the natural confusion which resulted the body-guards of John (for they stood close by) came immediately to his side. And one of them smote Marcellus with his sword, not knowing who he was, and thus John was enabled to escape with them, and reached the city with all speed. And if he had had the courage to go straightway before the emperor, I believe that he would have suffered no harm at his hand; but as it was, he fled for refuge to the sanctuary, and gave the empress opportunity to work her will against him at her pleasure.

May, 541

Thus, then, from being prefect he became a private citizen, and rising from that sanctuary he was conveyed to another, which is situated in the suburb of the city of Cyzicus called by the Cyzicenes Artace. There he donned the garb of a priest, much against his will,

not a bishop's gown however, but that of a presbyter, as they are called. But he was quite unwilling to perform the office of a priest lest at some time it should be a hindrance to his entering again into office; for he was by no means ready to relinquish his hopes. All his property was immediately confiscated to the public treasury, but a large proportion of this the emperor remitted to him, for he was still inclined to spare him. There it was possible for John to live, disregarding all dangers and enjoying great wealth, both that which he himself had concealed and that which by the decision of the emperor remained with him, and to indulge in luxury at his pleasure, and, if he had reasoned wisely, to consider his present lot a happy one. For this reason all the Romans were exceedingly vexed with the man, because, forsooth, after proving himself the basest of all demons, contrary to his deserts he was leading a life happier than before. But God, I think, did not suffer John's retribution to end thus, but prepared for him a greater punishment. And it fell out thus.

There was in Cyzicus a certain bishop named Eusebius, a man harsh to all who came in his way, and no less so than John; this man the Cyzicenes denounced to the emperor and summoned to justice. And since they accomplished nothing inasmuch as Eusebius circumvented them by his great power, certain youths agreed together and killed him in the market-place of Cyzicus. Now it happened that John had become especially hostile to Eusebius, and hence the suspicion of the plot fell upon him. Accordingly men were sent from the senate to investigate this act of pollution. And these men first confined John in a prison, and then this man who had been such a powerful prefect, and had been inscribed among the patricians and had mounted the seat of the consuls, than which nothing seems greater, at least in the Roman state, they made to stand naked like any robber or footpad, and thrashing him with many blows upon his back, compelled him to tell his past life. And while John had not been clearly convicted as guilty of the murder of Eusebius, it seemed that God's justice was exacting from him the penalties of the world. Thereafter they stripped him of all his goods and put him naked on board a ship, being wrapped in a single cloak, and that a very rough one purchased for some few obols; and wherever the ship anchored, those who had him in charge commanded him to ask from those he met bread or obols. Thus begging everywhere along the way he was conveyed to the city of Antinous in Aegypt. And this is now the third year during which they have been guarding him there in confinement. As for John himself, although he has fallen into such troubles, he has not relinquished his hope of royal power, but he made up his mind to denounce certain Alexandrians as owing money to the public treasury. Thus then John the Cappadocian ten years afterward was overtaken by this punishment for his political career.

## XXVI

At that time the Emperor again designated Belisarius General of the East, and, sending him to Libya, gained over the country, as will be told later on in my narrative. When this information came to Chosroes and the Persians, they were mightily vexed, and they already repented having made peace with the Romans, because they perceived that their power was extending greatly. And Chosroes sent envoys to Byzantium, and said that he rejoiced with the Emperor Justinian, and he asked with a laugh to receive his share of the spoils from Libya, on the ground that the emperor would never have been able to conquer in the war with the Vandals if the Persians had not been at peace with him. So then Justinian made a present of money to Chosroes, and not long afterwards dismissed the envoys.

In the city of Daras the following event took place. There was a certain John there serving in a detachment of infantry; this man, in conspiracy with some few of the soldiers, but not all, took possession of the city, essaying to make himself tyrant. Then he established

himself in a palace as if in a citadel, and was strengthening his tyranny every day. And if it had not happened that the Persians were continuing to keep peace with the Romans, irreparable harm would have come from this affair to the Romans. But as it was, this was prevented by the agreement which had already been reached, as I have said. On the fourth day of the tyranny some soldiers conspired together, and by the advice of Mamas, the priest of the city, and Anastasius, one of the notable citizens, they went up to the palace at high noon, each man hiding a small sword under his garment. And first at the door of the courtyard they found some few of the body-guards, whom they slew immediately. Then they entered the men's apartment and laid hold upon the tyrant; but some say that the soldiers were not the first to do this, but that while they were still hesitating in the courtyard and trembling at the danger, a certain sausage-vendor who was with them rushed in with his cleaver and meeting John smote him unexpectedly. But the blow which had been dealt him was not a fatal one, this account goes on to say, and he fled with a great outcry and suddenly fell among these very soldiers. Thus they laid hands upon the man and immediately set fire to the palace and burned it, in order that there might be left no hope from there for those making revolutions; and John they led away to the prison and bound. And one of them, fearing lest the soldiers, upon learning that the tyrant survived, might again make trouble for the city, killed John, and in this way stopped the confusion. Such, then, was the progress of events touching this tyranny.

BOOK II  
THE PERSIAN WAR (Continued)

I

Not long after this Chosroes, upon learning that Belisarius had begun to win Italy also for the Emperor Justinian, was no longer able to restrain his thoughts but he wished to discover pretexts, in order that he might break the treaty on some grounds which would seem plausible. And he conferred with Alamoundaras concerning this matter and commanded him to provide causes for war. So Alamoundaras brought against Arethas, the charge that he, Arethas, was doing him violence in a matter of boundary lines, and he entered into conflict with him in time of peace, and began to overrun the land of the Romans on this pretext. And he declared that, as for him, he was not breaking the treaty between the Persians and Romans, for neither one of them had included him in it. And this was true. For no mention of Saracens was ever made in treaties, on the ground that they were included under the names of Persians and Romans. Now this country which at that time was claimed by both tribes of Saracens is called Strata, and extends to the south of the city of Palmyra; nowhere does it produce a single tree or any of the useful growth of cornlands, for it is burned exceedingly dry by the sun, but from of old it has been devoted to the pasturage of some few flocks. Now Arethas maintained that the place belonged to the Romans, proving his assertion by the name which has long been applied to it by all (for Strata signifies "a paved road" in the Latin tongue), and he also adduced the testimonies of men of the oldest times. Alamoundaras, however, was by no means inclined to quarrel concerning the name, but he claimed that tribute had been given him from of old for the pasturage there by the owners of the flocks. The Emperor Justinian therefore entrusted the settlement of the disputed points to Strategius; a patrician and administrator of the royal treasures, and besides a man of wisdom and of good ancestry, and with him Summus, who had commanded the troops in Palestine. This Summus was the brother of Julian, who not long before had served as envoy to the Aethiopians and Homeritae. And the one of them, Summus, insisted that the Romans ought not to surrender the country, but Strategius begged of the emperor that he should not do the Persians the favour of providing them with pretexts for the war which they already desired, for the sake of a small bit of land and one of absolutely no account, but altogether unproductive and unsuitable for crops. The Emperor Justinian, therefore, took the matter under consideration, and a long time was spent in the settlement of the question.

But Chosroes, the King of the Persians, claimed that the treaty had been broken by Justinian, who had lately displayed great opposition to his house, in that he had attempted in time of peace to attach Alamoundaras to himself. For, as he said, Summus, who had recently gone to the Saracen ostensibly to arrange matters, had hoodwinked him by promises of large sums of money on condition that he should join the Romans, and he brought forward a letter which, he alleged, the Emperor Justinian had written to Alamoundaras concerning these things. He also declared that he had sent a letter to some of the Huns, in which he urged them to invade the land of the Persians and to do extensive damage to the country thereabout. This letter he asserted to have been put into his hands by the Huns themselves who had come before him. So then Chosroes, with these charges against the Romans, was purposing to break off the treaty. But as to whether he was speaking the truth in these matters, I am not able to say.

## II

At this point Vittigis, the leader of the Goths, already worsted in the war, sent two envoys to him to persuade him to march against the Romans; but the men whom he sent were not Goths, in order that the real character of the embassy might not be at once obvious and so make negotiations useless, but Ligurian priests who were attracted to this enterprise by rich gifts of money. One of these men, who seemed to be the more worthy, undertook the embassy assuming the pretended name of bishop which did not belong to him at all, while the other followed as his attendant. And when in the course of the journey they came to the land of Thrace, they attached to themselves a man from there to be an interpreter of the Syriac and the Greek tongues, and without being detected by any of the Romans, they reached the land of Persia. For inasmuch as they were at peace, they were not keeping a strict guard over that region. And coming before Chosroes they spoke as follows: "It is true, O King, that all other envoys undertake their task for the sake of advantages to themselves as a rule, but we have been sent by Vittigis, the king of the Goths and the Italians, in order to speak in behalf of thy kingdom; and consider that he is now present before thee speaking these words. If anyone should say, O King, putting all in a word, that thou hast given up thy kingdom and all men everywhere to Justinian, he would be speaking correctly. For since he is by nature a meddler and a lover of those things which in no way belong to him, and is not able to abide by the settled order of things, he has conceived the desire of seizing upon the whole earth, and has become eager to acquire for himself each and every state. Accordingly (since he was neither able alone to assail the Persians, nor with the Persians opposing him to proceed against the others), he decided to deceive thee with the pretence of peace, and by forcing the others to subjection to acquire mighty forces against thy state. Therefore, after having already destroyed the kingdom of the Vandals and subjugated the Moors, while the Goths because of their friendship stood aside for him, he has come against us bringing vast sums of money and many men. Now it is evident that, if he is able also to crush the Goths utterly, he will with us and those already enslaved march against the Persians, neither considering the name of friendship nor blushing before any of his sworn promises. While, therefore, some hope of safety is still left thee, do not do us any further wrong nor suffer it thyself, but see in our misfortunes what will a little later befall the Persians; and consider that the Romans could never be well-disposed to thy kingdom, and that when they become more powerful, they will not hesitate at all to display their enmity toward the Persians. Use, therefore, this good chance while the time fits, lest thou seek for it after it has ceased. For when once the time of opportunity has passed, it is not its nature to return again. And it is better by anticipating to be in security, than by delaying beyond the opportune time to suffer the most miserable fate possible at the hands of the enemy."

When Chosroes heard this, it seemed to him that Vittigis advised well, and he was still more eager to break off the treaty. For, moved as he was by envy toward the Emperor Justinian, he neglected completely to consider that the words were spoken to him by men who were bitter enemies of Justinian. But because he wished the thing he willingly consented to be persuaded. And he did the very same thing a little later in the case of the addresses of the Armenians and of the Lazi, which will be spoken of directly. And yet they were bringing as charges against Justinian the very things which would naturally be encomiums for a worthy monarch, namely that he was exerting himself to make his realm larger and much more splendid. For these accusations one might make also against Cyrus, the King of the Persians, and Alexander, the Macedonian. But justice is never accustomed to dwell together with envy. For these reasons, then, Chosroes was purposing to break off the treaty.



### III

At this same time another event also occurred; it was as follows. That Symeon who had given Pharangium into the hands of the Romans persuaded the Emperor Justinian, while the war was still at its height, to present him with certain villages of Armenia. And becoming master of these places, he was plotted against and murdered by those who had formerly possessed them. After this crime had been committed, the perpetrators of the murder fled into the land of Persia. They were two brothers, sons of Perozes. And when the Emperor heard this, he gave over the villages to Amazaspes, the nephew of Symeon, and appointed him ruler over the Armenians. This Amazaspes, as time went on, was denounced to the Emperor Justinian by one of his friends, Acacius by name, on the ground that he was abusing the Armenians and wished to give over to the Persians Theodosiopolis and certain other fortresses. After telling this, Acacius, by the emperor's will, slew Amazaspes treacherously, and himself secured the command over the Armenians by the gift of the emperor. And being base by nature, he gained the opportunity of displaying his inward character, and he proved to be the most cruel of all men toward his subjects. For he plundered their property without excuse and ordained that they should pay an unheard-of tax of four centenaria. But the Armenians, unable to bear him any longer, conspired together and slew Acacius and fled for refuge to Pharangium.

Therefore the emperor sent Sittas against them from Byzantium. For Sittas had been delaying there since the time when the treaty was made with the Persians. So he came to Armenia, but at first he entered upon the war reluctantly and exerted himself to calm the people and to restore the population to their former habitations, promising to persuade the emperor to remit to them the payment of the new tax. But since the emperor kept assailing him with frequent reproaches for his hesitation, led on by the slanders of Adolius, the son of Acacius, Sittas at last made his preparations for the conflict. First of all he attempted by means of promises of many good things to win over some of the Armenians by persuasion and to attach them to his cause, in order that the task of overpowering the others might be attended with less difficulty and toil. And the tribe called the Aspetiani, great in power and in numbers, was willing to join him. And they went to Sittas and begged him to give them pledges in writing that, if they abandoned their kinsmen in the battle and came to the Roman army, they should remain entirely free from harm, retaining their own possessions. Now Sittas was delighted and wrote to them in tablets, giving them pledges just as they desired of him; he then sealed the writing and sent it to them. Then, confident that by their help he would be victorious in the war without fighting, he went with his whole army to a place called Oenochalakon, where the Armenians had their camp. But by some chance those who carried the tablets went by another road and did not succeed at all in meeting the Aspetiani. Moreover a portion of the Roman army happened upon some few of them, and not knowing the agreement which had been made, treated them as enemies. And Sittas himself caught some of their women and children in a cave and slew them, either because he did not understand what had happened or because he was angry with the Aspetiani for not joining him as had been agreed.

But they, being now possessed with anger, arrayed themselves for battle with all the rest. But since both armies were on exceedingly difficult ground where precipices abounded, they did not fight in one place, but scattered about among the ridges and ravines. So it happened that some few of the Armenians and Sittas with not many of his followers came close upon each other, with only a ravine lying between them. Both parties were horsemen. Then Sittas with a few men following him crossed the ravine and advanced against the enemy; the Armenians, after withdrawing to the rear, stopped, and Sittas pursued no further but remained where he was. Suddenly someone from the Roman army, an Erulian

by birth, who had been pursuing the enemy, returning impetuously from them came up to Sittas and his men. Now as it happened Sittas had planted his spear in the ground; and the Erulian's horse fell upon this with a great rush and shattered it. And the general was exceedingly annoyed by this, and one of the Armenians, seeing him, recognized him and declared to all the others that it was Sittas. For it happened that he had no helmet on his head. Thus it did not escape the enemy that he had come there with only a few men. Sittas, then, upon hearing the Armenian say this, since his spear, as has been said, lay broken in two on the ground, drew his sword and attempted immediately to recross the ravine. But the enemy advanced upon him with great eagerness, and a soldier overtaking him in the ravine struck him a glancing blow with his sword on the top of his head; and he took off the whole scalp, but the steel did not injure the bone at all. And Sittas continued to press forward still more than before, but Artabanus, son of John of the Arsacidae, fell upon him from behind and with a thrust of his spear killed him. Thus Sittas was removed from the world after no notable fashion, in a manner unworthy of his valour and his continual achievements against the enemy, a man who was extremely handsome in appearance and a capable warrior, and a general second to none of his contemporaries. But some say that Sittas did not die at the hand of Artabanus, but that Solomon, a very insignificant man among the Armenians, destroyed him.

After the death of Sittas the emperor commanded Bouzes to go against the Armenians; and he, upon drawing near, sent to them promising to effect a reconciliation between the emperor and all the Armenians, and asking that some of their notables should come to confer with him on these matters. Now the Armenians as a whole were unable to trust Bouzes nor were they willing to receive his proposals. But there was a certain man of the Arsacidae who was especially friendly with him, John by name, the father of Artabanus, and this man, trusting in Bouzes as his friend came to him with his son-in-law, Bassaces, and a few others; but when these men had reached the spot where they were to meet Bouzes on the following day, and had made their bivouac there, they perceived that they had come into a place surrounded by the Roman army. Bassaces, the son-in-law, therefore earnestly entreated John to fly. And since he was not able to persuade him, he left him there alone, and in company with all the others eluded the Romans, and went back again by the same road. And Bouzes found John alone and slew him; and since after this the Armenians had no hope of ever reaching an agreement with the Romans, and since they were unable to prevail over the emperor in war, they came before the Persian king led by Bassaces, an energetic man. And the leading men among them came at that time into the presence of Chosroes and spoke as follows: "Many of us, O Master, are Arsacidae, descendants of that Arsaces who was not unrelated to the Parthian kings when the Persian realm lay under the hand of the Parthians, and who proved himself an illustrious king, inferior to none of his time. Now we have come to thee, and all of us have become slaves and fugitives, not, however, of our own will, but under most hard constraint, as it might seem by reason of the Roman power, but in truth, O King, by reason of thy decision,—if, indeed, he who gives the strength to those who wish to do injustice should himself justly bear also the blame of their misdeeds. Now we shall begin our account from a little distance back in order that you may be able to follow the whole course of events. Arsaces, the last king of our ancestors, abdicated his throne willingly in favour of Theodosius, the Roman Emperor, on condition that all who should belong to his family through all time should live unhampered in every respect, and in particular should in no case be subject to taxation. And we have preserved the agreement, until you, the Persians, made this much-vaunted treaty, which, as we think, one would not err in calling a sort of common destruction. For from that time, disregarding friend and foe, he who is in name thy friend, O King, but in fact thy enemy, has turned everything in the world upside down and wrought complete confusion. And this thou thyself

shalt know at no distant time, as soon as he is able to subdue completely the people of the West. For what thing which was before forbidden has he not done? or what thing which was well established has he not disturbed? Did he not ordain for us the payment of a tax which did not exist before, and has he not enslaved our neighbours, the Tzani, who were autonomous, and has he not set over the king of the wretched Lazi a Roman magistrate?—an act neither in keeping with the natural order of things nor very easy to explain in words. Has he not sent generals to the men of Bosphorus, the subjects of the Huns, and attached to himself the city which in no way belongs to him, and has he not made a defensive alliance with the Aethiopian kingdoms, of which the Romans had never even heard? More than this he has made the Homeritae his possession and the Red Sea, and he is adding the Palm Groves to the Roman dominion. We omit to speak of the fate of the Libyans and of the Italians. The whole earth is not large enough for the man; it is too small a thing for him to conquer all the world together. But he is even looking about the heavens and is searching the retreats beyond the ocean, wishing to gain for himself some other world. Why, therefore, O King, dost thou still delay? Why dost thou respect that most accursed peace, in order forsooth that he may make thee the last morsel of all? If it is thy wish to learn what kind of a man Justinian would shew himself toward those who yield to him, the example is to be sought near at hand from ourselves and from the wretched Lazi; and if thou wishest to see how he is accustomed to treat those who are unknown to him and who have done him not the least wrong, consider the Vandals and the Goths and the Moors. But the chief thing has not yet been spoken. Has he not made efforts in time of peace to win over by deception thy slave, Alamoundaras, O most mighty King, and to detach him from thy kingdom, and has he not striven recently to attach to himself the Huns who are utterly unknown to him, in order to make trouble for thee? And yet an act more strange than this has not been performed in all time. For since he perceived, as I think, that the overthrow of the western world would speedily be accomplished, he has already taken in hand to assail you of the East, since the Persian power alone has been left for him to grapple with. The peace, therefore, as far as concerns him, has already been broken for thee, and he himself has set an end to the endless peace. For they break the peace, not who may be first in arms, but they who may be caught plotting against their neighbours in time of peace. For the crime has been committed by him who attempts it, even though success be lacking. Now as for the course which the war will follow, this is surely clear to everyone. For it is not those who furnish causes for war, but those who defend themselves against those who furnish them, who are accustomed always to conquer their enemies. Nay more, the contest will not be evenly matched for us even in point of strength. For, as it happens, the majority of the Roman soldiers are at the end of the world, and as for the two generals who were the best they had, we come here having slain the one, Sittas, and Belisarius will never again be seen by Justinian. For disregarding his master, he has remained in the West, holding the power of Italy himself. So that when thou goest against the enemy, no one at all will confront thee, and thou wilt have us leading the army with good will, as is natural, and with a thorough knowledge of the country." When Chosroes heard this he was pleased, and calling together all who were of noble blood among the Persians, he disclosed to all of them what Vittigis had written and what the Armenians had said, and laid before them the question as to what should be done. Then many opinions were expressed inclining to either side, but finally it was decided that they must open hostilities against the Romans at the beginning of spring. For it was the late autumn season, in the thirteenth year of the reign of the Emperor Justinian. The Romans, however, did not suspect this, nor did they think that the Persians would ever break the so-called endless peace, although they heard that Chosroes blamed their emperor for his successes in the West, and that he preferred against him the charges which I have lately mentioned.

#### IV

539 A.D.

At that time also the comet appeared, at first about as long as a tall man, but later much larger. And the end of it was toward the west and its beginning toward the east, and it followed behind the sun itself. For the sun was in Capricorn and it was in Sagittarius. And some called it "the swordfish" because it was of goodly length and very sharp at the point, and others called it "the bearded star"; it was seen for more than forty days. Now those who were wise in these matters disagreed utterly with each other, and one announced that one thing, another that another thing was indicated by this star; but I only write what took place and I leave to each one to judge by the outcome as he wishes. Straightway a mighty Hunnic army crossing the Danube River fell as a scourge upon all Europe, a thing which had happened many times before, but which had never brought such a multitude of woes nor such dreadful ones to the people of that land. For from the Ionian Gulf these barbarians plundered everything in order as far as the suburbs of Byzantium. And they captured thirty-two fortresses in Illyricum, and they carried by storm the city of Cassandria (which the ancients called Potidaea, as far as we know), never having fought against walls before. And taking with them the money and leading away one hundred and twenty thousand captives, they all retired homeward without encountering any opposition. In later times too they often came there and brought upon the Romans irreparable calamity. This same people also assailed the wall of the Chersonesus, where they overpowered those who were defending themselves from the wall, and approaching through the surf of the sea, scaled the fortifications on the so-called Black Gulf; thus they got within the long wall, and falling unexpectedly upon the Romans in the Chersonesus they slew many of them and made prisoners of almost all the survivors. Some few of them also crossed the strait between Sestus and Abydus, and after plundering the Asiatic country, they returned again to the Chersonesus, and with the rest of the army and all the booty betook themselves to their homes. In another invasion they plundered Illyricum and Thessaly and attempted to storm the wall at Thermopylae; and since the guards on the walls defended them most valiantly, they sought out the ways around and unexpectedly found the path which leads up the mountain which rises there. In this way they destroyed almost all the Greeks except the Peloponnesians, and then withdrew. And the Persians not long afterwards broke off the treaty and wrought such harm to the Romans of the East as I shall set forth immediately.

Belisarius, after humbling Vittigis, the king of the Goths and Italians, brought him alive to Byzantium. And I shall now proceed to tell how the army of the Persians invaded the land of the Romans. When the Emperor Justinian perceived that Chosroes was eager for war, he wished to offer him some counsel and to dissuade him from the undertaking. Now it happened that a certain man had come to Byzantium from the city of Daras, Anastasius by name, well known for his sagacity; he it was who had broken the tyranny which had been established recently in Daras. Justinian therefore wrote a letter and sent it by this Anastasius to Chosroes; and the message of the letter was as follows: "It is the part of men of discretion and those by whom divine things are treated with due respect, when causes of war arise, and in particular against men who are in the truest sense friends, to exert all their power to put an end to them; but it belongs to foolish men and those who most lightly bring on themselves the enmity of Heaven to devise occasions for war and insurrection which have no real existence. Now to destroy peace and enter upon war is not a difficult matter, since the nature of things is such as to make the basest activities easy for the most dishonourable men. But when they have brought about war according to their intention, to return again to peace is for men, I think, not easy. And yet thou chargest me with writing letters which were not written with any dark purpose, and thou hast now made haste to



interpret these with arbitrary judgment, not in the sense in which we conceived them when we wrote them, but in a way which will be of advantage to thee in thy eagerness to carry out thy plans not without some pretext. But for us it is possible to point out that thy Alamoundaras recently overran our land and performed outrageous deeds in time of peace, to wit, the capture of towns, the seizure of property, the massacre and enslavement of such a multitude of men, concerning which it will be thy duty not to blame us, but to defend thyself. For the crimes of those who have done wrong are made manifest to their neighbours by their acts, not by their thoughts. But even with these things as they are, we have still decided to hold to peace, but we hear that thou in thy eagerness to make war upon the Romans art fabricating accusations which do not belong to us at all. Natural enough, this; for while those who are eager to preserve the present order of things repel even those charges against their friends which are most pressing, those who are not satisfied with established friendships exert themselves to provide even pretexts which do not exist. But this would not seem to be becoming even to ordinary men, much less to kings. But leaving aside these things do thou consider the number of those who will be destroyed on both sides in the course of the war, and consider well who will justly bear the blame for those things which will come to pass, and ponder upon the oaths which thou didst take when thou didst carry away the money, and consider that if, after that, thou wrongly dishonour them by some tricks or sophistries, thou wouldst not be able to pervert them; for Heaven is too mighty to be deceived by any man." When Chosroes saw this message, he neither made any immediate answer nor did he dismiss Anastasius, but he compelled him to remain there.

## V

540 A.D

When the winter was already reaching its close, and the thirteenth year of the reign of the Emperor Justinian was ending, Chosroes, son of Cabades, invaded the land of the Romans at the opening of spring with a mighty army, and openly broke the so-called endless peace. But he did not enter by the country between the rivers, but advanced with the Euphrates on his right. On the other side of the river stands the last Roman stronghold which is called Circesium, an exceedingly strong place, since the River Aborras, a large stream, has its mouth at this point and mingles with the Euphrates, and this fortress lies exactly in the angle which is made by the junction of the two rivers. And a long second wall outside the fortress cuts off the land between the two rivers, and completes the form of a triangle around Circesium. Chosroes, therefore, not wishing to make trial of so strong a fortress and not having in mind to cross the River Euphrates, but rather to go against the Syrians and Cilicians, without any hesitation led his army forward, and after advancing for what, to an unencumbered traveller, is about a three-days' journey along the bank of the Euphrates, he came upon the city of Zenobia; this place Zenobia had built in former times, and, as was natural, she gave her name to the city. Now Zenobia was the wife of Odonathus, the ruler of the Saracens of that region, who had been on terms of peace with the Romans from of old. This Odonathus rescued for the Romans the Eastern Empire when it had come under the power of the Medes; but this took place in former times. Chosroes then came near to Zenobia, but upon learning that the place was not important and observing that the land was untenanted and destitute of all good things, he feared lest any time spent by him there would be wasted on an affair of no consequence and would be a hindrance to great undertakings, and he attempted to force the place to surrender. But meeting with no success, he hastened his march forward.



After again accomplishing a journey of equal extent, he reached the city of Sura, which is on the River Euphrates, and stopped very close to it. There it happened that the horse on which Chosroes was riding neighed and stamped the ground with his foot. And the Magi considered the meaning of this incident and announced that the place would be captured. Chosroes then made camp and led his army against the fortifications to assail the wall. Now it happened that a certain Arsaces, an Armenian by birth, was commander of the soldiers in the town; and he made the soldiers mount the parapets, and fighting from there most valiantly slew many of the enemy, but was himself struck by an arrow and died. And then, since it was late in the day, the Persians retired to their camp in order to assail the wall again on the following day; but the Romans were in despair since their leader was dead, and were purposing to make themselves suppliants of Chosroes. On the following day, therefore, they sent the bishop of the city to plead for them and to beg that the town be spared; so he took with him some of his attendants, who carried fowls and wine and clean loaves, and came before Chosroes; there he threw himself on the ground, and with tears supplicated him to spare a pitiable population and a city altogether without honour in the eyes of the Romans, and one which in past times had never been of any account to the Persians, and which never would be such thereafter; and he promised that the men of Sura would give him ransom worthy of themselves and the city which they inhabited. But Chosroes was angry with the townsmen because, being the first he had met of all the Romans, they had not willingly received him into their city, but even daring to raise their arms against him had slain a large number of Persian notables. However he did not disclose his anger, but carefully concealed it behind a smooth countenance, in order that by carrying out the punishment of the inhabitants of Sura he might make himself in the eyes of the Romans a fearful person and one not to be resisted. For by acting in this way he calculated that those who would from time to time come in his way would yield to him without trouble. Accordingly with great friendliness he caused the bishop to rise, and receiving the gifts, gave the impression, in a way that he would immediately confer with the notables of the Persians concerning the ransom of the townsmen, and would settle their request favourably. Thus he dismissed the bishop and his following without any suspicion of the plot, and he sent with him certain of the men of note among the Persians, who were to be ostensibly an escort. These men he secretly commanded to go with him as far as the wall, encouraging him and cheering him with fair hopes, so that he and all those with him should be seen by those inside rejoicing and fearing nothing. But when the guards had set the gate open and were about to receive them into the city, they were to throw a stone or block of wood between the threshold and the gate and not allow them to shut it, but should themselves for a time stand in the way of those who wished to close it; for not long afterwards the army would follow them.

After giving these directions to the men Chosroes made ready the army, and commanded them to advance upon the city on the run whenever he should give the signal. So when they came close to the fortifications, the Persians bade farewell to the bishop and remained outside, and the townsmen, seeing that the man was exceedingly happy and that he was being escorted in great honour by the enemy, forgetting all their difficulties opened the gate wide, and received the priest and his following with clapping of hands and much shouting. And when all got inside, the guards began to push the gate in order to close it, but the Persians flung down a stone, which they had provided, between it and the threshold. And the guards pushed and struggled still more, but were quite unable to get the gate back to the threshold. On the other hand they dared not open it again, since they perceived that it was held by the enemy. But some say that it was not a stone but a block of wood which the Persians threw into the gateway. When the townsmen had as yet scarcely realized the plot, Chosroes was at hand with his whole army, and the barbarians forced back and flung open

the gate, which was soon carried by storm. Straightway, then, Chosroes, filled with wrath, plundered the houses and put to death great numbers of the population; all the remainder he reduced to slavery, and setting fire to the whole city razed it to the ground. Then he dismissed Anastasius, bidding him announce to the Emperor Justinian where in the world he had left Chosroes, son of Cabades.

Afterwards either through motives of humanity or of avarice, or as granting a favour to a woman whom he had taken as a captive from the city, Euphemia by name, Chosroes decided to shew some kindness to the inhabitants of Sura; for he had conceived for this woman an extraordinary love (for she was exceedingly beautiful to look upon), and had made her his wedded wife. He sent, accordingly, to Sergiopolis, a city subject to the Romans, named from Sergius, a famous saint, distant from the captured city one hundred and twenty-six stades and lying to the south of it in the so-called Barbarian Plain, and bade Candidus, the bishop of the city, purchase the captives, twelve thousand in number, for two centenaria. But the bishop, alleging that he had no money, refused absolutely to undertake the matter. Chosroes therefore requested him to set down in a document the agreement that he would give the money at a later time, and thus to purchase for a small sum such a multitude of slaves. Candidus did as directed, promising to give the money within a year, and swore the most dire oaths, specifying that he should receive the following punishment if he should not give the money at the time agreed upon, that he should pay double the amount and should himself be no longer a priest, as one who had neglected his sworn promise. And after setting down these things in writing, Candidus received all the inhabitants of Sura. And some few among them survived, but the majority, unable to support the misery which had fallen to their lot, succumbed soon afterwards. After the settlement of this affair Chosroes led his army forward.

## VI

IT had happened a little before this that the emperor had divided into two parts the military command of the East, leaving the portion as far as the River Euphrates under the control of Belisarius who formerly held the command of the whole, while the portion from there as far as the Persian boundary he entrusted to Bouzes, commanding him to take charge of the whole territory of the East until Belisarius should return from Italy. Bouzes therefore at first remained at Hierapolis, keeping his whole army with him; but when he learned what had befallen Sura, he called together the first men of the Hierapolitans and spoke as follows: "Whenever men are confronted with a struggle against an assailant with whom they are evenly matched in strength, it is not at all unreasonable that they should engage in open conflict with the enemy; but for those who are by comparison much inferior to their opponents it will be more advantageous to circumvent their enemy by some kind of tricks than to array themselves openly against them and thus enter into foreseen danger. How great, now, the army of Chosroes is you are assuredly informed. And if, with this army, he wishes to capture us by siege, and if we carry on the fight from the wall, it is probable that, while our supplies will fail us, the Persians will secure all they need from our land, where there will be no one to oppose them. And if the siege is prolonged in this way, I believe too that the fortification wall will not withstand the assaults of the enemy, for in many places it is most susceptible to attack, and thus irreparable harm will come to the Romans. But if with a portion of the army we guard the wall of the city, while the rest of us occupy the heights about the city, we shall make attacks from there at times upon the camp of our antagonists, and at times upon those who are sent out for the sake of provisions, and thus compel Chosroes to abandon the siege immediately and to make his retreat within a short time; for he will not be at all able to direct his attack without fear against the

fortifications, nor to provide any of the necessities for so great an army." So spoke Bouzes; and in his words he seemed to set forth the advantageous course of action, but of what was necessary he did nothing. For he chose out all that portion of the Roman army which was of marked excellence and was off. And where in the world he was neither any of the Romans in Hierapolis, nor the hostile army was able to learn. Such, then, was the course of these events.

But the Emperor Justinian, upon learning of the inroad of the Persians, immediately sent his nephew Germanus with three hundred followers in great disorder, promising that after no great time a numerous army would follow. And Germanus, upon reaching Antioch, went around the whole circuit of the wall; and the greater part of it he found secure, for along that portion of it which lies on the level ground the River Orontes flows, making it everywhere difficult of access, and the portion which is on higher ground rises upon steep hills and is quite inaccessible to the enemy; but when he attained the highest point, which the men of that place are accustomed to call Orocacias, he noticed that the wall at that point was very easy to assail. For there happens to be in that place a rock, which spreads out to a very considerable width, and rises to a height only a little less than the fortifications. He therefore commanded that they should either cut off the rock by making a deep ditch along the wall, lest anyone should essay to mount from there upon the fortifications, or that they should build upon it a great tower and connect its structure with the wall of the city. But to the architects of public buildings it seemed that neither one of these things should be done. For, as they said, the work would not be completed in a short time with the attack of the enemy so imminent, while if they began this work and did not carry it to completion, they would do nothing else than shew to the enemy at what point in the wall they should make their attack. Germanus, though disappointed in this plan, had some hope at first because he expected an army from Byzantium. But when, after considerable time had passed, no army arrived from the emperor nor was expected to arrive, he began to fear lest Chosroes, learning that the emperor's nephew was there, would consider it more important than any other thing to capture Antioch and himself, and for this reason would neglect everything else and come against the city with his whole army. The natives of Antioch also had these things in mind, and they held a council concerning them, at which it seemed most advisable to offer money to Chosroes and thus escape the present danger.

Accordingly they sent Megas, the bishop of Beroea, a man of discretion who at that time happened to be tarrying among them, to beg for mercy from Chosroes; and departing from there he came upon the Median army not far from Hierapolis. And coming into the presence of Chosroes, he entreated him earnestly to have pity upon men who had committed no offence against him and who were not able to hold out against the Persian army. For it was becoming to a king least of all men to trample upon and do violence to those who retreated before him and were quite unwilling to array themselves against him; for not one of the things which he was then doing was a kingly or honourable act, because, without affording any time for consideration to the Roman emperor, so that he might either make the peace secure as might seem well to both sovereigns, or make his preparations for war in accordance with a mutual agreement, as was to be expected, he had thus recklessly advanced in arms against the Romans, while their emperor did not as yet know what had come upon them. When Chosroes heard this, he was utterly unable by reason of his stupidity to order his mind with reason and discretion, but still more than before he was lifted up in spirit. He therefore threatened to destroy all the Syrians and Cilicians, and bidding Megas follow him, he led his army to Hierapolis. When he had come there and established his camp, since he saw that the fortifications were strong and learned that the city was well garrisoned with soldiers, he demanded money from the Hierapolitans, sending to them Paulus as interpreter. This Paulus had been reared in Roman territory and had

gone to an elementary school in Antioch, and besides he was said to be by birth of Roman extraction. But in spite of everything the inhabitants were exceedingly fearful for the fortifications, which embraced a large tract of land as far as the hill which rises there, and besides they wished to preserve their land unplundered; accordingly they agreed to give two thousand pounds of silver. Then indeed Megas entreated Chosroes in behalf of all the inhabitants of the East, and would not cease his entreaty, until Chosroes promised him that he would accept ten centenaria of gold and depart from the whole Roman empire.

## VII

Thus, then, on that day Megas departed thence and went on the way to Antioch, while Chosroes after receiving the ransom was moving toward Beroea. This city lies between Antioch and Hierapolis, at a distance from both of two-days' journey for an unencumbered traveller. Now while Megas, who travelled with a small company, advanced very quickly, the Persian army was accomplishing only one half of the distance which he travelled each day. And so on the fourth day he reached Antioch, while the Persians came to the suburb of Beroea. And Chosroes immediately sent Paulus and demanded money of the Beroeans, not only as much as he had received from the Hierapolitans, but double the amount, since he saw that their wall in many places was very vulnerable. As for the Beroeans, since they could by no means place confidence in their fortifications, they gladly agreed to give all, but after giving two thousand pounds of silver, they said that they were not able to give the remainder. And since Chosroes pressed them on this account, on the following night all of them fled for refuge into the fortress which is on the acropolis together with the soldiers who had been stationed there to guard the place. And on the following day men were sent to the city by Chosroes in order to receive the money; but on coming near the fortifications they found all the gates closed, and being unable to discover any man, they reported the situation to the king. And he commanded them to set ladders against the wall and to make trial of mounting it, and they did as directed. Then since no one opposed them, they got inside the fortifications and opened the gates at their leisure, and received into the city the whole army and Chosroes himself. By this time the king was furious with anger and he fired nearly the whole city. He then mounted the acropolis and decided to storm the fortress. There indeed the Roman soldiers while valiantly defending themselves slew some of the enemy; but Chosroes was greatly favoured by fortune by reason of the folly of the besieged, who had not sought refuge in this fortress by themselves, but along with all their horses and other animals, and by this inconsiderate act they were placed at a great disadvantage and began to be in danger. For since there was only one spring there and the horses and mules and other animals drank from it when they should not have done so, it came about that the water was exhausted. Such, then, was the situation of the Beroeans.

Megas, upon reaching Antioch and announcing the terms arranged by him with Chosroes, failed utterly to persuade them to carry out this agreement. For it happened that the Emperor Justinian had sent John, the son of Rufinus, and Julian, his private secretary, as ambassadors to Chosroes. The person holding this office is styled "a secretis" by the Romans; for secrets they are accustomed to call "secreta." These men had reached Antioch and were remaining there. Now Julian, one of the ambassadors, explicitly forbade everybody to give money to the enemy, or to purchase the cities of the emperor, and besides he denounced to Germanus the chief priest Ephraemius, as being eager to deliver over the city to Chosroes. For this reason Megas returned unsuccessful. But Ephraemius, the bishop of Antioch, fearing the attack of the Persians, went into Cilicia. There too came Germanus not long afterwards, taking with him some few men but leaving the most of them in Antioch.



Megas then came in haste to Beroea, and in vexation at what had taken place, he charged Chosroes with having treated the Beroeans outrageously; for while, as it seemed, he had sent him to Antioch to arrange the treaty, he had both plundered the property of the citizens, though they had committed no wrong at all, and had compelled them to shut themselves up in that fortress, and had then set fire to the city and razed it to the ground in defiance of right. To this Chosroes replied as follows: "Verily, my friend, you yourself are responsible for these things, in having compelled us to delay here; for as it is, you have arrived, not at the appointed time, but far behind it. And as for the strange conduct of your fellow-citizens, my most excellent sir, why should one make speeches of great length? For after agreeing to give us a fixed amount of silver for their own safety, they even now do not think it necessary to fulfil the agreement, but placing such complete confidence in the strength of their position, they are disregarding us absolutely, while we are compelled to undertake the siege of a fortress, as you surely see. But for my part, I have hope that with the help of the gods I shall have vengeance upon them shortly, and execute upon the guilty the punishment for the Persians whom I have lost wrongfully before this wall." So spoke Chosroes, and Megas replied as follows: "If one should consider that as king thou art making these charges against men who are in pitiable and most dishonoured plight, he would be compelled without a word of protest to agree with what thou hast said; for authority which is unlimited is bound by its very nature to carry with it also supremacy in argument; but if one be permitted to shake off all else and to espouse the truth of the matter, thou wouldst have, O King, nothing with which justly to reproach us; but mayst thou hear all mildly. First, as for me, since the time when I was sent to declare to the men of Antioch the message which thou didst send them, seven days have passed (and what could be done more quickly than this?) and now coming into thy presence I find these things accomplished by thee against my fatherland; but these men, having already lost all that is most valuable, thereafter have only one struggle to engage in—that for life—and have come, I think, so to be masters of the situation that they can no longer be compelled to pay thee any of the money. For to pay a thing which one does not possess could not be made possible for a man by any device. From of old indeed have the names of things been well and suitably distinguished by men; and among these distinctions is this, that want of power is separated from want of consideration. For when the latter by reason of intemperance of mind proceeds to resistance, it is accustomed to be detested, as is natural, but when the former, because of the impossibility of performing a service, is driven to the same point, it deserves to be pitied. Permit, therefore, O King, that, while we receive as our portion all the direst misfortunes, we may take with us this consolation at least, that we should not seem to have been ourselves responsible for the things which have befallen us. And as for money, consider that what thou hast taken into thy possession is sufficient for thee, not weighing this by thy position, but with regard to the power of the Beroeans. But beyond this do not force us in any way, lest perchance thou shouldst seem unable to accomplish the thing to which thou hast set thy hand; for excess is always punished by meeting obstacles that cannot be overcome, and the best course is not to essay the impossible. Let this, then, be my defence for the moment in behalf of these men. But if I should be able to have converse with the sufferers, I should have something else also to say which has now escaped me." So spoke Megas, and Chosroes permitted him to go into the acropolis. And when he had gone there and learned all that had happened concerning the spring, weeping he came again before Chosroes, and lying prone on the ground insisted that no money at all was left to the Beroeans, and entreated him to grant him only the lives of the men. Moved by the tearful entreaties of the man Chosroes fulfilled his request, and binding himself by an oath, gave pledges to all on the acropolis. Then the Beroeans, after coming into such great danger, left the acropolis free from harm, and departing went each his own way. Among the soldiers some few followed them, but the majority came as willing deserters to Chosroes, putting



forth as their grievance that the government owed them their pay for a long time; and with him they later went into the land of Persia.

## VIII

June 540 A.D.

Then Chosroes (since Megas said that he had by no means persuaded the inhabitants of Antioch to bring him the money) went with his whole army against them. Some of the population of Antioch thereupon departed from there with their money and fled as each one could. And all the rest likewise were purposing to do the same thing, and would have done so had not the commanders of the troops in Lebanon, Theoctistus and Molatzes, who arrived in the meantime with six thousand men, fortified them with hope and thus prevented their departure. Not long after this the Persian army also came. There they all pitched their tents and made camp fronting on the River Orontes and not very far from the stream. Chosroes then sent Paulus up beside the fortifications and demanded money from the men of Antioch, saying that for ten centenaria of gold he would depart from there, and it was obvious that he would accept even less than this for his withdrawal. And on that day their ambassadors went before Chosroes, and after speaking at length concerning the breaking of the peace and hearing much from him, they retired. But on the morrow the populace of Antioch (for they are not seriously disposed, but are always engaged in jesting and disorderly performance) heaped insults upon Chosroes from the battlements and taunted him with unseemly laughter; and when Paulus came near the fortifications and exhorted them to purchase freedom for themselves and the city for a small sum of money, they very nearly killed him with shots from their bows, and would have done so if he had not seen their purpose in time and guarded against it. On account of this Chosroes, boiling with anger, decided to storm the wall.

On the following day, accordingly, he led up all the Persians against the wall and commanded a portion of the army to make assaults at different points along the river, and he himself with the most of the men and best troops directed an attack against the height. For at this place, as has been stated by me above, the wall of fortification was most vulnerable. Thereupon the Romans, since the structure on which they were to stand when fighting was very narrow, devised the following remedy. Binding together long timbers they suspended them between the towers, and in this way they made these spaces much broader, in order that still more men might be able to ward off the assailants from there. So the Persians, pressing on most vigorously from all sides, were sending their arrows thickly everywhere, and especially along the crest of the hill. Meanwhile the Romans were fighting them back with all their strength, not soldiers alone, but also many of the most courageous youths of the populace. But it appeared that those who were attacking the wall there were engaged in a battle on even terms with their enemy. For the rock which was broad and high and, as it were, drawn up against the fortifications caused the conflict to be just as if on level ground. And if anyone of the Roman army had had the courage to get outside the fortifications with three hundred men and to anticipate the enemy in seizing this rock and to ward off the assailants from there, never, I believe, would the city have come into any danger from the enemy. For the barbarians had no point from which they could have conducted their assault, for they would be exposed to missiles from above both from the rock and from the wall; but as it was (for it was fated that Antioch be destroyed by this army of the Medes), this idea occurred to no one. So then while the Persians were fighting beyond their power, since Chosroes was present with them and urging them on with a mighty cry, giving their opponents not a moment in which to look about or guard against the missiles

discharged from their bows, and while the Romans, in great numbers and with much shouting, were defending themselves still more vigorously, the ropes with which the beams had been bound together, failing to support the weight, suddenly broke asunder and the timbers together with all those who had taken their stand on them fell to the ground with a mighty crash. When this was heard by other Romans also, who were fighting from the adjoining towers, being utterly unable to comprehend what had happened, but supposing that the wall at this point had been destroyed, they beat a hasty retreat. Now many young men of the populace who in former times had been accustomed to engage in factional strife with each other in the hippodromes descended into the city from the fortification wall, but they refused to flee and remained where they were, while the soldiers with Theoctistus and Molatzes straightway leaped upon the horses which happened to be ready there and rode away to the gates, telling the others a tale to the effect that Bouzes had come with an army and they wished to receive them quickly into the city, and with them to ward off the enemy. Thereupon many of the men of Antioch and all the women with their children made a great rush toward the gates; but since they were crowded by the horses, being in very narrow quarters, they began to fall down. The soldiers, however, sparing absolutely no one of those before them, all kept riding over the fallen still more fiercely than before, and a great many were killed there, especially about the gates themselves.

But the Persians, with no one opposing them, set ladders against the wall and mounted with no difficulty. And quickly reaching the battlements, for a time they were by no means willing to descend, but they seemed like men looking about them and at a loss what to do, because, as it seems to me, they supposed that the rough ground was beset with some ambuscades of the enemy. For the land inside the fortifications which one traverses immediately upon descending from the height is an uninhabited tract extending for a great distance and there are found there rocks which rise to a very great height, and steep places. But some say that it was by the will of Chosroes that the Persians hesitated. For when he observed the difficulty of the ground and saw the soldiers fleeing, he feared lest by reason of some necessity they should turn back from their retreat and make trouble for the Persians, and thus become an obstacle, as might well happen, in the way of his capturing a city which was both ancient and of great importance and the first of all the cities which the Romans had throughout the East both in wealth and in size and in population and in beauty and in prosperity of every kind. Hence it was that, considering everything else of less account, he wished to allow the Roman soldiers freely to avail themselves of the chance for flight. For this reason too the Persians also made signs to the fugitives with their hands, urging them to flee as quickly as possible. So the soldiers of the Romans together with their commanders took a hasty departure, all of them, through the gate which leads to Daphne, the suburb of Antioch; for from this gate alone the Persians kept away while the others were seized; and of the populace some few escaped with the soldiers. Then when the Persians saw that all the Roman soldiers had gone on, they descended from the height and got into the middle of the city. There, however, many of the young men of Antioch engaged in battle with them, and at first they seemed to have the upper hand in the conflict. Some of them were in heavy armour, but the majority was unarmed and using only stones as missiles. And pushing back the enemy they raised the paean, and with shouts proclaimed the Emperor Justinian triumphant, as if they had won the victory.

At this point Chosroes, seated on the tower which is on the height, summoned the ambassadors, wishing to say something. And one of his officers, Zaberganes, thinking that he wished to have words with the ambassadors concerning a settlement, came quickly before the king and spoke as follows: "Thou dost not seem to me, O Master, to think in the same way as do the Romans concerning the safety of these men. For they both before fighting offer insults to thy kingdom, and when they are defeated dare the impossible and

do the Persians irreparable harm, as if fearing lest some reason for shewing them humanity should be left in thee; but thou art wishing to pity those who do not ask to be saved, and hast shewn zeal to spare those who by no means wish it. Meanwhile these men have set an ambush in a captured city and are destroying the victors by means of snares, although all the soldiers have long since fled from them." When Chosroes heard this, he sent a large number of the best troops against them, and these not long afterwards returned and announced that nothing untoward had come to pass. For already the Persians had forced back the citizens by their numbers and turned them to flight, and a great slaughter took place there. For the Persians did not spare persons of any age and were slaying all whom they met, old and young alike. At that time they say that two women of those who were illustrious in Antioch got outside the fortifications, but perceiving that they would fall into the hands of the enemy (for they were already plainly seen going about everywhere), went running to the River Orontes, and, fearing lest the Persians should do them some insult, they covered their faces with their veils and threw themselves into the river's current and were carried out of sight. Thus the inhabitants of Antioch were visited with every form of misfortune.

## IX

Then Chosroes spoke to the ambassadors as follows: "Not far from the truth, I think, is the ancient saying that God does not give blessings unmixed, but He mingles them with troubles and then bestows them upon men. And for this reason we do not even have laughter without tears, but there is always attached to our successes some misfortune, and to our pleasures pain, not permitting anyone to enjoy in its purity such good fortune as is granted. For this city, which is of altogether preeminent importance in fact as well as in name in the land of the Romans I have indeed succeeded in capturing with the least exertion, since God has provided the victory all at once for us, as you doubtless see. But when I behold the massacre of such a multitude of men, and the victory thus drenched with blood, there arises in me no sense of the delight that should follow my achievement. And for this the wretched men of Antioch are to blame, for when the Persians were storming the wall they did not prove able to keep them back, and then when they had already triumphed and had captured the city at the first cry these men with unreasoned daring sought to die fighting against them in close combat. So while all the notables of the Persians were harassing me unceasingly with their demand that I should drag the city as with a net and destroy all the captives, I was commanding the fugitives to press on still more in their flight, in order that they might save themselves as quickly as possible. For to trample upon captives is not holy." Such high-sounding and airy words did Chosroes speak to the ambassadors, but nevertheless it did not escape them why he gave time to the Romans in their flight.

For he was the cleverest of all men at saying that which was not, and in concealing the truth, and in attributing the blame for the wrongs which he committed to those who suffered the wrong; besides he was ready to agree to everything and to pledge the agreement with an oath, and much more ready to forget completely the things lately agreed to and sworn to by him, and for the sake of money to debase his soul without reluctance to every act of pollution—a past master at feigning piety in his countenance, and absolving himself in words from the responsibility of the act. This man well displayed his own peculiar character on a certain occasion at Sura; for after he had hoodwinked the inhabitants of the city by a trick and had destroyed them in the manner which I have described, although they had previously done him no wrong at all, he saw, while the city was being captured, a comely woman and one not of lowly station being dragged by her left hand with great violence by

one of the barbarians; and the child, which she had only lately weaned, she was unwilling to let go, but was dragging it with her other hand, fallen, as it was, to the ground since it was not able to keep pace with that violent running. And they say that he uttered a pretended groan, and making it appear to all who were present at that time including Anastasius the ambassador that he was all in tears, he prayed God to exact vengeance from the man who was guilty of the troubles which had come to pass. Now Justinian, the Emperor of the Romans, was the one whom he wished to have understood, though he knew well that he himself was most responsible for everything. Endowed with such a singular nature Chosroes both became King of the Persians (for ill fortune had deprived Zames of his eye, he who in point of years had first right to the kingdom, at any rate after Caoses, whom Cabades for no good reason hated), and with no difficulty he conquered those who revolted against him, and all the harm which he purposed to do the Romans he accomplished easily. For every time when Fortune wishes to make a man great, she does at the fitting times those things which she has decided upon, with no one standing against the force of her will; and she neither regards the man's station, nor purposes to prevent the occurrence of things which ought not to be, nor does she give heed that many will blaspheme against her because of these things, mocking scornfully at that which has been done by her contrary to the deserts of the man who receives her favour; nor does she take into consideration anything else at all, if only she accomplish the thing which has been decided upon by her. But as for these matters, let them be as God wishes.

Chosroes commanded the army to capture and enslave the survivors of the population of Antioch, and to plunder all the property, while he himself with the ambassadors descended from the height to the sanctuary which they call a church. There Chosroes found stores of gold and silver so great in amount that, though he took no other part of the booty except these stores, he departed possessed of enormous wealth. And he took down from there many wonderful marbles and ordered them to be deposited outside the fortifications, in order that they might convey these too to the land of Persia. When he had finished these things, he gave orders to the Persians to burn the whole city. And the ambassadors begged him to withhold his hand only from the church, for which he had carried away ransom in abundance. This he granted to the ambassadors, but gave orders to burn everything else; then, leaving there a few men who were to fire the city, he himself with all the rest retired to the camp where they had previously set up their tents.

## X

A short time before this calamity God displayed a sign to the inhabitants of that city, by which He indicated the things which were to be. For the standards of the soldiers who had been stationed there for a long time had been standing previously toward the west, but of their own accord they turned and stood toward the east, and then returned again to their former position untouched by anyone. This the soldiers shewed to many who were near at hand and among them the manager of finances in the camp, while the standards were still trembling. This man, Tatianus by name, was an especially discreet person, a native of Mopsuestia. But even so those who saw this sign did not recognize that the mastery of the place would pass from the western to the eastern king, in order, evidently, that escape might be utterly impossible for those who were bound to suffer those things which came to pass.

But I become dizzy as I write of such a great calamity and transmit it to future times, and I am unable to understand why indeed it should be the will of God to exalt on high the fortunes of a man or of a place, and then to cast them down and destroy them for no cause which appears to us. For it is wrong to say that with Him all things are not always done with

reason, though he then endured to see Antioch brought down to the ground at the hands of a most unholy man, a city whose beauty and grandeur in every respect could not even so be utterly concealed.

So, then, after the city had been destroyed, the church was left solitary, thanks to the activity and foresight of the Persians to whom this work was assigned. And there were also left about the so-called Cerataeum many houses, not because of the foresight of any man, but, since they were situated at the extremity of the city, and not connected with any other building, the fire failed entirely to reach them. The barbarians burned also the parts outside the fortifications, except the sanctuary which is dedicated to St. Julianus and the houses which stand about this sanctuary. For it happened that the ambassadors had taken up their lodgings there. As for the fortifications, the Persians left them wholly untouched.

A little later the ambassadors again came to Chosroes and spoke as follows: "If our words were not addressed to thee in thy presence, O King, we should never believe that Chosroes, the son of Cabades, had come into the land of the Romans in arms, dishonouring the oaths which have recently been sworn by thee—for such pledges are regarded as the last and most firm security of all things among men to guarantee mutual trust and truthfulness—and breaking the treaty, though hope in treaties is the only thing left to those who are living in insecurity because of the evil deeds of war. For one might say of such a state of affairs that it is nothing else than the transformation of the habits of men into those of beasts. For in a time when no treaties at all are made, there will remain certainly war without end, and war which has no end is always calculated to estrange from their proper nature those who engage in it. With what intent, moreover, didst thou write to thy brother not long ago that he himself was responsible for the breaking of the treaty? Was it not obviously with the admission that the breaking of treaties is an exceedingly great evil? If therefore he has done no wrong, thou art not acting justly now in coming against us; but if it happen that thy brother has done any such thing, yet let thy complaint have its fulfilment thus far, and go no farther, that thou mayst shew thyself superior. For he who submits to be worsted in evil things would in better things justly be victorious. And yet we know well that the Emperor Justinian has never gone contrary to the treaty, and we entreat thee not to do the Romans such harm, from which there will be no advantage to the Persians, and thou wilt gain only this, that thou wilt have wrongfully wrought deeds of irreparable harm upon those who have recently made peace with thee." So spoke the ambassadors.

And Chosroes, upon hearing this, insisted that the treaty had been broken by the Emperor Justinian; and he enumerated the causes of war which the Emperor afforded, some of them of real importance and others idle and fabricated without any reason; most of all he wished to shew that the letters written by him to Alamoundaras and the Huns were the chief cause of the war, just as I have stated above. But as for any Roman who had invaded the land of Persia, or who had made a display of warlike deeds, he was unable either to mention or to point out such a one. The ambassadors, however, referred the charges in part not to Justinian but to certain of those who had served him, while in the case of others they took exception to what he had said on the ground that the things had not taken place as stated. Finally Chosroes made the demand that the Romans give him a large sum of money, but he warned them not to hope to establish peace for all time by giving money at that moment only. For friendship, he said, which is made by men on terms of money is generally spent as fast as the money is used up. It was necessary, therefore, that the Romans should pay some definite annual sum to the Persians. "For thus," he said, "the Persians will keep the peace secure for them, guarding the Caspian Gates themselves and no longer feeling resentment at them on account of the city of Daras, in return for which the Persians themselves will be in their pay forever." "So," said the ambassadors, "the Persians



desire to have the Romans subject and tributary to themselves." "No," said Chosroes, "but the Romans will have the Persians as their own soldiers for the future, dispensing to them a fixed payment for their service; for you give an annual payment of gold to some of the Huns and to the Saracens, not as tributary subjects to them, but in order that they may guard your land unplundered for all time." After Chosroes and the ambassadors had spoken thus at length with each other, they at last came to terms, agreeing that Chosroes should forthwith take from the Romans fifty centenaria, and that, receiving a tribute of five more centenaria annually for all time, he should do them no further harm, but taking with him hostages from the ambassadors to pledge the keeping of the agreement, should make his departure with the whole army to his native land, and that there ambassadors sent from the Emperor Justinian should arrange on a firm basis for the future the compact regarding the peace.

## XI

Then Chosroes went to Seleucia, a city on the sea, one hundred and thirty stades distant from Antioch; and there he neither met nor harmed a single Roman, and he bathed himself alone in the sea-water, and after sacrificing to the sun and such other divinities as he wished, and calling upon the gods many times, he went back. And when he came to the camp, he said that he had a desire to see the city of Apamea which was in the vicinity for no other reason than that of his interest in the place. And the ambassadors unwillingly granted this also, but only on condition that after seeing the city and taking away with him from there one thousand pounds of silver, he should, without inflicting any further injury, march back. But it was evident to the ambassadors and to all the others that Chosroes was setting out for Apamea with this sole purpose, that he might lay hold upon some pretext of no importance and plunder both the city and the land thereabout. Accordingly he first went up to Daphne, the suburb of Antioch, where he expressed great wonder at the grove and at the fountains of water; for both of these are very well worth seeing. And after sacrificing to the nymphs he departed, doing no further damage than burning the sanctuary of the archangel Michael together with certain other buildings, for the following reason. A Persian gentleman of high repute in the army of the Persians and well known to Chosroes, the king, while riding on horseback came in company with some others to a precipitous place near the so-called Tretum, where is a temple of the archangel Michael, the work of Evaris. This man, seeing one of the young men of Antioch on foot and alone concealing himself there, separated from the others and pursued him. Now the young man was a butcher, Aeimachus by name. When he was about to be overtaken, he turned about unexpectedly and threw a stone at his pursuer which hit him on the forehead and penetrated to the membrane by the ear. And the rider fell immediately to the ground, whereupon the youth drew out his sword and slew him. Then at his leisure he stripped him of his weapons and all his gold and whatever else he had on his person, and leaping upon his horse rode on. And whether by the favour of fortune or by his knowledge of the country, he succeeded completely in eluding the Persians and making good his escape. When Chosroes learned this, he was deeply grieved at what had happened, and commanded some of his followers to burn the sanctuary of the archangel Michael which I have mentioned above. And they, thinking that the sanctuary at Daphne was the one in question, burned it with the buildings about it, and they supposed that the commands of Chosroes had been executed. Such, then, was the course of these events.

But Chosroes with his whole army proceeded on the way to Apamea. Now there is a piece of wood one cubit in length in Apamea, a portion of the cross on which the Christ in Jerusalem once endured the punishment not unwillingly, as is generally agreed, and which in ancient times had been conveyed there secretly by a man of Syria. And the men of olden

times, believing that it would be a great protection both for themselves and for the city, made for it a sort of wooden chest and deposited it there; and they adorned this chest with much gold and with precious stones and they entrusted it to three priests who were to guard it in all security; and they bring it forth every year and the whole population worship it during one day. Now at that time the people of Apamea, upon learning that the army of the Medes was coming against them, began to be in great fear. And when they heard that Chosroes was absolutely untruthful, they came to Thomas, the chief priest of the city, and begged him to shew them the wood of the cross, in order that after worshipping it for the last time they might die. And he did as they requested. Then indeed it befell that a sight surpassing both description and belief was there seen. For while the priest was carrying the wood and showing it, above him followed a flame of fire, and the portion of the roof over him was illuminated with a great and unaccustomed light. And while the priest was moving through every part of the temple, the flame continued to advance with him, keeping constantly the place above him in the roof. So the people of Apamea, under the spell of joy at the miracle, were wondering and rejoicing and weeping, and already all felt confidence concerning their safety. And Thomas, after going about the whole temple, laid the wood of the cross in the chest and covered it, and suddenly the light had ceased. Then upon learning that the army of the enemy had come close to the city, he went in great haste to Chosroes. And when the king enquired of the priest whether it was the will of the citizens of Apamea to marshal themselves on the wall against the army of the Medes, the priest replied that no such thing had entered the minds of the men. "Therefore," said Chosroes, "receive me into the city accompanied by a few men with all the gates opened wide." And the priest said "Yes, for I have come here to invite thee to do this very thing." So the whole army pitched their tents and made camp before the fortifications.

Then Chosroes chose out two hundred of the best of the Persians and entered the city. But when he had got inside the gates, he forgot willingly enough what had been agreed upon between himself and the ambassadors, and he commanded the bishop to give not only one thousand pounds of silver nor even ten times that amount, but whatsoever treasures were stored there, being all of gold and silver and of marvellous great size. And I believe that he would not have shrunk from enslaving and plundering the whole city, unless some divine providence had manifestly prevented him; to such a degree did avarice overpower him and the desire of fame turn his mind. For he thought the enslavement of the cities a great glory for himself, considering it absolutely nothing that disregarding treaties and compacts he was performing such deeds against the Romans. This attitude of Chosroes will be revealed by what he undertook to do concerning the city of Daras during his withdrawal at this same time, when he treated his agreements with absolute disregard, and also by what he did to the citizens of Callinicus a little later in time of peace, as will be told by me in the following narrative. But God, as has been said, preserved Apamea. Now when Chosroes had seized all the treasures, and Thomas saw that he was already intoxicated with the abundance of the wealth, then bringing out the wood of the cross with the chest, he opened the chest and displaying the wood said: "O most mighty King, these alone are left me out of all the treasures. Now as for this chest (since it is adorned with gold and precious stones), we do not begrudge thy taking it and keeping it with all the rest, but this wood here, it is our salvation and precious to us, this, I beg and entreat thee, give to me." So spoke the priest. And Chosroes yielded and fulfilled the request.

Afterwards, being filled with a desire for popular applause, he commanded that the populace should go up into the hippodrome and that the charioteers should hold their accustomed contests. And he himself went up there also, eager to be a spectator of the performances. And since he had heard long before that the Emperor Justinian was extraordinarily fond of the Venetus colour, which is blue, wishing to go against him there

also, he was desirous of bringing about victory for the green. So the charioteers, starting from the barriers, began the contest, and by some chance he who was clad in the blue happened to pass his rival and take the lead. And he was followed in the same tracks by the wearer of the green colour. And Chosroes, thinking that this had been done purposely, was angry, and he cried out with a threat that the Caesar had wrongfully surpassed the others, and he commanded that the horses which were running in front should be held up, in order that from then on they might contend in the rear; and when this had been done just as he commanded, then Chosroes and the green faction were accounted victorious. At that time one of the citizens of Apamea came before Chosroes and accused a Persian of entering his house and violating his maiden daughter. Upon hearing this, Chosroes, boiling with anger, commanded that the man should be brought. And when he came before him, he directed that he should be impaled in the camp. And when the people learned this, they raised a mighty shout as loud as they could, demanding that the man be saved from the king's anger. And Chosroes promised that he would release the man to them, but he secretly impaled him not long afterwards. So after these things had been thus accomplished, he departed and marched back with the whole army.

## XII

And when he came to the city of Chalcis, eighty-four stades distant from the city of Beroea, he again seemed to forget the things which had been agreed upon, and encamping not far from the fortifications he sent Paulus to threaten the inhabitants of Chalcis, saying that he would take the city by siege, unless they should purchase their safety by giving ransom, and should give up to the Persians all the soldiers who were there together with their leader. And the citizens of Chalcis were seized with great fear of both sovereigns, and they swore that, as for soldiers, there were absolutely none of them in the city, although they had hidden Adonachus, the commander of the soldiers, and others as well in some houses, in order that they might not be seen by the enemy; and with difficulty they collected two centenaria of gold, for the city they inhabited was not very prosperous, and they gave them to Chosroes as the price of their lives and thus saved both the city and themselves.

From there on Chosroes did not wish to continue the return journey by the road he had come, but to cross the River Euphrates and gather by plunder as much money as possible from Mesopotamia. He therefore constructed a bridge at the place called Obbane, which is forty stades distant from the fortress in Barbalissum; then he himself went across and gave orders to the whole army to cross as quickly as possible, adding that he would break up the bridge on the third day, and he appointed also the time of the day. And when the appointed day was come, it happened that some of the army were left who had not yet crossed, but without the least consideration for them he sent the men to break up the bridge. And those who were left behind returned to their native land as each one could.

Then a sort of ambition came over Chosroes to capture the city of Edessa. For he was led on to this by a saying of the Christians, and it kept irritating his mind, because they maintained that it could not be taken, for the following reason. There was a certain Augarus in early times, toparch of Edessa (for thus the kings of the different nations were called then). Now this Augarus was the most clever of all men of his time, and as a result of this was an especial friend of the Emperor Augustus. For, desiring to make a treaty with the Romans, he came to Rome; and when he conversed with Augustus, he so astonished him by the abundance of his wisdom that Augustus wished never more to give up his company; for he was an ardent lover of his conversation, and whenever he met him, he was quite unwilling to depart from him. A long time, therefore, was consumed by him in this visit.

And one day when he was desirous of returning to his native land and was utterly unable to persuade Augustus to let him go, he devised the following plan. He first went out to hunt in the country about Rome; for it happened that he had taken considerable interest in the practice of this sport. And going about over a large tract of country, he captured alive many of the animals of that region, and he gathered up and took with him from each part of the country some earth from the land; thus he returned to Rome bringing both the earth and the animals. Then Augustus went up into the hippodrome and seated himself as was his wont, and Augarus came before him and displayed the earth and the animals, telling over from what district each portion of earth was and what animals they were. Then he gave orders to put the earth in different parts of the hippodrome, and to gather all the animals into one place and then to release them. So the attendants did as he directed. And the animals, separating from each other, went each to that portion of earth which was from the district in which it itself had been taken. And Augustus looked upon the performance carefully for a very long time, and he was wondering that nature untaught makes animals miss their native land. Then Augarus, suddenly laying hold upon his knees, said: "But as for me, O Master, what thoughts dost thou think I have, who possess a wife and children and a kingdom, small indeed, but in the land of my fathers?" And the emperor, overcome and compelled by the truth of his saying, granted not at all willingly that he should go away, and bade him ask besides whatever he wished. And when Augarus had secured this, he begged of Augustus to build him a hippodrome in the city of Edessa. And he granted also this. Thus then Augarus departed from Rome and came to Edessa. And the citizens enquired of him whether he had come bringing any good thing for them from the Emperor Augustus. And he answering said he had brought to the inhabitants of Edessa pain without loss and pleasure without gain, hinting at the fortune of the hippodrome.

At a later time when Augarus was well advanced in years, he was seized with an exceedingly violent attack of gout. And being distressed by the pains and his inability to move in consequence of them, he carried the matter to the physicians, and from the whole land he gathered all who were skilled in these matters. But later he abandoned these men (for they did not succeed in discovering any cure for the trouble), and finding himself helpless, he bewailed the fate which was upon him. But about that time Jesus, the Son of God, was in the body and moving among the men of Palestine, shewing manifestly by the fact that he never sinned at all, and also by his performing even things impossible, that he was the Son of God in very truth; for he called the dead and raised them up as if from sleep, and opened the eyes of men who had been born blind, and cleansed those whose whole bodies were covered with leprosy, and released those whose feet were maimed, and he cured all the other diseases which are called by the physicians incurable. When these things were reported to Augarus by those who travelled from Palestine to Edessa, he took courage and wrote a letter to Jesus, begging him to depart from Judaea and the senseless people there, and to spend his life with him from that time forward. When the Christ saw this message, he wrote in reply to Augarus, saying distinctly that he would not come, but promising him health in the letter. And they say that he added this also that never would the city be liable to capture by the barbarians. This final portion of the letter was entirely unknown to those who wrote the history of that time; for they did not even make mention of it anywhere; but the men of Edessa say that they found it with the letter, so that they have even caused the letter to be inscribed in this form on the gates of the city instead of any other defence. The city did in fact come under the Medes a short time afterwards, not by capture however, but in the following manner. A short time after Augarus received the letter of the Christ, he became free from suffering, and after living on in health for a long time, he came to his end. But that one of his sons who succeeded to the kingdom shewed himself the most unholy of all men, and besides committing many other wrongs against his subjects, he voluntarily



went over to the Persians, fearing the vengeance which was to come from the Romans. But long after this the citizens of Edessa destroyed the barbarian guards who were dwelling with them, and gave the city into the hands of the Romans. \* \* \* he is eager to attach it to his cause, judging by what has happened in my time, which I shall present in the appropriate place. And the thought once occurred to me that, if the Christ did not write this thing just as I have told it, still, since men have come to believe in it, He wishes to guard the city uncaptured for this reason, that He may never give them any pretext for error. As for these things, then, let them be as God wills, and so let them be told.

For this reason it seemed to Chosroes at that time a matter of moment to capture Edessa. And when he came to Batne, a small stronghold of no importance, one day's journey distant from Edessa, he bivouacked there for that night, but at early dawn he was on the march to Edessa with his whole army. But it fell out that they lost their way and wandered about, and on the following night bivouacked in the same place; and they say that this happened to them a second time also. When with difficulty Chosroes reached the neighbourhood of Edessa, they say that suppuration set in in his face and his jaw became swollen. For this reason he was quite unwilling to make an attempt on the city, but he sent Paulus and demanded money from the citizens. And they said that they had absolutely no fear concerning the city, but in order that he might not damage the country they agreed to give two centenaria of gold. And Chosroes took the money and kept the agreement.

### XIII

At that time also the Emperor Justinian wrote a letter to Chosroes, promising to carry out the agreement which had been made by him and the ambassadors regarding the peace. When this message was received by Chosroes, he released the hostages and made preparations for his departure, and he wished to sell off all the captives from Antioch. And when the citizens of Edessa learned of this, they displayed an unheard-of zeal. For there was not a person who did not bring ransom for the captives and deposit it in the sanctuary according to the measure of his possessions. And there were some who even exceeded their proportionate amount in so doing. For the harlots took off all the adornment which they wore on their persons, and threw it down there, and any farmer who was in want of plate or of money, but who had an ass or a sheep, brought this to the sanctuary with great zeal. So there was collected an exceedingly great amount of gold and silver and money in other forms, but not a bit of it was given for ransom. For Bouzes happened to be present there, and he took in hand to prevent the transaction, expecting that this would bring him some great gain. Therefore Chosroes moved forward, taking with him all the captives. And the citizens of Carrhae met him holding out to him great sums of money; but he said that it did not belong to him because the most of them are not Christians but are of the old faith.

503 A.D.

But when, likewise, the citizens of Constantina offered money, he accepted it, although he asserted that the city belonged to him from his fathers. For at the time when Cabades took Amida, he wished also to capture Edessa and Constantina. But when he came near to Edessa he enquired of the Magi whether it would be possible for him to capture the city, pointing out the place to them with his right hand. But they said that the city would not be captured by him by any device, judging by the fact that in stretching out his right hand to it he was not giving thereby the sign of capture or of any other grievous thing, but of salvation. And when Cabades heard this, he was convinced and led his army on to Constantina. And upon arriving there, he issued orders to the whole army to encamp for a siege. Now the priest of Constantina was at that time Baradotus, a just man and especially beloved of God,



and his prayers for this reason were always effectual for whatever he wished; and even seeing his face one would have straightway surmised that this man was most completely acceptable to God. This Baradotus came then to Cabades bearing wine and dried figs and honey and unblemished loaves, and entreated him not to make an attempt on a city which was not of any importance and which was very much neglected by the Romans, having neither a garrison of soldiers nor any other defence, but only the inhabitants, who were pitiable folk. Thus spoke the priest; and Cabades promised that he would grant him the city freely, and he presented him with all the food-supplies which had been prepared by him for the army in anticipation of the siege, an exceedingly great quantity; and thus he departed from the land of the Romans. For this reason it was that Chosroes claimed that the city belonged to him from his fathers.

And when he reached Daras, he began a siege; but within the city the Romans and Martinus, their general (for it happened that he was there), made their preparations for resistance. Now the city is surrounded by two walls, the inner one of which is of great size and a truly wonderful thing to look upon (for each tower reaches to a height of a hundred feet, and the rest of the wall to sixty), while the outer wall is much smaller, but in other respects strong and one to be reckoned with seriously. And the space between has a breadth of not less than fifty feet; in that place the citizens of Daras are accustomed to put their cattle and other animals when an enemy assails them. At first then Chosroes made an assault on the fortifications toward the west, and forcing back his opponents by overwhelming numbers of missiles, he set fire to the gates of the small wall. However no one of the barbarians dared to get inside. Next he decided to make a tunnel secretly at the eastern side of the city. For at this point alone can the earth be dug, since the other parts of the fortifications were set upon rock by the builders. So the Persians began to dig, beginning from their trench. And since this was very deep, they were neither observed by the enemy nor did they afford them any means of discovering what was being done. So they had already gone under the foundations of the outer wall, and were about to reach the space between the two walls and soon after to pass also the great wall and take the city by force; but since it was not fated to be captured by the Persians, someone from the camp of Chosroes came alone about midday close to the fortifications, whether a man or something else greater than man, and he made it appear to those who saw him that he was collecting the weapons which the Romans had a little before discharged from the wall against the barbarians who were assailing them. And while doing this and holding his shield before him, he seemed to be bantering those who were on the parapet and taunting them with laughter. Then he told them of everything and commanded them all to be on the watch and to take all possible care for their safety. After revealing these things he was off, while the Romans with much shouting and confusion were ordering men to dig the ground between the two walls. The Persians, on the other hand, not knowing what was being done, were pushing on the work no less than before. So while the Persians were making a straight way underground to the wall of the city, the Romans by the advice of Theodoras, a man learned in the science called mechanics, were constructing their trench in a cross-wise direction and making it of sufficient depth, so that when the Persians had reached the middle point between the two circuit-walls they suddenly broke into the trench of the Romans. And the first of them the Romans killed, while those in the rear by fleeing at top speed into the camp saved themselves. For the Romans decided by no means to pursue them in the dark. So Chosroes, failing in this attempt and having no hope that he would take the city by any device thereafter, opened negotiations with the besieged, and carrying away a thousand pounds of silver he retired into the land of Persia. When this came to the knowledge of the Emperor Justinian, he was no longer willing to carry the agreement into effect, charging Chosroes with having attempted to capture the city of Daras during a truce. Such were the

fortunes of the Romans during the first invasion of Chosroes; and the summer drew to its close.

#### XIV

Now Chosroes built a city in Assyria in a place one day's journey distant from the city of Ctesiphon, and he named it the Antioch of Chosroes and settled there all the captives from Antioch, constructing for them a bath and a hippodrome and providing that they should have free enjoyment of their other luxuries besides. For he brought with him charioteers and musicians both from Antioch and from the other Roman cities. Besides this he always provisioned these citizens of Antioch at public expense more carefully than in the fashion of captives, and he required that they be called king's subjects, so as to be subordinate to no one of the magistrates, but to the king alone. And if any one else too who was a Roman in slavery ran away and succeeded in escaping to the Antioch of Chosroes, and if he was called a kinsman by any one of those who lived there, it was no longer possible for the owner of this captive to take him away, not even if he who had enslaved the man happened to be a person of especial note among the Persians.

526 A.D.

Thus, then, the portent which had come to the citizens of Antioch in the reign of Anastasius reached this final fulfilment for them. For at that time a violent wind suddenly fell upon the suburb of Daphne, and some of the cypresses which were there of extraordinary height were overturned from the extremities of their roots and fell to the earth—trees which the law forbade absolutely to be cut down. Accordingly, a little later, when Justinus was ruling over the Romans, the place was visited by an exceedingly violent earthquake, which shook down the whole city and straightway brought to the ground the most and the finest of the buildings, and it is said that at that time three hundred thousand of the population of Antioch perished. And finally in this capture the whole city, as has been said, was destroyed. Such, then, was the calamity which befell the men of Antioch.

541 A.D.

And Belisarius came to Byzantium from Italy, summoned by the emperor; and after he had spent the winter in Byzantium, the emperor sent him as general against Chosroes and the Persians at the opening of spring, together with the officers who had come with him from Italy, one of whom, Valerianus, he commanded to lead the troops in Armenia. For Martinus had been sent immediately to the East, and for this reason Chosroes found him at Daras, as has been stated above. And among the Goths, Vittigis remained in Byzantium, but all the rest marched with Belisarius against Chosroes. At that time one of the envoys of Vittigis, he who was assuming the name of bishop, died in the land of Persia, and the other one remained there. And the man who followed them as interpreter withdrew to the land of the Romans, and John, who was commanding the troops in Mesopotamia, arrested him near the boundaries of Constantina, and bringing him into the city confined him in a prison; there the man in answer to his enquiries related everything which had been done. Such, then, was the course of these events. And Belisarius and his followers went in haste, since he was eager to anticipate Chosroes' making any second invasion into the land of the Romans.

#### XV

But in the meantime Chosroes was leading his army against Colchis, where the Lazi were calling him in for the following reason. The Lazi at first dwelt in the land of Colchis as

subjects of the Romans, but not to the extent of paying them tribute or obeying their commands in any respect, except that, whenever their king died, the Roman emperor would send emblems of the office to him who was about to succeed to the throne. And he, together with his subjects, guarded strictly the boundaries of the land in order that hostile Huns might not proceed from the Caucasus mountains, which adjoin their territory, through Lazica and invade the land of the Romans. And they kept guard without receiving money or troops from the Romans and without ever joining the Roman armies, but they were always engaged in commerce by sea with the Romans who live on the Black Sea. For they themselves have neither salt nor grain nor any other good thing, but by furnishing skins and hides and slaves they secured the supplies which they needed. But when the events came to pass in which Gourgenes, the king of the Iberians, was concerned, as has been told in the preceding narrative, Roman soldiers began to be quartered among the Lazi; and these barbarians were annoyed by the soldiers, and most of all by Peter, the general, a man who was prone to treat insolently those who came into contact with him. This Peter was a native of Arzanene, which is beyond the River Nymphius, a district subject to the Persians from of old, but while still a child he had been captured and enslaved by the Emperor Justinus at the time when Justinus, after the taking of Amida, was invading the land of the Persians with Celer's army. And since his owner showed him great kindness, he attended the school of a grammarist. And at first he became secretary to Justinus, but when, after the death of Anastasius, Justinus took over the Roman empire, Peter was made a general, and he degenerated into a slave of avarice, if anyone ever did, and shewed himself very fatuous in his treatment of all.

And later the Emperor Justinian sent different officers to Lazica, and among them John, whom they called Tzibus, a man of obscure and ignoble descent, but who had climbed to the office of general by virtue of no other thing than that he was the most accomplished villain in the world and most successful in discovering unlawful sources of revenue. This man unsettled and threw into confusion all the relations of the Romans and the Lazi. He also persuaded the Emperor Justinian to build a city on the sea in Lazica, Petra by name; and there he sat as in a citadel and plundered the property of the Lazi. For the salt, and all other cargoes which were considered necessary for the Lazi, it was no longer possible for the merchants to bring into the land of Colchis, nor could they purchase them elsewhere by sending for them, but he set up in Petra the so-called "monopoly" and himself became a retail dealer and overseer of all the handling of these things, buying everything and selling it to the Colchians, not at the customary rates, but as dearly as possible. At the same time, even apart from this, the barbarians were annoyed by the Roman army quartered upon them, a thing which had not been customary previously. Accordingly, since they were no longer able to endure these things, they decided to attach themselves to the Persians and Chosroes, and immediately they sent to them envoys who were to arrange this without the knowledge of the Romans. These men had been instructed that they should take pledges from Chosroes that he would never give up the Lazi against their will to the Romans, and that with this understanding they should bring him with the Persian army into the land.

Accordingly the envoys went to the Persians, and coming secretly before Chosroes they said: "If any people in all time have revolted from their own friends in any manner whatsoever and attached themselves wrongfully to men utterly unknown to them, and after that by the kindness of fortune have been brought back once more with greatest rejoicing to those who were formerly their own, consider, O Most mighty King, that such as these are the Lazi. For the Colchians in ancient times, as allies of the Persians, rendered them many good services and were themselves treated in like manner; and of these things there are many records in books, some of which we have, while others are preserved in thy palace up to the present time. But at a later time it came about that our ancestors, whether neglected

by you or for some other reason (for we are unable to ascertain anything certain about this matter), became allies of the Romans. And now we and the king of Lazica give to the Persians both ourselves and our land to treat in any way you may desire. And we beg of you to think thus concerning us: if, on the one hand, we have suffered nothing outrageous at the hands of the Romans, but have been prompted by foolish motives in coming to you, reject this prayer of ours straightway, considering that with you likewise the Colchians will never be trustworthy (for when a friendship has been dissolved, a second friendship formed with others becomes, owing to its character, a matter of reproach); but if we have been in name friends of the Romans, but in fact their loyal slaves, and have suffered impious treatment at the hands of those who have tyrannized over us, receive us, your former allies, and acquire as slaves those whom you used to treat as friends, and shew your hatred of a cruel tyranny which has risen thus on our borders, by acting worthily of that justice which it has always been the tradition of the Persians to defend. For the man who himself does no wrong is not just, unless he is also accustomed to rescue those who are wronged by others when he has it in his power. But it is worth while to tell a few of the things which the accursed Romans have dared to do against us. In the first place they have left our king only the form of royal power, while they themselves have appropriated the actual authority, and he sits a king in the position of a servant, fearing the general who issues the orders; and they have put upon us a multitude of soldiery, not in order to guard the land against those who harass us (for not one of our neighbours except, indeed, the Romans has disturbed us), but in order that they may confine us as in a prison and make themselves masters of our possessions. And purposing to make more speedy the robbery of what we have, behold, O King, what sort of a design they have formed; the supplies which are in excess among them they compel the Lazi to buy against their will, while those things which are most useful to them among the products of Lazica these fellows demand to buy, as they put it, from us, the price being determined in both cases by the judgment of the stronger party. And thus they are robbing us of all our gold as well as of the necessities of life, using the fair name of trade, but in fact oppressing us as thoroughly as they possibly can. And there has been set over us as ruler a huckster who has made our destitution a kind of business by virtue of the authority of his office. The cause of our revolt, therefore, being of this sort, has justice on its side; but the advantage which you yourselves will gain if you receive the request of the Lazi we shall forthwith tell. To the realm of Persia you will add a most ancient kingdom, and as a result of this you will have the power of your sway extended, and it will come about that you will have a part in the sea of the Romans through our land, and after thou hast built ships in this sea, O King, it will be possible for thee with no trouble to set foot in the palace in Byzantium. For there is no obstacle between. And one might add that the plundering of the land of the Romans every year by the barbarians along the boundary will be under your control. For surely you also are acquainted with the fact that up till now the land of the Lazi has been a bulwark against the Caucasus mountains. So with justice leading the way, and advantage added thereto, we consider that not to receive our words with favour would be wholly contrary to good judgment." So spoke the envoys.

And Chosroes, delighted by their words, promised to protect the Lazi, and enquired of the envoys whether it was possible for him to enter the land of Colchis with a large army. For he said that previously he had heard many persons report that the land was exceedingly hard to traverse even for an unimpeded traveller, being extremely rugged and covered very extensively by thick forests of wide-spreading trees. But the envoys stoutly maintained to him that the way through the country would be easy for the whole Persian army, if they cut the trees and threw them into the places which were made difficult by precipices. And they promised that they themselves would be guides of the route, and would take the lead in this work for the Persians. Encouraged by this suggestion, Chosroes gathered a great army and



made his preparations for the inroad, not disclosing the plan to the Persians except those alone to whom he was accustomed to communicate his secrets, and commanding the envoys to tell no one what was being done; and he pretended that he was setting out into Iberia, in order to settle matters there; for a Hunnic tribe, he kept saying in explanation, had assailed the Persian domain at that point.

## XVI

At this time Belisarius had arrived in Mesopotamia and was gathering his army from every quarter, and he also kept sending men into the land of Persia to act as spies. And wishing himself to encounter the enemy there, if they should again make an incursion into the land of the Romans, he was organizing on the spot and equipping the soldiers, who were for the most part without either arms or armour, and in terror of the name of the Persians. Now the spies returned and declared that for the present there would be no invasion of the enemy; for Chosroes was occupied elsewhere with a war against the Huns. And Belisarius, upon learning this, wished to invade the land of the enemy immediately with his whole army. Arethas also came to him with a large force of Saracens, and besides the emperor wrote a letter instructing him to invade the enemy's country with all speed. He therefore called together all the officers in Daras and spoke as follows: "I know that all of you, my fellow officers, are experienced in many wars, and I have brought you together at the present time, not in order to stir up your minds against the enemy by addressing to you any reminder or exhortation (for I think that you need no speech that prompts to daring), but in order that we may deliberate together among ourselves, and choose rather the course which may seem fairest and best for the cause of the emperor. For war is wont to succeed by reason of careful planning more than by anything else. Now it is necessary that those who gather for deliberation should make their minds entirely free from modesty and from fear. For fear, by paralyzing those who have fallen into it, does not allow the reason to choose the nobler part, and modesty obscures what has been seen to be the better course and leads investigation the opposite way. If, therefore, it seems to you that any purpose has been formed either by our mighty emperor or by me concerning the present situation, let no thought of this enter your minds. For, as for him, he is altogether ignorant of what is being done, and is therefore unable to adapt his moves to opportune moments; there is therefore no fear but that in going contrary to him we shall do that which will be of advantage to his cause. And as for me, since I am human, and have come here from the West after a long interval, it is impossible that some of the necessary things should not escape me. So it behoves you, without any too modest regard for my opinion, to say outright whatever is going to be of advantage for ourselves and for the emperor. Now in the beginning, fellow officers, we came here in order to prevent the enemy from making any invasion into our land, but at the present time, since things have gone better for us than we had hoped, it is possible for us to make his land the subject of our deliberation. And now that you have been gathered together for this purpose, it is fair, I think, that you should tell without any concealment what seems to each one best and most advantageous." Thus spoke Belisarius.

And Peter and Bouzes urged him to lead the army without any hesitation against the enemy's country. And their opinion was followed immediately by the whole council. Rhecithancus, however, and Theoctistus, the commanders of the troops in Lebanon, said that, while they too had the same wish as the others concerning the invasion, they feared that if they abandoned the country of Phoenicia and Syria, Alamoundaras would plunder it at his leisure, and that the emperor would be angry with them because they had not guarded and kept unplundered the territory under their command, and for this reason they were quite unwilling to join the rest of the army in the invasion. But Belisarius said that the



opinion of these two men was not in the least degree true; for it was the season of the vernal equinox, and at this season the Saracens always dedicated about two months to their god, and during this time never undertook any inroad into the land of others. Agreeing, therefore, to release both of them with their followers within sixty days, he commanded them also to follow with the rest of the army. So Belisarius was making his preparation for the invasion with great zeal.

## XVII

But Chosroes and the Median army, after crossing Iberia, reached the territory of Lazica under the leadership of the envoys; there with no one to withstand them they began to cut down the trees which grow thickly over that very mountainous region, rising to a great height, and spreading out their branches remarkably, so that they made the country absolutely impassable for the army; and these they threw into the rough places, and thus rendered the road altogether easy. And when they arrived in the centre of Colchis (the place where the tales of the poets say that the adventure of Medea and Jason took place), Goubazes, the king of the Lazi, came and did obeisance to Chosroes, the son of Cabades, as Lord, putting himself together with his palace and all Lazica into his hand.

Now there is a coast city named Petra in Colchis, on the sea which is called the Euxine, which in former times had been a place of no importance, but which the Emperor Justinian had rendered strong and otherwise conspicuous by means of the circuit-wall and other buildings which he erected. When Chosroes ascertained that the Roman army was in that place with John, he sent an army and a general, Aniabedes, against them in order to capture the place at the first onset. But John, upon learning of their approach, gave orders that no one should go outside the fortifications nor allow himself to be seen from the parapet by the enemy, and he armed the whole army and stationed them in the vicinity of the gates, commanding them to keep silence and not allow the least sound of any kind to escape from them. So the Persians came close to the fortifications, and since nothing of the enemy was either seen or heard by them they thought that the Romans had abandoned the city and left it destitute of men. For this reason they closed in still more around the fortifications, so as to set up ladders immediately, since no one was defending the wall. And neither seeing nor hearing anything of the enemy, they sent to Chosroes and explained the situation. And he sent the greater part of the army, commanding them to make an attempt upon the fortifications from all sides, and he directed one of the officers to make use of the engine known as a ram around the gate, while he himself, seated on the hill which lies very close to the city, became a spectator of the operations. And straightway the Romans opened the gates all of a sudden, and unexpectedly fell upon and slew great numbers of the enemy, and especially those stationed about the ram; the rest with difficulty made their escape together with the general and were saved. And Chosroes, filled with rage, impaled Aniabedes, since he had been outgeneralled by John, a tradesman and an altogether unwarlike man. But some say that not Aniabedes, but the officer commanding the men who were working the ram was impaled. And he himself broke camp with the whole army, and coming close to the fortifications of Petra, made camp and began a siege. On the following day he went completely around the fortifications, and since he suspected that they could not support a very strong attack, he decided to storm the wall. And bringing up the whole army there, he opened the action, commanding all to shoot with their bows against the parapet. The Romans, meanwhile, in defending themselves, made use of their engines of war and all their bows. At first, then, the Persians did the Romans little harm, although they were shooting their arrows thick and fast, while at the same time they suffered severely at the hands of the Romans, since they were being shot at from an elevation. But later on (since it was fated

that Petra be captured by Chosroes), John by some chance was shot in the neck and died, and as a result of this the other Romans ceased to care for anything. Then indeed the barbarians withdrew to their camp; for it was already growing dark; but on the following day they planned to assail the fortifications by an excavation, as follows.

The city of Petra is on one side inaccessible on account of the sea, and on the other on account of the sheer cliffs which rise there on every hand; indeed it is from this circumstance that the city has received the name it bears. And it has only one approach on the level ground, and that not very broad; for exceedingly high cliffs overhang it on either side. At that point those who formerly built the city provided that that portion of the wall should not be open to attack by making long walls which ran along beside either cliff and guarded the approach for a great distance. And they built two towers, one in each of these walls, not following the customary plan, but as follows. They refused to allow the space in the middle of the structure to be empty, but constructed the entire towers from the ground up to a great height of very large stones which fitted together, in order that they might never be shaken down by a ram or any other engine. Such, then, are the fortifications of Petra. But the Persians secretly made a tunnel into the earth and got under one of the two towers, and from there carried out many of the stones and in their place put wood, which a little later they burned. And the flame, rising little by little, weakened the stones, and all of a sudden shook the whole tower violently and straightway brought it down to the ground. And the Romans who were on the tower perceived what was being done in sufficient time so that they did not fall with it to the ground, but they fled and got inside the city wall. And now it was possible for the enemy to storm the wall from the level, and thus with no trouble to take the city by force. The Romans, therefore, in terror, opened negotiations with the barbarians, and receiving from Chosroes pledges concerning their lives and their property, they surrendered to him both themselves and the city. Thus Chosroes captured Petra. 541 A.D. And finding the treasures of John, which were extremely rich, he took them himself, but besides this neither he himself nor anyone else of the Persians touched anything, and the Romans, retaining their own possessions, mingled with the Median army.

## XVIII

Meantime Belisarius and the Roman army, having learned nothing of what was being done there, were going in excellent order from the city of Daras toward Nisibis. And when they had reached the middle of their journey, Belisarius led the army to the right where there were abundant springs of water and level ground sufficient for all to camp upon. And there he gave orders to make a camp at about forty-two stades from the city of Nisibis. But all the others marvelled greatly that he did not wish to camp close to the fortifications, and some were quite unwilling to follow him. Belisarius therefore addressed those of the officers who were about him thus: "It was not my wish to disclose to all what I am thinking. For talk carried about through a camp cannot keep secrets, for it advances little by little until it is carried out even to the enemy. But seeing that the majority of you are allowing yourselves to act in a most disorderly manner, and that each one wishes to be himself supreme commander in the war, I shall now say among you things about which one ought to keep silence, mentioning, however, this first, that when many in an army follow independent judgments it is impossible that anything needful be done. Now I think that Chosroes, in going against other barbarians, has by no means left his own land without sufficient protection, and in particular this city which is of the first rank and is set as a defence to his whole land. In this city I know well that he has stationed soldiers in such number and of such valour as to be sufficient to stand in the way of our assaults. And the proof of this you have near at hand. For he put in command of these men the general Nabedes, who, after

Chosroes himself at least, seems to be first among the Persians in glory and in every other sort of honour. This man, I believe, will both make trial of our strength and will permit of our passing by on no other condition than that he be defeated by us in battle. If, therefore, the conflict should be close by the city, the struggle will not be even for us and the Persians. For they, coming out from their stronghold against us, in case of success, should it so happen, will feel unlimited confidence in assailing us, and in case of defeat they will easily escape from our attack. For we shall only be able to pursue them a short distance, and from this no harm will come to the city, which you surely see cannot be captured by storming the wall when soldiers are defending it. But if the enemy engage with us here and we conquer them, I have great hopes, fellow officers, of capturing the city. For while our antagonists are fleeing a long way, we shall either mingle with them and rush inside the gates with them, as is probable, or we shall anticipate them and compel them to turn and escape to some other place, and thus render Nisibis without its defenders easy of capture for us."

When Belisarius had said this, all the others except Peter were convinced, and they made camp and remained with him. He, however, associating with himself John, who commanded the troops in Mesopotamia and had no small part of the army, came up to a position not far removed from the fortifications, about ten stades away, and remained quietly there. But Belisarius marshalled the men who were with him as if for combat, and sent word to Peter and his men also to hold themselves in array for battle, until he himself should give the signal; and he said that he knew well that the barbarians would attack them about midday, remembering, as they surely would, that while they themselves are accustomed to partake of food in the late afternoon, the Romans do so about midday. So Belisarius gave this warning; but Peter and his men disregarded his commands, and about midday, being distressed by the sun (for the place is exceedingly dry and hot), they stacked their arms, and with never a thought of the enemy began to go about in disorderly fashion and eat gourds which grew there. And when this was observed by Nabedes, he led the Persian army running at full speed against them. And the Romans, since they did not fail to observe that the Persians were coming out of the fortifications (for they were seen clearly because moving over a level plain), sent to Belisarius urging him to support them, and they themselves snatched up their arms, and in disorder and confusion confronted their foe. But Belisarius and his men, even before the messenger had reached them, discovered by the dust the attack of the Persians, and went to the rescue on the run. And when the Persians came up, the Romans did not withstand their onset, but were routed without any difficulty, and the Persians, following close upon them, killed fifty men, and seized and kept the standard of Peter. And they would have slain them all in this pursuit, for the Romans had no thought of resistance, if Belisarius and the army with him had not come upon them and prevented it. For as the Goths, first of all, came upon them with long spears in close array, the Persians did not await their attack but beat a hasty retreat. And the Romans together with the Goths followed them up and slew a hundred and fifty men. For the pursuit was only of short duration, and the others quickly got inside the fortifications. Then indeed all the Romans withdrew to the camp of Belisarius, and the Persians on the following day set up on a tower instead of a trophy the standard of Peter, and hanging sausages from it they taunted the enemy with laughter; however, they no longer dared to come out against them, but they guarded the city securely.

## XIX

And Belisarius, seeing that Nisibis was exceedingly strong, and having no hope regarding its capture, was eager to go forward, in order that he might do the enemy some damage by a sudden inroad. Accordingly he broke camp and moved forward with the whole

army. And after accomplishing a day's journey, they came upon a fortress which the Persians call Sisauranon. There were in that place besides the numerous population eight hundred horsemen, the best of the Persians, who were keeping guard under command of a man of note, Bleschames by name. And the Romans made camp close by the fortress and began a siege, but, upon making an assault upon the fortifications, they were beaten back, losing many men in the fight. For the wall happened to be extremely strong, and the barbarians defended it against their assailants with the greatest vigour. Belisarius therefore called together all the officers and spoke as follows: "Experience in many wars, fellow officers, has made it possible for us in difficult situations to foresee what will come to pass, and has made us capable of avoiding disaster by choosing the better course. You understand, therefore, how great a mistake it is for an army to proceed into a hostile land, when many strongholds and many fighting men in them have been left in the rear. Now exactly this has happened to us in the present case. For if we continue our advance, some of the enemy from this place as well as from the city of Nisibis will follow us secretly and will, in all probability, handle us roughly in places which are for them conveniently adapted for an ambushade or some other sort of attack. And if, by any chance, a second army confronts us and opens battle, it will be necessary for us to array ourselves against both, and we should thus suffer irreparable harm at their hands. And in saying this I do not mention the fact that if we fail in the engagement, should it so happen, we shall after that have absolutely no way of return left to the land of the Romans. Let us not therefore by reason of most ill-considered haste seem to have been our own despoilers, nor by our eagerness for strife do harm to the cause of the Romans. For stupid daring leads to destruction, but discreet hesitation is well adapted always to save those who adopt such a course. Let us therefore establish ourselves here and endeavour to capture this fortress, and let Arethas with his forces be sent into the country of Assyria. For the Saracens are by nature unable to storm a wall, but the cleverest of all men at plundering. And some of the soldiers who are good fighters will join them in the invasion, so that, if no opposition presents itself to them, they may overwhelm those who fall in their way, and if any hostile force encounters them, they may be saved easily by retiring to us. And after we have captured the fortress, if God wills, then with the whole army let us cross the River Tigris, without having to fear mischief from anyone in our rear, and knowing well how matters stand with the Assyrians."

These words of Belisarius seemed to all well spoken, and he straightway put the plan into execution. Accordingly he commanded Arethas with his troops to advance into Assyria, and with them he sent twelve hundred soldiers, the most of whom were from among his own guard, putting two guardsmen in command of them, Trajan and John who was called the Glutton, both capable warriors. These men he directed to obey Arethas in everything they did, and he commanded Arethas to pillage all that lay before him and then return to the camp and report how matters stood with the Assyrians with regard to military strength. So Arethas and his men crossed the River Tigris and entered Assyria. There they found a goodly land and one which had been free from plunder for a long time, and undefended besides; and moving rapidly they pillaged many of the places there and secured a great amount of rich plunder. And at that time Belisarius captured some of the Persians and learned from them that those who were inside the fortress were altogether out of provisions. For they do not observe the custom which is followed in the cities of Daras and Nisibis, where they put away the annual food-supply in public store-houses, and now that a hostile army had fallen upon them unexpectedly they had not anticipated the event by carrying in any of the necessities of life. And since a great number of persons had taken refuge suddenly in the fortress, they were naturally hard pressed by the want of provisions. When Belisarius learned this, he sent George, a man of the greatest discretion with whom he shared his secrets, to test the men of the place, in the hope that he might be able to arrange some terms



of surrender and thus take the place. And George succeeded, after addressing to them many words of exhortation and of kindly invitation, in persuading them to take pledges for their safety and to deliver themselves and the fortress to the Romans. Thus Belisarius captured Sisauranon, and the inhabitants, all of whom were Christians and of Roman origin, he released unscathed, but the Persians he sent with Bleschames to Byzantium, and razed the fortification wall of the fortress to the ground. And the emperor not long afterwards sent these Persians and Bleschames to Italy to fight against the Goths. Such, then, was the course of events which had to do with the fortress of Sisauranon.

But Arethas, fearing lest he should be despoiled of his booty by the Romans, was now unwilling to return to the camp. So he sent some of his followers ostensibly for the purpose of reconnoitring, but secretly commanding them to return as quickly as possible and announce to the army that a large hostile force was at the crossing of the river. For this reason, then, he advised Trajan and John to return by another route to the land of the Romans. So they did not come again to Belisarius, but keeping the River Euphrates on the right they finally arrived at the Theodosiopolis which is near the River Aborrhias. But Belisarius and the Roman army, hearing nothing concerning this force, were disturbed, and they were filled with fear and an intolerable and exaggerated suspicion. And since much time had been consumed by them in this siege, it came about that many of the soldiers were taken there with a troublesome fever; for the portion of Mesopotamia which is subject to the Persians is extremely dry and hot. And the Romans were not accustomed to this and especially those who came from Thrace; and since they were living their daily life in a place where the heat was excessive and in stuffy huts in the summer season, they became so ill that the third part of the army were lying half-dead. The whole army, therefore, was eager to depart from there and return as quickly as possible to their own land, and most of all the commanders of the troops in Lebanon, Rhecithancus and Theoctistus, who saw that the time which was the sacred season of the Saracens had in fact already passed. They came, indeed, frequently to Belisarius and entreated him to release them immediately, protesting that they had given over to Alamoundaras the country of Lebanon and Syria, and were sitting there for no good reason.

Belisarius therefore called together all the officers and opened a discussion. Then John, the son of Nicetas, rose first and spoke as follows: "Most excellent Belisarius, I consider that in all time there has never been a general such as you are either in fortune or in valour. And this reputation has come to prevail not alone among the Romans, but also among all barbarians. This fair name, however, you will preserve most securely, if you should be able to take us back alive to the land of the Romans; for now indeed the hopes which we may have are not bright. For I would have you look thus at the situation of this army. The Saracens and the most efficient soldiers of the army crossed the River Tigris, and one day, I know not how long since, they found themselves in such a plight that they have not even succeeded in sending a messenger to us, and Rhecithancus and Theoctistus will depart, as you see surely, believing that the army of Alamoundaras is almost at this very moment in the midst of Phoenicia, pillaging the whole country there. And among those who are left the sick are so numerous that those who will care for them and convey them to the land of the Romans are fewer in number than they are by a great deal. Under these circumstances, if it should fall out that any hostile force should come upon us, either while remaining here or while going back, not a man would be able to carry back word to the Romans in Daras of the calamity which had befallen us. For as for going forward, I consider it impossible even to be spoken of. While, therefore, some hope is still left, it will be of advantage both to make plans for the return and to put the plans into action. For when men have come into danger and especially such danger as this, it is downright folly for them to devote their thoughts not to safety, but to opposition to the enemy." So spoke John, and all



the others expressed approval, and becoming disorderly, they demanded that the retreat be made with all speed. Accordingly Belisarius laid the sick in the carts and let them lead the way, while he led the army behind them. And as soon as they got into the land of the Romans, he learned everything which had been done by Arethas, but he did not succeed in inflicting any punishment upon him, for he never came into his sight again. So ended the invasion of the Romans.

And after Chosroes had taken Petra, it was announced to him that Belisarius had invaded the Persian territory, and the engagement near the city of Nisibis was reported, as also the capture of the fortress of Sisauranon, and all that the army of Arethas had done after crossing the River Tigris. Straightway, then, he established a garrison in Petra, and with the rest of the army and those of the Romans who had been captured he marched away into the land of Persia. Such, then, were the events which took place in the second invasion of Chosroes. And Belisarius went to Byzantium at the summons of the emperor, and passed the winter there.

## XX

542 A.D.

At the opening of spring Chosroes, the son of Cabades, for the third time began an invasion into the land of the Romans with a mighty army, keeping the River Euphrates on the right. And Candidus, the priest of Sergiopolis, upon learning that the Median army had come near there, began to be afraid both for himself and for the city, since he had by no means carried out at the appointed time the agreement which he had made; accordingly he went into the camp of the enemy and entreated Chosroes not to be angry with him because of this. For as for money, he had never had any, and for this reason he had not even wished in the first place to deliver the inhabitants of Sura, and though he had supplicated the Emperor Justinian many times on their behalf, he had failed to receive any help from him. But Chosroes put him under guard, and, torturing him most cruelly, claimed the right to exact from him double the amount of money, just as had been agreed. And Candidus entreated him to send men to Sergiopolis to take all the treasures of the sanctuary there. And when Chosroes followed this suggestion, Candidus sent some of his followers with them. So the inhabitants of Sergiopolis, receiving into the city the men sent by Chosroes, gave them many of the treasures, declaring that nothing else was left them. But Chosroes said that these were by no means sufficient for him, and demanded that he should receive others still more than these. Accordingly he sent men, ostensibly to search out with all diligence the wealth of the city, but in reality to take possession of the city. But since it was fated that Sergiopolis should not be taken by the Persians, one of the Saracens, who, though a Christian, was serving under Alamoundaras, Ambrus by name, came by night along the wall of the city, and reporting to them the whole plan, bade them by no means receive the Persians into the city. Thus those who were sent by Chosroes returned to him unsuccessful, and he, boiling with anger, began to make plans to capture the city. He accordingly sent an army of six thousand, commanding them to begin a siege and to make assaults upon the fortifications. And this army came there and commenced active operations, and the citizens of Sergiopolis at first defended themselves vigorously, but later they gave up, and in terror at the danger, they were purposing to give over the city to the enemy. For, as it happened, they had not more than two hundred soldiers. But Ambrus, again coming along by the fortifications at night, said that within two days the Persians would raise the siege since their water supply had failed them absolutely. For this reason they did not by any means open negotiations with the enemy, and the barbarians, suffering with thirst, removed from

there and came to Chosroes. However, Chosroes never released Candidus. For it was necessary, I suppose, that since he had disregarded his sworn agreement, he should be a priest no longer. Such, then, was the course of these events.

But when Chosroes arrived at the land of the Commagenae which they call Euphratesia, he had no desire to turn to plundering or to the capture of any stronghold, since he had previously taken everything before him as far as Syria, partly by capture and partly by exacting money, as has been set forth in the preceding narrative. And his purpose was to lead the army straight for Palestine, in order that he might plunder all their treasures and especially those in Jerusalem. For he had it from hearsay that this was an especially goodly land and peopled by wealthy inhabitants. And all the Romans, both officers and soldiers, were far from entertaining any thought of confronting the enemy or of standing in the way of their passage, but manning their strongholds as each one could, they thought it sufficient to preserve them and save themselves.

The Emperor Justinian, upon learning of the inroad of the Persians, again sent Belisarius against them. And he came with great speed to Euphratesia since he had no army with him, riding on the government post-horses, which they are accustomed to call "Veredi," while Justus, the nephew of the emperor, together with Bouzes and certain others, was in Hierapolis where he had fled for refuge. And when these men heard that Belisarius was coming and was not far away, they wrote a letter to him which ran as follows: "Once more Chosroes, as you yourself doubtless know, has taken the field against the Romans, bringing a much greater army than formerly; and where he is purposing to go is not yet evident, except indeed that we hear he is very near, and that he has injured no place, but is always moving ahead. But come to us as quickly as possible, if indeed you are able to escape detection by the army of the enemy, in order that you yourself may be safe for the emperor, and that you may join us in guarding Hierapolis." Such was the message of the letter. But Belisarius, not approving the advice given, came to the place called Europum, which is on the River Euphrates. From there he sent about in all directions and began to gather his army, and there he established his camp; and the officers in Hierapolis he answered with the following words: "If, now, Chosroes is proceeding against any other peoples, and not against subjects of the Romans, this plan of yours is well considered and insures the greatest possible degree of safety; for it is great folly for those who have the opportunity of remaining quiet and being rid of trouble to enter into any unnecessary danger; but if, immediately after departing from here, this barbarian is going to fall upon some other territory of the Emperor Justinian, and that an exceptionally good one, but without any guard of soldiers, be assured that to perish valorously is better in every way than to be saved without a fight. For this would justly be called not salvation but treason. But come as quickly as possible to Europum, where, after collecting the whole army, I hope to deal with the enemy as God permits." And when the officers saw this message, they took courage, and leaving there Justus with some few men in order to guard Hierapolis, all the others with the rest of the army came to Europum.

## XXI

But Chosroes, upon learning that Belisarius with the whole Roman army had encamped at Europum, decided not to continue his advance, but sent one of the royal secretaries, Abandanus by name, a man who enjoyed a great reputation for discretion, to Belisarius, in order to find out by inspection what sort of a general he might be, but ostensibly to make a protest because the Emperor Justinian had not sent the ambassadors to the Persians at all in order that they might settle the arrangements for the peace as had

been agreed. When Belisarius learned this, he did as follows. He himself picked out six thousand men of goodly stature and especially fine physique, and set out to hunt at a considerable distance from the camp. Then he commanded Diogenes, the guardsman, and Adolius, the son of Acacius, to cross the river with a thousand horsemen and to move about the bank there, always making it appear to the enemy that if they wished to cross the Euphrates and proceed to their own land, they would never permit them to do so. This Adolius was an Armenian by birth, and he always served the emperor while in the palace as privy counsellor (those who enjoy this honour are called by the Romans "silentiarii"), but at that time he was commander of some Armenians. And these men did as directed.

Now when Belisarius had ascertained that the envoy was close at hand, he set up a tent of some heavy cloth, of the sort which is commonly called a "pavilion," and seated himself there as one might in a desolate place, seeking thus to indicate that he had come without any equipment. And he arranged the soldiers as follows. On either side of the tent were Thracians and Illyrians, with Goths beyond them, and next to these Eruli, and finally Vandals and Moors. And their line extended for a great distance over the plain. For they did not remain standing always in the same place, but stood apart from one another and kept walking about, looking carelessly and without the least interest upon the envoy of Chosroes. And not one of them had a cloak or any other outer garment to cover the shoulders, but they were sauntering about clad in linen tunics and trousers, and outside these their girdles. And each one had his horse-whip, but for weapons one had a sword, another an axe, another an uncovered bow. And all gave the impression that they were eager to be off on the hunt with never a thought of anything else. So Abandanes came into the presence of Belisarius and said that the king Chosroes was indignant because the agreement previously made had not been kept, in that the envoys had not been sent to him by Caesar (for thus the Persians call the emperor of the Romans), and as a result of this Chosroes had been compelled to come into the land of the Romans in arms. But Belisarius was not terrified by the thought that such a multitude of barbarians were encamped close by, nor did he experience any confusion because of the words of the man, but with a laughing, care-free countenance he made answer, saying: "This course which Chosroes has followed on the present occasion is not in keeping with the way men usually act. For other men, in case a dispute should arise between themselves and any of their neighbours, first carry on negotiations with them, and whenever they do not receive reasonable satisfaction, then finally go against them in war. But he first comes into the midst of the Romans, and then begins to offer suggestions concerning peace." With such words as these he dismissed the ambassador.

And when Abandanes came to Chosroes, he advised him to take his departure with all possible speed. For he said he had met a general who in manliness and sagacity surpassed all other men, and soldiers such as he at least had never seen, whose orderly conduct had roused in him the greatest admiration. And he added that the contest was not on an even footing as regards risk for him and for Belisarius, for there was this difference, that if he conquered, he himself would conquer the slave of Caesar, but if he by any chance were defeated, he would bring great disgrace upon his kingdom and upon the race of the Persians; and again the Romans, if conquered, could easily save themselves in strongholds and in their own land, while if the Persians should meet with any reverse, not even a messenger would escape to the land of the Persians. Chosroes was convinced by this admonition and wished to turn back to his own country, but he found himself in a very perplexing situation. For he supposed that the crossing of the river was being guarded by the enemy, and he was unable to march back by the same road, which was entirely destitute of human habitation, since the supplies which they had at the first when they invaded the land of the Romans had already entirely failed them. At last after long consideration it seemed to him most advantageous to risk a battle and get to the opposite side, and to make

the journey through a land abounding in all good things. Now Belisarius knew well that not even a hundred thousand men would ever be sufficient to check the crossing of Chosroes. For the river at many places along there can be crossed in boats very easily, and even apart from this the Persian army was too strong to be excluded from the crossing by an enemy numerically insignificant. But he had at first commanded the troops of Diogenes and Adolius, together with the thousand horsemen, to move about the bank at that point in order to confuse the barbarian by a feeling of helplessness. But after frightening this same barbarian, as I have said, Belisarius feared lest there should be some obstacle in the way of his departing from the land of the Romans. For it seemed to him a most significant achievement to have driven away from there the army of Chosroes, without risking any battle against so many myriads of barbarians with soldiers who were very few in number and who were in abject terror of the Median army. For this reason he commanded Diogenes and Adolius to remain quiet.

Chosroes, accordingly, constructed a bridge with great celerity and crossed the River Euphrates suddenly with his whole army. For the Persians are able to cross all rivers without the slightest difficulty because when they are on the march they have in readiness hook-shaped irons with which they fasten together long timbers, and with the help of these they improvise a bridge on the spur of the moment wherever they may desire. And as soon as he had reached the land on the opposite side, he sent to Belisarius and said that he, for his part, had bestowed a favour upon the Romans in the withdrawal of the Median army, and that he was expecting the envoys from them, who ought to present themselves to him at no distant time. Then Belisarius also with the whole Roman army crossed the River Euphrates and immediately sent to Chosroes. And when the messengers came into his presence, they commended him highly for his withdrawal and promised that envoys would come to him promptly from the emperor, who would arrange with him that the terms which had previously been agreed upon concerning the peace should be put into effect. And they asked of him that he treat the Romans as his friends in his journey through their land. This too he agreed to carry out, if they should give him some one of their notable men as a hostage to make this compact binding, in order that they might carry out their agreement. So the envoys returned to Belisarius and reported the words of Chosroes, and he came to Edessa and chose John, the son of Basilius, the most illustrious of all the inhabitants of Edessa in birth and in wealth, and straightway sent him, much against his will, as a hostage to Chosroes. And the Romans were loud in their praises of Belisarius and he seemed to have achieved greater glory in their eyes by this affair than when he brought Gelimer or Vittigis captive to Byzantium. For in reality it was an achievement of great importance and one deserving great praise, that, at a time when all the Romans were panic-stricken with fear and were hiding themselves in their defences, and Chosroes with a mighty army had come into the midst of the Roman domain, a general with only a few men, coming in hot haste from Byzantium just at that moment, should have set his camp over against that of the Persian king, and that Chosroes unexpectedly, either through fear of fortune or of the valour of the man or even because deceived by some tricks, should no longer continue his advance, but should in reality take to flight, though pretending to be seeking peace.

But in the meantime Chosroes, disregarding the agreement, took the city of Callinicus which was entirely without defenders. For the Romans, seeing that the wall of this city was altogether unsound and easy of capture, were tearing down portions of it in turn and restoring them with new construction. Now just at that time they had torn down one section of it and had not yet built in this interval; when, therefore, they learned that the enemy were close at hand, they carried out the most precious of their treasures, and the wealthy inhabitants withdrew to other strongholds, while the rest without soldiers remained where they were. And it happened that great numbers of farmers had gathered there. These

Chosroes enslaved and razed everything to the ground. A little later, upon receiving the hostage, John, he retired to his own country. And the Armenians who had submitted to Chosroes received pledges from the Romans and came with Bassaces to Byzantium. Such was the fortune of the Romans in the third invasion of Chosroes. And Belisarius came to Byzantium at the summons of the emperor, in order to be sent again to Italy, since the situation there was already full of difficulties for the Romans.

## XXII

542 A.D.

During these times there was a pestilence, by which the whole human race came near to being annihilated. Now in the case of all other scourges sent from Heaven some explanation of a cause might be given by daring men, such as the many theories propounded by those who are clever in these matters; for they love to conjure up causes which are absolutely incomprehensible to man, and to fabricate outlandish theories of natural philosophy, knowing well that they are saying nothing sound, but considering it sufficient for them, if they completely deceive by their argument some of those whom they meet and persuade them to their view. But for this calamity it is quite impossible either to express in words or to conceive in thought any explanation, except indeed to refer it to God. For it did not come in a part of the world nor upon certain men, nor did it confine itself to any season of the year, so that from such circumstances it might be possible to find subtle explanations of a cause, but it embraced the entire world, and blighted the lives of all men, though differing from one another in the most marked degree, respecting neither sex nor age. For much as men differ with regard to places in which they live, or in the law of their daily life, or in natural bent, or in active pursuits, or in whatever else man differs from man, in the case of this disease alone the difference availed naught. And it attacked some in the summer season, others in the winter, and still others at the other times of the year. Now let each one express his own judgment concerning the matter, both sophist and astrologer, but as for me, I shall proceed to tell where this disease originated and the manner in which it destroyed men.

It started from the Aegyptians who dwell in Pelusium. Then it divided and moved in one direction towards Alexandria and the rest of Aegypt, and in the other direction it came to Palestine on the borders of Aegypt; and from there it spread over the whole world, always moving forward and travelling at times favourable to it. For it seemed to move by fixed arrangement, and to tarry for a specified time in each country, casting its blight slightly upon none, but spreading in either direction right out to the ends of the world, as if fearing lest some corner of the earth might escape it. For it left neither island nor cave nor mountain ridge which had human inhabitants; and if it had passed by any land, either not affecting the men there or touching them in indifferent fashion, still at a later time it came back; then those who dwelt round about this land, whom formerly it had afflicted most sorely, it did not touch at all, but it did not remove from the place in question until it had given up its just and proper tale of dead, so as to correspond exactly to the number destroyed at the earlier time among those who dwelt round about. And this disease always took its start from the coast, and from there went up to the interior. And in the second year it reached Byzantium in the middle of spring, where it happened that I was staying at that time. And it came as follows. Apparitions of supernatural beings in human guise of every description were seen by many persons, and those who encountered them thought that they were struck by the man they had met in this or that part of the body, as it happened, and immediately upon seeing this apparition they were seized also by the disease. Now at first



those who met these creatures tried to turn them aside by uttering the holiest of names and exorcising them in other ways as well as each one could, but they accomplished absolutely nothing, for even in the sanctuaries where the most of them fled for refuge they were dying constantly. But later on they were unwilling even to give heed to their friends when they called to them, and they shut themselves up in their rooms and pretended that they did not hear, although their doors were being beaten down, fearing, obviously, that he who was calling was one of those demons. But in the case of some the pestilence did not come on in this way, but they saw a vision in a dream and seemed to suffer the very same thing at the hands of the creature who stood over them, or else to hear a voice foretelling to them that they were written down in the number of those who were to die. But with the majority it came about that they were seized by the disease without becoming aware of what was coming either through a waking vision or a dream. And they were taken in the following manner. They had a sudden fever, some when just roused from sleep, others while walking about, and others while otherwise engaged, without any regard to what they were doing. And the body shewed no change from its previous colour, nor was it hot as might be expected when attacked by a fever, nor indeed did any inflammation set in, but the fever was of such a languid sort from its commencement and up till evening that neither to the sick themselves nor to a physician who touched them would it afford any suspicion of danger. It was natural, therefore, that not one of those who had contracted the disease expected to die from it. But on the same day in some cases, in others on the following day, and in the rest not many days later, a bubonic swelling developed; and this took place not only in the particular part of the body which is called "boubon," that is, below the abdomen, but also inside the armpit, and in some cases also beside the ears, and at different points on the thighs.

Up to this point, then, everything went in about the same way with all who had taken the disease. But from then on very marked differences developed; and I am unable to say whether the cause of this diversity of symptoms was to be found in the difference in bodies, or in the fact that it followed the wish of Him who brought the disease into the world. For there ensued with some a deep coma, with others a violent delirium, and in either case they suffered the characteristic symptoms of the disease. For those who were under the spell of the coma forgot all those who were familiar to them and seemed to be sleeping constantly. And if anyone cared for them, they would eat without waking, but some also were neglected, and these would die directly through lack of sustenance. But those who were seized with delirium suffered from insomnia and were victims of a distorted imagination; for they suspected that men were coming upon them to destroy them, and they would become excited and rush off in flight, crying out at the top of their voices. And those who were attending them were in a state of constant exhaustion and had a most difficult time of it throughout. For this reason everybody pitied them no less than the sufferers, not because they were threatened by the pestilence in going near it (for neither physicians nor other persons were found to contract this malady through contact with the sick or with the dead, for many who were constantly engaged either in burying or in attending those in no way connected with them held out in the performance of this service beyond all expectation, while with many others the disease came on without warning and they died straightway); but they pitied them because of the great hardships which they were undergoing. For when the patients fell from their beds and lay rolling upon the floor, they kept patting them back in place, and when they were struggling to rush headlong out of their houses, they would force them back by shoving and pulling against them. And when water chanced to be near, they wished to fall into it, not so much because of a desire for drink (for the most of them rushed into the sea), but the cause was to be found chiefly in the diseased state of their minds. They had also great difficulty in the matter of eating, for they could not easily take

food. And many perished through lack of any man to care for them, for they were either overcome by hunger, or threw themselves down from a height. And in those cases where neither coma nor delirium came on, the bubonic swelling became mortified and the sufferer, no longer able to endure the pain, died. And one would suppose that in all cases the same thing would have been true, but since they were not at all in their senses, some were quite unable to feel the pain; for owing to the troubled condition of their minds they lost all sense of feeling.

Now some of the physicians who were at a loss because the symptoms were not understood, supposing that the disease centred in the bubonic swellings, decided to investigate the bodies of the dead. And upon opening some of the swellings, they found a strange sort of carbuncle that had grown inside them.

Death came in some cases immediately, in others after many days; and with some the body broke out with black pustules about as large as a lentil and these did not survive even one day, but all succumbed immediately. With many also a vomiting of blood ensued without visible cause and straightway brought death. Moreover I am able to declare this, that the most illustrious physicians predicted that many would die, who unexpectedly escaped entirely from suffering shortly afterwards, and that they declared that many would be saved, who were destined to be carried off almost immediately. So it was that in this disease there was no cause which came within the province of human reasoning; for in all cases the issue tended to be something unaccountable. For example, while some were helped by bathing, others were harmed in no less degree. And of those who received no care many died, but others, contrary to reason, were saved. And again, methods of treatment shewed different results with different patients. Indeed the whole matter may be stated thus, that no device was discovered by man to save himself, so that either by taking precautions he should not suffer, or that when the malady had assailed him he should get the better of it; but suffering came without warning and recovery was due to no external cause.

And in the case of women who were pregnant death could be certainly foreseen if they were taken with the disease. For some died through miscarriage, but others perished immediately at the time of birth with the infants they bore. However, they say that three women in confinement survived though their children perished, and that one woman died at the very time of child-birth but that the child was born and survived.

Now in those cases where the swelling rose to an unusual size and a discharge of pus had set in, it came about that they escaped from the disease and survived, for clearly the acute condition of the carbuncle had found relief in this direction, and this proved to be in general an indication of returning health; but in cases where the swelling preserved its former appearance there ensued those troubles which I have just mentioned. And with some of them it came about that the thigh was withered, in which case, though the swelling was there, it did not develop the least suppuration. With others who survived the tongue did not remain unaffected, and they lived on either lisping or speaking incoherently and with difficulty.

### XXIII

Now the disease in Byzantium ran a course of four months, and its greatest virulence lasted about three. And at first the deaths were a little more than the normal, then the mortality rose still higher, and afterwards the tale of dead reached five thousand each day, and again it even came to ten thousand and still more than that. Now in the beginning each man attended to the burial of the dead of his own house, and these they threw even into the

tombs of others, either escaping detection or using violence; but afterwards confusion and disorder everywhere became complete. For slaves remained destitute of masters, and men who in former times were very prosperous were deprived of the service of their domestics who were either sick or dead, and many houses became completely destitute of human inhabitants. For this reason it came about that some of the notable men of the city because of the universal destitution remained unburied for many days.

And it fell to the lot of the emperor, as was natural, to make provision for the trouble. He therefore detailed soldiers from the palace and distributed money, commanding Theodorus to take charge of this work; this man held the position of announcer of imperial messages, always announcing to the emperor the petitions of his clients, and declaring to them in turn whatever his wish was. In the Latin tongue the Romans designate this office by the term "referendarius." So those who had not as yet fallen into complete destitution in their domestic affairs attended individually to the burial of those connected with them. But Theodorus, by giving out the emperor's money and by making further expenditures from his own purse, kept burying the bodies which were not cared for. And when it came about that all the tombs which had existed previously were filled with the dead, then they dug up all the places about the city one after the other, laid the dead there, each one as he could, and departed; but later on those who were making these trenches, no longer able to keep up with the number of the dying, mounted the towers of the fortifications in Sycae, and tearing off the roofs threw the bodies in there in complete disorder; and they piled them up just as each one happened to fall, and filled practically all the towers with corpses, and then covered them again with their roofs. As a result of this an evil stench pervaded the city and distressed the inhabitants still more, and especially whenever the wind blew fresh from that quarter.

At that time all the customary rites of burial were overlooked. For the dead were not carried out escorted by a procession in the customary manner, nor were the usual chants sung over them, but it was sufficient if one carried on his shoulders the body of one of the dead to the parts of the city which bordered on the sea and flung him down; and there the corpses would be thrown upon skiffs in a heap, to be conveyed wherever it might chance. At that time, too, those of the population who had formerly been members of the factions laid aside their mutual enmity and in common they attended to the burial rites of the dead, and they carried with their own hands the bodies of those who were no connections of theirs and buried them. Nay, more, those who in times past used to take delight in devoting themselves to pursuits both shameful and base, shook off the unrighteousness of their daily lives and practised the duties of religion with diligence, not so much because they had learned wisdom at last nor because they had become all of a sudden lovers of virtue, as it were—for when qualities have become fixed in men by nature or by the training of a long period of time, it is impossible for them to lay them aside thus lightly, except, indeed, some divine influence for good has breathed upon them—but then all, so to speak, being thoroughly terrified by the things which were happening, and supposing that they would die immediately, did, as was natural, learn respectability for a season by sheer necessity. Therefore as soon as they were rid of the disease and were saved, and already supposed that they were in security, since the curse had moved on to other peoples, then they turned sharply about and reverted once more to their baseness of heart, and now, more than before, they make a display of the inconsistency of their conduct, altogether surpassing themselves in villainy and in lawlessness of every sort. For one could insist emphatically without falsehood that this disease, whether by chance or by some providence, chose out with exactitude the worst men and let them go free. But these things were displayed to the world in later times.

During that time it seemed no easy thing to see any man in the streets of Byzantium, but all who had the good fortune to be in health were sitting in their houses, either attending the sick or mourning the dead. And if one did succeed in meeting a man going out, he was carrying one of the dead. And work of every description ceased, and all the trades were abandoned by the artisans, and all other work as well, such as each had in hand. Indeed in a city which was simply abounding in all good things starvation almost absolute was running riot. Certainly it seemed a difficult and very notable thing to have a sufficiency of bread or of anything else; so that with some of the sick it appeared that the end of life came about sooner than it should have come by reason of the lack of the necessities of life. And, to put all in a word, it was not possible to see a single man in Byzantium clad in the chlamys, and especially when the emperor became ill (for he too had a swelling of the groin), but in a city which held dominion over the whole Roman empire every man was wearing clothes befitting private station and remaining quietly at home. Such was the course of the pestilence in the Roman empire at large as well as in Byzantium. And it fell also upon the land of the Persians and visited all the other barbarians besides.

#### XXIV

545 A.D.

Now it happened that Chosroes had come from Assyria to a place toward the north called Adarbiganon, from which he was planning to make an invasion into the Roman domain through Persarmenia. In that place is the great sanctuary of fire, which the Persians reverence above all other gods. There the fire is guarded unquenched by the Magi, and they perform carefully a great number of sacred rites, and in particular they consult an oracle on those matters which are of the greatest importance. This is the fire which the Romans worshipped under the name of Hestia in ancient times. There someone who had been sent from Byzantium to Chosroes announced that Constantianus and Sergius would come before him directly as envoys to arrange the treaty. Now these two men were both trained speakers and exceedingly clever; Constantianus was an Illyrian by birth, and Sergius was from the city of Edessa in Mesopotamia. And Chosroes remained quiet expecting these men. But in the course of the journey thither Constantianus became ill and much time was consumed; in the meantime it came about that the pestilence fell upon the Persians. For this reason Nabedes, who at that time held the office of general in Persarmenia, sent the priest of the Christians in Dubios by direction of the king to Valerianus, the general in Armenia, in order to reproach the envoys for their tardiness and to urge the Romans with all zeal toward peace. And he came with his brother to Armenia, and, meeting Valerianus, declared that he himself, as a Christian, was favourably disposed toward the Romans, and that the king Chosroes always followed his advice in every matter; so that if the ambassadors would come with him to the land of Persia, there would be nothing to prevent them from arranging the peace as they wished. Thus then spoke the priest; but the brother of the priest met Valerianus secretly and said that Chosroes was in great straits: for his son had risen against him in an attempt to set up a tyranny, and he himself together with the whole Persian army had been taken with the plague; and this was the reason why he wished just now to settle the agreement with the Romans. When Valerianus heard this, he straightway dismissed the bishop, promising that the envoys would come to Chosroes at no distant time, but he himself reported the words which he had heard to the Emperor Justinian. This led the emperor immediately to send word to him and to Martinus and the other commanders to invade the enemy's territory as quickly as possible. For he knew well that no one of the enemy would stand in their way. And he commanded them to gather all in one place and so

make their invasion into Persarmenia. When the commanders received these letters, all of them together with their followers began to gather into the land of Armenia.

And already Chosroes had abandoned Adarbiganon a little before through fear of the plague and was off with his whole army into Assyria, where the pestilence had not as yet become epidemic. Valerianus accordingly encamped close by Theodosiopolis with the troops under him; and with him was arrayed Narses, who had with him Armenians and some of the Eruli. And Martinus, the General of the East, together with Ildiger and Theoctistus, reached the fortress of Citharizon, and fixing his camp there, remained on the spot. This fortress is separated from Theodosiopolis by a journey of four days. There too Peter came not long afterwards together with Adolius and some other commanders. Now the troops in this region were commanded by Isaac, the brother of Narses. And Philemouth and Beros with the Eruli who were under them came into the territory of Chorhazianene, not far from the camp of Martinus. And Justus, the emperor's nephew, and Peranius and John, the son of Nicetas, together with Domentiolus and John, who was called the Glutton, made camp near the place called Phison, which is close by the boundaries of Martyropolis. Thus then were encamped the Roman commanders with their troops; and the whole army amounted to thirty thousand men. Now all these troops were neither gathered into one place, nor indeed was there any general meeting for conference. But the generals sent to each other some of their followers and began to make enquiries concerning the invasion. Suddenly, however, Peter, without communicating with anyone, and without any careful consideration, invaded the hostile land with his troops. And when on the following day this was found out by Philemouth and Beros, the leaders of the Eruli, they straightway followed. And when this in turn came to the knowledge of Martinus and Valerianus and their men, they quickly joined in the invasion. And all of them a little later united with each other in the enemy's territory, with the exception of Justus and his men, who, as I have said, had encamped far away from the rest of the army, and learned later of their invasion; then, indeed, they also invaded the territory of the enemy as quickly as possible at the point where they were, but failed altogether to unite with the other commanders. As for the others, they proceeded in a body straight for Doubios, neither plundering nor damaging in any other way the land of the Persians.

## XXV

Now Doubios is a land excellent in every respect, and especially blessed with a healthy climate and abundance of good water; and from Theodosiopolis it is removed a journey of eight days. In that region there are plains suitable for riding, and many very populous villages are situated in very close proximity to one another, and numerous merchants conduct their business in them. For from India and the neighbouring regions of Iberia and from practically all the nations of Persia and some of those under Roman sway they bring in merchandise and carry on their dealings with each other there. And the priest of the Christians is called "Catholicos" in the Greek tongue, because he presides alone over the whole region. Now at a distance of about one hundred and twenty stades from Doubios on the right as one travels from the land of the Romans, there is a mountain difficult of ascent and moreover precipitous, and a village crowded into very narrow space by the rough country about, Anglon by name. Thither Nabedes withdrew with his whole army as soon as he learned of the inroad of the enemy, and, confident in his strength of position, he shut himself in. Now the village lies at the extremity of the mountain, and there is a strong fortress bearing the same name as this village on the steep mountain side. So Nabedes with stones and carts blocked up the entrances into the village and thus made it still more difficult of access. And in front of it he dug a sort of trench and stationed the army there,



having filled some old cabins with ambuscades of infantrymen Altogether the Persian army amounted to four thousand men.

While these things were being done in this way, the Romans reached a place one day's journey distant from Anglon, and capturing one of the enemy who was going out as a spy they enquired where in the world Nabedes was then. And he asserted that the man had retired from Anglon with the whole Median army. And when Narses heard this, he was indignant, and he heaped reproaches and abuse upon his fellow-commanders for their hesitation. And others, too, began to do the very same thing, casting insults upon one another; and from then on, giving up all thought of battle and danger, they were eager to plunder the country thereabout. The troops broke camp, accordingly, and without the guidance of generals and without observing any definite formation, they moved forward in complete confusion; for neither had they any countersign among themselves, as is customary in such perilous situations, nor were they arranged in their proper divisions. For the soldiers marched forward, mixed in with the baggage train, as if going to the ready plunder of great wealth. But when they came near to Anglon, they sent out spies who returned to them announcing the array of the enemy. And the generals were thunder-struck by the unexpectedness of it, but they considered it altogether disgraceful and unmanly to turn back with an army of such great size, and so they disposed the army in its three divisions, as well as the circumstances permitted, and advanced straight toward the enemy. Now Peter held the right wing and Valerianus the left, while Martinus and his men arrayed themselves in the centre. And when they came close to their opponents, they halted, preserving their formation, but not without disorder. The cause for this was to be found in the difficulty of the ground, which was very badly broken up, and in the fact that they were entering battle in a formation arranged on the spur of the moment. And up to this time the barbarians, who had gathered themselves into a small space, were remaining quiet, considering the strength of their antagonists, since the order had been given them by Nabedes not under any circumstances to begin the fighting, but if the enemy should assail them, to defend themselves with all their might.

And first Narses with the Eruli and those of the Romans who were under him, engaged with the enemy, and after a hard hand-to-hand struggle, he routed the Persians who were before him. And the barbarians in flight ascended on the run to the fortress, and in so doing they inflicted terrible injury upon one another in the narrow way. And then Narses urged his men forward and pressed still harder upon the enemy, and the rest of the Romans joined in the action. But all of a sudden the men who were in ambush, as has been said, came out from the cabins along the narrow alleys, and killed some of the Eruli, falling unexpectedly upon them, and they struck Narses himself a blow on the temple. And his brother Isaac carried him out from among the fighting men, mortally wounded. And he died shortly afterwards, having proved himself a brave man in this engagement. Then, as was to be expected, great confusion fell upon the Roman army, and Nabedes let out the whole Persian force upon his opponents. And the Persians, shooting into great masses of the enemy in the narrow alleys, killed a large number without difficulty, and particularly of the Eruli who had at the first fallen upon the enemy with Narses and were fighting for the most part without protection. For the Eruli have neither helmet nor corselet nor any other protective armour, except a shield and a thick jacket, which they gird about them before they enter a struggle. And indeed the Erulian slaves go into battle without even a shield, and when they prove themselves brave men in war, then their masters permit them to protect themselves in battle with shields. Such is the custom of the Eruli.

And the Romans did not withstand the enemy and all of them fled as fast as they could, never once thinking of resistance and heedless of shame or of any other worthy

motive. But the Persians, suspecting that they had not turned thus to a shameless flight, but that they were making use of some ambuscades against them, pursued them as far as the rough ground extended and then turned back, not daring to fight a decisive battle on level ground, a few against many. The Romans, however, and especially all the generals, supposing that the enemy were continuing the pursuit without pause, kept fleeing still faster, wasting not a moment; and they were urging on their horses as they ran with whip and voice, and throwing their corselets and other accoutrements in haste and confusion to the ground. For they had not the courage to array themselves against the Persians if they overtook them, but they placed all hope of safety in their horses' feet, and, in short, the flight became such that scarcely any one of their horses survived, but when they stopped running, they straightway fell down and expired. And this proved a disaster for the Romans so great as to exceed anything that had ever befallen them previously. For great numbers of them perished and still more fell into the hands of the enemy. And their weapons and draught animals which were taken by the enemy amounted to such an imposing number that Persia seemed as a result of this affair to have become richer. And Adolius, while passing through a fortified place during this retreat—it was situated in Persarmenia—was struck on the head by a stone thrown by one of the inhabitants of the town, and died there. As for the forces of Justus and Peranius, they invaded the country about Taraunon, and after gathering some little plunder, immediately returned.

## XXVI

544 A.D.

And in the following year, Chosroes, the son of Cabades, for the fourth time invaded the land of the Romans, leading his army towards Mesopotamia. Now this invasion was made by this Chosroes not against Justinian, the Emperor of the Romans, nor indeed against any other man, but only against the God whom the Christians reverence. For when in the first invasion he retired, after failing to capture Edessa, both he and the Magi, since they had been worsted by the God of the Christians, fell into a great dejection. Wherefore Chosroes, seeking to allay it, uttered a threat in the palace that he would make slaves of all the inhabitants of Edessa and bring them to the land of Persia, and would turn the city into a pasture for sheep. Accordingly when he had approached the city of Edessa with his whole army, he sent some of the Huns who were following him against that portion of the fortifications of the city which is above the hippodrome, with the purpose of doing no further injury than seizing the flocks which the shepherds had stationed there along the wall in great numbers: for they were confident in the strength of the place, since it was exceedingly steep, and supposed that the enemy would never dare to come so very close to the wall. So the barbarians were already laying hold of the sheep, and the shepherds were trying most valiantly to prevent them. And when a great number of Persians had come to the assistance of the Huns, the barbarians succeeded in detaching something of a flock from there, but Roman soldiers and some of the populace made a sally upon the enemy and the battle became a hand-to-hand struggle; meanwhile the flock of its own accord returned again to the shepherds. Now one of the Huns who was fighting before the others was making more trouble for the Romans than all the rest. And some rustic made a good shot and hit him on the right knee with a sling, and he immediately fell headlong from his horse to the ground, which thing heartened the Romans still more. And the battle which had begun early in the morning ended at midday, and both sides withdrew from the engagement thinking that they had the advantage. So the Romans went inside the fortifications, while the barbarians pitched their tents and made camp in a body about seven stades from the city.

Then Chosroes either saw some vision or else the thought occurred to him that if, after making two attempts, he should not be able to capture Edessa, he would thereby cover himself with much disgrace. Accordingly he decided to sell his withdrawal to the citizens of Edessa for a great sum of money. On the following day, therefore, Paulus the interpreter came along by the wall and said that some of the Roman notables should be sent to Chosroes. And they with all speed chose out four of their illustrious men and sent them. When these men reached the Median camp, they were met according to the king's order by Zaberganes, who first terrified them with many threats and then enquired of them which course was the more desirable for them, whether that leading to peace, or that leading to war. And when the envoys agreed that they would choose peace rather than the dangers of war, Zaberganes replied: "Therefore it is necessary for you to purchase this for a great sum of money." And the envoys said that they would give as much as they had provided before, when he came against them after capturing Antioch. And Zaberganes dismissed them with laughter, telling them to deliberate most carefully concerning their safety and then to come again to the Persians. And a little later Chosroes summoned them, and when they came before him, he recounted how many Roman towns he had previously enslaved and in what manner he had accomplished it; then he threatened that the inhabitants of Edessa would receive more direful treatment at the hands of the Persians, unless they should give them all the wealth which they had inside the fortifications; for only on this condition, he said, would the army depart. When the envoys heard this, they agreed that they would purchase peace from Chosroes, if only he would not prescribe impossible conditions for them: but the outcome of a conflict, they said, was plainly seen by no one at all before the struggle. For there was never a war whose outcome might be taken for granted by those who waged it. Thereupon Chosroes in anger commanded the envoys to be gone with all speed.

On the eighth day of the siege he formed the design of erecting an artificial hill against the circuit wall of the city; accordingly he cut down trees in great numbers from the adjacent districts and, without removing the leaves, laid them together in a square before the wall, at a point which no missile from the city could reach; then he heaped an immense amount of earth right upon the trees and above that threw on a great quantity of stones, not such as are suitable for building, but cut at random, and only calculated to raise the hill as quickly as possible to a great height. And he kept laying on long timbers in the midst of the earth and the stones, and made them serve to bind the structure together, in order that as it became high it should not be weak. But Peter, the Roman general (for he happened to be there with Martinus and Peranius), wishing to check the men who were engaged in this work, sent some of the Huns who were under his command against them. And they, by making a sudden attack, killed a great number; and one of the guardsmen, Argek by name, surpassed all others, for he alone killed twenty-seven. From that time on, however, the barbarians kept a careful guard, and there was no further opportunity for anyone to go out against them. But when the artisans engaged in this work, as they moved forward, came within range of missiles, then the Romans offered a most vigorous resistance from the city wall, using both their slings and their bows against them. Wherefore the barbarians devised the following plan. They provided screens of goat's hair cloth, of the kind which are called Cilician, making them of adequate thickness and height, and attached them to long pieces of wood which they always set before those who were working on the "agesta" (for thus the Romans used to call in the Latin tongue the thing which they were making). Behind this neither ignited arrows nor any other weapon could reach the workmen, but all of them were thrown back by the screens and stopped there. And then the Romans, falling into a great fear, sent the envoys to Chosroes in great trepidation, and with them Stephanus, a physician of marked learning among those of his time at any rate, who also had once cured Cabades,

the son of Perozes, when ill, and had been made master of great wealth by him. He, therefore, coming into the presence of Chosroes with the others, spoke as follows: "It has been agreed by all from of old that kindness is the mark of a good king. Therefore, most mighty King, while busying thyself with murders and battles and the enslavement of cities it will perhaps be possible for thee to win the other names, but thou wilt never by any means have the reputation of being 'good.' And yet least of all cities should Edessa suffer any adversity at thy hand. For there was I born, who, without any foreknowledge of what was coming to pass, fostered thee from childhood and counseled thy father to appoint thee his successor in the kingdom, so that to thee I have proved the chief cause of the kingship of Persia, but to my fatherland of her present woes. For men, as a general thing, bring down upon their own heads the most of the misfortunes which are going to befall them. But if any remembrance of such benefaction comes to thy mind, do us no further injury, and grant me this requital, by which, O King, thou wilt escape the reputation of being most cruel." Such were the words of Stephanus. But Chosroes declared that he would not depart from there until the Romans should deliver to him Peter and Peranius, seeing that, being his hereditary slaves, they had dared to array themselves against him. And if it was not their pleasure to do this, the Romans must choose one of two alternatives, either to give the Persians five hundred centenaria of gold, or to receive into the city some of his associates who would search out all the money, both gold and silver, as much as was there, and bring it to him, allowing everything else to remain in the possession of the present owners. Such then were the words which Chosroes hurled forth, being in hopes of capturing Edessa with no trouble. And the ambassadors (since all the conditions which he had announced to them seemed impossible), in despair and great vexation, proceeded to the city. And when they had come inside the city-wall, they reported the message from Chosroes, and the whole city was filled with tumult and lamentation.

Now the artificial hill was rising to a great height and was being pushed forward with much haste. And the Romans, being at a loss what to do, again sent off the envoys to Chosroes. And when they had arrived in the enemy's camp, and said that they had come to make entreaty concerning the same things, they did not even gain a hearing of any kind from the Persians, but they were insulted and driven out from there with a great tumult, and so returned to the city. At first, then, the Romans tried to over-top the wall opposite the hill by means of another structure. But since the Persian work was already rising far above even this, they stopped their building and persuaded Martinus to make the arrangements for a settlement in whatever way he wished. He then came up close to the enemy's camp and began to converse with some of the Persian commanders. But they, completely deceiving Martinus, said that their king was desirous of peace, but that he was utterly unable to persuade the Roman Emperor to have done with his strife with Chosroes and to establish peace with him at last. And they mentioned as evidence of this the fact that Belisarius, who in power and dignity was far superior to Martinus, as even he himself would not deny, had recently persuaded the king of the Persians, when he was in the midst of Roman territory, to withdraw from there into Persia, promising that envoys from Byzantium would come to him at no distant time and establish peace securely, but that he had done none of the things agreed upon, since he had found himself unable to overcome the determination of the Emperor Justinian.

## XXVII

In the meantime the Romans were busying themselves as follows: They made a tunnel from the city underneath the enemy's embankment, commanding the diggers not to leave this work until they should get under the middle of the hill. By this means they were



planning to burn the embankment. But as the tunnel advanced to about the middle of the hill, a sound of blows, as it were, came to the ears of those Persians who were standing above. And perceiving what was being done, they too began from above and dug on both sides of the middle, so that they might catch the Romans who were doing the damage there. But the Romans found it out and abandoned this attempt, throwing earth into the place which had been hollowed out, and then began to work on the lower part of the embankment at the end which was next to the wall, and by taking out timbers and stones and earth they made an open space just like a chamber; then they threw in there dry trunks of trees of the kind which burn most easily, and saturated them with oil of cedar and added quantities of sulphur and bitumen. So, then, they were keeping these things in readiness; and meanwhile the Persian commanders in frequent meetings with Martinus were carrying on conversations with him in the same strain as the one I have mentioned, making it appear that they would receive proposals in regard to peace. But when at last their hill had been completed, and had been raised to a great elevation, approaching the circuit-wall of the city and rising far above it in height, then they sent Martinus away, definitely refusing to arrange the treaty, and they intended from then on to devote themselves to active warfare.

Accordingly the Romans straightway set fire to the tree-trunks which had been prepared for this purpose. But when the fire had burned only a certain portion of the embankment, and had not yet been able to penetrate through the whole mass, the wood was already entirely exhausted. But they kept throwing fresh wood into the pit, not slackening their efforts for a moment. And when the fire was already active throughout the whole embankment, some smoke appeared at night rising from every part of the hill, and the Romans, who were not yet willing to let the Persians know what was being done, resorted to the following device: They filled small pots with coals and fire and threw these and also ignited arrows in great numbers to all parts of the embankment. And the Persians who were keeping guard there, began to go about in great haste and extinguish these, and they supposed that the smoke arose from them. But since the trouble increased, the barbarians rushed up to help in great numbers, and the Romans, shooting them from the wall, killed many. And Chosroes too came there about sunrise, followed by the greater part of the army, and, upon mounting the hill, he first perceived what the trouble was. For he disclosed the fact that the cause of the smoke was underneath, not in the missiles which the enemy were hurling, and he ordered the whole army to come to the rescue with all speed. And the Romans, taking courage, began to insult them, while the barbarians were at work, some throwing on earth, and others water, where the smoke appeared, hoping thus to get the better of the trouble; however, they were absolutely unable to accomplish anything. For where the earth was thrown on, the smoke, as was natural, was checked at that place, but not long afterwards it rose from another place, since the fire compelled it to force its way out wherever it could. And where the water fell most plentifully it only succeeded in making the bitumen and the sulphur much more active, and caused them to exert their full force upon the wood near by; and it constantly drove the fire forward, since the water could not penetrate inside the embankment in a quantity at all sufficient to extinguish the flame by its abundance. And in the late afternoon the smoke became so great in volume that it was visible to the inhabitants of Carrhae and to some others who dwelt far beyond them. And since a great number of Persians and of Romans had gone up on top of the embankment, a fight took place and a hand-to-hand struggle to drive each other off, and the Romans were victorious. Then even the flames rose and appeared clearly above the embankment, and the Persians abandoned this undertaking.

On the sixth day after this, at early dawn, they made an assault secretly upon a certain part of the circuit-wall with ladders, at the point which is called the Fort. And since the Romans who were keeping guard there were sleeping a quiet, peaceful sleep, as the night



was drawing to its close, they silently set the ladders against the wall and were already ascending. But one of the rustics alone among the Romans happened to be awake, and he with a shout and a great noise began to rouse them all. And a hard struggle ensued in which the Persians were worsted, and they retired to their camp, leaving the ladders where they were; these the Romans drew up at their leisure. But Chosroes about midday sent a large part of the army against the so-called Great Gate in order to storm the wall. And the Romans went out and confronted them, not only soldiers, but even rustics and some of the populace, and they conquered the barbarians in battle decisively and turned them to flight. And while the Persians were still being pursued, Paulus, the interpreter, came from Chosroes, and going into the midst of the Romans, he reported that Rhecinarus had come from Byzantium to arrange the peace; and thus the two armies separated. Now it was already some days since Rhecinarus had arrived at the camp of the barbarians. But the Persians had by no means disclosed this fact to the Romans, plainly awaiting the outcome of the attempts upon the wall which they had planned, in order that, if they should be able to capture it, they might seem in no way to be violating the treaty, while if defeated, as actually happened, they might draw up the treaty at the invitation of the Romans. And when Rhecinarus had gone inside the gates, the Persians demanded that those who were to arrange the peace should come to Chosroes without any delay, but the Romans said that envoys would be sent three days later; for that just at the moment their general, Martinus, was unwell.

And Chosroes, suspecting that the reason was not a sound one, prepared for battle. And at that time he only threw a great mass of bricks upon the embankment; but two days later he came against the fortifications of the city with the whole army to storm the wall. And at every gate he stationed some of the commanders and a part of the army, encircling the whole wall in this way, and he brought up ladders and war-engines against it. And in the rear he placed all the Saracens with some of the Persians, not in order to assault the wall, but in order that, when the city was captured, they might gather in the fugitives and catch them as in a drag-net. Such, then, was the purpose of Chosroes in arranging the army in this way. And the fighting began early in the morning, and at first the Persians had the advantage. For they were in great numbers and fighting against a very small force, since the most of the Romans had not heard what was going on and were utterly unprepared. But as the conflict advanced the city became full of confusion and tumult, and the whole population, even women and little children, were going up on to the wall. Now those who were of military age together with the soldiers were repelling the enemy most vigorously, and many of the rustics made a remarkable shew of valorous deeds against the barbarians. Meanwhile the women and children, and the aged also, were gathering stones for the fighters and assisting them in other ways. Some also filled numerous basins with olive-oil, and after heating them over fire a sufficient time everywhere along the wall, they sprinkled the oil, while boiling fiercely, upon the enemy who were assailing the wall, using a sort of whisk for the purpose, and in this way harassed them still more. The Persians, therefore, soon gave up and began to throw down their arms, and coming before the king, said that they were no longer able to hold out in the struggle. But Chosroes, in a passion of anger, drove them all on with threats and urged them forward against the enemy. And the soldiers with much shouting and tumult brought up the towers and the other engines of war to the wall and set the ladders against it, in order to capture the city with one grand rush. But since the Romans were hurling great numbers of missiles and exerting all their strength to drive them off, the barbarians were turned back by force; and as Chosroes withdrew, the Romans taunted him, inviting him to come and storm the wall. Only Azarethes at the so-called Soinian Gate was still fighting with his men, at the place which they call Tripurgia. And since the Romans at this point were not a match for them, but were giving way before

their assaults, already the outer wall, which they call an outwork, had been torn down by the barbarians in many places, and they were pressing most vigorously upon those who were defending themselves from the great circuit-wall; but at last Peranius with a large number of soldiers and some of the citizens went out against them and defeated them in battle and drove them off. And the assault which had begun early in the morning ended in the late afternoon, and both sides remained quiet that night, the Persians fearing for their defences and for themselves, and the Romans gathering stones and taking them to the parapets and putting everything else in [43-2] complete readiness, so as to fight against the enemy on the morrow when they should attack the wall. Now on the succeeding day not one of the barbarians came against the fortifications; but on the day after that a portion of the army, urged on by Chosroes, made an assault upon the so-called Gate of Barlaus; but the Romans sallied forth and confronted them, and the Persians were decisively beaten in the engagement, and after a short time retired to the camp. And then Paulus, the interpreter of the Persians, came along by the wall and called for Martinus, in order that he might make the arrangements for the truce. Thus Martinus came to conference with the commanders of the Persians, and they concluded an agreement, by which Chosroes received five centenaria from the inhabitants of Edessa, and left them, in writing, the promise not to inflict any further injury upon the Romans; then, after setting fire to all his defences, he returned homeward with his whole army.

## XXVIII

At about this time two generals of the Romans died, Justus, the nephew of the emperor, and Peranius, the Iberian, of whom the former succumbed to disease, while Peranius fell from his horse in hunting and suffered a fatal rupture. The emperor therefore appointed others in their places, dispatching Marcellus, his own nephew who was just arriving at the age of manhood, and Constantianus, who a little earlier had been sent as an envoy with Sergius to Chosroes. Then the Emperor Justinian sent Constantianus and Sergius a second time to Chosroes to arrange the truce. And they overtook him in Assyria, at the place where there are two towns, Seleucia and Ctesiphon, built by the Macedonians who after Alexander, the son of Philip, ruled over the Persians and the other nations there. These two towns are separated by the Tigris River only, for they have nothing else between them. There the envoys met Chosroes, and they demanded that he should give back to the Romans the country of Lazica, and establish peace with them on a thoroughly secure basis. But Chosroes said that it was not easy for them to come to terms with each other, unless they should first declare an armistice, and then should continue to go back and forth to each other without so much fear and settle their differences and make a peace which should be on a secure basis for the future. And it was necessary, he said, that in return for this continued armistice the Roman Emperor should give him money and should also send a certain physician, Tribunus by name, in order to spend some specified time with him. For it happened that this physician at a former time had rid him of a severe disease, and as a result of this he was especially beloved and greatly missed by him. When the Emperor Justinian heard this, he immediately sent both Tribunus and the money, amounting to twenty centenaria. In this way the treaty was made between the Romans and the Persians for five years, in the nineteenth year of the reign of the Emperor Justinian.

545 A.D.

And a little later Arethas and Alamoundaras, the rulers of the Saracens, waged a war against each other by themselves, unaided either by the Romans or the Persians. And Alamoundaras captured one of the sons of Arethas in a sudden raid while he was pasturing

horses, and straightway sacrificed him to Aphrodite; and from this it was known that Arethas was not betraying the Romans to the Persians. Later they both came together in battle with their whole armies, and the forces of Arethas were overwhelmingly victorious, and turning their enemy to flight, they killed many of them. And Arethas came within a little of capturing alive two of the sons of Alamoundaras; however, he did not actually succeed. Such, then, was the course of events among the Saracens.

But it became clear that Chosroes, the Persian king, had made the truce with the Romans with treacherous intent, in order that he might find them remiss on account of the peace and inflict upon them some grave injury. For in the third year of the truce he devised the following schemes. There were in Persia two brothers, Phabrizus and Isdigousnas, both holding most important offices there and at the same time reckoned to be the basest of all the Persians, and having a great reputation for their cleverness and evil ways. Accordingly, since Chosroes had formed the purpose of capturing the city of Daras by a sudden stroke, and to move all the Colchians out of Lazica and establish in their place Persian settlers, he selected these two men to assist him in both undertakings. For it seemed to him that it would be a lucky stroke and a really important achievement to win for himself the land of Colchis and to have it in secure possession, reasoning that this would be advantageous to the Persian empire in many ways. In the first place they would have Iberia in security forever afterwards, since the Iberians would not have anyone with whom, if they revolted, they might find safety; for since the most notable men of these barbarians together with their king, Gourgenes, had looked towards revolt, as I have stated in the preceding pages, the Persians from that time on did not permit them to set up a king over themselves, nor were the Iberians single-minded subjects of the Persians, but there was much suspicion and distrust between them. And it was evident that the Iberians were most thoroughly dissatisfied and that they would attempt a revolution shortly if they could only seize upon some favourable opportunity. Furthermore, the Persian empire would be forever free from plunder by the Huns who lived next to Lazica, and he would send them against the Roman domains more easily and readily, whenever he should so desire. For he considered that, as regards the barbarians dwelling in the Caucasus, Lazica was nothing else than a bulwark against them. But most of all he hoped that the subjugation of Lazica would afford this advantage to the Persians, that starting from there they might overrun with no trouble both by land and by sea the countries along the Euxine Sea, as it is called, and thus win over the Cappadocians and the Galatians and Bithynians who adjoin them, and capture Byzantium by a sudden assault with no one opposing them. For these reasons, then, Chosroes was anxious to gain possession of Lazica, but in the Lazi he had not the least confidence. For since the time when the Romans had withdrawn from Lazica, the common people of the country naturally found the Persian rule burdensome. For the Persians are beyond all other men singular in their ways, and they are excessively rigid as regards the routine of daily life. And their laws are difficult of access for all men, and their requirements quite unbearable. But in comparison with the Lazi the difference of their thinking and living shews itself in an altogether exceptional degree, since the Lazi are Christians of the most thorough-going kind, while all the Persian views regarding religion are the exact opposite of theirs. And apart from this, salt is produced nowhere in Lazica, nor indeed does grain grow there nor the vine nor any other good thing. But from the Romans along the coast everything is brought in to them by ship, and even so they do not pay gold to the traders, but hides and slaves and whatever else happens to be found there in great abundance; and when they were excluded from this trade, they were, as was to be expected, in a state of constant vexation. When, therefore, Chosroes perceived this, he was eager to anticipate with certainty any move on their part to revolt against him. And upon considering the matter, it seemed to him to be the most advantageous course to put Goubazes, the king of the Lazi, out of the way as

quickly as possible, and to move the Lazi in a body out of the country, and then to colonize this land with Persians and certain other nations.

When Chosroes had matured these plans, he sent Isdigousnas to Byzantium, ostensibly to act as an envoy, and he picked out five hundred of the most valorous of the Persians and sent them with him, directing them to get inside the city of Daras, and to take their lodgings in many different houses, and at night to set these all on fire, and, while all the Romans were occupied with this fire, as was natural, to open the gates immediately, and receive the rest of the Persian army into the city. For word had been sent previously to the commander of the city of Nisibis to conceal a large force of soldiers near by and hold them in readiness. For in this way Chosroes thought that they would destroy all the Romans with no trouble, and seizing the city of Daras, would hold it securely. But someone who knew well what was being arranged, a Roman who had come to the Persians as a deserter a little earlier, told everything to George, who was staying there at the time; now this was the same man whom I mentioned in the preceding pages as having persuaded the Persians who were besieged in the fortress of Sisauranon to surrender themselves to the Romans. George therefore met this ambassador at the boundary line between Roman and Persian soil and said that this thing he was doing was not after the fashion of an embassy, and that never had so numerous a body of Persians stopped for the night in a city of the Romans. For he ought, he said, to have left behind all the rest in the town of Ammodios, and must himself enter the city of Daras with some few men. Now Isdigousnas was indignant and appeared to take it ill, because he had been insulted wrongfully, in spite of the fact that he was dispatched on an embassy to the Roman emperor. But George, paying no heed to him in his fury, saved the city for the Romans. For he received Isdigousnas into the city with only twenty men.

So having failed in this attempt, the barbarian came to Byzantium as if on an embassy, bringing with him his wife and two daughters (for this was his pretext for the crowd which had been gathered about him); but when he came before the emperor, he was unable to say anything great or small about any serious matter, although he wasted no less than ten months in Roman territory. However, he gave the emperor the gifts from Chosroes, as is customary, and a letter, in which Chosroes requested the Emperor Justinian to send word whether he was enjoying the best possible health. Nevertheless the Emperor Justinian received this Isdigousnas with more friendliness and treated him with greater honour than any of the other ambassadors of whom we know. So true was this that, whenever he entertained him, he caused Braducius, who followed him as interpreter, to recline with him on the couch, a thing which had never before happened in all time. For no one ever saw an interpreter become a table-companion of even one of the more humble officials, not to speak of a king. But he both received and dismissed this man in a style more splendid than that which befits an ambassador, although he had undertaken the embassy for no serious business, as I have said. For if anyone should count up the money expended and the gifts which Isdigousnas carried with him when he went away, he will find them amounting to more than ten centenaria of gold. So the plot against the city of Daras ended in this way for Chosroes.

## XXIX

His first move against Lazica was as follows. He sent into the country a great amount of lumber suitable for the construction of ships, explaining to no one what his purpose was in so doing, but ostensibly he was sending it in order to set up engines of war on the fortifications of Petra. Next he chose out three hundred able warriors of the Persians, and



sent them there under command of Phabrizus, whom I have lately mentioned, ordering him to make away with Goubazes as secretly as possible; as for the rest, he himself would take care. Now when this lumber had been conveyed to Lazica, it happened that it was struck suddenly by lightning and reduced to ashes. And Phabrizus, upon arriving in Lazica with the three hundred, began to contrive so that he might carry out the orders received by him from Chosroes regarding Goubazes. Now it happened that one of the men of note among the Colchians, Pharsanses by name, had quarrelled with Goubazes and in consequence had become exceedingly hostile to him, and now he did not dare at all to go into the presence of the king. When this was learned by Phabrizus, he summoned Pharsanses and in a conference with him disclosed the whole project, and enquired of the man in what way he ought to go about the execution of the deed. And it seemed best to them after deliberating together that Phabrizus should go into the city of Petra, and should summon Goubazes there, in order to announce to him what the king had decided concerning the interests of the Lazi. But Pharsanses secretly revealed to Goubazes what was being prepared. He, accordingly, did not come to Phabrizus at all, but began openly to plan a revolt. Then Phabrizus commanded the other Persians to attend as carefully as they could to the guarding of Petra, and to make everything as secure as possible against a siege, and he himself with the three hundred returned homeward without having accomplished his purpose. And Goubazes reported to the Emperor Justinian the condition in which they were, and begged him to grant forgiveness for what the Lazi had done in the past, and to come to their defence with all his strength, since they desired to be rid of the Median rule. For if left by themselves the Colchians would not be able to repel the power of the Persians.

When the Emperor Justinian heard this, he was overjoyed, and sent seven thousand men under the leadership of Dagisthaeus and a thousand Tzani to the assistance of the Lazi. And when this force reached the land of Colchis, they encamped together with Goubazes and the Lazi about the fortifications of Petra and commenced a siege. But since the Persians who were there made a most stalwart defence from the wall, it came about that much time was spent in the siege; for the Persians had put away an ample store of victuals in the town. And Chosroes, being greatly disturbed by these things, dispatched a great army of horse and foot against the besiegers, putting Mermeroes in command of them. And when Goubazes learned of this, he considered the matter together with Dagisthaeus and acted in the manner which I shall presently set forth.

The river Boas rises close to the territory of the Tzani among the Armenians who dwell around Pharangium. And at first its course inclines to the right for a great distance, and its stream is small and can be forded by anyone with no trouble as far as the place where the territory of the Iberians lies on the right, and the end of the Caucasus lies directly opposite. In that place many nations have their homes, and among them the Alani and Abasgi, who are Christians and friends of the Romans from of old; also the Zechi, and after them the Huns who bear the name Sabeiri. But when this river reaches the point which marks the termination of the Caucasus and of Iberia as well, there other waters also are added to it and it becomes much larger and from there flows on bearing the name of Phasis instead of Boas[26]; and it becomes a navigable stream as far as the so-called Euxine Sea into which it empties; and on either side of it lies Lazica. Now on the right of the stream particularly the whole country for a great distance is populated by the people of Lazica as far as the boundary of Iberia. For all the villages of the Lazi are here beyond the river, and towns have been built there from of old, among which are Archaeopolis, a very strong place, and Sebastopolis, and the fortress of Pitius, and Scanda and Sarapanis over against the boundary of Iberia. Moreover there are two cities of the greatest importance in that region, Rhodopolis and Mocheresis. But on the left of the river, while the country belongs to Lazica as far as one day's journey for an unencumbered traveller, the land is without human



habitation. Adjoining this land is the home of the Romans who are called Pontic. Now it was in the territory of Lazica, in the part which was altogether uninhabited, that the Emperor Justinian founded the city of Petra in my own time. This was the place where John, surnamed Tzibus, established the monopoly, as I have told in the previous narrative, and gave cause to the Lazi to revolt. And as one leaves the city of Petra going southward, the Roman territory commences immediately, and there are populous towns there, and one which bears the name of Rhizaeum, also Athens and certain others as far as Trapezus. Now when the Lazi brought in Chosroes, they crossed the River Boas and came to Petra keeping the Phasis on the right, because, as they said, they would thus provide against being compelled to spend much time and trouble in ferrying the men across the River Phasis, but in reality they did not wish to display their own homes to the Persians. And yet Lazica is everywhere difficult to traverse both to the right and to the left of the River Phasis. For there are on both sides of the river exceedingly high and jagged mountains, and as a result the passes are narrow and very long. (The Romans call the roads through such passes "clisurae" when they put their own word into a Greek form.) But since at that time Lazica happened to be unguarded, the Persians had reached Petra very easily with the Lazi who were their guides.

But on this occasion Goubazes, upon learning of the advance of the Persians, directed Dagisthaeus to send some men to guard with all their strength the pass which is below the River Phasis, and he bade him not on any account to abandon the siege until they should be able to capture Petra and the Persians in it. He himself meanwhile with the whole Colchian army came to the frontier of Lazica, in order to devote all his strength to guarding the pass there. Now it happened that long before he had persuaded the Alani and Sabeiri to form an alliance with him, and they had agreed for three centenaria not merely to assist the Lazi in guarding the land from plunder, but also to render Iberia so destitute of men that not even the Persians would be able to come in from there in the future. And Goubazes had promised that the emperor would give them this money. So he reported the agreement to the Emperor Justinian and besought him to send this money for the barbarians and afford the Lazi some consolation in their great distress. He also stated that the treasury owed him his salary for ten years, for though he was assigned a post among the privy counsellors in the palace, he had received no payment from it since the time when Chosroes came into the land of Colchis. And the Emperor Justinian intended to fulfil this request, but some business came up to occupy his attention and he did not send the money at the proper time. So Goubazes was thus engaged.

But Dagisthaeus, being a rather young man and by no means competent to carry on a war against Persia, did not handle the situation properly. For while he ought to have sent certainly the greater part of the army to the pass, and perhaps should have assisted in person in this enterprise, he sent only one hundred men, just as if he were managing a matter of secondary importance. He himself, moreover, though besieging Petra with the whole army, accomplished nothing, although the enemy were few. For while they had been at the beginning not less than fifteen hundred, they had been shot at by Romans and Lazi in their fighting at the wall for a long time, and had made a display of valour such as no others known to us have made, so that many were falling constantly and they were reduced to an exceedingly small number. So while the Persians, plunged in despair and at a loss what to do, were remaining quiet, the Romans made a trench along the wall for a short space, and the circuit-wall at this point fell immediately. But it happened that inside this space there was a building which did not stand back at all from the circuit-wall, and this reached to the whole length of the fallen portion; thus, taking the place of the wall for the besieged, it rendered them secure none the less. But this was not sufficient greatly to disturb the Romans. For knowing well that by doing the same thing elsewhere they would capture the

city with the greatest ease, they became still more hopeful than before. For this reason Dagisthaeus sent word to the emperor of what had come to pass, and proposed that prizes of victory should be in readiness for him, indicating what rewards the emperor should bestow upon himself and his brother; for he would capture Petra after no great time. So the Romans and the Tzani made a most vigorous assault upon the wall, but the Persians unexpectedly withstood them, although only a very few were left. And since the Romans were accomplishing nothing by assaulting the wall, they again turned to digging. And they went so far in this work that the foundations of the circuit-wall were no longer on solid ground, but stood for the most part over empty space, and, in the nature of things, would fall almost immediately. And if Dagisthaeus had been willing immediately to apply fire to the foundations, I think that the city would have been captured by them straightway; but, as it was, he was awaiting encouragement from the emperor, and so, always hesitating and wasting time, he remained inactive. Such, then, was the course of events in the Roman camp.

### XXX

But Mermeroes, after passing the Iberian frontier with the whole Median army, was moving forward with the River Phasis on his right. For he was quite unwilling to go through the country of Lazica, lest any obstacle should confront him there. For he was eager to save the city of Petra and the Persians in it, even though a portion of the circuit-wall had fallen down suddenly. For it had been hanging in the air, as I have said; and volunteers from the Roman army to the number of fifty got inside the city, and raised the shout proclaiming the Emperor Justinian triumphant. These men were led by a young man of Armenian birth, John by name, the son of Thomas whom they used to call by the surname Gouzes. This Thomas had built many of the strongholds about Lazica at the direction of the emperor, and he commanded the soldiers there, seeming to the emperor an intelligent person. Now John, when the Persians joined battle with his men, was wounded and straightway withdrew to the camp with his followers, since no one else of the Roman army came to support him. Meanwhile the Persian Mirranes who commanded the garrison in Petra, fearing for the city, directed all the Persians to keep guard with the greatest diligence, and he himself went to Dagisthaeus, and addressed him with fawning speeches and deceptive words, agreeing readily to surrender the city not long afterwards. In this way he succeeded in deceiving him so that the Roman army did not immediately enter the city.

Now when the army of Mermeroes came to the pass, the Roman garrison, numbering one hundred men, confronted them there and offered a stalwart resistance, and they held in check their opponents who were attempting the entrance. But the Persians by no means withdrew, but those who fell were constantly replaced by others, and they kept advancing, trying with all their strength to force their way in. Among the Persians more than a thousand perished, but at last the Romans were worn out with killing, and, being forced back by the throng, they withdrew, and running up to the heights of the mountain there were saved. Dagisthaeus, upon learning this, straightway abandoned the siege without giving any commands to the army, and proceeded to the River Phasis; and all the Romans followed him, leaving their possessions behind in the camp. And when the Persians observed what was being done, they opened their gates and came forth, and approached the tents of the enemy in order to capture the camp. But the Tzani, who had not followed after Dagisthaeus, as it happened, rushed out to defend the camp, and they routed the enemy without difficulty and killed many. So the Persians fled inside their fortifications, and the Tzani, after plundering the Roman camp proceeded straight for Rhizaeum. And from there

they came to Athens and betook themselves to their homes through the territory of the Trapezuntines.

And Mermeroes and the Median army came there on the ninth day after the withdrawal of Dagisthaeus; and in the city they found left of the Persian garrison three hundred and fifty men wounded and unfit for fighting, and only one hundred and fifty men unhurt; for all the rest had perished. Now the survivors had in no case thrown the bodies of the fallen outside the fortifications, but though stifled by the evil stench, they held out in a manner beyond belief, in order that they might not afford the enemy any encouragement for the prosecution of the siege, by letting them know that most of their number had perished. And Mermeroes remarked by way of a taunt that the Roman state was worthy of tears and lamentation, because they had come to such a state of weakness that they had been unable by any device to capture one hundred and fifty Persians without a wall. And he was eager to build up the portions of the circuit-wall which had fallen down; but since at the moment he had neither lime nor any of the other necessary materials for the building ready at hand, he devised the following plan. Filling with sand the linen bags in which the Persians had carried their provisions into the land of Colchis, he laid them in the place of the stones, and the bags thus arranged took the place of the wall. And choosing out three thousand of his able fighting men, he left them there, depositing with them victuals for no great length of time, and commanding them to attend to the building of the fortifications; then he himself with all the rest of the army turned back and marched away.

But since, if he went from there by the same road, no means of provisioning his army was available, since he had left everything in Petra which had been brought in by the army from Iberia, he planned to go by another route through the mountains, where he learned that the country was inhabited, in order that by foraging there he might be able to live off the land. In the course of this journey one of the notables among the Lazi, Phoubelis by name, laid an ambush for the Persians while camping for the night, bringing with him Dagisthaeus with two thousand of the Romans; and these men, making a sudden attack, killed some of the Persians who were grazing their horses, and after securing the horses as plunder they shortly withdrew. Thus, then, Mermeroes with the Median army departed from there.

But Goubazes, upon learning what had befallen the Romans both at Petra and at the pass, did not even so become frightened, nor did he give up the guarding of the pass where he was, considering that their hope centred in that place. For he understood that, even if the Persians had been able by forcing back the Romans on the left of the River Phasis to cross over the pass and get into Petra, they could thereby inflict no injury upon the land of the Lazi, since they were utterly unable to cross the Phasis, in particular because no ships were at their disposal. For in depth this river is not inferior to the deepest rivers, and it spreads out to a great width. Moreover it has such a strong current that when it empties into the sea, it goes on as a separate stream for a very great distance, without mingling at all with the sea-water. Indeed, those who navigate in those parts are able to draw up drinking water in the midst of the sea. Moreover, the Lazi have erected fortresses all along the right bank of the river, in order that, even when the enemy are ferried across in boats, they may not be able to disembark on the land.

The Emperor Justinian at this time sent to the nation of the Sabeiri the money which had been agreed upon, and he rewarded Goubazes and the Lazi with additional sums of money. And it happened that long before this time he had sent another considerable army also to Lazica, which had not yet arrived there. The commander of this army was Rhecithancus, from Thrace, a man of discretion and a capable warrior. Such then was the course of these events.

Now when Mermeroes got into the mountains, as I have said, he was anxious to fill Petra with provisions from there. For he did not by any means think that the victuals which they had brought in with them would suffice for the garrison there, amounting to three thousand men. But since the supplies they found along the way barely sufficed for the provisioning of that army, which numbered no less than thirty thousand, and since on this account they were able to send nothing at all of consequence to Petra, upon consideration he found it better for them that the greater part of the army should depart from the land of Colchis, and that some few should remain there, who were to convey to the garrison in Petra the most of the provisions which they might find, while using the rest to maintain themselves comfortably. He therefore selected five thousand men and left them there, appointing as commanders over them Phabrizus and three others. For it seemed to him unnecessary to leave more men there, since there was no enemy at all. And he himself with the rest of the army came into Persarmenia and remained quietly in the country around Doubios.

Now the five thousand, upon coming nearer to the frontier of Lazica, encamped in a body beside the Phasis River, and from there they went about in small bands and plundered the neighbouring country. Now when Goubazes perceived this, he sent word to Dagisthaeus to hasten there to his assistance: for it would be possible for them to do the enemy some great harm. And he did as directed, moving forward with the whole Roman army with the River Phasis on the left, until he came to the place where the Lazi were encamped on the opposite bank of the river. Now it happened that the Phasis could be forded at this point, a fact which neither the Romans nor the Persians suspected in the least because of their lack of familiarity with these regions; but the Lazi knew it well, and they made the crossing suddenly and joined the Roman army. And the Persians chose out a thousand men of repute among them and sent them forth, that no one might advance against the camp to harm it. And two of this force, who had gone out ahead of their fellows to reconnoitre, fell unexpectedly into the hands of the enemy and informed them of the whole situation. The Romans, therefore, and the Lazi fell suddenly upon the thousand men, and not one of them succeeded in escaping, but the most of them were slain, while some also were captured; and through these the men of Goubazes and Dagisthaeus succeeded in learning the numbers of the Median army and the length of the journey to them and the condition in which they then were. They therefore broke camp and marched against them with their whole army, calculating so that they would fall upon them well on in the night; their own force amounted to fourteen thousand men. Now the Persians, having no thought of an enemy in their minds, were enjoying a long sleep; for they supposed that the river was impassable, and that the thousand men, with no one to oppose them, were making a long march somewhere. But the Romans and Lazi at early dawn unexpectedly fell upon them, and they found some still buried in slumber and others just roused from sleep and lying defenceless upon their beds. Not one of them, therefore, thought of resistance, and the majority were caught and killed, while some also were captured by the enemy, among whom happened to be one of the commanders; only a few escaped in the darkness and were saved. And the Romans and Lazi captured the camp and all the standards, and they also secured many weapons and a great deal of money as plunder, besides great numbers of horses and mules. And pursuing them for a very great distance they came well into Iberia. There they happened upon [45-54] certain others of the Persians also and slew a great number. Thus the Persians departed from Lazica; and the Romans and Lazi found there all the supplies, including great quantities of flour, which the barbarians had brought in from Iberia, in order to transport them to Petra, and they burned them all. And they left a large number of Lazi in the pass, so that it might no longer be possible for the Persians to carry in supplies to Petra, and they returned with all the plunder and the captives.

549 A.D.

And the fourth year of the truce between the Romans and Persians came to an end, being the twenty-third year of the reign of the Emperor Justinian.

And John the Cappadocian one year before this came to Byzantium at the summons of the emperor. For at that time the Empress Theodora had reached the term of her life. However, he was quite unable to recover any of his former dignities, but he continued to hold the priestly honour against his will; and yet the vision had often come to the man that he would arrive at royalty. For the divine power is accustomed to tempt those whose minds are not solidly grounded by nature, by holding before their vision, on great and lofty hopes, that which is counted splendid among men. At any rate the marvel-mongers were always predicting to this John many such imaginary things, and especially that he was bound to be clothed in the garment of Augustus. Now there was a certain priest in Byzantium, Augustus by name, who guarded the treasures of the temple of Sophia. So when John had been shorn and declared worthy of the priestly dignity by force, inasmuch as he had no garment becoming a priest, he had been compelled by those who were in charge of this business to put on the cloak and the tunic of this Augustus who was near by, and in this, I suppose, his prophecy reached its fulfilment.



BOOK III  
THE VANDALIC WAR

I

Jan. 17, 395 A.D.

Such, then, was the final outcome of the Persian War for the Emperor Justinian; and I shall now proceed to set forth all that he did against the Vandals and the Moors. But first shall be told whence came the host of the Vandals when they descended upon the land of the Romans. After Theodosius, the Roman Emperor, had departed from the world, having proved himself one of the most just of men and an able warrior, his kingdom was taken over by his two sons, Arcadius, the elder, receiving the Eastern portion, and Honorius, the younger, the Western. But the Roman power had been thus divided as far back as the time of Constantine and his sons; for he transferred his government to Byzantium, and making the city larger and much more renowned, allowed it to be named after him.

Now the earth is surrounded by a circle of ocean, either entirely or for the most part (for our knowledge is not as yet at all clear in this matter); and it is split into two continents by a sort of outflow from the ocean, a flow which enters at the western part and forms this Sea which we know, beginning at Gadir and extending all the way to the Maeotic Lake. Of these two continents the one to the right, as one sails into the Sea, as far as the Lake, has received the name of Asia, beginning at Gadir and at the southern of the two Pillars of Heracles. *Septem* is the name given by the natives to the fort at that point, since seven hills appear there; for "*septem*" has the force of "seven" in the Latin tongue. And the whole continent opposite this was named Europe. And the strait at that point separates the two continents by about eighty-four stades, but from there on they are kept apart by wide expanses of sea as far as the Hellespont. For at this point they again approach each other at *Sestus* and *Abydus*, and once more at Byzantium and Chalcedon as far as the rocks called in ancient times the "Dark Blue Rocks," where even now is the place called *Hieron*. For at these places the continents are separated from one another by a distance of only ten stades and even less than that.

Now the distance from one of the Pillars of Heracles to the other, if one goes along the shore and does not pass around the Ionian Gulf and the sea called the Euxine but crosses from Chalcedon to Byzantium and from Dryous to the opposite mainland, is a journey of two hundred and eighty-five days for an unencumbered traveller. For as to the land about the Euxine Sea, which extends from Byzantium to the Lake, it would be impossible to tell everything with precision, since the barbarians beyond the Ister River, which they also call the Danube, make the shore of that sea quite impossible for the Romans to traverse—except, indeed, that from Byzantium to the mouth of the Ister is a journey of twenty-two days, which should be added to the measure of Europe by one making the computation. And on the Asiatic side, that is from Chalcedon to the Phasis River, which, flowing from the country of the Colchians, descends into the Pontus, the journey is accomplished in forty days. So that the whole Roman domain, according to the distance along the sea at least, attains the measure of a three hundred and forty-seven days' journey, if, as has been said, one ferries over the Ionian Gulf, which extends about eight hundred stades from Dryous. For the passage across the gulf amounts to a journey of not less than four days. Such, then, was the size of the Roman empire in the ancient times.

And there fell to him who held the power in the West the most of Libya, extending ninety days' journey—for such is the distance from Gadir to the boundaries of Tripolis in

Libya; and in Europe he received as his portion territory extending seventy-five days' journey—for such is the distance from the northern of the Pillars of Heracles to the Ionian Gulf. And one might add also the distance around the gulf. And the emperor of the East received territory extending one hundred and twenty days' journey, from the boundaries of Cyrene in Libya as far as Epidamnus, which lies on the Ionian Gulf and is called at the present time Dyrrachium, as well as that portion of the country about the Euxine Sea which, as previously stated, is subject to the Romans. Now one day's journey extends two hundred and ten stades, or as far as from Athens to Megara. Thus, then, the Roman emperors divided either continent between them. And among the islands Britain, which is outside the Pillars of Heracles and by far the largest of all islands, was counted, as is natural, with the West; and inside the Pillars, Ebusa, which lies in the Mediterranean in what we may call the Propontis, just inside the opening where the ocean enters, about seven days' journey from the opening, and two others near it, Majorica and Minorica, as they are called by the natives, were also assigned to the Western empire. And each of the islands in the Sea itself fell to the share of that one of the two emperors within whose boundaries it happened to lie.

## II

395-423 A.D

Now while Honorius was holding the imperial power in the West, barbarians took possession of his land; and I shall tell who they were and in what manner they did so. There were many Gothic nations in earlier times, just as also at the present, but the greatest and most important of all are the Goths, Vandals, Visigoths, and Gepaedes. In ancient times, however, they were named Sauromatae and Melanchlaeni; and there were some too who called these nations Getic. All these, while they are distinguished from one another by their names, as has been said, do not differ in anything else at all. For they all have white bodies and fair hair, and are tall and handsome to look upon, and they use the same laws and practise a common religion. For they are all of the Arian faith, and have one language called Gothic; and, as it seems to me, they all came originally from one tribe, and were distinguished later by the names of those who led each group. This people used to dwell above the Ister River from of old. Later on the Gepaedes got possession of the country about Singidunum and Sirmium, on both sides of the Ister River, where they have remained settled even down to my time.

But the Visigoths, separating from the others, removed from there and at first entered into an alliance with the Emperor Arcadius, but at a later time (for faith with the Romans cannot dwell in barbarians), under the leadership of Alaric, they became hostile to both emperors, and, beginning with Thrace, treated all Europe as an enemy's land. Now the Emperor Honorius had before this time been sitting in Rome, with never a thought of war in his mind, but glad, I think, if men allowed him to remain quiet in his palace. But when word was brought that the barbarians with a great army were not far off, but somewhere among the Taulantii, he abandoned the palace and fled in disorderly fashion to Ravenna, a strong city lying just about at the end of the Ionian Gulf, while some say that he brought in the barbarians himself, because an uprising had been started against him among his subjects; but this does not seem to me trustworthy, as far, at least, as one can judge of the character of the man. And the barbarians, finding that they had no hostile force to encounter them, became the most cruel of all men. For they destroyed all the cities which they captured, especially those south of the Ionian Gulf, so completely that nothing has been left to my time to know them by, unless, indeed, it might be one tower or one gate or some such thing which chanced to remain. And they killed all the people, as many as came in their way, both

old and young alike, sparing neither women nor children. Wherefore even up to the present time Italy is sparsely populated. They also gathered as plunder all the money out of all Europe, and, most important of all, they left in Rome nothing whatever of public or private wealth when they moved on to Gaul. But I shall now tell how Alaric captured Rome.

After much time had been spent by him in the siege, and he had not been able either by force or by any other device to capture the place, he formed the following plan. Among the youths in the army whose beards had not yet grown, but who had just come of age, he chose out three hundred whom he knew to be of good birth and possessed of valour beyond their years, and told them secretly that he was about to make a present of them to certain of the patricians in Rome, pretending that they were slaves. And he instructed them that, as soon as they got inside the houses of those men, they should display much gentleness and moderation and serve them eagerly in whatever tasks should be laid upon them by their owners; and he further directed them that not long afterwards, on an appointed day at about midday, when all those who were to be their masters would most likely be already asleep after their meal, they should all come to the gate called Salarian and with a sudden rush kill the guards, who would have no previous knowledge of the plot, and open the gates as quickly as possible. After giving these orders to the youths, Alaric straightway sent ambassadors to the members of the senate, stating that he admired them for their loyalty toward their emperor, and that he would trouble them no longer, because of their valour and faithfulness, with which it was plain that they were endowed to a remarkable degree, and in order that tokens of himself might be preserved among men both noble and brave, he wished to present each one of them with some domestics. After making this declaration and sending the youths not long afterwards, he commanded the barbarians to make preparations for the departure, and he let this be known to the Romans. And they heard his words gladly, and receiving the gifts began to be exceedingly happy, since they were completely ignorant of the plot of the barbarian. For the youths, by being unusually obedient to their owners, averted suspicion, and in the camp some were already seen moving from their positions and raising the siege, while it seemed that the others were just on the point of doing the very same thing. But when the appointed day had come, Alaric armed his whole force for the attack and was holding them in readiness close by the Salarian Gate; for it happened that he had encamped there at the beginning of the siege.

Aug. 24, 410 A.D.

And all the youths at the time of the day agreed upon came to this gate, and, assailing the guards suddenly, put them to death; then they opened the gates and received Alaric and the army into the city at their leisure. And they set fire to the houses which were next to the gate, among which was also the house of Sallust, who in ancient times wrote the history of the Romans, and the greater part of this house has stood half-burned up to my time; and after plundering the whole city and destroying the most of the Romans, they moved on. At that time they say that the Emperor Honorius in Ravenna received the message from one of the eunuchs, evidently a keeper of the poultry, that Rome had perished. And he cried out and said, "And yet it has just eaten from my hands!" For he had a very large cock, Rome by name; and the eunuch comprehending his words said that it was the city of Rome which had perished at the hands of Alaric, and the emperor with a sigh of relief answered quickly: "But I, my good fellow, thought that my fowl Rome had perished." So great, they say, was the folly with which this emperor was possessed.

But some say that Rome was not captured in this way by Alaric, but that Proba, a woman of very unusual eminence in wealth and in fame among the Roman senatorial class, felt pity for the Romans who were being destroyed by hunger and the other suffering they endured; for they were already even tasting each other's flesh; and seeing that every good

hope had left them, since both the river and the harbour were held by the enemy, she commanded her domestics, they say, to open the gates by night.

Now when Alaric was about to depart from Rome, he declared Attalus, one of their nobles, emperor of the Romans, investing him with the diadem and the purple and whatever else pertains to the imperial dignity. And he did this with the intention of removing Honorius from his throne and of giving over the whole power in the West to Attalus. With such a purpose, then, both Attalus and Alaric were going with a great army against Ravenna. But this Attalus was neither able to think wisely himself, nor to be persuaded by one who had wisdom to offer. So while Alaric did not by any means approve the plan, Attalus sent commanders to Libya without an army. Thus, then, were these things going on.

407 A.D.

And the island of Britain revolted from the Romans, and the soldiers there chose as their king Constantinus, a man of no mean station. And he straightway gathered a fleet of ships and a formidable army and invaded both Spain and Gaul with a great force, thinking to enslave these countries. But Honorius was holding ships in readiness and waiting to see what would happen in Libya, in order that, if those sent by Attalus were repulsed, he might himself sail for Libya and keep some portion of his own kingdom, while if matters there should go against him, he might reach Theodosius and remain with him.

408-450 A.D.

For Arcadius had already died long before, and his son Theodosius, still a very young child, held the power of the East. But while Honorius was thus anxiously awaiting the outcome of these events and tossed amid the billows of uncertain fortune, it so chanced that some wonderful pieces of good fortune befell him. For God is accustomed to succour those who are neither clever nor able to devise anything of themselves, and to lend them assistance, if they be not wicked, when they are in the last extremity of despair; such a thing, indeed, befell this emperor. For it was suddenly reported from Libya that the commanders of Attalus had been destroyed, and that a host of ships was at hand from Byzantium with a very great number of soldiers who had come to assist him, though he had not expected them, and that Alaric, having quarrelled with Attalus, had stripped him of the emperor's garb and was now keeping him under guard in the position of a private citizen.

411 A.D.

And afterwards Alaric died of disease, and the army of the Visigoths under the leadership of Adaulphus proceeded into Gaul, and Constantinus, defeated in battle, died with his sons. However the Romans never succeeded in recovering Britain, but it remained from that time on under tyrants. And the Goths, after making the crossing of the Ister, at first occupied Pannonia, but afterwards, since the emperor gave them the right, they inhabited the country of Thrace. And after spending no great time there they conquered the West. But this will be told in the narrative concerning the Goths.

### III

Now the Vandals dwelling about the Maeotic Lake, since they were pressed by hunger, moved to the country of the Germans, who are now called Franks, and the river Rhine, associating with themselves the Alani, a Gothic people. Then from there, under the leadership of Godigisclus, they moved and settled in Spain, which is the first land of the Roman empire on the side of the ocean. At that time Honorius made an agreement with

Godigisclus that they should settle there on condition that it should not be to the detriment of the country. But there was a law among the Romans, that if any persons should fail to keep their property in their own possession, and if, meanwhile, a time amounting to thirty years should pass, that these persons should thenceforth not be entitled to proceed against those who had forced them out, but they were excluded by demurrer from access to the court; and in view of this he established a law that whatever time should be spent by the Vandals in the Roman domain should not by any means be counted toward this thirty-year demurrer.

Aug. 27, 423 A.D.

And Honorius himself, when the West had been driven by him to this pass, died of disease. Now before this, as it happened, the royal power had been shared by Honorius with Constantius, the husband of Placidia, the sister of Arcadius and Honorius; but he lived to exercise the power only a few days, and then, becoming seriously ill, he died while Honorius was still living, having never succeeded in saying or in doing anything worth recounting; for the time was not sufficient during which he lived in possession of the royal power. Now a son of this Constantius, Valentinian, a child just weaned, was being reared in the palace of Theodosius, but the members of the imperial court in Rome chose one of the soldiers there, John by name, as emperor. This man was both gentle and well-endowed with sagacity and thoroughly capable of valorous deeds. At any rate he held the tyranny five years and directed it with moderation, and he neither gave ear to slanderers nor did he do any unjust murder, willingly at least, nor did he set his hand to robbing men of money; but he did not prove able to do anything at all against the barbarians, since his relations with Byzantium were hostile. Against this John, Theodosius, the son of Arcadius, sent a great army and Aspar and Ardaburius, the son of Aspar, as generals, and wrested from him the tyranny and gave over the royal power to Valentinian, who was still a child. And Valentinian took John alive, and he brought him out in the hippodrome of Aquileia with one of his hands cut off and caused him to ride in state on an ass, and then after he had suffered much ill treatment from the stage-performers there, both in word and in deed, he put him to death.

426 A.D.

Thus Valentinian took over the power of the West. But Placidia, his mother, had reared this emperor and educated him in an altogether effeminate manner, and in consequence he was filled with wickedness from childhood. For he associated mostly with sorcerers and those who busy themselves with the stars, and, being an extraordinarily zealous pursuer of love affairs with other men's wives, he conducted himself in a most indecent manner, although he was married to a woman of exceptional beauty.

And not only was this true, but he also failed to recover for the empire anything of what had been wrested from it before, and he both lost Libya in addition to the territory previously lost and was himself destroyed. And when he perished, it fell to the lot of his wife and his children to become captives. Now the disaster in Libya came about as follows.

There were two Roman generals, Aetius and Boniface, especially valiant men and in experience of many wars inferior to none of that time at least. These two came to be at variance in regard to matters of state, but they attained to such a degree of highmindedness and excellence in every respect that if one should call either of them "the last of the Romans" he would not err, so true was it that all the excellent qualities of the Romans were summed up in these two men. One of these, Boniface, was appointed by Placidia general of all Libya. Now this was not in accord with the wishes of Aetius, but he by no means disclosed the fact that it did not please him. For their hostility had not as yet come to light, but was concealed behind the countenance of each. But when Boniface had got out of the



way, Aetius slandered him to Placidia, saying that he was setting up a tyranny and had robbed her and the emperor of all Libya, and he said that it was very easy for her to find out the truth; for if she should summon Boniface to Rome, he would never come. And when the woman heard this, Aetius seemed to her to speak well and she acted accordingly. But Aetius, anticipating her, wrote to Boniface secretly that the mother of the emperor was plotting against him and wished to put him out of the way. And he predicted to him that there would be convincing proof of the plot; for he would be summoned very shortly for no reason at all. Such was the announcement of the letter. And Boniface did not disregard the message, for as soon as those arrived who were summoning him to the emperor, he refused to give heed to the emperor and his mother, disclosing to no one the warning of Aetius. So when Placidia heard this, she thought that Aetius was exceedingly well-disposed towards the emperor's cause and took under consideration the question of Boniface. But Boniface, since it did not seem to him that he was able to array himself against the emperor, and since if he returned to Rome there was clearly no safety for him, began to lay plans so that, if possible, he might have a defensive alliance with the Vandals, who, as previously stated, had established themselves in Spain not far from Libya. There Godigisclus had died and the royal power had fallen to his sons, Gontharis, who was born to him from his wedded wife, and Gizeric, of illegitimate birth. But the former was still a child and not of very energetic temper, while Gizeric had been excellently trained in warfare, and was the cleverest of all men. Boniface accordingly sent to Spain those who were his own most intimate friends and gained the adherence of each of the sons of Godigisclus on terms of complete equality, it being agreed that each one of the three, holding a third part of Libya, should rule over his own subjects; but if a foe should come against any one of them to make war, that they should in common ward off the aggressors. On the basis of this agreement the Vandals crossed the strait at Gadira and came into Libya, and the Visigoths in later times settled in Spain. But in Rome the friends of Boniface, remembering the character of the man and considering how strange his action was, were greatly astonished to think that Boniface was setting up a tyranny, and some of them at the order of Placidia went to Carthage. There they met Boniface, and saw the letter of Aetius, and after hearing the whole story they returned to Rome as quickly as they could and reported to Placidia how Boniface stood in relation to her. And though the woman was dumbfounded, she did nothing unpleasant to Aetius nor did she upbraid him for what he had done to the emperor's house, for he himself wielded great power and the affairs of the empire were already in an evil plight; but she disclosed to the friends of Boniface the advice Aetius had given, and, offering oaths and pledges of safety, entreated them to persuade the man, if they could, to return to his fatherland and not to permit the empire of the Romans to lie under the hand of barbarians. And when Boniface heard this, he repented of his act and of his agreement with the barbarians, and he besought them incessantly, promising them everything, to remove from Libya. But since they did not receive his words with favour, but considered that they were being insulted, he was compelled to fight with them, and being defeated in the battle, he retired to Hippo Regius, a strong city in the portion of Numidia that is on the sea. There the Vandals made camp under the leadership of Gizeric and began a siege; for Gontharis had already died. And they say that he perished at the hand of his brother. The Vandals, however, do not agree with those who make this statement, but say that Gontharis' was captured in battle by Germans in Spain and impaled, and that Gizeric was already sole ruler when he led the Vandals into Libya. This, indeed, I have heard from the Vandals, stated in this way. But after much time had passed by, since they were unable to secure Hippo Regius either by force or by surrender, and since at the same time they were being pressed by hunger, they raised the siege. And a little later Boniface and the Romans in Libya, since a numerous army had come from both Rome and Byzantium and Aspar with them as general, decided to renew the struggle, and a fierce battle was fought in which they were badly beaten by the enemy, and

they made haste to flee as each one could. And Aspar betook himself homeward, and Boniface, coming before Placidia, acquitted himself of the suspicion, showing that it had arisen against him for no true cause.

#### IV

So the Vandals, having wrested Libya from the Romans in this way, made it their own. And those of the enemy whom they took alive they reduced to slavery and held under guard. Among these happened to be Marcian, who later upon the death of Theodosius assumed the imperial power. At that time, however, Gizeric commanded that the captives be brought into the king's courtyard, in order that it might be possible for him, by looking at them, to know what master each of them might serve without degradation. And when they were gathered under the open sky, about midday, the season being summer, they were distressed by the sun and sat down. And somewhere or other among them Marcian, quite neglected, was sleeping. Then an eagle flew over him spreading out his wings, as they say, and always remaining in the same place in the air he cast a shadow over Marcian alone. And Gizeric, upon seeing from the upper storey what was happening, since he was an exceedingly discerning person, suspected that the thing was a divine manifestation, and summoning the man enquired of him who he might be. And he replied that he was a confidential adviser of Aspar; such a person the Romans call a "domesticus" in their own tongue. And when Gizeric heard this and considered first the meaning of the bird's action, and then remembered how great power Aspar exercised in Byzantium, it became evident to him that the man was being led to royal power. He therefore by no means deemed it right to kill him, reasoning that, if he should remove him from the world, it would be very clear that the thing which the bird had done was nothing (for he would not honour with his shadow a king who was about to die straightway), and he felt, too, that he would be killing him for no good cause; and if, on the other hand, it was fated that in later times the man should become king, it would never be within his power to inflict death upon him; for that which has been decided upon by God could never be prevented by a man's decision. But he bound Marcian by oaths that, if it should be in his power, he would never take up arms against the Vandals at least. Thus, then, Marcian was released and came to Byzantium, and when at a later time Theodosius died he received the empire.

450 A.D.

And in all other respects he proved himself a good emperor, but he paid no attention at all to affairs in Libya. But this happened in later times.

At that time Gizeric, after conquering Aspar and Boniface in battle, displayed a foresight worth recounting, whereby he made his good fortune most thoroughly secure. For fearing lest, if once again an army should come against him from both Rome and Byzantium, the Vandals might not be able to use the same strength and enjoy the same fortune, (since human affairs are wont to be overturned by Heaven and to fail by reason of the weakness of men's bodies), he was not lifted up by the good fortune he had enjoyed, but rather became moderate because of what he feared, and so he made a treaty with the Emperor Valentinian providing that each year he should pay to the emperor tribute from Libya, and he delivered over one of his sons, Honoric, as a hostage to make this agreement binding. So Gizeric both showed himself a brave man in the battle and guarded the victory as securely as possible, and, since the friendship between the two peoples increased greatly, he received back his son Honoric. And at Rome Placidia had died before this time, and after her, Valentinian, her son, also died, having no male offspring, but two daughters had been

born to him from Eudoxia, the child of Theodosius. And I shall now relate in what manner Valentinian died.

There was a certain Maximus, a Roman senator, of the house of that Maximus who, while usurping the imperial power, was overthrown by the elder Theodosius and put to death, and on whose account also the Romans celebrate the annual festival named from the defeat of Maximus. This younger Maximus was married to a woman discreet in her ways and exceedingly famous for her beauty. For this reason a desire came over Valentinian to have her to wife. And since it was impossible, much as he wished it, to meet her, he plotted an unholy deed and carried it to fulfilment. For he summoned Maximus to the palace and sat down with him to a game of draughts, and a certain sum was set as a penalty for the loser; and the emperor won in this game, and receiving Maximus' ring as a pledge for the agreed amount, he sent it to his house, instructing the messenger to tell the wife of Maximus that her husband bade her come as quickly as possible to the palace to salute the queen Eudoxia. And she, judging by the ring that the message was from Maximus, entered her litter and was conveyed to the emperor's court. And she was received by those who had been assigned this service by the emperor, and led into a certain room far removed from the women's apartments, where Valentinian met her and forced her, much against her will. And she, after the outrage, went to her husband's house weeping and feeling the deepest possible grief because of her misfortune, and she cast many curses upon Maximus as having provided the cause for what had been done. Maximus, accordingly, became exceedingly aggrieved at that which had come to pass, and straightway entered into a conspiracy against the emperor; but when he saw that Aetius was exceedingly powerful, for he had recently conquered Attila, who had invaded the Roman domain with a great army of Massagetæ and the other Scythians, the thought occurred to him that Aetius would be in the way of his undertaking. And upon considering this matter, it seemed to him that it was the better course to put Aetius out of the way first, paying no heed to the fact that the whole hope of the Romans centred in him. And since the eunuchs who were in attendance upon the emperor were well-disposed toward him, he persuaded the emperor by their devices that Aetius was setting on foot a revolution. And Valentinian, judging by nothing else than the power and valour of Aetius that the report was true, put the man to death.

Sept.21, 454 A.D.

Whereupon a certain Roman made himself famous by a saying which he uttered. For when the emperor enquired of him whether he had done well in putting Aetius to death, he replied saying that, as to this matter, he was not able to know whether he had done well or perhaps otherwise, but one thing he understood exceedingly well, that he had cut off his own right hand with the other.

So after the death of Aetius, Attila, since no one was a match for him, plundered all Europe with no trouble and made both emperors subservient and tributary to himself. For tribute money was sent to him every year by the emperors. At that time, while Attila was besieging Aquileia, a city of great size and exceedingly populous situated near the sea and above the Ionian Gulf, they say that the following good fortune befell him. For they tell the story that, when he was able to capture the place neither by force nor by any other means, he gave up the siege in despair, since it had already lasted a long time, and commanded the whole army without any delay to make their preparations for the departure, in order that on the morrow all might move from there at sunrise. And the following day about sunrise, the barbarians had raised the siege and were already beginning the departure, when a single male stork which had a nest on a certain tower of the city wall and was rearing his nestlings there suddenly rose and left the place with his young. And the father stork was flying, but the little storks, since they were not yet quite ready to fly, were at times sharing their

father's flight and at times riding upon his back, and thus they flew off and went far away from the city. And when Attila saw this (for he was most clever at comprehending and interpreting all things), he commanded the army, they say, to remain still in the same place, adding that the bird would never have gone flying off at random from there with his nestlings, unless he was prophesying that some evil would come to the place at no distant time. Thus, they say, the army of the barbarians settled down to the siege once more, and not long after that a portion of the wall—the very part which held the nest of that bird—for no apparent reason suddenly fell down, and it became possible for the enemy to enter the city at that point, and thus Aquileia was captured by storm. Such is the story touching Aquileia.

455 A.D.

Later on Maximus slew the emperor with no trouble and secured the tyranny, and he married Eudoxia by force. For the wife to whom he had been wedded had died not long before. And on one occasion in private he made the statement to Eudoxia that it was all for the sake of her love that he had carried out all that he had done. And since she felt a repulsion for Maximus even before that time, and had been desirous of exacting vengeance from him for the wrong done Valentinian, his words made her swell with rage still more against him, and led her on to carry out her plot, since she had heard Maximus say that on account of her the misfortune had befallen her husband. And as soon as day came, she sent to Carthage entreating Gizeric to avenge Valentinian, who had been destroyed by an unholy man, in a manner unworthy both of himself and of his imperial station, and to deliver her, since she was suffering unholy treatment at the hand of the tyrant. And she impressed it upon Gizeric that, since he was a friend and ally and so great a calamity had befallen the imperial house, it was not a holy thing to fail to become an avenger. For from Byzantium she thought no vengeance would come, since Theodosius had already departed from the world and Marcian had taken over the empire.

## V

And Gizeric, for no other reason than that he suspected that much money would come to him, set sail for Italy with a great fleet. And going up to Rome, since no one stood in his way, he took possession of the palace. Now while Maximus was trying to flee, the Romans threw stones at him and killed him, and they cut off his head and each of his other members and divided them among themselves. But Gizeric took Eudoxia captive, together with Eudocia and Placidia, the children of herself and Valentinian, and placing an exceedingly great amount of gold and other imperial treasure in his ships sailed to Carthage, having spared neither bronze nor anything else whatsoever in the palace. He plundered also the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, and tore off half of the roof. Now this roof was of bronze of the finest quality, and since gold was laid over it exceedingly thick, it shone as a magnificent and wonderful spectacle. But of the ships with Gizeric, one, which was bearing the statues, was lost, they say, but with all the others the Vandals reached port in the harbour of Carthage. Gizeric then married Eudocia to Honoric, the elder of his sons; but the other of the two women, being the wife of Olybrius, a most distinguished man in the Roman senate, he sent to Byzantium together with her mother, Eudoxia, at the request of the emperor. Now the power of the East had by now fallen to Leon, who had been set in this position by Aspar, since Marcian had already passed from the world.

457. A.D.

Afterwards Gizeric devised the following scheme. He tore down the walls of all the cities in Libya except Carthage, so that neither the Libyans themselves, espousing the cause

of the Romans, might have a strong base from which to begin a rebellion, nor those sent by the emperor have any ground for hoping to capture a city and by establishing a garrison in it to make trouble for the Vandals. Now at that time it seemed that he had counselled well and had ensured prosperity for the Vandals in the safest possible manner; but in later times when these cities, being without walls, were captured by Belisarius all the more easily and with less exertion, Gizeric was then condemned to suffer much ridicule, and that which for the time he considered wise counsel turned out for him to be folly. For as fortunes change men are always accustomed to change with them their judgments regarding what has been planned in the past. And among the Libyans all who happened to be men of note and conspicuous for their wealth he handed over as slaves, together with their estates and all their money, to his sons Honoric and Genzon. For Theodorus, the youngest son, had died already, being altogether without offspring, either male or female. And he robbed the rest of the Libyans of their estates, which were both very numerous and excellent, and distributed them among the nation of the Vandals, and as a result of this these lands have been called "Vandals' estates" up to the present time. And it fell to the lot of those who had formerly possessed these lands to be in extreme poverty and to be at the same time free men; and they had the privilege of going away wheresoever they wished. And Gizeric commanded that all the lands which he had given over to his sons and to the other Vandals should not be subject to any kind of taxation. But as much of the land as did not seem to him good he allowed to remain in the hands of the former owners, but assessed so large a sum to be paid on this land for taxes to the government that nothing whatever remained to those who retained their farms. And many of them were constantly being sent into exile or killed. For charges were brought against them of many sorts, and heavy ones too; but one charge seemed to be the greatest of all, that a man, having money of his own, was hiding it. Thus the Libyans were visited with every form of misfortune.

The Vandals and the Alani he arranged in companies, appointing over them no less than eighty captains, whom he called "chiliarchs," making it appear that his host of fighting men in active service amounted to eighty thousand. And yet the number of the Vandals and Alani was said in former times, at least, to amount to no more than fifty thousand men. However, after that time by their natural increase among themselves and by associating other barbarians with them they came to be an exceedingly numerous people. But the names of the Alani and all the other barbarians, except the Moors, were united in the name of Vandals. At that time, after the death of Valentinian, Gizeric gained the support of the Moors, and every year at the beginning of spring he made invasions into Sicily and Italy, enslaving some of the cities, razing others to the ground, and plundering everything; and when the land had become destitute of men and of money, he invaded the domain of the emperor of the East. And so he plundered Illyricum and the most of the Peloponnesus and of the rest of Greece and all the islands which lie near it. And again he went off to Sicily and Italy, and kept plundering and pillaging all places in turn. And one day when he had embarked on his ship in the harbour of Carthage, and the sails were already being spread, the pilot asked him, they say, against what men in the world he bade them go. And he in reply said: "Plainly [25-4] against those with whom God is angry." Thus without any cause he kept making invasions wherever chance might lead him.

## VI

And the Emperor Leon, wishing to punish the Vandals because of these things, was gathering an army against them; and they say that this army amounted to about one hundred thousand men. And he collected a fleet of ships from the whole of the eastern Mediterranean, shewing great generosity to both soldiers and sailors, for he feared lest from



a parsimonious policy some obstacle might arise to hinder him in his desire to carry out his punishment of the barbarians. Therefore, they say, thirteen hundred centenaria were expended by him to no purpose. But since it was not fated that the Vandals should be destroyed by this expedition, he made Basiliscus commander-in-chief, the brother of his wife Berine, a man who was extraordinarily desirous of the royal power, which he hoped would come to him without a struggle if he won the friendship of Aspar. For Aspar himself, being an adherent of the Arian faith, and having no intention of changing it for another, was unable to enter upon the imperial office, but he was easily strong enough to establish another in it, and it already seemed likely that he would plot against the Emperor Leon, who had given him offence. So they say that since Aspar was then fearful lest, if the Vandals were defeated, Leon should establish his power most securely, he repeatedly urged upon Basiliscus that he should spare the Vandals and Gizeric.

Now before this time Leon had already appointed and sent Anthemius, as Emperor of the West, a man of the senate of great wealth and high birth, in order that he might assist him in the Vandalic war. And yet Gizeric kept asking and earnestly entreating that the imperial power be given to Olybrius, who was married to Placidia, the daughter of Valentinian, and on account of his relationship well-disposed toward him, and when he failed in this he was still more angry and kept plundering the whole land of the emperor. Now there was in Dalmatia a certain Marcellianus, one of the acquaintances of Aetius and a man of repute, who, after Aetius had died in the manner told above, no longer deigned to yield obedience to the emperor, but beginning a revolution and detaching all the others from allegiance, held the power of Dalmatia himself, since no one dared encounter him. But the Emperor Leon at that time won over this Marcellianus by very careful wheedling, and bade him go to the island of Sardinia, which was then subject to the Vandals. And he drove out the Vandals and gained possession of it with no great difficulty. And Heracleius was sent from Byzantium to Tripolis in Libya, and after conquering the Vandals of that district in battle, he easily captured the cities, and leaving his ships there, led his army on foot toward Carthage. Such, then, was the sequence of events which formed the prelude of the war.

But Basiliscus with his whole fleet put in at a town distant from Carthage no less than two hundred and eighty stades (now it so happened that a temple of Hermes had been there from of old, from which fact the place was named Mercurium; for the Romans call Hermes "Mercurius"), and if he had not purposely played the coward and hesitated, but had undertaken to go straight for Carthage, he would have captured it at the first onset, and he would have reduced the Vandals to subjection without their even thinking of resistance; so overcome was Gizeric with awe of Leon as an invincible emperor, when the report was brought to him that Sardinia and Tripolis had been captured, and he saw the fleet of Basiliscus to be such as the Romans were said never to have had before. But, as it was, the general's hesitation, whether caused by cowardice or treachery, prevented this success. And Gizeric, profiting by the negligence of Basiliscus, did as follows. Arming all his subjects in the best way he could, he filled his ships, but not all, for some he kept in readiness empty, and they were the ships which sailed most swiftly. And sending envoys to Basiliscus, he begged him to defer the war for the space of five days, in order that in the meantime he might take counsel and do those things which were especially desired by the emperor. They say, too, that he sent also a great amount of gold without the knowledge of the army of Basiliscus and thus purchased this armistice. And he did this, thinking, as actually did happen, that a favouring wind would rise for him during this time. And Basiliscus, either as doing a favour to Aspar in accordance with what [16-22] he had promised, or selling the moment of opportunity for money, or perhaps thinking it the better course, did as he was requested and remained quietly in the camp, awaiting the moment favourable to the enemy.

But the Vandals, as soon as the wind had arisen for them which they had been expecting during the time they lay at rest, raised their sails and, taking in tow the boats which, as has been stated above, they had made ready with no men in them, they sailed against the enemy. And when they came near, they set fire to the boats which they were towing, when their sails were bellied by the wind, and let them go against the Roman fleet. And since there were a great number of ships there, these boats easily spread fire wherever they struck, and were themselves readily destroyed together with those with which they came in contact. And as the fire advanced in this way the Roman fleet was filled with tumult, as was natural, and with a great din that rivalled the noise caused by the wind and the roaring of the flames, as the soldiers together with the sailors shouted orders to one another and pushed off with their poles the fire-boats and their own ships as well, which were being destroyed by one another in complete disorder. And already the Vandals too were at hand ramming and sinking the ships, and making booty of such of the soldiers as attempted to escape, and of their arms as well. But there were also some of the Romans who proved themselves brave men in this struggle, and most of all John, who was a general under Basiliscus and who had no share whatever in his treason. For a great throng having surrounded his ship, he stood on the deck, and turning from side to side kept killing very great numbers of the enemy from there, and when he perceived that the ship was being captured, he leaped with his whole equipment of arms from the deck into the sea. And though Genzon, the son of Gizeric, entreated him earnestly not to do this, offering pledges and holding out promises of safety, he nevertheless threw himself into the sea, uttering this one word, that John would never come under the hands of dogs.

471 A.D.

So this war came to an end, and Heracleius departed for home; for Marcellianus had been destroyed treacherously by one of his fellow-officers. And Basiliscus, coming to Byzantium, seated himself as a suppliant in the sanctuary of Christ the Great God ("Sophia" the temple is called by the men of Byzantium who consider that this designation is especially appropriate to God), and although, by the intercession of Berine, the queen, he escaped this danger, he was not able at that time to reach the throne, the thing for the sake of which everything had been done by him. For the Emperor Leon not long afterwards destroyed both Aspar and Ardaburius in the palace, because he suspected that they were plotting against his life. Thus, then, did these events take place.

## VII

Aug. 11, 472 A.D.

Now Anthemius, the emperor of the West, died at the hand of his son-in-law Rhecimer, and Olybrius, succeeding to the throne, a short time afterward suffered the same fate. And when Leon also had died in Byzantium, the imperial office was taken over by the younger Leon, the son of Zeno and Ariadne, the daughter of Leon, while he was still only a few days old. And his father having been chosen as partner in the royal power, the child forthwith passed from the world.

474 A.D.

Majorinus also deserves mention, who had gained the power of the West before this time. For this Majorinus, who surpassed in every virtue all who have ever been emperors of the Romans, did not bear lightly the loss of Libya, but collected a very considerable army against the Vandals and came to Liguria, intending himself to lead the army against the enemy. For Majorinus never showed the least hesitation before any task and least of all

before the dangers of war. But thinking it not inexpedient for him to investigate first the strength of the Vandals and the character of Gizeric and to discover how the Moors and Libyans stood with regard to friendship or hostility toward the Romans, he decided to trust no eyes other than his own in such a matter. Accordingly he set out as if an envoy from the emperor to Gizeric, assuming some fictitious name. And fearing lest, by becoming known, he should himself receive some harm and at the same time prevent the success of the enterprise, he devised the following scheme. His hair, which was famous among all men as being so fair as to resemble pure gold, he anointed with some kind of dye, which was especially invented for this purpose, and so succeeded completely in changing it for the time to a dark hue. And when he came before Gizeric, the barbarian attempted in many ways to terrify him, and in particular, while treating him with engaging attention, as if a friend, he brought him into the house where all his weapons were stored, a numerous and exceedingly noteworthy array. Thereupon they say that the weapons shook of their own accord and gave forth a sound of no ordinary or casual sort, and then it seemed to Gizeric that there had been an earthquake, but when he got outside and made enquiries concerning the earthquake, since no one else agreed with him, a great wonder, they say, came over him, but he was not able to comprehend the meaning of what had happened. So Majorinus, having accomplished the very things he wished, returned to Liguria, and leading his army on foot, came to the Pillars of Heracles, purposing to cross over the strait at that point, and then to march by land from there against Carthage. And when Gizeric became aware of this, and perceived that he had been tricked by Majorinus in the matter of the embassy, he became alarmed and made his preparations for war. And the Romans, basing their confidence on the valour of Majorinus, already began to have fair hopes of recovering Libya for the empire.

But meantime Majorinus was attacked by the disease of dysentery and died, a man who had shewn himself moderate toward his subjects, and an object of fear to his enemies. And another emperor, Nepos, upon taking over the empire, and living to enjoy it only a few days, died of disease, and Glycerius after him entered into this office and suffered a similar fate. And after him Augustus assumed the imperial power. There were, moreover, still other emperors in the West before this time, but though I know their names well, I shall make no mention of them whatever. For it so fell out that they lived only a short time after attaining the office, and as a result of this accomplished nothing worthy of mention. Such was the course of events in the West.

But in Byzantium Basiliscus, being no longer able to master his passion for royal power, made an attempt to usurp the throne, and succeeded without difficulty, since Zeno, together with his wife, sought refuge in Isauria, which was his native home.

And while he was maintaining his tyranny for a year and eight months he was detested by practically everyone and in particular by the soldiers of the court on account of the greatness of his avarice. And Zeno, perceiving this, collected an army and came against him. And Basiliscus sent an army under the general Harmatus in order to array himself against Zeno. But when they had made camp near one another, Harmatus surrendered his army to Zeno, on the condition that Zeno should appoint as Caesar Harmatus' son Basiliscus, who was a very young child, and leave him as successor to the throne upon his death. And Basiliscus, deserted by all, fled for refuge to the same sanctuary as formerly. And Acacius, the priest of the city, put him into the hands of Zeno, charging him with impiety and with having brought great confusion and many innovations into the Christian doctrine, having inclined toward the heresy of Eutyches. And this was so. And after Zeno had thus taken over the empire a second time, he carried out his pledge to Harmatus formally by appointing his son Basiliscus Caesar, but not long afterwards he both stripped him of the office and put Harmatus to death. And he sent Basiliscus together with his children and his wife into

Cappadocia in the winter season, commanding that they should be destitute of food and clothes and every kind of care. And there, being hard pressed by both cold and hunger, they took refuge in one another's arms, and embracing their loved ones, perished. And this punishment overtook Basiliscus for the policy he had pursued. These things, however, happened in later times.

But at that time Gizeric was plundering the whole Roman domain just as much as before, if not more, circumventing his enemy by craft and driving them out of their possessions by force, as has been previously said, and he continued to do so until the emperor Zeno came to an agreement with him and an endless peace was established between them, by which it was provided that the Vandals should never in all time perform any hostile act against the Romans nor suffer such a thing at their hands. And this peace was preserved by Zeno himself and also by his successor in the empire, Anastasius And it remained in force until the time of the emperor Justinus. But Justinian, who was the nephew of Justinus, succeeded him in the imperial power, and it was in the reign of this Justinian that the war with which we are concerned came to pass, in the manner which will be told in the following narrative.

477 A.D.

Gizeric, after living on a short time, died at an advanced age, having made a will in which he enjoined many things upon the Vandals and in particular that the royal power among them should always fall to that one who should be the first in years among all the male offspring descended from Gizeric himself. So Gizeric, having ruled over the Vandals thirty-nine years from the time when he captured Carthage, died, as I have said.

## VIII

And Honoric, the eldest of his sons, succeeded to the throne, Genzon having already departed from the world. During the time when this Honoric ruled the Vandals they had no war against anyone at all, except the Moors. For through fear of Gizeric the Moors had remained quiet before that time, but as soon as he was out of their way they both did much harm to the Vandals and suffered the same themselves. And Honoric shewed himself the most cruel and unjust of all men toward the Christians in Libya. For he forced them to change over to the Arian faith, and as many as he found not readily yielding to him he burned, or destroyed by other forms of death; and he also cut off the tongues of many from the very throat, who even up to my time were going about in Byzantium having their speech uninjured, and perceiving not the least effect from this punishment; but two of these, since they saw fit to go in to harlots, were thenceforth no longer able to speak. And after ruling over the Vandals eight years he died of disease; and by that time the Moors dwelling on Mt. Aurasium had revolted from the Vandals and were independent (this Aurasium is a mountain of Numidia, about thirteen days' journey distant from Carthage and fronting the south); and indeed they never came under the Vandals again, since the latter were unable to carry on a war against Moors on a mountain difficult of access and exceedingly steep.

After the death of Honoric the rule of the Vandals fell to Gundamundus, the son of Genzon, the son of Gizeric.

485 - 490A.D.

For he, in point of years, was the first of the offspring of Gizeric. This Gundamundus fought against the Moors in numerous encounters, and after subjecting the Christians to still greater suffering, he died of disease, being now at about the middle of the twelfth year of his reign. And his brother Trasamundus took over the kingdom, a man well-favoured in

appearance and especially gifted with discretion and highmindedness. However he continued to force the Christians to change their ancestral faith, not by torturing their bodies as his predecessors had done, but by seeking to win them with honours and offices and presenting them with great sums of money; and in the case of those who would not be persuaded, he pretended he had not the least knowledge of what manner of men they were. And if he caught any guilty of great crimes which they had committed either by accident or deliberate intent, he would offer such men, as a reward for changing their faith, that they should not be punished for their offences. And when his wife died without becoming the mother of either male or female offspring, wishing to establish the kingdom as securely as possible, he sent to Theoderic, the king of the Goths, asking him to give him his sister Amalafriada to wife, for her husband had just died. And Theoderic sent him not only his sister but also a thousand of the notable Goths as a bodyguard, who were followed by a host of attendants amounting to about five thousand fighting men. And Theoderic also presented his sister with one of the promontories of Sicily, which are three in number,—the one which they call Lilybaeum,—and as a result of this Trasamundus was accounted the strongest and most powerful of all those who had ruled over the Vandals. He became also a very special friend of the emperor Anastasius. It was during the reign of Trasamundus that it came about that the Vandals suffered a disaster at the hands of the Moors such as had never befallen them before that time.

There was a certain Cabaon ruling over the Moors of Tripolis, a man experienced in many wars and exceedingly shrewd. This Cabaon, upon learning that the Vandals were marching against him, did as follows. First of all he issued orders to his subjects to abstain from all injustice and from all foods tending towards luxury and most of all from association with women; and setting up two palisaded enclosures, he encamped himself with all the men in one, and in the other he shut the women, and he threatened that death would be the penalty if anyone should go to the women's palisade. And after this he sent spies to Carthage with the following instructions: whenever the Vandals in going forth on the expedition should offer insult to any temple which the Christians reverence, they were to look on and see what took place; and when the Vandals had passed the place, they were to do the opposite of everything which the Vandals had done to the sanctuary before their departure. And they say that he added this also, that he was ignorant of the God whom the Christians worshipped, but it was probable that if He was powerful, as He was said to be, He should wreak vengeance upon those who insulted Him and defend those who honoured Him. So the spies came to Carthage and waited quietly, observing the preparation of the Vandals; but when the army set out on the march to Tripolis, they followed, clothing themselves in humble garb. And the Vandals, upon making camp the first day, led their horses and their other animals into the temples of the Christians, and sparing no insult, they acted with all the unrestrained lawlessness natural to them, beating as many priests as they caught and lashing them with many blows over the back and commanding them to render such service to the Vandals as they were accustomed to assign to the most dishonoured of their domestics. And as soon as they had departed from there, the spies of Cabaon did as they had been directed to do; for they straightway cleansed the sanctuaries and took away with great care the filth and whatever other unholy thing lay in them, and they lighted all the lamps and bowed down before the priests with great reverence and saluted them with all friendliness; and after giving pieces of silver to the poor who sat about these sanctuaries, they then followed after the army of the Vandals. And from then on along the whole route the Vandals continued to commit the same offences and the spies to render the same service. And when they were coming near the Moors, the spies anticipated them and reported to Cabaon what had been done by the Vandals and by themselves to the temples of the Christians, and that the enemy were somewhere near by. And Cabaon, upon



learning this, arranged for the encounter as follows. He marked off a circle in the plain where he was about to make his palisade, and placed his camels turned sideways in a circle as a protection for the camp, making his line fronting the enemy about twelve camels deep. Then he placed the children and the women and all those who were unfit for fighting together with their possessions in the middle, while he commanded the host of fighting men to stand between the feet of those animals, covering themselves with their shields. And since the phalanx of the Moors was of such a sort, the Vandals were at a loss how to handle the situation; for they were neither good with the javelin nor with the bow, nor did they know how to go into battle on foot, but they were all horsemen, and used spears and swords for the most part, so that they were unable to do the enemy any harm at a distance; and their horses, annoyed at the sight of the camels, refused absolutely to be driven against the enemy. And since the Moors, by hurling javelins in great numbers among them from their safe position, kept killing both their horses and men without difficulty, because they were a vast throng, they began to flee, and, when the Moors came out against them, the most of them were destroyed, while some fell into the hands of the enemy; and an exceedingly small number from this army returned home. Such was the fortune which Trasamundus suffered at the hands of the Moors. And he died at a later time, having ruled over the Moors twenty-seven years.

## IX

523 A.D.

And Ilderic, the son of Honoric, the son of Gizeric, next received the kingdom, a ruler who was easily approached by his subjects and altogether gentle, and he shewed himself harsh neither to the Christians nor to anyone else, but in regard to affairs of war he was a weakling and did not wish this thing even to come to his ears. Hoamer, accordingly, his nephew and an able warrior, led the armies against any with whom the Vandals were at war; he it was whom they called the Achilles of the Vandals. During the reign of this Ilderic the Vandals were defeated in Byzacium by the Moors, who were ruled by Antalas, and it so fell out that they became enemies instead of allies and friends to Theoderic and the Goths in Italy. For they put Amalafriada in prison and destroyed all the Goths, charging them with revolutionary designs against the Vandals and Ilderic. However, no revenge came from Theoderic, for he considered himself unable to gather a great fleet and make an expedition into Libya, and Ilderic was a very particular friend and guest-friend of Justinian, who had not yet come to the throne, but was administering the government according to his pleasure; for his uncle Justinus, who was emperor, was very old and not altogether experienced in matters of state. And Ilderic and Justinian made large presents of money to each other.

Now there was a certain man in the family of Gizeric, Gelimer, the son of Geilaris, the son of Genzon, the son of Gizeric, who was of such age as to be second only to Ilderic, and for this reason he was expected to come into the kingdom very soon. This man was thought to be the best warrior of his time, but for the rest he was a cunning fellow and base at heart and well versed in undertaking revolutionary enterprises and in laying hold upon the money of others. Now this Gelimer, when he saw the power coming to him, was not able to live in his accustomed way, but assumed to himself the tasks of a king and usurped the rule, though it was not yet due him; and since Ilderic in a spirit of friendliness gave in to him, he was no longer able to restrain his thoughts, but allying with himself all the noblest of the Vandals, he persuaded them to wrest the kingdom from Ilderic, as being an unwarlike king who had been defeated by the Moors, and as betraying the power of the Vandals into the

hand of the Emperor Justinus, in order that the kingdom might not come to him, because he was of the other branch of the family; for he asserted slanderously that this was the meaning of Ilderich's embassy to Byzantium, and that he was giving over the empire of the Vandals to Justinus. And they, being persuaded, carried out this plan. Thus Gelimer seized the supreme power, and imprisoned Ilderich, after he had ruled over the Vandals seven years, and also Hoamer and his brother Euagees.

527 A.D.

But when Justinian heard these things, having already received the imperial power, he sent envoys to Gelimer in Libya with the following letter: "You are not acting in a holy manner nor worthily of the will of Gizeric, keeping in prison an old man and a kinsman and the king of the Vandals (if the counsels of Gizeric are to be of effect), and robbing him of his office by violence, though it would be possible for you to receive it after a short time in a lawful manner. Do you therefore do no further wrong and do not exchange the name of king for the title of tyrant, which comes but a short time earlier. But as for this man, whose death may be expected at any moment, allow him to bear in appearance the form of royal power, while you do all the things which it is proper that a king should do; and wait until you can receive from time and the law of Gizeric, and from them alone, the name which belongs to the position. For if you do this, the attitude of the Almighty will be favourable and at the same time our relations with you will be friendly."

Such was his message. But Gelimer sent the envoys away with nothing accomplished, and he blinded Hoamer and also kept Ilderich and Euagees in closer confinement, charging them with planning flight to Byzantium. And when this too was heard by the Emperor Justinian, he sent envoys a second time and wrote as follows: "We, indeed, supposed that you would never go contrary to our advice when we wrote you the former letter. But since it pleases you to have secured possession of the royal power in the manner in which you have taken and now hold it, get from it whatever Heaven grants. But do you send to us Ilderich, and Hoamer whom you have blinded, and his brother, to receive what comfort they can who have been robbed of a kingdom or of sight; for we shall not let the matter rest if you do not do this. And I speak thus because we are led by the hope which I had based on our friendship. And the treaty with Gizeric will not stand as an obstacle for us. For it is not to make war upon him who has succeeded to the kingdom of Gizeric that we come, but to avenge Gizeric with all our power."

When Gelimer had read this, he replied as follows: "King Gelimer to the Emperor Justinian. Neither have I taken the office by violence nor has anything unholy been done by me to my kinsmen. For Ilderich, while planning a revolution against the house of Gizeric, was dethroned by the nation of the Vandals; and I was called to the kingdom by my years, which gave me the preference, according to the law at least. Now it is well for one to administer the kingly office which belongs to him and not to make the concerns of others his own. Hence for you also, who have a kingdom, meddling in other's affairs is not just; and if you break the treaty and come against us, we shall oppose you with all our power, calling to witness the oaths which were sworn by Zeno, from whom you have received the kingdom which you hold." The Emperor Justinian, upon receiving this letter, having been angry with Gelimer even before then, was still more eager to punish him. And it seemed to him best to put an end to the Persian war as soon as possible and then to make an expedition to Libya; and since he was quick at forming a plan and prompt in carrying out his decisions, Belisarius, the General of the East, was summoned and came to him immediately, no announcement having been made to him nor to anyone else that he was about to lead an army against Libya, but it was given out that he had been removed from the office which he held. And straightway the treaty with Persia was made, as has been told in the preceding narrative.

And when the Emperor Justinian considered that the situation was as favourable as possible, both as to domestic affairs and as to his relations with Persia, he took under consideration the situation in Libya. But when he disclosed to the magistrates that he was gathering an army against the Vandals and Gelimer, the most of them began immediately to show hostility to the plan, and they lamented it as a misfortune, recalling the expedition of the Emperor Leon and the disaster of Basiliscus, and reciting how many soldiers had perished and how much money the state had lost. But the men who were the most sorrowful of all, and who, by reason of their anxiety, felt the keenest regret, were the pretorian prefect, whom the Romans call "praetor," and the administrator of the treasury, and all to whom had been assigned the collection of either public or imperial taxes, for they reasoned that while it would be necessary for them to produce countless sums for the needs of the war, they would be granted neither pardon in case of failure nor extension of time in which to raise these sums. And every one of the generals, supposing that he himself would command the army, was in terror and dread at the greatness of the danger, if it should be necessary for him, if he were preserved from the perils of the sea, to encamp in the enemy's land, and, using his ships as a base, to engage in a struggle against a kingdom both large and formidable. The soldiers, also, having recently returned from a long, hard war, and having not yet tasted to the full the blessings of home, were in despair, both because they were being led into sea-fighting,—a thing which they had not learned even from tradition before then,—and because they were sent from the eastern frontier to the West, in order to risk their lives against Vandals and Moors. But all the rest, as usually happens in a great throng, wished to be spectators of new adventures while others faced the dangers.

But as for saying anything to the emperor to prevent the expedition, no one dared to do this except John the Cappadocian, the pretorian prefect, a man of the greatest daring and the cleverest of all men of his time. For this John, while all the others were bewailing in silence the fortune which was upon them, came before the emperor and spoke as follows: "O Emperor, the good faith which thou dost shew in dealing with thy subjects enables us to speak frankly regarding anything which will be of advantage to thy government, even though what is said and done may not be agreeable to thee. For thus does thy wisdom temper thy authority with justice, in that thou dost not consider that man only as loyal to thy cause who serves thee under any and all conditions, nor art thou angry with the man who speaks against thee, but by weighing all things by pure reason alone, thou hast often shewn that it involves us in no danger to oppose thy purposes. Led by these considerations, O Emperor, I have come to offer this advice, knowing that, though I shall give perhaps offence at the moment, if it so chance, yet in the future the loyalty which I bear you will be made clear, and that for this I shall be able to shew thee as a witness. For if, through not hearkening to my words, thou shalt carry out the war against the Vandals, it will come about, if the struggle is prolonged for thee, that my advice will win renown. For if thou hast confidence that thou wilt conquer the enemy, it is not at all unreasonable that thou shouldst sacrifice the lives of men and expend a vast amount of treasure, and undergo the difficulties of the struggle; for victory, coming at the end, covers up all the calamities of war. But if in reality these things lie on the knees of God, and if it behoves us, taking example from what has happened in the past, to fear the outcome of war, on what grounds is it not better to love a state of quiet rather than the dangers of mortal strife? Thou art purposing to make an expedition against Carthage, to which, if one goes by land, the journey is one of a hundred and forty days, and if one goes by water, he is forced to cross the whole open sea and go to its very end. So that he who brings thee news of what will happen in the camp must needs reach thee a year after the event. And one might add that if thou art victorious over thy enemy, thou couldst not take possession of Libya while Sicily and Italy lie in the hands of

others; and at the same time, if any reverse befall thee, O Emperor, the treaty having already been broken by thee, thou wilt bring the danger upon our own land. In fact, putting all in a word, it will not be possible for thee to reap the fruits of victory, and at the same time any reversal of fortune will bring harm to what is well established. It is before an enterprise that wise planning is useful. For when men have failed, repentance is of no avail, but before disaster comes there is no danger in altering plans. Therefore it will be of advantage above all else to make fitting use of the decisive moment."

Thus spoke John; and the Emperor Justinian, hearkening to his words, checked his eager desire for the war. But one of the priests whom they call bishops, who had come from the East, said that he wished to have a word with the emperor. And when he met Justinian, he said that God had visited him in a dream, and bidden him go to the emperor and rebuke him, because, after undertaking the task of protecting the Christians in Libya from tyrants, he had for no good reason become afraid. "And yet," He had said, "I will Myself join with him in waging war and make him lord of Libya." When the emperor heard this, he was no longer able to restrain his purpose, and he began to collect the army and the ships, and to make ready supplies of weapons and of food, and he announced to Belisarius that he should be in readiness, because he was very soon to act as general in Libya. Meanwhile Pudentius, one of the natives of Tripolis in Libya, caused this district to revolt from the Vandals, and sending to the emperor he begged that he should despatch an army to him; for, he said, he would with no trouble win the land for the emperor. And Justinian sent him Tattimuth and an army of no very great size. This force Pudentius joined with his own troops and, the Vandals being absent, he gained possession of the land and made it subject to the emperor. And Gelimer, though wishing to inflict punishment upon Pudentius, found the following obstacle in his way.

There was a certain Godas among the slaves of Gelimer, a Goth by birth, a passionate and energetic fellow possessed of great bodily strength, but appearing to be well-disposed to the cause of his master. To this Godas Gelimer entrusted the island of Sardinia, in order both to guard the island and to pay over the annual tribute. But he neither could digest the prosperity brought by fortune nor had he the spirit to endure it, and so he undertook to establish a tyranny, and he refused to continue the payment of the tribute, and actually detached the island from the Vandals and held it himself. And when he perceived that the Emperor Justinian was eager to make war against Libya and Gelimer, he wrote to him as follows:

"It was neither because I yielded to folly nor because I had suffered anything unpleasant at my master's hands that I turned my thoughts towards rebellion, but seeing the extreme cruelty of the man both toward his kinsmen and toward his subjects, I could not, willingly at least, be reputed to have a share in his inhumanity. For it is better to serve a just king than a tyrant whose commands are unlawful. But do thou join with me to assist in this my effort and send soldiers so that I may be able to ward off my assailants."

And the emperor, on receiving this letter, was pleased, and he sent Eulogius as envoy and wrote a letter praising Godas for his wisdom and his zeal for justice, and he promised an alliance and soldiers and a general, who would be able to guard the island with him and to assist him in every other way, so that no trouble should come to him from the Vandals. But Eulogius, upon coming to Sardinia, found that Godas was assuming the name and wearing the dress of a king and that he had attached a body-guard to his person. And when Godas read the emperor's letter, he said that it was his wish to have soldiers, indeed, come to fight along with him, but as for a commander, he had absolutely no desire for one. And having written to the emperor in this sense, he dismissed Eulogius.



## XI

The emperor, meanwhile, not having yet ascertained these things, was preparing four hundred soldiers with Cyril as commander, who were to assist Godas in guarding the island. And with them he also had in readiness the expedition against Carthage, ten thousand foot-soldiers, and five thousand horsemen, gathered from the regular troops and from the "foederati." Now at an earlier time only barbarians were enlisted among the foederati, those, namely, who had come into the Roman political system, not in the condition of slaves, since they had not been conquered by the Romans, but on the basis of complete equality. For the Romans call treaties with their enemies "foedera." But at the present time there is nothing to prevent anyone from assuming this name, since time will by no means consent to keep names attached to the things to which they were formerly applied, but conditions are ever changing about according to the desire of men who control them, and men pay little heed to the meaning which they originally attached to a name. And the commanders of the foederati were Dorotheus, the general of the troops in Armenia, and Solomon, who was acting as manager for the general Belisarius; (such a person the Romans call "domesticus." Now this Solomon was a eunuch, but it was not by the devising of man that he had suffered mutilation, but some accident which befell him while in swaddling clothes had imposed this lot upon him); and there were also Cyprian, Valerian, Martinus, Althias, John, Marcellus, and the Cyril whom I have mentioned above; and the commanders of the regular cavalry were Rufinus and Aïgan, who were of the house of Belisarius, and Barbatius and Pappus, while the regular infantry was commanded by Theodorus, who was surnamed Cteanus, and Terentius, Zaïdus, Marcian, and Sarapis. And a certain John, a native of Epidamnus, which is now called Dyrrachium, held supreme command over all the leaders of infantry. Among all these commanders Solomon was from a place in the East, at the very extremity of the Roman domain, where the city called Daras now stands, and Aïgan was by birth of the Massagetæ whom they now call Huns; and the rest were almost all inhabitants of the land of Thrace. And there followed with them also four hundred Eruli, whom Pharas led, and about six hundred barbarian allies from the nation of the Massagetæ, all mounted bowmen; these were led by Sinnion and Balas, men endowed with bravery and endurance in the highest degree. And for the whole force five hundred ships were required, no one of which was able to carry more than fifty thousand medimni, nor any one less than three thousand. And in all the vessels together there were thirty thousand sailors, Egyptians and Ionians for the most part, and Cilicians, and one commander was appointed over all the ships, Calonymus of Alexandria. And they had also ships of war prepared as for sea-fighting, to the number of ninety-two, and they were single-banked ships covered by decks, in order that the men rowing them might if possible not be exposed to the bolts of the enemy. Such boats are called "dromones" by those of the present time; for they are able to attain a great speed. In these sailed two thousand men of Byzantium, who were all rowers as well as fighting men; for there was not a single superfluous man among them. And Archelaus was also sent, a man of patrician standing who had already been pretorian prefect both in Byzantium and in Illyricum, but he then held the position of prefect of the army; for thus the officer charged with the maintenance of the army is designated. But as general with supreme authority over all the emperor sent Belisarius, who was in command of the troops of the East for the second time. And he was followed by many spearmen and many guards as well, men who were capable warriors and thoroughly experienced in the dangers of fighting. And the emperor gave him written instructions, bidding him do everything as seemed best to him, and stating that his acts would be final, as if the emperor himself had done them. The writing, in fact, gave him the power of a king. Now Belisarius was a native of Germania, which lies between Thrace and Illyricum. These things, then, took place in this way.



Gelimer, however, being deprived of Tripolis by Pudentius and of Sardinia by Godas, scarcely hoped to regain Tripolis, since it was situated at a great distance and the rebels were already being assisted by the Romans, against whom just at that moment it seemed to him best not to take the field; but he was eager to get to the island before any army sent by the emperor to fight for his enemies should arrive there. He accordingly selected five thousand of the Vandals and one hundred and twenty ships of the fastest kind, and appointing as general his brother Tzazon, he sent them off. And so they were sailing with great enthusiasm and eagerness against Godas and Sardinia. In the meantime the Emperor Justinian was sending off Valerian and Martinus in advance of the others in order to await the rest of the army in the Peloponnesus. And when these two had embarked upon their ships, it came to the emperor's mind that there was something which he wished to enjoin upon them,—a thing which he had wished to say previously, but he had been so busied with the other matters of which he had to speak that his mind had been occupied with them and this subject had been driven out. He summoned them, accordingly, intending to say what he wished, but upon considering the matter, he saw that it would not be propitious for them to interrupt their journey. He therefore sent men to forbid them either to return to him or to disembark from their ships. And these men, upon coming near the ships, commanded them with much shouting and loud cries by no means to turn back, and it seemed to those present that the thing which had happened was no good omen and that never would one of the men in those ships return from Libya to Byzantium. For besides the omen they suspected that a curse also had come to the men from the emperor, not at all by his own will, so that they would not return. Now if anyone should so interpret the incident with regard to these two commanders, Valerian and Martinus, he will find the original opinion untrue. But there was a certain man among the body-guards of Martinus, Stotzas by name, who was destined to be an enemy of the emperor, to make an attempt to set up a tyranny, and by no means to return to Byzantium, and one might suppose that curse to have been turned upon him by Heaven. But whether this matter stands thus or otherwise, I leave to each one to reason out as he wishes. But I shall proceed to tell how the general Belisarius and the army departed.

## XII

533 A.D.

In the seventh year of Justinian's reign, at about the spring equinox, the emperor commanded the general's ship to anchor off the point which is before the royal palace. Thither came also Epiphanius, the chief priest of the city, and after uttering an appropriate prayer, he put on the ships one of the soldiers who had lately been baptized and had taken the Christian name. And after this the general Belisarius and Antonina, his wife, set sail. And there was with them also Procopius, who wrote this history; now previously he had been exceedingly terrified at the danger, but later he had seen a vision in his sleep which caused him to take courage and made him eager to go on the expedition. For it seemed in the dream that he was in the house of Belisarius, and one of the servants entering announced that some men had come bearing gifts; and Belisarius bade him investigate what sort of gifts they were, and he went out into the court and saw men who carried on their shoulders earth with the flowers and all. And he bade him bring these men into the house and deposit the earth they were carrying in the portico; and Belisarius together with his [5-10] guardsmen came there, and he himself reclined on that earth and ate of the flowers, and urged the others to do likewise; and as they reclined and ate, as if upon a couch, the food seemed to them exceedingly sweet. Such, then, was the vision of the dream.

And the whole fleet followed the general's ship, and they put in at Perinthus, which is now called Heracleia, where five days' time was spent by the army, since at that place the general received as a present from the emperor an exceedingly great number of horses from the royal pastures, which are kept for him in the territory of Thrace. And setting sail from there, they anchored off Abydus, and it came about as they were delaying there four days on account of the lack of wind that the following event took place. Two Massagetæ killed one of their comrades who was ridiculing them, in the midst of their intemperate drinking; for they were intoxicated. For of all men the Massagetæ are the most intemperate drinkers. Belisarius, accordingly, straightway impaled these two men on the hill which is near Abydus. And since all, and especially the relatives of these two men, were angry and declared that it was not in order to be punished nor to be subject to the laws of the Romans that they had entered into an alliance (for their own laws did not make the punishment for murder such as this, they said); and since they were joined in voicing the accusation against the general even by Roman soldiers, who were anxious that there should be no punishment for their offences, Belisarius called together both the Massagetæ and the rest of the army and spoke as follows: "If my words were addressed to men now for the first time entering into war, it would require a long time for me to convince you by speech how great a help justice is for gaining the victory. For those who do not understand the fortunes of such struggles think that the outcome of war lies in strength of arm alone. But you, who have often conquered an enemy not inferior to you in strength of body and well endowed with valour, you who have often tried your strength against your opponents, you, I think, are not ignorant that, while it is men who always do the fighting in either army, it is God who judges the contest as seems best to Him and bestows the victory in battle. Now since this is so, it is fitting to consider good bodily condition and practice in arms and all the other provision for war of less account than justice and those things which pertain to God. For that which may possibly be of greatest advantage to men in need would naturally be honoured by them above all other things. Now the first proof of justice would be the punishment of those who have committed unjust murder. For if it is incumbent upon us to sit in judgment upon the actions which from time to time are committed by men toward their neighbours, and to adjudge and to name the just and the unjust action, we should find that nothing is more precious to a man than his life. And if any barbarian who has slain his kinsman expects to find indulgence in his trial on the ground that he was drunk, in all fairness he makes the charge so much the worse by reason of the very circumstance by which, as he alleges, his guilt is removed. For it is not right for a man under any circumstances, and especially when serving in an army, to be so drunk as readily to kill his dearest friends; nay, the drunkenness itself, even if the murder is not added at all, is worthy of punishment; and when a kinsman is wronged, the crime would clearly be of greater moment as regards punishment than when committed against those who are not kinsmen, at least in the eyes of men of sense. Now the example is before you and you may see what sort of an outcome such actions have. But as for you, it is your duty to avoid laying violent hands upon anyone without provocation, or carrying off the possessions of others; for I shall not overlook it, be assured, and I shall not consider anyone of you a fellow-soldier of mine, no matter how terrible he is reputed to be to the foe, who is not able to use clean hands against the enemy. For bravery cannot be victorious unless it be arrayed along with justice." So spoke Belisarius. And the whole army, hearing what was said and looking up at the two men impaled, felt an overwhelming fear come over them and took thought to conduct their lives with moderation, for they saw that they would not be free from great danger if they should be caught doing anything unlawful.

### XIII

After this Belisarius bethought him how his whole fleet should always keep together as it sailed and should anchor in the same place. For he knew that in a large fleet, and especially if rough winds should assail them, it was inevitable that many of the ships should be left behind and scattered on the open sea, and that their pilots should not know which of the ships that put to sea ahead of them it was better to follow. So after considering the matter, he did as follows. The sails of the three ships in which he and his following were carried he painted red from the upper corner for about one third of their length, and he erected upright poles on the prow of each, and hung lights from them, so that both by day and by night the general's ships might be distinguishable; then he commanded all the pilots to follow these ships. Thus with the three ships leading the whole fleet not a single ship was left behind. And whenever they were about to put out from a harbour, the trumpets announced this to them.

And upon setting out from Abydus they met with strong winds which carried them to Sigeum. And again in calm weather they proceeded more leisurely to Malea, where the calm proved of the greatest advantage to them. For since they had a great fleet and exceedingly large ships, as night came on everything was thrown into confusion by reason of their being crowded into small space, and they were brought into extreme peril. At that time both the pilots and the rest of the sailors shewed themselves skilful and efficient, for while shouting at the top of their voices and making a great noise they kept pushing the ships apart with their poles, and cleverly kept the distances between their different vessels; but if a wind had arisen, whether a following or a head wind, it seems to me that the sailors would hardly have preserved themselves and their ships. But as it was, they escaped, as I have said, and put in at Taenarum, which is now called Caenopolis. Then, pressing on from there, they touched at Methone, and found Valerian and Martinus with their men, who had reached the same place a short time before. And since there were no winds blowing, Belisarius anchored the ships there, and disembarked the whole army; and after they were on shore he assigned the commanders their positions and drew up the soldiers. And while he was thus engaged and no wind at all arose, it came about that many of the soldiers were destroyed by disease caused in the following manner.

The pretorian prefect, John, was a man of worthless character, and so skilful at devising ways of bringing money into the public treasury to the detriment of men that I, for my part, should never be competent to describe this trait of his. But this has been said in the preceding pages, when I was brought to this point by my narrative. But I shall tell in the present case in what manner he destroyed the soldiers. The bread which soldiers are destined to eat in camp must of necessity be put twice into the oven, and be cooked so carefully as to last for a very long period and not spoil in a short time, and loaves cooked in this way necessarily weigh less; and for this reason, when such bread is distributed, the soldiers generally received as their portion one-fourth more than the usual weight. John, therefore, calculating how he might reduce the amount of firewood used and have less to pay to the bakers in wages, and also how he might not lose in the weight of the bread, brought the still uncooked dough to the public baths of Achilles, in the basement of which the fire is kept burning, and bade his men set it down there. And when it seemed to be cooked in some fashion or other, he threw it into bags, put it on the ships, and sent it off. And when the fleet arrived at Methone, the loaves disintegrated and returned again to flour, not wholesome flour, however, but rotten and becoming mouldy and already giving out a sort of oppressive odour. And the loaves were dispensed by measure to the soldiers by those to whom this office was assigned, and they were already making the distribution of the bread by quarts and bushels. And the soldiers, feeding upon this in the summer time in a

place where the climate is very hot, became sick, and not less than five hundred of them died; and the same thing was about to happen to more, but Belisarius prevented it by ordering the bread of the country to be furnished them. And reporting the matter to the emperor, he himself gained in favour, but he did not at that time bring any punishment upon John.

These events, then, took place in the manner described. And setting out from Methone they reached the harbour of Zacynthus, where they took in enough water to last them in crossing the Adriatic Sea, and after making all their other preparations, sailed on. But since the wind they had was very gentle and languid, it was only on the sixteenth day that they came to land at a deserted place in Sicily near which Mount Aetna rises. And while they were being delayed in this passage, as has been said, it so happened that the water of the whole fleet was spoiled, except that which Belisarius himself and his table-companions were drinking. For this alone was preserved by the wife of Belisarius in the following manner. She filled with water jars made of glass and constructed a small room with planks in the hold of the ship where it was impossible for the sun to penetrate, and there she sank the jars in sand, and by this means the water remained unaffected. So much, then, for this.

#### XIV

And as soon as Belisarius had disembarked upon the island, he began to feel restless, knowing not how to proceed, and his mind was tormented by the thought that he did not know what sort of men the Vandals were against whom he was going, and how strong they were in war, or in what manner the Romans would have to wage the war, or what place would be their base of operations. But most of all he was disturbed by the soldiers, who were in mortal dread of sea-fighting and had no shame in saying beforehand that, if they should be disembarked on the land, they would try to show themselves brave men in the battle, but if hostile ships assailed them, they would turn to flight; for, they said, they were not able to contend against two enemies at once, both men and water. Being at a loss, therefore, because of all these things, he sent Procopius, his adviser, to Syracuse, to find out whether the enemy had any ships in ambush keeping watch over the passage across the sea, either on the island or on the continent, and where it would be best for them to anchor in Libya, and from what point as base it would be advantageous for them to start in carrying on the war against the Vandals. And he bade him, when he should have accomplished his commands, return and meet him at the place called Caucana, about two hundred stades distant from Syracuse, where both he and the whole fleet were to anchor. But he let it be understood that he was sending him to buy provisions, since the Goths were willing to give them a market, this having been decided upon by the Emperor Justinian and Amalasontha, the mother of Antalaric, who was at that time a boy being reared under the care of his mother, Amalasontha, and held sway over both the Goths and the Italians. For when Theoderic had died and the kingdom came to his nephew, Antalaric, who had already before this lost his father, Amalasontha was fearful both for her child and for the kingdom and cultivated the friendship of Justinian very carefully, and she gave heed to his commands in all matters and at that time promised to provide a market for his army and did so.

Now when Procopius reached Syracuse, he unexpectedly met a man who had been a fellow-citizen and friend of his from childhood, who had been living in Syracuse for a long time engaged in the shipping business, and he learned from him what he wanted; for this man showed him a domestic who had three days before that very day come from Carthage, and he said that they need not suspect that there would be any ambush set for the fleet by

the Vandals. For from no one in the world had they learned that an army was coming against them at that time, but all the active men among the Vandals had actually a little before gone on an expedition against Godas. And for this reason Gelimer, with no thought of an enemy in his mind and regardless of Carthage and all the other places on the sea, was staying in Hermione, which is in Byzacium, four days' journey distant from the coast; so that it was possible for them to sail without fearing any difficulty and to anchor wherever the wind should call them. When Procopius heard this, he took the hand of the domestic and walked to the harbour of Arethousa where his boat lay at anchor, making many enquiries of the man and searching out every detail. And going on board the ship with him, he gave orders to raise the sails and to make all speed for Caucana. And since the master of the domestic stood on the shore wondering that he did not give him back the man, Procopius shouted out, when the ship was already under way, begging him not to be angry with him; for it was necessary that the domestic should meet the general, and, after leading the army to Libya, would return after no long time to Syracuse with much money in his pocket.

But upon coming to Caucana they found all in deep grief. For Dorotheus, the general of the troops of Armenia, had died there, leaving to the whole army a great sense of loss. But Belisarius, when the domestic had come before him and related his whole story, became exceedingly glad, and after bestowing many praises upon Procopius, he issued orders to give the signal for departure with the trumpets. And setting sail quickly they touched at the islands of Gaulus and Melita, which mark the boundary between the Adriatic and Tuscan Seas. There a strong east wind arose for them, and on the following day it carried the ships to the point of Libya, at the place which the Romans call in their own tongue "Shoal's Head." For its name is "Caputvada," and it is five days' journey from Carthage for an unencumbered traveller.

## XV

And when they came near the shore, the general bade them furl the sails, throw out anchors from the ships, and make a halt; and calling together all the commanders to his own ship, he opened a discussion with regard to the disembarkation. Thereupon many speeches were made inclining to either side, and Archelaus came forward and spoke as follows:

"I admire, indeed, the virtue of our general, who, while surpassing all by far in judgment and possessing the greatest wealth of experience, and at the same time holding the power alone, has proposed an open discussion and bids each one of us speak, so that we shall be able to choose whichever course seems best, though it is possible for him to decide alone on what is needful and at his leisure to put it into execution as he wishes. But as for you, my fellow officers—I do not know how I am to say it easily—one might wonder that each one did not hasten to be the first to oppose the disembarkation. And yet I understand that the making of suggestions to those who are entering upon a perilous course brings no personal advantage to him who offers the advice, but as a general thing results in bringing blame upon him. For when things go well for men, they attribute their success to their own judgment or to fortune, but when they fail, they blame only the one who has advised them. Nevertheless I shall speak out. For it is not right for those who deliberate about safety to shrink from blame. You are purposing to disembark on the enemy's land, fellow-officers; but in what harbour are you planning to place the ships in safety? Or in what city's wall will you find security for yourselves? Have you not then heard that this promontory—I mean from Carthage to Iouce—extends, they say, for a journey of nine days, altogether without



harbours and lying open to the wind from whatever quarter it may blow? And not a single walled town is left in all Libya except Carthage, thanks to the decision of Gizeric. And one might add that in this place, they say, water is entirely lacking. Come now, if you wish, let us suppose that some adversity befall us, and with this in view make the decision. For that those who enter into contests of arms should expect no difficulty is not in keeping with human experience nor with the nature of things. If, then, after we have disembarked upon the mainland, a storm should fall upon us, will it not be necessary that one of two things befall the ships, either that they flee away as far as possible, or perish upon this promontory? Secondly, what means will there be of supplying us with necessities? Let no one look to me as the officer charged with the maintenance of the army. For every official, when deprived of the means of administering his office, is of necessity reduced to the name and character of a private person. And where shall we deposit our superfluous arms or any other part of our necessities when we are compelled to receive the attack of the barbarians? Nay, as for this, it is not well even to say how it will turn out. But I think that we ought to make straight for Carthage. For they say that there is a harbour called Stagnum not more than forty stades distant from that city, which is entirely unguarded and large enough for the whole fleet. And if we make this the base of our operations, we shall carry on the war without difficulty. And I, for my part, think it likely that we shall win Carthage by a sudden attack, especially since the enemy are far away from it, and that after we have won it we shall have no further trouble. For it is a way with all men's undertakings that when the chief point has been captured, they collapse after no long time. It behoves us, therefore, to bear in mind all these things and to choose the best course." So spoke Archelaus.

And Belisarius spoke as follows: "Let no one of you, fellow-officers, think that my words are those of censure, nor that they are spoken in the last place to the end that it may become necessary for all to follow them, of whatever sort they may be. For I have heard what seems best to each one of you, and it is becoming that I too should lay before you what I think, and then with you should choose the better course. But it is right to remind you of this fact, that the soldiers said openly a little earlier that they feared the dangers by sea and would turn to flight if a hostile ship should attack them, and we prayed God to shew us the land of Libya and allow us a peaceful disembarkation upon it. And since this is so, I think it the part of foolish men first to pray to receive from God the more favourable fortune, then when this is given them, to reject it and go in the contrary direction. And if we do sail straight for Carthage and a hostile fleet encounters us, the soldiers will remain without blame, if they flee with all their might—for a delinquency announced beforehand carries with it its own defence—but for us, even if we come through safely, there will be no forgiveness. Now while there are many difficulties if we remain in the ships, it will be sufficient, I think, to mention only one thing,—that by which especially they wish to frighten us when they hold over our heads the danger of a storm. For if any storm should fall upon us, one of two things, they say, must necessarily befall the ships, either that they flee far from Libya or be destroyed upon this headland. What then under the present circumstances will be more to our advantage to choose? to have the ships alone destroyed, or to have lost everything, men and all? But apart from this, at the present time we shall fall upon the enemy unprepared, and in all probability shall fare as we desire; for in warfare it is the unexpected which is accustomed to govern the course of events. But a little later, when the enemy have already made their preparation, the struggle we shall have will be one of strength evenly matched. And one might add that it will be necessary perhaps to fight even for the disembarkation, and to seek for that which now we have within our grasp but over which we are deliberating as a thing not necessary. And if at the very time, when we are engaged in conflict, a storm also comes upon us, as often happens on the sea, then while struggling both against the waves and against the Vandals, we shall come to regret our

prudence. As for me, then, I say that we must disembark upon the land with all possible speed, landing horses and arms and whatever else we consider necessary for our use, and that we must dig a trench quickly and throw a stockade around us of a kind which can contribute to our safety no less than any walled town one might mention, and with that as our base must carry on the war from there if anyone should attack us. And if we shew ourselves brave men, we shall lack nothing in the way of provisions. For those who hold the mastery over their enemy are lords also of the enemy's possessions; and it is the way of victory, first to invest herself with all the wealth, and then to set it down again on that side to which she inclines. Therefore, for you both the chance of safety and of having an abundance of good things lies in your own hands."

When Belisarius had said this, the whole assembly agreed and adopted his proposal, and separating from one another, they made the disembarkation as quickly as possible, about three months later than their departure from Byzantium. And indicating a certain spot on the shore the general bade both soldiers and sailors dig the trench and place the stockade about it. And they did as directed. And since a great throng was working and fear was stimulating their enthusiasm and the general was urging them on, not only was the trench dug on the same day, but the stockade was also completed and the pointed stakes were fixed in place all around. Then, indeed, while they were digging the trench, something happened which was altogether amazing. A great abundance of water sprang forth from the earth, a thing which had not happened before in Byzantium, and besides this the place where they were was altogether waterless. Now this water sufficed for all uses of both men and animals. And in congratulating the general, Procopius said that he rejoiced at the abundance of water, not so much because of its usefulness, as because it seemed to him a symbol of an easy victory, and that Heaven was foretelling a victory to them. This, at any rate, actually came to pass. So for that night all the soldiers bivouacked in the camp, setting guards and doing everything else as was customary, except, indeed, that Belisarius commanded five bowmen to remain in each ship for the purpose of a guard, and that the ships-of-war should anchor in a circle about them, taking care that no one should come against them to do them harm.

## XVI

But on the following day, when some of the soldiers went out into the fields and laid hands on the fruit, the general inflicted corporal punishment of no casual sort upon them, and he called all the army together and spoke as follows: "This using of violence and the eating of that which belongs to others seems at other times a wicked thing only on this account, that injustice is in the deed itself, as the saying is; but in the present instance so great an element of detriment is added to the wrongdoing that—if it is not too harsh to say so—we must consider the question of justice of less account and calculate the magnitude of the danger that may arise from your act. For I have disembarked you upon this land basing my confidence on this alone, that the Libyans, being Romans from of old, are unfaithful and hostile to the Vandals, and for this reason I thought that no necessities would fail us and, besides, that the enemy would not do us any injury by a sudden attack. But now this your lack of self-control has changed it all and made the opposite true. For you have doubtless reconciled the Libyans to the Vandals, bringing their hostility round upon your own selves. For by nature those who are wronged feel enmity toward those who have done them violence, and it has come round to this that you have exchanged your own safety and a bountiful supply of good things for some few pieces of silver, when it was possible for you, by purchasing provisions from willing owners, not to appear unjust and at the same time to enjoy their friendship to the utmost. Now, therefore, the war will be between you and both

Vandals and Libyans, and I, at least, say further that it will be against God himself, whose aid no one who does wrong can invoke. But do you cease trespassing wantonly upon the possessions of others, and reject a gain which is full of dangers. For this is that time in which above all others moderation is able to save, but lawlessness leads to death. For if you give heed to these things, you will find God propitious, the Libyan people well-disposed, and the race of the Vandals open to your attack."

With these words Belisarius dismissed the assembly. And at that time he heard that the city of Syllectus was distant one day's journey from the camp, lying close to the sea on the road leading to Carthage, and that the wall of this city had been torn down for a long time, but the inhabitants of the place had made a barrier on all sides by means of the walls of their houses, on account of the attacks of the Moors, and guarded a kind of fortified enclosure; he, accordingly, sent one of his spearmen, Boriades, together with some of the guards, commanding them to make an attempt on the city, and, if they captured it, to do no harm in it, but to promise a thousand good things and to say that they had come for the sake of the people's freedom, that so the army might be able to enter into it. And they came near the city about dusk and passed the night hidden in a ravine. But at early dawn, meeting country folk going into the city with waggons, they entered quietly with them and with no trouble took possession of the city. And when day came, no one having begun any disturbance, they called together the priest and all the other notables and announced the commands of the general, and receiving the keys of the entrances from willing hands, they sent them to the general.

On the same day the overseer of the public post deserted, handing over all the government horses. And they captured also one of those who are occasionally sent to bear the royal responses, whom they call "veredarii"; and the general did him no harm but presented him with much gold and, receiving pledges from him, put into his hand the letter which the Emperor Justinian had written to the Vandals, that he might give it to the magistrates of the Vandals. And the writing was as follows: "Neither have we decided to make war upon the Vandals, nor are we breaking the treaty of Gizeric, but we are attempting to dethrone your tyrant, who, making light of the testament of Gizeric, has imprisoned your king and is keeping him in custody, and those of his relatives whom he hated exceedingly he put to death at the first, and the rest, after robbing them of their sight, he keeps under guard, not allowing them to terminate their misfortunes by death. Do you, therefore, join forces with us and help us in freeing yourselves from so wicked a tyranny, in order that you may be able to enjoy both peace and freedom. For we give you pledges in the name of God that these things will come to you by our hand." Such was the message of the emperor's letter. But the man who received this from Belisarius did not dare to publish it openly, and though he shewed it secretly to his friends, he accomplished nothing whatever of consequence.

## XVII

And Belisarius, having arrayed his army as for battle in the following manner, began the march to Carthage. He chose out three hundred of his guards, men who were able warriors, and handed them over to John, who was in charge of the expenditures of the general's household; such a person the Romans call "optio." And he was an Armenian by birth, a man gifted with discretion and courage in the highest degree. This John, then, he commanded to go ahead of the army, at a distance of not less than twenty stades, and if he should see anything of the enemy, to report it with all speed, so that they might not be compelled to enter into battle unprepared. And the allied Massagetæ he commanded to

travel constantly on the left of the army, keeping as many stades away or more; and he himself marched in the rear with the best troops. For he suspected that it would not be long before Gelimer, following them from Hermione, would make an attack upon them. And these precautions were sufficient, for on the right side there was no fear, since they were travelling not far from the coast. And he commanded the sailors to follow along with them always and not to separate themselves far from the army, but when the wind was favouring to lower the great sails, and follow with the small sails, which they call "dolones," and when the wind dropped altogether to keep the ships under way as well as they could by rowing.

And when Belisarius reached Syllectus, the soldiers behaved with moderation, and they neither began any unjust brawls nor did anything out of the way, and he himself, by displaying great gentleness and kindness, won the Libyans to his side so completely that thereafter he made the journey as if in his own land; for neither did the inhabitants of the land withdraw nor did they wish to conceal anything, but they both furnished a market and served the soldiers in whatever else they wished. And accomplishing eighty stades each day, we completed the whole journey to Carthage, passing the night either in a city, should it so happen, or in a camp made as thoroughly secure as the circumstances permitted. Thus we passed through the city of Leptis and Hadrumetum and reached the place called Grasse, three hundred and fifty stades distant from Carthage. In that place was a palace of the ruler of the Vandals and a park the most beautiful of all we know. For it is excellently watered by springs and has a great wealth of woods. And all the trees are full of fruit; so that each one of the soldiers pitched his tent among fruit-trees, and though all of them ate their fill of the fruit, which was then ripe, there was practically no diminution to be seen in the fruit.

But Gelimer, as soon as he heard in Hermione that the enemy were at hand, wrote to his brother Ammatas in Carthage to kill Ilderic and all the others, connected with him either by birth or otherwise, whom he was keeping under guard, and commanded him to make ready the Vandals and all others in the city serviceable for war, in order that, when the enemy got inside the narrow passage at the suburb of the city which they call Decimum,[52] they might come together from both sides and surround them and, catching them as in a net, destroy them. And Ammatas carried this out, and killed Ilderic, who was a relative of his, and Euagees, and all the Libyans who were intimate with them. For Hoamer had already departed from the world. And arming the Vandals, he made them ready, intending to make his attack at the opportune moment. But Gelimer was following behind, without letting it be known to us, except, indeed, that, on that night when we bivouacked in Grasse, scouts coming from both armies met each other, and after an exchange of blows they each retired to their own camp, and in this way it became evident to us that the enemy were not far away. As we proceeded from there it was impossible to discern the ships. For high rocks extending well into the sea cause mariners to make a great circuit, and there is a projecting headland, inside of which lies the town of Hermes. Belisarius therefore commanded Archelaus, the prefect, and Calonymus, the admiral, not to put in at Carthage, but to remain about two hundred stades away until he himself should summon them. And departing from Grasse we came on the fourth day to Decimum, seventy stades distant from Carthage.

## XVIII

And on that day Gelimer commanded his nephew Gibamundus with two thousand of the Vandals to go ahead of the rest of the army on the left side, in order that Ammatas coming from Carthage, Gelimer himself from the rear, and Gibamundus from the country to the left, might unite and accomplish the task of encircling the enemy with less difficulty and exertion. But as for me, during this struggle I was moved to wonder at the ways of Heaven



and of men, noting how God, who sees from afar what will come to pass, traces out the manner in which it seems best to him that things should come to pass, while men, whether they are deceived or counsel aright, know not that they have failed, should that be the issue, or that they have succeeded, God's purpose being that a path shall be made for Fortune, who presses on inevitably toward that which has been foreordained. For if Belisarius had not thus arranged his forces, commanding the men under John to take the lead, and the Massagetae to march on the left of the army, we should never have been able to escape the Vandals. And even with this planned so by Belisarius, if Ammatas had observed the opportune time, and had not anticipated this by about the fourth part of a day, never would the cause of the Vandals have fallen as it did; but as it was, Ammatas came to Decimum about midday, in advance of the time, while both we and the Vandal army were far away, erring not only in that he did not arrive at the fitting time, but also in leaving at Carthage the host of the Vandals, commanding them to come to Decimum as quickly as possible, while he with a few men and not even the pick of the army came into conflict with John's men. And he killed twelve of the best men who were fighting in the front rank, and he himself fell, having shewn himself a brave man in this engagement. And the rout, after Ammatas fell, became complete, and the Vandals, fleeing at top speed, swept back all those who were coming from Carthage to Decimum. For they were advancing in no order and not drawn up as for battle, but in companies, and small ones at that; for they were coming in bands of twenty or thirty. And seeing the Vandals under Ammatas fleeing, and thinking their pursuers were a great multitude, they turned and joined in the flight. And John and his men, killing all whom they came upon, advanced as far as the gates of Carthage. And there was so great a slaughter of Vandals in the course of the seventy stades that those who beheld it would have supposed that it was the work of an enemy twenty thousand strong.

At the same time Gibamundus and his two thousand came to Pedion Halon, which is forty stades distant from Decimum on the left as one goes to Carthage, and is destitute of human habitation or trees or anything else, since the salt in the water permits nothing except salt to be produced there; in that place they encountered the Huns and were all destroyed. Now there was a certain man among the Massagetae, well gifted with courage and strength of body, the leader of a few men; this man had the privilege handed down from his fathers and ancestors to be the first in all the Hunnic armies to attack the enemy. For it was not lawful for a man of the Massagetae to strike first in battle and capture one of the enemy until, indeed, someone from this house began the struggle with the enemy. So when the two armies had come not far from each other, this man rode out and stopped alone close to the army of the Vandals. And the Vandals, either because they were dumbfounded at the courageous spirit of the man or perhaps because they suspected that the enemy were contriving something against them, decided neither to move nor to shoot at the man. And I think that, since they had never had experience of battle with the Massagetae, but heard that the nation was very warlike, they were for this reason terrified at the danger. And the man, returning to his compatriots, said that God had sent them these strangers as a ready feast. Then at length they made their onset and the Vandals did not withstand them, but breaking their ranks and never thinking of resistance, they were all disgracefully destroyed.

## XIX

But we, having learned nothing at all of what had happened, were going on to Decimum. And Belisarius, seeing a place well adapted for a camp, thirty-five stades distant from Decimum, surrounded it with a stockade which was very well made, and placing all the infantry there and calling together the whole army, he spoke as follows: "Fellow-soldiers, the decisive moment of the struggle is already at hand; for I perceive that the enemy are



advancing upon us; and the ships have been taken far away from us by the nature of the place; and it has come round to this that our hope of safety lies in the strength of our hands. For there is not a friendly city, no, nor any other stronghold, in which we may put our trust and have confidence concerning ourselves. But if we should show ourselves brave men, it is probable that we shall still overcome the enemy in the war; but if we should weaken at all, it will remain for us to fall under the hand of the Vandals and to be destroyed disgracefully. And yet there are many advantages on our side to help us on toward victory; for we have with us both justice, with which we have come against our enemy (for we are here in order to recover what is our own), and the hatred of the Vandals toward their own tyrant. For the alliance of God follows naturally those who put justice forward, and a soldier who is ill-disposed toward his ruler knows not how to play the part of a brave man. And apart from this, we have been engaged with Persians and Scythians all the time, but the Vandals, since the time they conquered Libya, have seen not a single enemy except naked Moors. And who does not know that in every work practice leads to skill, while idleness leads to inefficiency? Now the stockade, from which we shall have to carry on the war, has been made by us in the best possible manner. And we are able to deposit here our weapons and everything else which we are not able to carry when we go forth; and when we return here again, no kind of provisions can fail us. And I pray that each one of you, calling to mind his own valour and those whom he has left at home, may so march with contempt against the enemy."

After speaking these words and uttering a prayer after them, Belisarius left his wife and the barricaded camp to the infantry, and himself set forth with all the horsemen. For it did not seem to him advantageous for the present to risk an engagement with the whole army, but it seemed wise to skirmish first with the horsemen and make trial of the enemy's strength, and finally to fight a decisive battle with the whole army. Sending forward, therefore, the commanders of the foederati, he himself followed with the rest of the force and his own spearmen and guards. And when the foederati and their leaders reached Decimum, they saw the corpses of the fallen—twelve comrades from the forces of John and near them Ammatas and some of the Vandals. And hearing from the inhabitants of the place the whole story of the fight, they were vexed, being at a loss as to where they ought to go. But while they were still at a loss and from the hills were looking around over the whole country thereabouts, a dust appeared from the south and a little later a very large force of Vandal horsemen. And they sent to Belisarius urging him to come as quickly as possible, since the enemy were bearing down upon them. And the opinions of the commanders were divided. For some thought that they ought to close with their assailants, but the others said that their force was not sufficient for this. And while they were debating thus among themselves, the barbarians drew near under the leadership of Gelimer, who was following a road between the one which Belisarius was travelling and the one by which the Massagetae who had encountered Gibamundus had come. But since the land was hilly on both sides, it did not allow him to see either the disaster of Gibamundus or Belisarius' stockade, nor even the road along which Belisarius' men were advancing. But when they came near each other, a contest arose between the two armies as to which should capture the highest of all the hills there. For it seemed a suitable one to encamp upon, and both sides preferred to engage with the enemy from there. And the Vandals, coming first, took possession of the hill by crowding off their assailants and routed the enemy, having already become an object of terror to them. And the Romans in flight came to a place seven stades distant from Decimum, where, as it happened, Uliaris, the personal guard of Belisarius, was, with eight hundred guardsmen. And all supposed that Uliaris would receive them and hold his position, and together with them would go against the Vandals; but when they came together, these troops all unexpectedly fled at top speed and went on the run to Belisarius.

From then on I am unable to say what happened to Gelimer that, having the victory in his hands, he willingly gave it up to the enemy, unless one ought to refer foolish actions also to God, who, whenever He purposes that some adversity shall befall a man, touches first his reason and does not permit that which will be to his advantage to come to his consideration. For if, on the one hand, he had made the pursuit immediately, I do not think that even Belisarius would have withstood him, but our cause would have been utterly and completely lost, so numerous appeared the force of the Vandals and so great the fear they inspired in the Romans; or if, on the other hand, he had even ridden straight for Carthage, he would easily have killed all John's men, who, heedless of everything else, were wandering about the plain one by one or by twos and stripping the dead. And he would have preserved the city with its treasures, and captured our ships, which had come rather near, and he would have withdrawn from us all hope both of sailing away and of victory. But in fact he did neither of these things. Instead he descended from the hill at a walk, and when he reached the level ground and saw the corpse of his brother, he turned to lamentations, and, in caring for his burial, he blunted the edge of his opportunity—an opportunity which he was not able to grasp again. Meantime Belisarius, meeting the fugitives, bade them stop, and arrayed them all in order and rebuked them at length; then, after hearing of the death of Ammatas and the pursuit of John, and learning what he wished concerning the place and the enemy, he proceeded at full speed against Gelimer and the Vandals. But the barbarians, having already fallen into disorder and being now unprepared, did not withstand the onset of the Romans, but fled with all their might, losing many there, and the battle ended at night. Now the Vandals were in flight, not to Carthage nor to Byzacium, whence they had come, but to the plain of Boulla and the road leading into Numidia. So the men with John and the Massagetæ returned to us about dusk, and after learning all that had happened and reporting what they had done, they passed the night with us in Decimum.

## XX

But on the following day the infantry with the wife of Belisarius came up and we all proceeded together on the road toward Carthage, which we reached in the late evening; and we passed the night in the open, although no one hindered us from marching into the city at once. For the Carthaginians opened the gates and burned lights everywhere and the city was brilliant with the illumination that whole night, and those of the Vandals who had been left behind were sitting as suppliants in the sanctuaries. But Belisarius prevented the entrance in order to guard against any ambuscade being set for his men by the enemy, and also to prevent the soldiers from having freedom to turn to plundering, as they might under the concealment of night. On that day, since an east wind arose for them, the ships reached the headland, and the Carthaginians, for they already sighted them, removed the iron chains of the harbour which they call Mandracium, and made it possible for the fleet to enter. Now there is in the king's palace a room filled with darkness, which the Carthaginians call Ancon, where all were cast with whom the tyrant was angry. In that place, as it happened, many of the eastern merchants had been confined up to that time. For Gelimer was angry with these men, charging them with having urged the emperor on to the war, and they were about to be destroyed, all of them, this having been decided upon by Gelimer on that day on which Ammatas was killed in Decimum; to such an extremity of danger did they come. The guard of this prison, upon hearing what had taken place in Decimum and seeing the fleet inside the point, entered the room and enquired of the men, who had not yet learned the good news, but were sitting in the darkness and expecting death, what among their possessions they would be willing to give up and be saved. And when they said they desired to give everything he might wish, he demanded nothing of all their treasures, but required them all

to swear that, if they escaped, they would assist him also with all their power when he came into danger. And they did this. Then he told them the whole story, and tearing off a plank from the side toward the sea, he pointed out the fleet approaching, and releasing all from the prison went out with them.

But the men on the ships, having as yet heard nothing of what the army had done on the land, were completely at a loss, and slackening their sails they went to the town of Mercurium; there they learned what had taken place at Decimum, and becoming exceedingly joyful sailed on. And when, with a favouring wind blowing, they came to within one hundred and fifty stades of Carthage, Archelaus and the soldiers bade them anchor there, fearing the warning of the general, but the sailors would not obey. For they said that the promontory at that point was without a harbour and also that the indications were that a well-known storm, which the natives call Cypriana, would arise immediately. And they predicted that, if it came upon them in that place, they would not be able to save even one of the ships. And it was as they said. So they slackened their sails for a short time and deliberated; and they did not think they ought to try for Mandracium (for they shrank from violating the commands of Belisarius, and at the same time they suspected that the entrance to Mandracium was closed by the chains, and besides they feared that this harbour was not sufficient for the whole fleet) but Stagnum seemed to them well situated (for it is forty stades distant from Carthage), and there was nothing in it to hinder them, and also it was large enough for the whole fleet. There they arrived about dusk and all anchored, except, indeed, that Calonymus with some of the sailors, disregarding the general and all the others, went off secretly to Mandracium, no one daring to hinder him, and plundered the property of the merchants dwelling on the sea, both foreigners and Carthaginians.

On the following day Belisarius commanded those on the ships to disembark, and after marshalling the whole army and drawing it up in battle formation, he marched into Carthage; for he feared lest he should encounter some snare set by the enemy. There he reminded the soldiers at length of how much good fortune had come to them because they had displayed moderation toward the Libyans, and he exhorted them earnestly to preserve good order with the greatest care in Carthage. For all the Libyans had been Romans in earlier times and had come under the Vandals by no will of their own and had suffered many outrages at the hands of these barbarians. For this very reason the emperor had entered into war with the Vandals, and it was not holy that any harm should come from them to the people whose freedom they had made the ground for taking the field against the Vandals.

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After such words of exhortation he entered Carthage, and, since no enemy was seen by them, he went up to the palace and seated himself on Gelimer's throne. There a crowd of merchants and other Carthaginians came before Belisarius with much shouting, persons whose homes were on the sea, and they made the charge that there had been a robbery of their property on the preceding night by the sailors. And Belisarius bound Calonymus by oaths to bring without fail all his thefts to the light. And Calonymus, taking the oath and disregarding what he had sworn, for the moment made the money his plunder, but not long afterwards he paid his just penalty in Byzantium. For being taken with the disease called apoplexy, he became insane and bit off his own tongue and then died. But this happened at a later time.

But then, since the hour was appropriate, Belisarius commanded that lunch be prepared for them, in the very place where Gelimer was accustomed to entertain the leaders of the Vandals. This place the Romans call "Delphix," not in their own tongue, but using the Greek word according to the ancient custom. For in the palace at Rome, where the dining couches of the emperor were placed, a tripod had stood from olden times, on which the emperor's cupbearers used to place the cups. Now the Romans call a tripod "Delphix," since they were first made at Delphi, and from this both in Byzantium and wherever there is a king's dining couch they call the room "Delphix"; for the Romans follow the Greek also in calling the emperor's residence "Palatium." For a [Greek named Pallas lived in this place before the capture of Troy and built a noteworthy house there, and they called this dwelling "Palatium"; and when Augustus received the imperial power, he decided to take up his first residence in that house, and from this they call the place wherever the emperor resides "Palatium." So Belisarius dined in the Delphix and with him all the notables of the army. And it happened that the lunch made for Gelimer on the preceding day was in readiness. And we feasted on that very food and the domestics of Gelimer served it and poured the wine and waited upon us in every way. And it was possible to see Fortune in her glory and making a display of the fact that all things are hers and that nothing is the private possession of any man. And it fell to the lot of Belisarius on that day to win such fame as no one of the men of his time ever won nor indeed any of the men of olden times. For though the Roman soldiers were not accustomed to enter a subject city without confusion, even if they numbered only five hundred, and especially if they made the entry unexpectedly, all the soldiers under the command of this general showed themselves so orderly that there was not a single act of insolence nor a threat, and indeed nothing happened to hinder the business of the city; but in a captured city, one which had changed its government and shifted its allegiance, it came about that no man's household was excluded from the privileges of the market-place; [10-17] on the contrary, the clerks drew up their lists of the men and conducted the soldiers to their lodgings, just as usual, and the soldiers themselves, getting their lunch by purchase from the market, rested as each one wished.

Afterwards Belisarius gave pledges to those Vandals who had fled into the sanctuaries, and began to take thought for the fortifications. For the circuit-wall of Carthage had been so neglected that in many places it had become accessible to anyone who wished and easy to attack. For no small part of it had fallen down, and it was for this reason, the Carthaginians said, that Gelimer had not made his stand in the city. For he thought that it would be impossible in a short time to restore such a circuit-wall to a safe condition. And they said that an old oracle had been uttered by the children in earlier times in Carthage, to the effect that "gamma shall pursue beta, and again beta itself shall pursue gamma." And at that time it had been spoken by the children in play and had been left as an unexplained riddle, but now it was perfectly clear to all. For formerly Gizeric had driven out Boniface and now Belisarius was doing the same to Gelimer. This, then, whether it was a rumour or an oracle, came out as I have stated.

At that time a dream also came to light, which had been seen often before this by many persons, but without being clear as to how it would turn out. And the dream was as follows. Cyprian, a holy man, is revered above all others by the Carthaginians. And they have founded a very noteworthy temple in his honour before the city on the sea-shore, in which they conduct all other customary services, and also celebrate there a festival which they call the "Cypriana"; and the sailors are accustomed to name after Cyprian the storm, which I mentioned lately, giving it the same name as the festival, since it is wont to come on at the time at which the Libyans have always been accustomed to celebrate the festival. This

temple the Vandals took from the Christians by violence in the reign of Honoric. And they straightway drove out their priests from the temple in great dishonour, and themselves thereafter attended to the sacred festival which, they said, now belonged to the Arians. And the Libyans, indeed, were angry on this account and altogether at a loss, but Cyprian, they say, often sent them a dream saying that there was not the least need for the Christians to be concerned about him; for he himself as time went on would be his own avenger. And when the report of this was passed around and came to all the Libyans, they were expecting that some vengeance would come upon the Vandals at some time because of this sacred festival, but were unable to conjecture how in the world the vision would be realized for them. Now, therefore, when the emperor's expedition had come to Libya, since the time had already come round and would bring the celebration of the festival on the succeeding day, the priests of the Arians, in spite of the fact that Ammatas had led the Vandals to Decimum, cleansed the whole sanctuary and were engaged in hanging up the most beautiful of the votive offerings there, and making ready the lamps and bringing out the treasures from the store-houses and preparing all things with exactness, arranging everything according to its appropriate use. But the events in Decimum turned out in the manner already described. And the priests of the Arians were off in flight, while the Christians who conform to the orthodox faith came to the temple of Cyprian, and they burned all the lamps and attended to the sacred festival just as is customary for them to perform this service, and thus it was known to all what the vision of the dream was foretelling. This, then, came about in this way.

## XXII

And the Vandals, recalling an ancient saying, marvelled, understanding clearly thereafter that for a man, at least, no hope could be impossible nor any possession secure. And what this saying was and in what manner it was spoken I shall explain. When the Vandals originally, pressed by hunger, were about to remove from their ancestral abodes, a certain part of them was left behind who were reluctant to go and not desirous of following Godigisclus. And as time went on it seemed to those who had remained that they were well off as regards abundance of provisions, and Gizeric with his followers gained possession of Libya. And when this was heard by those who had not followed Godigisclus, they rejoiced, since thenceforth the country was altogether sufficient for them to live upon. But fearing lest at some time much later either the very ones who had conquered Libya, or their descendants, should in some way or other be driven out of Libya and return to their ancestral homes (for they never supposed that the Romans would let Libya be held for ever), they sent ambassadors to them. And these men, upon coming before Gizeric, said that they rejoiced with their compatriots who had met with such success, but that they were no longer able to guard the land of which he and his men had thought so little that they had settled in Libya. They prayed therefore that, if they laid no claim to their fatherland, they would bestow it as an unprofitable possession upon themselves, so that their title to the land might be made as secure as possible, and if anyone should come to do it harm, they might by no means disdain to die in behalf of it. Gizeric, accordingly, and all the other Vandals thought that they spoke fairly and justly, and they were in the act of granting everything which the envoys desired of them. But a certain old man who was esteemed among them and had a great reputation for discretion said that he would by no means permit such a thing. "For in human affairs," he said, "not one thing stands secure; nay, nothing which now exists is stable for all time for men, while as regards that which does not yet exist, there is nothing which may not come to pass." When Gizeric heard this, he expressed approval and decided to send the envoys away with nothing accomplished. Now



at that time both he himself and the man who had given the advice were judged worthy of ridicule by all the Vandals, as foreseeing the impossible. But when these things which have been told took place, the Vandals learned to take a different view of the nature of human affairs and realized that the saying was that of a wise man.

Now as for those Vandals who remained in their native land, neither remembrance nor any name of them has been preserved to my time. For since, I suppose, they were a small number, they were either overpowered by the neighbouring barbarians or they were mingled with them not at all unwillingly and their name gave way to that of their conquerors. Indeed, when the Vandals were conquered at that time by Belisarius, no thought occurred to them to go from there to their ancestral homes. For they were not able to convey themselves suddenly from Libya to Europe, especially as they had no ships at hand, but paid the penalty there for all the wrongs they had done the Romans and especially the Zacynthians. For at one time Gizeric, falling suddenly upon the towns in the Peloponnesus, undertook to assault Taenarum. And being repulsed from there and losing many of his followers he retired in complete disorder. And while he was still filled with anger on account of this, he touched at Zacynthus, and having killed many of those he met and enslaved five hundred of the notables, he sailed away soon afterwards. And when he reached the middle of the Adriatic Sea, as it is called, he cut into small pieces the bodies of the five hundred and threw them all about the sea without the least concern. But this happened in earlier times.

### XXIII

But at that time Gelimer, by distributing much money to the farmers among the Libyans and shewing great friendliness toward them, succeeded in winning many to his side. These he commanded to kill the Romans who went out into the country, proclaiming a fixed sum of gold for each man killed, to be paid to him who did the deed. And they killed many from the Roman army, not soldiers, however, but slaves and servants, who because of a desire for money went up into the villages stealthily and were caught. And the farmers brought their heads before Gelimer and departed receiving their pay, while he supposed that they had slain soldiers of the enemy.

At that time Diogenes, the aide of Belisarius, made a display of valorous deeds. For having been sent, together with twenty-two of the body-guards, to spy upon their opponents, he came to a place two days' journey distant from Carthage. And the farmers of the place, being unable to kill these men, reported to Gelimer that they were there. And he chose out and sent against them three hundred horsemen of the Vandals, enjoining upon them to bring all the men alive before him. For it seemed to him a most remarkable achievement to make captive a personal aide of Belisarius with twenty-two body-guards. Now Diogenes and his party had entered a certain house and were sleeping in the upper storey, having no thought of the enemy in mind, since, indeed, they had learned that their opponents were far away. But the Vandals, coming there at early dawn, thought it would not be to their advantage to destroy the doors of the house or to enter it in the dark, fearing lest, being involved in a night encounter, they might themselves destroy one another, and at the same time, if that should happen, provide a way of escape for a large number of the enemy in the darkness. But they did this because cowardice had paralyzed their minds, though it would have been possible for them with no trouble, by carrying torches or even without these, to catch their enemies in their beds not only without weapons, but absolutely naked besides. But as it was, they made a phalanx in a circle about the whole house and especially at the doors, and all took their stand there. But in the meantime it so happened that one of

the Roman soldiers was roused from sleep, and he, noticing the noise which the Vandals made as they talked stealthily among themselves and moved with their weapons, was able to comprehend what was being done, and rousing each one of his comrades silently, he told them what was going on. And they, following the opinion of Diogenes, all put on their clothes quietly and taking up their weapons went below. There they put the bridles on their horses and leaped upon them unperceived by anyone. And after standing for a time by the court-yard entrance, they suddenly opened the door there, and straightway all came out. And then the Vandals immediately closed with them, but they accomplished nothing. For the Romans rode hard, covering themselves with their shields and warding off their assailants with their spears. And in this way Diogenes escaped the enemy, losing two of his followers, but saving the rest. He himself, however, received three blows in this encounter on the neck and the face, from which indeed he came within a little of dying, and one blow also on the left hand, as a result of which he was thereafter unable to move his little finger. This, then, took place in this way.

And Belisarius offered great sums of money to the artisans engaged in the building trade and to the general throng of workmen, and by this means he dug a trench deserving of great admiration about the circuit-wall, and setting stakes close together along it he made an excellent stockade about the fortifications. And not only this, but he built up in a short time the portions of the wall which had suffered, a thing which seemed worthy of wonder not only to the Carthaginians, but also to Gelimer himself at a later time. For when he came as a captive to Carthage, he marvelled when he saw the wall and said that his own negligence had proved the cause of all his present troubles. This, then, was accomplished by Belisarius while in Carthage.

#### XXIV

But Tzazon, the brother of Gelimer, reached Sardinia with the expedition which has been mentioned above and disembarked at the harbour of Caranalis; and at the first onset he captured the city and killed the tyrant Godas and all the fighting men about him. And when he heard that the emperor's expedition was in the land of Libya, having as yet learned nothing of what had been done there, he wrote to Gelimer as follows: "Know, O King of the Vandals and Alani, that the tyrant Godas has perished, having fallen into our hands, and that the island is again under thy kingdom, and celebrate the festival of triumph. And as for the enemy who have had the daring to march against our land, expect that their attempt will come to the same fate as that experienced by those who in former times marched against our ancestors." And those who took this letter sailed into the harbour of Carthage with no thought of the enemy in mind. And being brought by the guards before the general, they put the letter into his hands and gave him information on the matters about which he enquired, being thunderstruck at what they beheld and awed at the suddenness of the change; however, they suffered nothing unpleasant at the hand of Belisarius.

At this same time another event also occurred as follows. A short time before the emperor's expedition reached Libya, Gelimer had sent envoys into Spain, among whom were Gothaeus and Fuscias, in order to persuade Theudis, the ruler of the Visigoths, to establish an alliance with the Vandals. And these envoys, upon disembarking on the mainland after crossing the strait at Gadira, found Theudis in a place situated far from the sea. And when they had come up to the place where he was, Theudis received them with friendliness and entertained them heartily, and during the feast he pretended to enquire how matters stood with Gelimer and the Vandals. Now since these envoys had travelled to him rather slowly, it happened that he had heard from others everything which had befallen

the Vandals. For one merchant ship sailing for trade had put out from Carthage on the very same day as the army marched into the city, and finding a favouring wind, had come to Spain. From those on this ship Theudis learned all that had happened in Libya, but he forbade the merchants to reveal it to anyone, in order that this might not become generally known. And when Gothaeus and his followers replied that everything was as well as possible for them, he asked them for what purpose, then, they had come. And when they proposed the alliance, Theudis bade them go to the sea-coast; "For from there," he said, "you will learn of the affairs at home with certainty." And the envoys, supposing that the man was in his cups and his words were not sane, remained silent. But when on the following day they met him and made mention of the alliance, and Theudis used the same words a second time, then at length they understood that some change of fortune had befallen them in Libya, but never once thinking of Carthage they sailed for the city. And upon coming to land close by it and happening upon Roman soldiers, they put themselves in their hands to do with them as they wished. And from there they were led away to the general, and reporting the whole story, they suffered no harm at his hand. These things, then, happened thus. And Cyril, upon coming near to Sardinia and learning what had happened to Godas, sailed to Carthage, and there, finding the Roman army and Belisarius victorious, he remained at rest; and Solomon was sent to the emperor in order to announce what had been accomplished.

## XXV

But Gelimer, upon reaching the plain of Boulla, which is distant from Carthage a journey of four days for an unencumbered traveller, not far from the boundaries of Numidia, began to gather there all the Vandals and as many of the Moors as happened to be friendly to him. Few Moors, however, joined his alliance, and these were altogether insubordinate. For all those who ruled over the Moors in Mauretania and Numidia and Byzacium sent envoys to Belisarius saying that they were slaves of the emperor and promised to fight with him. There were some also who even furnished their children as hostages and requested that the symbols of office be sent them from him according to the ancient custom. For it was a law among the Moors that no one should be a ruler over them, even if he was hostile to the Romans, until the emperor of the Romans should give him the tokens of the office. And though they had already received them from the Vandals, they did not consider that the Vandals held the office securely. Now these symbols are a staff of silver covered with gold, and a silver cap,—not covering the whole head, but like a crown and held in place on all sides by bands of silver,—a kind of white cloak gathered by a golden brooch on the right shoulder in the form of a Thessalian cape, and a white tunic with embroidery, and a gilded boot. And Belisarius sent these things to them, and presented each one of them with much money. However, they did not come to fight along with him, nor, on the other hand, did they dare give their support to the Vandals, but standing out of the way of both contestants, they waited to see what would be the outcome of the war. Thus, then, matters stood with the Romans.

But Gelimer sent one of the Vandals to Sardinia with a letter to his brother Tzazon. And he went quickly to the coast, and finding by chance a merchant-ship putting out to sea, he sailed into the harbour of Caranalis and put the letter into the hands of Tzazon. Now the message of the letter was as follows:

"It was not, I venture to think, Godas who caused the island to revolt from us, but some curse of madness sent from Heaven which fell upon the Vandals. For by depriving us of you and the notables of the Vandals, it has seized and carried off from the house of Gizeric absolutely all the blessings which we enjoyed. For it was not to recover the island for

us that you sailed from here, but in order that Justinian might be master of Libya. For that which Fortune had decided upon previously it is now possible to know from the outcome. Belisarius, then, has come against us with a small army, but valour straightway departed and fled from the Vandals, taking good fortune with her. For Ammatas and Gibamundus have fallen, because the Vandals lost their courage, and the horses and shipyards and all Libya and, not least of all, Carthage itself, are held already by the enemy. And the Vandals are sitting here, having paid with their children and wives and all their possessions for their failure to play the part of brave men in battle, and to us is left only the plain of Boulla, where our hope in you has set us down and still keeps us. But do you have done with such matters as rebel tyrants and Sardinia and the cares concerning these things, and come to us with your whole force as quickly as possible. For when men find the very heart and centre of all in danger, it is not advisable for them to consider minutely other matters. And struggling hereafter in common against the enemy, we shall either recover our previous fortune, or gain the advantage of not bearing apart from each other the hard fate sent by Heaven."

When this letter had been brought to Tzazon, and he had disclosed its contents to the Vandals, they turned to wailing and lamentation, not openly, however, but concealing their feelings as much as possible and avoiding the notice of the islanders, silently among themselves they bewailed the fate which was upon them. And straightway setting in order matters in hand just as chance directed, they manned the ships. And sailing from there with the whole fleet, on the third day they came to land at the point of Libya which marks the boundary between the Numidians and Mauretanians. And they reached the plain of Boulla travelling on foot, and there joined with the rest of the army. And in that place there were many most pitiable scenes among the Vandals, which I, at least, could never relate as they deserve. For I think that even if one of the enemy themselves had happened to be a spectator at that time, he would probably have felt pity, in spite of himself, for the Vandals and for human fortune. For Gelimer and Tzazon threw their arms about each other's necks, and could not let go, but they spoke not a word to each other, but kept wringing their hands and weeping, and each one of the Vandals with Gelimer embraced one of those who had come from Sardinia, and did the same thing. And they stood for a long time as if grown together and found such comfort as they could in this, and neither did the men of Gelimer think fit to ask about Godas (for their present fortune had prostrated them and caused them to reckon such things as had previously seemed to them most important with those which were now utterly negligible), nor could those who came from Sardinia bring themselves to ask about what had happened in Libya. For the place was sufficient to permit them to judge of what had come to pass. And indeed they did not make any mention even of their own wives and children, knowing well that whoever of theirs was not there had either died or fallen into the hands of the enemy. Thus, then, did these things happen.

BOOK IV  
THE VANDALIC WAR (Continued)

I

Gelimer, seeing all the Vandals gathered together, led his army against Carthage. And when they came close to it, they tore down a portion of the aqueduct,—a structure well worth seeing—which conducted water into the city, and after encamping for a time they withdrew, since no one of the enemy came out against them. And going about the country there they kept the roads under guard and thought that in this way they were besieging Carthage; however, they did not gather any booty, nor plunder the land, but took possession of it as their own. And at the same time they kept hoping that there would be some treason on the part of the Carthaginians themselves and such of the Roman soldiers as followed the doctrine of Arius. They also sent to the leaders of the Huns, and promising that they would have many good things from the Vandals, entreated them to become their friends and allies. Now the Huns even before this had not been well-disposed toward the cause of the Romans, since they had not indeed come to them willingly as allies (for they asserted that the Roman general Peter had given an oath and then, disregarding what had been sworn, had thus brought them to Byzantium), and accordingly they received the words of the Vandals, and promised that when they should come to real fighting they would turn with them against the Roman army. But Belisarius had a suspicion of all this (for he had heard it from the deserters), and also the circuit-wall had not as yet been completed entirely, and for these reasons he did not think it possible for his men to go out against the enemy for the present, but he was making his preparations within as well as possible. And one of the Carthaginians, Laurus by name, having been condemned on a charge of treason and proved guilty by his own secretary, was impaled by Belisarius on a hill before the city, and as a result of this the others came to feel a sort of irresistible fear and refrained from attempts at treason. And he courted the Massagetæ with gifts and banquets and every other manner of flattering attention every day, and thus persuaded them to disclose to him what Gelimer had promised them on condition of their turning traitors in the battle. And these barbarians said that they had no enthusiasm for fighting, for they feared that, if the Vandals were vanquished, the Romans would not send them back to their native land, but they would be compelled to grow old and die right there in Libya; and besides they were also concerned, they said, about the booty, lest they be robbed of it. Then indeed Belisarius gave them pledges that, if the Vandals should be conquered decisively, they would be sent without the least delay to their homes with all their booty, and thus he bound them by oaths in very truth to assist the Romans with all zeal in carrying through the war.

And when all things had been prepared by him in the best way possible, and the circuit-wall had been already completed, he called together the whole army and spoke as follows: "As for exhortation, fellow Romans, I do not know that it is necessary to make any to you,—men who have recently conquered the enemy so completely that Carthage here and the whole of Libya is a possession of your valour, and for this reason you will have no need of admonition that prompts to daring. For the spirits of those who have conquered are by no means wont to be overcome. But I think it not untimely to remind you of this one thing, that, if you on the present occasion but prove equal to your own selves in valour, straightway there will be an end for the Vandals of their hopes, and for you of the battle. Hence there is every reason why you should enter into this engagement with the greatest eagerness. For ever sweet to men is toil coming to an end and reaching its close. Now as for the host of the Vandals, let no one of you consider them. For not by numbers of men nor by



measure of body, but by valour of soul, is war wont to be decided. And let the strongest motive which actuates men come to your minds, namely, pride in past achievement. For it is a shame, for those at least who have reason, to fall short of one's own self and to be found inferior to one's own standard of valour. For I know well that terror and the memory of misfortunes have laid hold upon the enemy and compel them to become less brave, for the one fills them with fear because of what has already happened, and the other brushes aside their hope of success. For Fortune, once seen to be bad, straightway enslaves the spirit of those who have fallen in her way. And I shall explain how the struggle involves for you at the present time a greater stake than formerly. For in the former battle the danger was, if things did not go well for us, that we should not take the land of others; but now, if we do not win the struggle, we shall lose the land which is our own. In proportion, then, as it is easier to possess nothing than to be deprived of what one has, just so now our fear touches our most vital concerns more than before. And yet formerly we had the fortune to win the victory with the infantry absent, but now, entering the battle with God propitious and with our whole army, I have hopes of capturing the camp of the enemy, men and all. Thus, then, having the end of the war ready at hand, do not by reason of any negligence put it off to another time, lest you be compelled to seek for the opportune moment after it has run past us. For when the fortune of war is postponed, its nature is not to proceed in the same manner as before, especially if the war be prolonged by the will of those who are carrying it on. For Heaven is accustomed to bring retribution always upon those who abandon the good fortune which is present. But if anyone considers that the enemy, seeing their children and wives and most precious possessions in our hands, will be daring beyond reason and will incur risks beyond the strength which they have, he does not think rightly. For an overpowering passion springing up in the heart in behalf of what is most precious is wont to diminish men's actual strength and does not allow them to make full use of their present opportunities. Considering, then, all these things, it behoves you to go with great contempt against the enemy."

## II

After such words of exhortation, Belisarius sent out all the horsemen on the same day, except five hundred, and also the guardsmen and the standard, which the Romans call "bandum,"<sup>[1]</sup> entrusting them to John the Armenian, and directing him to skirmish only, if opportunity should arise. And he himself on the following day followed with the infantry forces and the five hundred horsemen. And the Massagetæ, deliberating among themselves, decided, in order to seem in friendly agreement with both Gelimer and Belisarius, neither to begin fighting for the Romans nor to go over to the Vandals before the encounter, but whenever the situation of one or the other army should be bad, then to join the victors in their pursuit of the vanquished. Thus, then, had this matter been decided upon by the barbarians. And the Roman army came upon the Vandals encamped in Tricamarum, one hundred and fifty stades distant from Carthage. So they both bivouacked there at a considerable distance from one another. And when it was well on in the night, a prodigy came to pass in the Roman camp as follows. The tips of their spears were lighted with a bright fire and the points of them seemed to be burning most vigorously. This was not seen by many, but it filled with consternation the few who did see it, not knowing how it would come out. And this happened to the Romans in Italy again at a much later time. And at that time, since they knew by experience, they believed it to be a sign of victory. But now, as I have said, since this was the first time it had happened, they were filled with consternation and passed the night in great fear.

And on the following day Gelimer commanded the Vandals to place the women and children and all their possessions in the middle of the stockade, although it had not the character of a fort, and calling all together, he spoke as follows: "It is not to gain glory, or to retrieve the loss of empire alone, O fellow Vandals, that we are about to fight, so that even if we wilfully played the coward and sacrificed these our belongings we might possibly live, sitting at home and keeping our own possessions; but you see, surely, that our fortunes have come round to such a pass that, if we do not gain the mastery over the enemy, we shall, if we perish, leave them as masters of these our children and our wives and our land and all our possessions, while if we survive, there will be added our own enslavement and to behold all these enslaved; but if, indeed, we overcome our foes in the war, we shall, if we live, pass our lives among all good things, or, after the glorious ending of our lives, there will be left to our wives and children the blessings of prosperity, while the name of the Vandals will survive and their empire be preserved. For if it has ever happened to any men to be engaged in a struggle for their all, we now more than all others realize that we are entering the battle-line with our hopes for all we have resting wholly upon ourselves. Not for our bodies, then, is our fear, nor in death is our danger, but in being defeated by the enemy. For if we lose the victory, death will be to our advantage. Since, therefore, the case stands so, let no one of the Vandals weaken, but let him proudly expose his body, and from shame at the evils that follow defeat let him court the end of life. For when a man is ashamed of that which is shameful, there is always present with him a dauntless courage in the face of danger. And let no recollection of the earlier battle come into your minds. For it was not by cowardice on our part that we were defeated, but we tripped upon obstacles interposed by fortune and were overthrown. Now it is not the way of the tide of fortune to flow always in the same direction, but every day, as a rule, it is wont to change about. In manliness it is our boast that we surpass the enemy, and that in numbers we are much superior; for we believe that we surpass them no less than tenfold. And why shall I add that many and great are the incentives which, now especially, urge us on to valour, naming the glory of our ancestors and the empire which has been handed down to us by them? For in our case that glory is obscured by our unlikeness to our kindred, while the empire is bent upon fleeing from us as unworthy. And I pass over in silence the wails of these poor women and the tears of our children, by which, as you see, I am now so deeply moved that I am unable to prolong my discourse. But having said this one thing, I shall stop,—that there will be for us no returning to these most precious possessions if we do not gain the mastery over the enemy. Remembering these things, shew yourselves brave men and do not bring shame upon the fame of Gizeric."

After speaking such words, Gelimer commanded his brother Tzazon to deliver an exhortation separately to the Vandals who had come with him from Sardinia. And he gathered them together a little apart from the camp and spoke as follows: "For all the Vandals, fellow soldiers, the struggle is in behalf of those things which you have just heard the king recount, but for you, in addition to all the other considerations, it so happens that you are vying with yourselves. For you have recently been victorious in a struggle for the maintenance of our rule, and you have recovered the island for the empire of the Vandals; there is every reason, therefore, for you to make still greater display of your valour. For those whose hazard involves the greatest things must needs display the greatest zeal for warfare also. Indeed, when men who struggle for the maintenance of their rule are defeated, should it so happen, they have not failed in the most vital part; but when men are engaged in battle for their all, surely their very lives are influenced by the outcome of the struggle. And for the rest, if you shew yourselves brave men at the present time, you will thereby prove with certainty that the destruction of the tyrant Godas was an achievement of valour on your part; but if you weaken now, you will be deprived of even the renown of those

deeds, as of something which does not belong to you at all. And yet, even apart from this, it is reasonable to think that you will have an advantage over the rest of the Vandals in this battle. For those who have failed are dismayed by their previous fortune, while those who have encountered no reverse enter the struggle with their courage unimpaired. And this too, I think, will not be spoken out of season, that if we conquer the enemy, it will be you who will win the credit for the greatest part of the victory, and all will call you saviours of the nation of the Vandals. For men who achieve renown in company with those who have previously met with misfortune naturally claim the better fortune as their own. Considering all these things, therefore, I say that you should bid the women and children who are lamenting their fate to take courage even now, should summon God to fight with us, should go with enthusiasm against the enemy, and lead the way for our compatriots into this battle."

### III

After both Gelimer and Tzazon had spoken such exhortations, they led out the Vandals, and at about the time of lunch, when the Romans were not expecting them, but were preparing their meal, they were at hand and arrayed themselves for battle along the bank of the stream. Now the stream at that place is an ever-flowing one, to be sure, but its volume is so small that it is not even given a special name by the inhabitants of the place, but it is designated simply as a brook. So the Romans came to the other bank of this river, after preparing themselves as well as they could under the circumstances, and arrayed themselves as follows. The left wing was held by Martinus and Valerian, John, Cyprian, Althias, and Marcellus, and as many others as were commanders of the foederati; and the right was held by Pappas, Barbatus, and Aïgan, and the others who commanded the forces of cavalry. And in the centre John took his position, leading the guards and spearmen of Belisarius and carrying the general's standard. And Belisarius also came there at the opportune moment with his five hundred horsemen, leaving the infantry behind advancing at a walk. For all the Huns had been arrayed in another place, it being customary for them even before this not to mingle with the Roman army if they could avoid so doing, and at that time especially, since they had in mind the purpose which has previously been explained, it was not their wish to be arrayed with the rest of the army. Such, then, was the formation of the Romans. And on the side of the Vandals, either wing was held by the chiliarchs, and each one led the division under him, while in the centre was Tzazon, the brother of Gelimer, and behind him were arrayed the Moors. But Gelimer himself was going about everywhere exhorting them and urging them on to daring. And the command had been previously given to all the Vandals to use neither spear nor any other weapon in this engagement except their swords.

After a considerable time had passed and no one began the battle, John chose out a few of those under him by the advice of Belisarius and crossing the river made an attack on the centre, where Tzazon crowded them back and gave chase. And the Romans in flight came into their own camp, while the Vandals in pursuit came as far as the stream, but did not cross it. And once more John, leading out more of the guardsmen of Belisarius, made a dash against the forces of Tzazon, and again being repulsed from there, withdrew to the Roman camp. And a third time with almost all the guards and spearmen of Belisarius he took the general's standard and made his attack with much shouting and a great noise. But since the barbarians manfully withstood them and used only their swords, the battle became fierce, and many of the noblest of the Vandals fell, and among them Tzazon himself, the brother of Gelimer. Then at last the whole Roman army was set in motion, and crossing the river they advanced upon the enemy, and the rout, beginning at the centre, became

complete; for each of the Roman divisions turned to flight those before them with no trouble. And the Massagetae, seeing this, according to their agreement among themselves joined the Roman army in making the pursuit, but this pursuit was not continued for a great distance. For the Vandals entered their own camp quickly and remained quiet, while the Romans, thinking that they would not be able to fight it out with them inside the stockade, stripped such of the corpses as had gold upon them and retired to their own camp. And there perished in this battle, of the Romans less than fifty, but of the Vandals about eight hundred.

But Belisarius, when the infantry came up in the late afternoon, moved as quickly as he could with the whole army and went against the camp of the Vandals. And Gelimer, realising that Belisarius with his infantry and the rest of his army was coming against him straightway, without saying a word or giving a command leaped upon his horse and was off in flight on the road leading to Numidia. And his kinsmen and some few of his domestics followed him in utter consternation and guarding with silence what was taking place. And for some time it escaped the notice of the Vandals that Gelimer had run away, but when they all perceived that he had fled, and the enemy were already plainly seen, then indeed the men began to shout and the children cried out and the women wailed. And they neither took with them the money they had nor did they heed the laments of those dearest to them, but every man fled in complete disorder just as he could. And the Romans, coming up, captured the camp, money and all, with not a man in it; and they pursued the fugitives throughout the whole night, killing all the men upon whom they happened, and making slaves of the women and children. And they found in this camp a quantity of wealth such as has never before been found, at least in one place. For the Vandals had plundered the Roman domain for a long time and had transferred great amounts of money to Libya, and since their land was an especially good one, nourishing abundantly with the most useful crops, it came about that the revenue collected from the commodities produced there was not paid out to any other country in the purchase of a food supply, but those who possessed the land always kept for themselves the income from it for the ninety-five years during which the Vandals ruled Libya. And from this it resulted that their wealth, amounting to an extraordinary sum, returned once more on that day into the hands of the Romans.

533 A.D.

So this battle and the pursuit and the capture of the Vandals' camp happened three months after the Roman army came to Carthage, at about the middle of the last month, which the Romans call "December."

#### IV

Then Belisarius, seeing the Roman army rushing about in confusion and great disorder, was disturbed, being fearful throughout the whole night lest the enemy, uniting by mutual agreement against him, should do him irreparable harm. And if this thing had happened at that time in any way at all, I believe that, not one of the Romans would have escaped and enjoyed this booty. For the soldiers, being extremely poor men, upon becoming all of a sudden masters of very great wealth and of women both young and extremely comely, were no longer able to restrain their minds or to find any satiety in the things they had, but were so intoxicated, drenched as they were by their present good fortunes, that each one wished to take everything with him back to Carthage. And they were going about, not in companies but alone or by twos, wherever hope led them, searching out everything roundabout among the valleys and the rough country and wherever there chanced to be a cave or anything such as might bring them into danger or ambush. For neither did fear of

the enemy nor their respect for Belisarius occur to them, nor indeed anything else at all except the desire for spoils, and being overmastered by this they came to think lightly of everything else. And Belisarius, taking note of all this, was at a loss as to how he should handle the situation. But at daybreak he took his stand upon a certain hill near the road, appealing to the discipline which no longer existed and heaping reproaches upon all, soldiers and officers alike. Then indeed, those who chanced to be near, and especially those who were of the household of Belisarius, sent the money and slaves which they had to Carthage with their tentmates and messmates, and themselves came up beside the general and gave heed to the orders given them.

And he commanded John, the Armenian, with two hundred men to follow Gelimer, and without slackening their speed either night or day to pursue him, until they should take him living or dead. And he sent word to his associates in Carthage to lead into the city all the Vandals who were sitting as suppliants in sanctuaries in the places about the city, giving them pledges and taking away their weapons, that they might not begin an uprising, and to keep them there until he himself should come. And with those who were left he went about everywhere and gathered the soldiers hastily, and to all the Vandals he came upon he gave pledges for their safety. For it was no longer possible to catch anyone of the Vandals except as a suppliant in the sanctuaries. And from these he took away their weapons and sent them, with soldiers to guard them, to Carthage, not giving them time to unite against the Romans. And when everything was as well settled as possible, he himself with the greater part of the army moved against Gelimer with all speed. But John, after continuing the pursuit five days and nights, had already come not far from Gelimer, and in fact he was about to engage with him on the following day. But since it was not fated that Gelimer should be captured by John, the following obstacle was contrived by fortune. Among those pursuing with John it happened that there was Uliaris, the aide of Belisarius. Now this man was a passionate fellow and well favoured in strength of heart and body, but not a very serious man, but one who generally took delight in wine and buffoonery. This Uliaris on the sixth day of the pursuit, being drunk, saw a bird sitting in a tree at about sunrise, and he quickly stretched his bow and despatched a missile at the bird. And he missed the bird, but John, who was behind it, he hit in the neck by no will of his own. And since the wound was mortal, John passed away a short time afterwards, leaving great sorrow at his loss to the Emperor Justinian and Belisarius, the general, and to all the Romans and Carthaginians. For in manliness and every sort of virtue he was well endowed, and he shewed himself, to those who associated with him, gentle and equitable to a degree quite unsurpassed. Thus, then, John fulfilled his destiny. As for Uliaris, when he came to himself, he fled to a certain village which was near by and sat as a suppliant in the sanctuary there. And the soldiers no longer pressed the pursuit of Gelimer, but they cared for John as long as he survived, and when he had died they carried out all the customary rites in his burial, and reporting the whole matter to Belisarius they remained where they were. And as soon as he heard of it, he came to John's burial, and bewailed his fate. And after weeping over him and grieving bitterly at the whole occurrence, he honoured the tomb of John with many gifts and especially by providing for it a regular income. However, he did nothing severe to Uliaris, since the soldiers said that John had enjoined upon them by the most dread oaths that no vengeance should come to him, since he had not performed the unholy deed with deliberate intent.

Thus, then, Gelimer escaped falling into the hands of the enemy on that day. And from that time on Belisarius pursued him, but upon reaching a strong city of Numidia situated on the sea, ten days distant from Carthage, which they call Hippo Regius, he learned that Gelimer had ascended the mountain Papua and could no longer be captured by the Romans. Now this mountain is situated at the extremity of Numidia and is exceedingly precipitous



and climbed only with the greatest difficulty (for lofty cliffs rise up toward it from every side), and on it dwell barbarian Moors, who were friends and allies to Gelimer, and an ancient city named Medeus lies on the outskirts of the mountain. There Gelimer rested with his followers. But as for Belisarius, he was not able to make any attempt at all on the mountain, much less in the winter season, and since his affairs were still in an uncertain state, he did not think it advisable to be away from Carthage; and so he chose out soldiers, with Pharas as their leader, and set them to maintain the siege of the mountain. Now this Pharas was energetic and thoroughly serious and upright in every way, although he was an Erulian by birth. And for an Erulian not to give himself over to treachery and drunkenness, but to strive after uprightness, is no easy matter and merits abundant praise. But not only was it Pharas who maintained orderly conduct, but also all the Erulians who followed him. This Pharas, then, Belisarius commanded to establish himself at the foot of the mountain during the winter season and to keep close guard, so that it would neither be possible for Gelimer to leave the mountain nor for any supplies to be brought in to him. And Pharas acted accordingly. Then Belisarius turned to the Vandals who were sitting as suppliants in the sanctuaries in Hippo Regius,—and there were many of them and of the nobility—and he caused them all to accept pledges and arise, and then he sent them to Carthage with a guard. And there it came about that the following event happened to him.

In the house of Gelimer there was a certain scribe named Boniface, a Libyan, and a native of Byzacium, a man exceedingly faithful to Gelimer. At the beginning of this war Gelimer had put this Boniface on a very swift-sailing ship, and placing all the royal treasure in it commanded him to anchor in the harbour of Hippo Regius, and if he should see that the situation was not favourable to their side, he was to sail with all speed to Spain with the money, and go to Theudis, the leader of the Visigoths, where he was expecting to find safety for himself also, should the fortune of war prove adverse for the Vandals. So Boniface, as long as he felt hope for the cause of the Vandals, remained there; but as soon as the battle in Tricamarum took place, with all the other events which have been related, he spread his canvas and sailed away just as Gelimer had directed him. But an opposing wind brought him back, much against his will, into the harbour of Hippo Regius. And since he had already heard that the enemy were somewhere near, he entreated the sailors with many promises to row with all their might for some other continent or for an island. But they were unable to do so, since a very severe storm had fallen upon them and the waves of the sea were rising to a great height, seeing that it was the Tuscan sea, and then it occurred to them and to Boniface that, after all, God wished to give the money to the Romans and so was not allowing the ship to put out. However, though they had got outside the harbour, they encountered great danger in bringing their ship back to anchorage. And when Belisarius arrived at Hippo Regius, Boniface sent some men to him. These he commanded to sit in a sanctuary, and they were to say that they had been sent by Boniface, who had the money of Gelimer, but to conceal the place where he was, until they should receive the pledges of Belisarius that upon giving Gelimer's money lie himself should escape free from harm, having all that was his own. These men, then, acted according to these instructions, and Belisarius was pleased at the good news and did not decline to take an oath. And sending some of his associates he took the treasure of Gelimer and released Boniface in possession of his own money and also with an enormous sum which he plundered from Gelimer's treasure.

## V

And when he returned to Carthage, he put all the Vandals in readiness, so that at the opening of spring he might send them to Byzantium; and he sent out an army to recover for

the Romans everything which the Vandals ruled. And first he sent Cyril to Sardinia with a great force, having the head of Tzazon, since these islanders were not at all willing to yield to the Romans, fearing the Vandals and thinking that what had been told them as having happened in Tricamarum could not be true. And he ordered this Cyril to send a portion of the army to Corsica, and to recover for the Roman empire the island, which had been previously subject to the Vandals; this island was called Cyrnus in early times, and is not far from Sardinia. So he came to Sardinia and displayed the head of Tzazon to the inhabitants of the place, and he won back both the islands and made them tributary to the Roman domain. And to Caesarea in Mauretania Belisarius sent John with an infantry company which he usually commanded himself; this place is distant from Carthage a journey of thirty days for an unencumbered traveller, as one goes towards Gadir and the west; and it is situated upon the sea, having been a great and populous city from ancient times. Another John, one of his own guardsmen, he sent to Gadir on the strait and by one of the Pillars of Heracles, to take possession of the fort there which they call "Septem." And to the islands which are near the strait where the ocean flows in, called Ebusa and Majorica and Minorica by the natives, he sent Apollinarius, who was a native of Italy, but had come while still a lad to Libya. And he had been rewarded with great sums of money by Ilderic, who was then leader of the Vandals, and after Ilderic had been removed from the office and was in confinement, as has been told in the previous narrative, he came to the Emperor Justinian with the other Libyans who were working in the interest of Ilderic, in order to entreat his favour as a suppliant. And he joined the Roman expedition against Gelimer and the Vandals, and proved himself a brave man in this war and most of all at Tricamarum. And as a result of his deeds there Belisarius entrusted to him these islands. And later Belisarius sent an army also into Tripolis to Pudentius and Tattimuth, who were being pressed by the Moors there, and thus strengthened the Roman power in that quarter.

He also sent some men to Sicily in order to take the fortress in Lilybaeum, as belonging to the Vandals' kingdom, but he was repulsed from there, since the Goths by no means saw fit to yield any part of Sicily, on the ground that this fortress did not belong to the Vandals at all. And when Belisarius heard this, he wrote to the commanders who were there as follows: "You are depriving us of Lilybaeum, the fortress of the Vandals who are the slaves of the emperor, and are not acting justly nor in a way to benefit yourselves, and you wish to bring upon your ruler, though he does not so will it and is far distant from the scene of these actions, the hostility of the great emperor, whose good-will he has, having won it with great labour. And yet how could you but seem to be acting contrary to the ways of men, if you recently allowed Gelimer to hold the fortress, but have decided to wrest from the emperor, Gelimer's master, the possessions of the slave? You, at least, should not act thus, most excellent sirs. But reflect that, while it is the nature of friendship to cover over many faults, hostility does not brook even the smallest misdeeds, but searches the past for every offence, and allows not its enemy to grow rich on what does not in the least belong to them. Moreover, the enemy fights to avenge the wrongs which it says have been done to its ancestors; and whereas, if friendship thus turned to hostility fails in the struggle, it suffers no loss of its own possessions, yet if it succeeds, it teaches the vanquished to take a new view of the indulgence which has been shewn them in the past. See to it, then, that you neither do us further harm nor suffer harm yourselves, and do not make the great emperor an enemy to the Gothic nation, when it is your prayer that he be propitious toward you. For be well assured that, if you lay claim to this fortress, war will confront you immediately, and not for Lilybaeum alone, but for all the possessions you claim as yours, though not one of them belongs to you."

Such was the message of the letter. And the Goths reported these things to the mother of Antalaric, and at her direction made the following reply: "The letter which you have

written, most excellent Belisarius, carries sound admonition, but pertinent to some other men, not to us the Goths. For there is nothing of the Emperor Justinian's which we have taken and hold; may we never be so mad as to do such a thing! The whole of Sicily we claim because it is our own, and the fortress of Lilybaeum is one of its promontories. And if Theoderic gave his sister, who was the consort of the king of the Vandals, one of the trading-ports of Sicily for her use, this is nothing. For this fact could not afford a basis for any claim on your part. But you, O General, would be acting justly toward us, if you should be willing to make the settlement of the matters in dispute between us, not as an enemy, but as a friend. And there is this difference, that friends are accustomed to settle their disagreements by arbitration, but enemies by battle. We, therefore, shall commit this matter to the Emperor Justinian, to arbitrate in whatever manner seems to him lawful and just. And we desire that the decisions you make shall be as wise as possible, rather than as hasty as possible, and that you, therefore, await the decision of your emperor." Such was the message of the letter of the Goths. And Belisarius, reporting all to the emperor, remained quiet until the emperor should send him word what his wish was.

## VI

But Pharas, having by this time become weary of the siege for many reasons, and especially because of the winter season, and at the same time thinking that the Moors there would not be able to stand in his way, undertook the ascent of Papua with great zeal. Accordingly he armed all his followers very carefully and began the ascent. But the Moors rushed to the defence, and since they were on ground which was steep and very hard to traverse, their efforts to hinder those making the ascent were easily accomplished. But Pharas fought hard to force the ascent, and one hundred and ten of his men perished in this struggle, and he himself with the remainder was beaten back and retired; and as a result of this he did not dare to attempt the ascent again, since the situation was against him, but he established as careful a guard as possible, in order that those on Papua, being pressed by hunger, might surrender themselves; and he neither permitted them to run away nor anything to be brought in to them from outside. Then, indeed, it came about that Gelimer and those about him, who were nephews and cousins of his and other persons of high birth, experienced a misery which no one could describe, however eloquent he might be, in a way which would equal the facts. For of all the nations which we know that of the Vandals is the most luxurious, and that of the Moors the most hardy. For the Vandals, since the time when they gained possession of Libya, used to indulge in baths, all of them, every day, and enjoyed a table abounding in all things, the sweetest and best that the earth and sea produce. And they wore gold very generally, and clothed themselves in the Medic garments, which now they call "seric," and passed their time, thus dressed, in theatres and hippodromes and in other pleasureable pursuits, and above all else in hunting. And they had dancers and mimes and all other things to hear and see which are of a musical nature or otherwise merit attention among men. And the most of them dwelt in parks, which were well supplied with water and trees; and they had great numbers of banquets, and all manner of sexual pleasures were in great vogue among them. But the Moors live in stuffy huts both in winter and in summer and at every other time, never removing from them either because of snow or the heat of the sun or any other discomfort whatever due to nature. And they sleep on the ground, the prosperous among them, if it should so happen, spreading a fleece under themselves. Moreover, it is not customary among them to change their clothing with the seasons, but they wear a thick cloak and a rough shirt at all times. And they have neither bread nor wine nor any other good thing, but they take grain, either wheat or barley, and, without boiling it or grinding it to flour or barley-meal, they eat it in a manner not a whit

different from that of animals. Since the Moors, then, were of a such a sort, the followers of Gelimer, after living with them for a long time and changing their accustomed manner of life to such a miserable existence, when at last even the necessities of life had failed, held out no longer, but death was thought by them most sweet and slavery by no means disgraceful.

Now when this was learned by Pharas, he wrote to Gelimer as follows: "I too am a barbarian and not accustomed to writing and speaking, nor am I skilful in these matters. But that which I am forced as a man to know, having learned from the nature of things, this I am writing you. What in the world has happened to you, my dear Gelimer, that you have cast, not yourself alone, but your whole family besides, into this pit? Is it, forsooth, that you may avoid becoming a slave? But this is assuredly nothing but youthful folly, and making of 'liberty' a mere shibboleth, as though liberty were worth possessing at the price of all this misery! And, after all, do you not consider that you are, even now, a slave to the most wretched of the Moors, since your only hope of being saved, if the best happens, is in them? And yet why would it not be better in every way to be a slave among the Romans and beggared, than to be monarch on Mount Papua with Moors as your subjects? But of course it seems to you the very height of disgrace even to be a fellow slave with Belisarius! Away with the thought, most excellent Gelimer. Are not we, who also are born of noble families, proud that we are now in the service of an emperor? And indeed they say that it is the wish of the Emperor Justinian to have you enrolled in the senate, thus sharing in the highest honour and being a patrician, as we term that rank, and to present you with lands both spacious and good and with great sums of money, and that Belisarius is willing to make himself responsible for your having all these things, and to give you pledges. Now as for all the miseries which fortune has brought you, you are able to bear with fortitude whatever comes from her, knowing that you are but a man and that these things are inevitable; but if fortune has purposed to temper these adversities with some admixture of good, would you of yourself refuse to accept this gladly? Or should we consider that the good gifts of fortune are not just as inevitable as are her undesirable gifts? Yet such is not the opinion of even the utterly senseless; but you, it would seem, have now lost your good judgment, steeped as you are in misfortunes. Indeed, discouragement is wont to confound the mind and to be transformed to folly. If, however, you can bear your own thoughts and refrain from rebelling against fortune when she changes, it will be possible at this very moment for you to choose that which will be wholly to your advantage, and to escape from the evils which hang over you."

When Gelimer had read this letter and wept bitterly over it, he wrote in reply as follows: "I am both deeply grateful to you for the advice which you have given me and I also think it unbearable to be a slave to an enemy who wrongs me, from whom I should pray God to exact justice, if He should be propitious to me,—an enemy who, though he had never experienced any harm from me either in deeds which he suffered or in words which he heard, provided a pretext for a war which was unprovoked, and reduced me to this state of misfortune, bringing Belisarius against me from I know not where. And yet it is not at all unlikely that he also, since he is but a man, though he be emperor too, may have something befall him which he would not choose. But as for me, I am not able to write further. For my present misfortune has robbed me of my thoughts. Farewell, then, dear Pharas, and send me a lyre and one loaf of bread and a sponge, I pray you." When this reply was read by Pharas, he was at a loss for some time, being unable to understand the final words of the letter, until he who had brought the letter explained that Gelimer desired one loaf because he was eager to enjoy the sight of it and to eat it, since from the time when he went up upon Papua he had not seen a single baked loaf. A sponge also was necessary for him; for one of his eyes, becoming irritated by lack of washing, was greatly swollen. And being a skilful



harpist he had composed an ode relating to his present misfortune, which he was eager to chant to the accompaniment of a lyre while he wept out his soul. When Pharas heard this, he was deeply moved, and lamenting the fortune of men, he did as was written and sent all the things which Gelimer desired of him. However he relaxed the siege not a whit, but kept watch more closely than before.

## VII

And already a space of three months had been spent in this siege and the winter was coming to an end. And Gelimer was afraid, suspecting that his besiegers would come up against him after no great time; and the bodies of most of the children who were related to him<sup>[21]</sup> were discharging worms in this time of misery. And though in everything he was deeply distressed, and looked upon everything,—except, indeed, death,—with dissatisfaction, he nevertheless endured the suffering beyond all expectation, until it happened that he beheld a sight such as the following. A certain Moorish woman had managed somehow to crush a little corn, and making of it a very tiny cake, threw it into the hot ashes on the hearth. For thus it is the custom among the Moors to bake their loaves. And beside this hearth two children were sitting, in exceedingly great distress by reason of their hunger, the one being the son of the very woman who had thrown in the cake, and the other a nephew of Gelimer; and they were eager to seize the cake as soon as it should seem to them to be cooked. And of the two children the Vandal got ahead of the other and snatched the cake first, and, though it was still exceedingly hot and covered with ashes, hunger overpowered him, and he threw it into his mouth and was eating it, when the other seized him by the hair of the head and struck him over the temple and beat him again and thus compelled him with great violence to cast out the cake which was already in his throat. This sad experience Gelimer could not endure (for he had followed all from the beginning), and his spirit was weakened and he wrote as quickly as possible to Pharas as follows: "If it has ever happened to any man, after manfully enduring terrible misfortunes, to take a course contrary to that which he had previously determined upon, consider me to be such a one, O most excellent Pharas. For there has come to my mind your advice, which I am far from wishing to disregard. For I cannot resist fortune further nor rebel against fate, but I shall follow straightway wherever it seems to her best to lead; but let me receive the pledges, that Belisarius guarantees that the emperor will do everything which you recently promised me. For I, indeed, as soon as you give the pledges, shall put both myself into your hands and these kinsmen of mine and the Vandals, as many as are here with us."

Such were the words written by Gelimer in this letter. And Pharas, having signified this to Belisarius, as well as what they had previously written to each other, begged him to declare as quickly as possible what his wish was. And Belisarius (since he was greatly desirous of leading Gelimer alive to the emperor), as soon as he had read the letter, became overjoyed and commanded Cyprian, a leader of foederati, to go to Papua with certain others, and directed them to give an oath concerning the safety of Gelimer and of those with him, and to swear that he would be honoured before the emperor and would lack nothing. And when these men had come to Pharas, they went with him to a certain place by the foot of the mountain, where Gelimer came at their summons, and after receiving the pledges just as he wished he came with them to Carthage. And it happened that Belisarius was staying for a time in the suburb of the city which they call Adas. Accordingly Gelimer came before him in that place, laughing with such laughter as was neither moderate nor the kind one could conceal, and some of those who were looking at him suspected that by reason of the extremity of his affliction he had changed entirely from his natural state and that, already beside himself, he was laughing for no reason. But his friends would have it that the man



was in his sound mind, and that because he had been born in a royal family, and had ascended the throne, and had been clothed with great power and immense wealth from childhood even to old age, and then being driven to flight and plunged into great fear had undergone the sufferings on Papua, and now had come as a captive, having in this way had experience of all the gifts of fortune, both good and evil, for this reason, they believed, he thought that man's lot was worthy of nothing else than much laughter. Now concerning this laughter of Gelimer's, let each one speak according to his judgment, both enemy and friend. But Belisarius, reporting to the emperor that Gelimer was a captive in Carthage, asked permission to bring him to Byzantium with him. At the same time he guarded both him and all the Vandals in no dishonour and proceeded to put the fleet in readiness. Now many other things too great to be hoped for have before now been experienced in the long course of time, and they will continue as long as the fortunes of men are the same as they now are; for those things which seem to reason impossible are actually accomplished, and many times those things which previously appeared impossible, when they have befallen, have seemed to be worthy of wonder; but whether such events as these ever took place before I am not able to say, wherein the fourth descendant of Gizeric, and his kingdom at the height of its wealth and military strength, were completely undone in so short a time by five thousand men coming in as invaders and having not a place to cast anchor. For such was the number of the horsemen who followed Belisarius, and carried through the whole war against the Vandals. For whether this happened by chance or because of some kind of valour, one would justly marvel at it. But I shall return to the point from which I have strayed.

## VIII

So the Vandalic war ended thus. But envy, as is wont to happen in cases of great good fortune, was already swelling against Belisarius, although he provided no pretext for it. For some of the officers slandered him to the emperor, charging him, without any grounds whatever, with seeking to set up a kingdom for himself, a statement for which there was no basis whatever. But the emperor did not disclose these things to the world, either because he paid no heed to the slander, or because this course seemed better to him. But he sent Solomon and gave Belisarius the opportunity to choose whichever of two things he desired, either to come to Byzantium with Gelimer and the Vandals, or to remain there and send them. And Belisarius, since it did not escape him that the officers were bringing against him the charge of seeking supreme power, was eager to get to Byzantium, in order that he might clear himself of the charge and be able to proceed against his slanderers. Now as to the manner in which he learned of the attempt of his accusers, I shall explain. When those who denounced him wished to present this slander, fearing lest the man who was to carry their letter to the emperor should be lost at sea and thus put a stop to their proceedings, they wrote the aforesaid accusation on two tablets, purposing to send two messengers to the emperor in two ships. And one of these two sailed away without being detected, but the second, on account of some suspicion or other, was captured in Mandracium, and putting the writing into the hands of his captors, he made known what was being done. So Belisarius, having learned in this way, was eager to come before the emperor, as has been said. Such, then, was the course of these events at Carthage.

But the Moors who dwelt in Byzacium and in Numidia turned to revolt for no good reason, and they decided to break the treaty and to rise suddenly against the Romans. And this was not out of keeping with their peculiar character. For there is among the Moors neither fear of God nor respect for men. For they care not either for oaths or for hostages, even though the hostages chance to be the children or brothers of their leaders. Nor is peace

maintained among the Moors by any other means than by fear of the enemies opposing them. Now I shall set forth in what manner the treaty was made by them with Belisarius and how it was broken. When it came to be expected that the emperor's expedition would arrive in Libya, the Moors, fearing lest they should receive some harm from it, consulted the oracles of their women. For it is not lawful in this nation for a man to utter oracles, but the women among them as a result of some sacred rites become possessed and foretell the future, no less than any of the ancient oracles. So on that occasion, when they made enquiry, as has been said, the women gave the response: "There shall be a host from the waters, the overthrow of the Vandals, destruction and defeat of the Moors, when the general of the Romans shall come unbearded." When the Moors heard this, since they saw that the emperor's army had come from the sea, they began to be in great fear and were quite unwilling to fight in alliance with the Vandals, but they sent to Belisarius and established peace, as has been stated previously, and then remained quiet and waited for the future, to see how it would fall out. And when the power of the Vandals had now come to an end, they sent to the Roman army, investigating whether there was anyone unbearded among them holding an office. And when they saw all wearing full beards, they thought that the oracle did not indicate the present time to them, but one many generations later, interpreting the saying in that way which they themselves wished. Immediately, therefore, they were eager to break the treaty, but their fear of Belisarius prevented them. For they had no hope that they would ever overcome the Romans in war, at least with him present. But when they heard that he was making his departure together with his guards and spearmen, and that the ships were already being filled with them and the Vandals, they suddenly rose in arms and displayed every manner of outrage upon the Libyans. For the soldiers were both few in each place on the frontier and still unprepared, so that they would not have been able to stand against the barbarians as they made inroads at every point, nor to prevent their incursions, which took place frequently and not in an open manner. But men were being killed indiscriminately and women with their children were being made slaves, and the wealth was being plundered from every part of the frontier and the whole country was being filled with fugitives. These things were reported to Belisarius when he was just about setting sail. And since it was now too late for him to return himself, he entrusted Solomon with the administration of Libya and he also chose out the greatest part of his own guards and spearmen, instructing them to follow Solomon and as quickly as possible to punish with all zeal those of the Moors who had risen in revolt and to exact vengeance for the injury done the Romans. And the emperor sent another army also to Solomon with Theodoras, the Cappadocian, and Ildiger, who was the son-in-law of Antonina, the wife of Belisarius. And since it was no longer possible to find the revenues of the districts of Libya set down in order in documents, as the Romans had recorded them in former times, inasmuch as Gizeric had upset and destroyed everything in the beginning, Tryphon and Eustratius were sent by the emperor, in order to assess the taxes for the Libyans each according to his proportion. But these men seemed to the Libyans neither moderate nor endurable.

## IX

Belisarius, upon reaching Byzantium with Gelimer and the Vandals, was counted worthy to receive such honours, as in former times were assigned to those generals of the Romans who had won the greatest and most noteworthy victories. And a period of about six hundred years had now passed since anyone had attained these honours, except, indeed, Titus and Trajan, and such other emperors as had led armies against some barbarian nation and had been victorious. For he displayed the spoils and slaves from the war in the midst of the city and led a procession which the Romans call a "triumph," not, however, in the

ancient manner, but going on foot from his own house to the hippodrome and then again from the barriers until he reached the place where the imperial throne is. And there was booty,—first of all, whatever articles are wont to be set apart for the royal service,—thrones of gold and carriages in which it is customary for a king's consort to ride, and much jewelry made of precious stones, and golden drinking cups, and all the other things which are useful for the royal table. And there was also silver weighing many thousands of talents and all the royal treasure amounting to an exceedingly great sum (for Gizeric had despoiled the Palatium in Rome, as has been said in the preceding narrative), and among these were the treasures of the Jews, which Titus, the son of Vespasian, together with certain others, had brought to Rome after the capture of Jerusalem. And one of the Jews, seeing these things, approached one of those known to the emperor and said: "These treasures I think it inexpedient to carry into the palace in Byzantium. Indeed, it is not possible for them to be elsewhere than in the place where Solomon, the king of the Jews, formerly placed them. For it is because of these that Gizeric captured the palace of the Romans, and that now the Roman army has captured that the Vandals." When this had been brought to the ears of the Emperor, he became afraid and quickly sent everything to the sanctuaries of the Christians in Jerusalem. And there were slaves in the triumph, among whom was Gelimer himself, wearing some sort of a purple garment upon his shoulders, and all his family, and as many of the Vandals as were very tall and fair of body. And when Gelimer reached the hippodrome and saw the emperor sitting upon a lofty seat and the people standing on either side and realized as he looked about in what an evil plight he was, he neither wept nor cried out, but ceased not saying over in the words of the Hebrew scripture: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." And when he came before the emperor's seat, they stripped off the purple garment, and compelled him to fall prone on the ground and do obeisance to the Emperor Justinian. This also Belisarius did, as being a suppliant of the emperor along with him. And the Emperor Justinian and the Empress Theodora presented the children of Ilderic and his offspring and all those of the family of the Emperor Valentinian with sufficient sums of money, and to Gelimer they gave lands not to be despised in Galatia and permitted him to live there together with his family. However, Gelimer was by no means enrolled among the patricians, since he was unwilling to change from the faith of Arius.

Jan 1, 535 A.D.

A little later the triumph was celebrated by, Belisarius in the ancient manner also. For he had the fortune to be advanced to the office of consul, and therefore was borne aloft by the captives, and as he was thus carried in his curule chair, he threw to the populace those very spoils of the Vandalic war. For the people carried off the silver plate and golden girdles and a vast amount of the Vandals' wealth of other sorts as a result of Belisarius' consulship, and it seemed that after a long interval of disuse an old custom was being revived. These things, then, took place in Byzantium in the manner described.

## X

And Solomon took over the army in Libya; but in view of the fact that the Moors had risen against him, as has been told previously, and that everything was in suspense, he was at a loss how to treat the situation. For it was reported that the barbarians had destroyed the soldiers in Byzacium and Numidia and that they were pillaging and plundering everything there. But what disturbed most of all both him and all Carthage was the fate which befell Aïgan, the Massagete, and Rufinus, the Thracian, in Byzacium. For both were men of great repute both in the household of Belisarius and in the Roman army, one of them, Aïgan, being among the spearmen of Belisarius, while the other, as the most courageous of all, was

accustomed to carry the standard of the general in battle; such an officer the Romans call "bandifer." Now at the time referred to these two men were commanding detachments of cavalry in Byzacium, and when they saw the Moors plundering everything before them and making all the Libyans captives, they watched in a narrow pass with their followers for those who were escorting the booty, and killed them and took away all the captives. And when a report of this came to the commanders of the barbarians, Coutzinas and Esdilasas and Iourphouthes and Medisinissas, who were not far away from this pass, they moved against them with their whole army in the late afternoon. And the Romans, being a very few men and shut off in a narrow place in the midst of many thousands, were not able to ward off their assailants. For wherever they might turn, they were always shot at from the rear. Then, indeed, Rufinus and Aïgan with some few men ran to the top of a rock which was near by and from there defended themselves against the barbarians. Now as long as they were using their bows, the enemy did not dare come directly to a hand-to-hand struggle with them, but they kept hurling their javelins among them; but when all the arrows of the Romans were now exhausted, the Moors closed with them, and they defended themselves with their swords as well as the circumstances permitted. But since they were overpowered by the multitude of the barbarians, Aïgan fell there with his whole body hacked to pieces, and Rufinus was seized by the enemy and led away. But straightway one of the commanders, Medisinissas, fearing lest he should escape and again make trouble for them, cut off his head and taking it to his home shewed it to his wives, for it was a remarkable sight on account of the extraordinary size of the head and the abundance of hair. And now, since the narration of the history has brought me to this point, it is necessary to tell from the beginning whence the nations of the Moors came to Libya and how they settled there.

When the Hebrews had withdrawn from Egypt and had come near the boundaries of Palestine, Moses, a wise man, who was their leader on the journey, died, and the leadership was passed on to Joshua, the son of Nun, who led this people into Palestine, and, by displaying a valour in war greater than that natural to a man, gained possession of the land. And after overthrowing all the nations he easily won the cities, and he seemed to be altogether invincible. Now at that time the whole country along the sea from Sidon as far as the boundaries of Egypt was called Phoenicia. And one king in ancient times held sway over it, as is agreed by all who have written the earliest accounts of the Phoenicians. In that country there dwelt very populous tribes, the Gergesites and the Jebusites and some others with other names by which they are called in the history of the Hebrews. Now when these nations saw that the invading general was an irresistible prodigy, they emigrated from their ancestral homes and made their way to Egypt, which adjoined their country. And finding there no place sufficient for them to dwell in, since there has been a great population in Aegypt from ancient times, they proceeded to Libya. And they established numerous cities and took possession of the whole of Libya as far as the Pillars of Heracles, and there they have lived even up to my time, using the Phoenician tongue. They also built a fortress in Numidia, where now is the city called Tigisis. In that place are two columns made of white stone near by the great spring, having Phoenician letters cut in them which say in the Phoenician tongue: "We are they who fled from before the face of Joshua, the robber, the son of Nun." There were also other nations settled in Libya before the Moors, who on account of having been established there from of old were said to be children of the soil. And because of this they said that Antaeus, their king, who wrestled with Heracles in Clipea, was a son of the earth. And in later times those who removed from Phoenicia with Dido came to the inhabitants of Libya as to kinsmen. And they willingly allowed them to found and hold Carthage. But as time went on Carthage became a powerful and populous city. And a battle took place between them and their neighbours, who, as has been said, had come from Palestine before them and are called Moors at the present time, and the Carthaginians



defeated them and compelled them to live a very great distance away from Carthage. Later on the Romans gained the supremacy over all of them in war, and settled the Moors at the extremity of the inhabited land of Libya, and made the Carthaginians and the other Libyans subject and tributary to themselves. And after this the Moors won many victories over the Vandals and gained possession of the land now called Mauretania, extending from Gadir as far as the boundaries of Caesarea, as well as the most of Libya which remained. Such, then, is the story of the settlement of the Moors in Libya.

## XI

Now when Solomon heard what had befallen Rufinus and Aïgan, he made ready for war and wrote as follows to the commanders of the Moors: "Other men than you have even before this had the ill fortune to lose their senses and to be destroyed, men who had no means of judging beforehand how their folly would turn out. But as for you, who have the example near at hand in your neighbours, the Vandals, what in the world has happened to you that you have decided to raise your hands against the great emperor and throw away your own security, and that too when you have given the most dread oaths in writing and have handed over your children as pledges to the agreement? Is it that you have determined to make a kind of display of the fact that you have no consideration either for God or for good faith or for kinship itself or for safety or for any other thing at all? And yet, if such is your practice in matters which concern the divine, in what ally do you put your trust in marching against the emperor of the Romans? And if you are taking the field to the destruction of your children, what in the world is it in behalf of which you have decided to endanger yourselves? But if any repentance has by now entered your hearts for what has already taken place, write to us, that we may satisfactorily arrange with you touching what has already been done; but if your madness has not yet abated, expect a Roman war, which will come upon you together with the oaths which you have violated and the wrong which you are doing to your own children."

Such was the letter which Solomon wrote. And the Moors replied as follows: "Belisarius deluded us with great promises and by this means persuaded us to become subjects of the Emperor Justinian; but the Romans, while giving us no share in any good thing, expected to have us, though pinched with hunger, as their friends and allies. Therefore it is more fitting that you should be called faithless than that the Moors should be. For the men who break treaties are not those who, when manifestly wronged, bring accusation against their neighbours and turn away from them, but those who expect to keep others in faithful alliance with them and then do them violence. And men make God their enemy, not when they march against others in order to recover their own possessions, but when they get themselves into danger of war by encroaching upon the possessions of others. And as for children, that will be your concern, who are not permitted to marry more than one wife; but with us, who have, it may be, fifty wives living with each of us, offspring of children can never fail."

When Solomon had read this letter, he decided to lead his whole army against the Moors. So after arranging matters in Carthage, he proceeded with all his troops to Byzacium. And when he reached the place which is called Mammes, where the four Moorish commanders, whom I have mentioned a little before, were encamped, he made a stockade for himself. Now there are lofty mountains there, and a level space near the foothills of the mountains, where the barbarians had made preparations for the battle and arranged their fighting order as follows. They formed a circle of their camels, just as, in the previous narrative, I have said Cabaon did, making the front about twelve deep. And they placed the



women with the children within the circle; (for among the Moors it is customary to take also a few women, with their children, to battle, and these make the stockades and huts for them and tend the horses skilfully, and have charge of the camels and the food; they also sharpen the iron weapons and take upon themselves many of the tasks in connection with the preparation for battle); and the men themselves took their stand on foot in between the legs of the camels, having shields and swords and small spears which they are accustomed to hurl like javelins. And some of them with their horses remained quietly among the mountains. But Solomon disregarded one half of the circle of the Moors, which was towards the mountain, placing no one there. For he feared lest the enemy on the mountain should come down and those in the circle should turn about and thus make the men drawn up there exposed to attack on both sides in the battle. But against the remainder of the circle he drew up his whole army, and since he saw the most of them frightened and without courage, on account of what had befallen Aïgan and Rufinus, and wishing to admonish them to be of good cheer, he spoke as follows: "Men who have campaigned with Belisarius, let no fear of these men enter your minds, and, if Moors gathered to the number of fifty thousand have already defeated five hundred Romans, let not this stand for you as an example. But call to mind your own valour, and consider that while the Vandals defeated the Moors, you have become masters of the Vandals in war without any effort, and that it is not right that those who have conquered the greater should be terrified before those who are inferior. And indeed of all men the Moorish nation seems to be the most poorly equipped for war's struggle. For the most of them have no armour at all, and those who have shields to hold before themselves have only small ones which are not well made and are not able to turn aside what strikes against them. And after they have thrown those two small spears, if they do not accomplish anything, they turn of their own accord to flight. So that it is possible for you, after guarding against the first attack of the barbarians, to win the victory with no trouble at all. But as to your equipment of arms, you see, of course, how great is the difference between it and that of your opponents. And apart from this, both valour of heart and strength of body and experience in war and confidence because you have already conquered all your enemies,—all these advantages you have; but the Moors, being deprived of all these things, put their trust only in their own great throng. And it is easier for a few who are most excellently prepared to conquer a multitude of men not good at warfare than it is for the multitude to defeat them. For while the good soldier has his confidence in himself, the cowardly man generally finds that the very number of those arrayed with him produces a want of room that is full of peril. Furthermore, you are warranted in despising these camels, which cannot fight for the enemy, and when struck by our missiles will, in all probability, become the cause of considerable confusion and disorder among them. And the eagerness for battle which the enemy have acquired on account of their former success will be your ally in the fight. For daring, when it is kept commensurate with one's power, will perhaps be of some benefit even to those who make use of it, but when it exceeds one's power it lends into danger. Bearing these things in mind and despising the enemy, observe silence and order; for by taking thought for these things we shall win the victory over the disorder of the barbarians more easily and with less labour." Thus spoke Solomon.

And the commanders of the Moors also, seeing the barbarians terrified at the orderly array of the Romans, and wishing to recall their host to confidence again, exhorted them in this wise: "That the Romans have human bodies, the kind that yield when struck with iron, we have been taught, O fellow-soldiers, by those of them whom we have recently met, the best of them all, some of whom we have overwhelmed with our spears and killed, and the others we have seized and made our prisoners of war. And not only is this so, but it is now possible to see also that we boast great superiority over them in numbers. And, furthermore, the struggle for us involves the very greatest things, either to be masters of all

Libya or to be slaves to these braggarts. It is therefore necessary for us to be in the highest degree brave men at the present time. For it is not expedient that those whose all is at stake should be other than exceedingly courageous. And it behoves us to despise the equipment of arms which the enemy have. For if they come on foot against us, they will not be able to move rapidly, but will be worsted by the agility of the Moors, and their cavalry will be terrified both by the sight of the camels, and by the noise they make, which, rising above the general tumult of battle, will, in all likelihood, throw them into disorder. And if anyone by taking into consideration the victory of the Romans over the Vandals thinks them not to be withstood, he is mistaken in his judgment. For the scales of war are, in the nature of the case, turned by the valour of the commander or by fortune; and Belisarius, who was responsible for their gaining the mastery over the Vandals, has now, thanks to Heaven, been removed out of our way. And, besides, we too have many times conquered the Vandals and stripped them of their power, and have thus made the victory over them a more feasible and an easier task for the Romans. And now we have reason to hope to conquer this enemy also if you shew yourselves brave men in the struggle."

After the officers of the Moors had delivered this exhortation, they began the engagement. And at first there arose great disorder in the Roman army. For their horses were offended by the noise made by the camels and by the sight of them, and reared up and threw off their riders and the most of them fled in complete disorder. And in the meantime the Moors were making sallies and hurling all the small spears which they had in their hands, thus causing the Roman army to be filled with tumult, and they were hitting them with their missiles while they were unable either to defend themselves or to remain in position. But after this, Solomon, observing what was happening, leaped down from his horse himself first and caused all the others to do the same. And when they had dismounted, he commanded the others to stand still, and, holding their shields before them and receiving the missiles sent by the enemy, to remain in their position; but he himself, leading forward not less than five hundred men, made an attack upon the other portion of the circle. These men he commanded to draw their swords and kill the camels which stood at that point. Then the Moors who were stationed there beat a hasty retreat, and the men under Solomon killed about two hundred camels, and straightway, when the camels fell, the circle became accessible to the Romans. And they advanced on the run into the middle of the circle where the women of the Moors were sitting; meanwhile the barbarians in consternation withdrew to the mountain which was close by, and as they fled in complete disorder the Romans followed behind and killed them. And it is said that ten thousand of the Moors perished in this encounter, while all the women together with the children were made slaves. And the soldiers secured as booty all the camels which they had not killed. Thus the Romans with all their plunder went to Carthage to celebrate the festival of triumph.

## XII

But the barbarians, being moved with anger, once more took the field in a body against the Romans, leaving behind not one of their number, and they began to overrun the country in Byzacium, sparing none of any age of those who fell in their way. And when Solomon had just marched into Carthage it was reported that the barbarians with a great host had come into Byzacium and were plundering everything there. He therefore departed quickly with his whole army and marched against them. And when he reached Bourgaon, where the enemy were encamped, he remained some days in camp over against them, in order that, as soon as the Moors should get on level ground, he might begin the battle. But since they remained on the mountain, he marshalled his army and arrayed it for battle; the Moors,

however, had no intention of ever again engaging in battle with the Romans in level country (for already an irresistible fear had come over them), but on the mountain they hoped to overcome them more easily. Now Mt. Bourgaon is for the most part precipitous and on the side toward the east extremely difficult to ascend, but on the west it is easily accessible and rises in an even slope. And there are two lofty peaks which rise up, forming between them a sort of vale, very narrow, but of incredible depth. Now the barbarians left the peak of the mountain unoccupied, thinking that on this side no hostile movement would be made against them; and they left equally unprotected the space about the foot of the mountain where Bourgaon was easy of access. But at the middle of the ascent they made their camp and remained there, in order that, if the enemy should ascend and begin battle with them, they might at the outset, being on higher ground, shoot down upon their heads. They also had on the mountain many horses, prepared either for flight or for the pursuit, if they should win the battle.

Now when Solomon saw that the Moors were unwilling to fight another battle on the level ground, and also that the Roman army was opposed to making a siege in a desert place, he was eager to come to an encounter with the enemy on Bourgaon. But inasmuch as he saw that the soldiers were stricken with terror because of the multitude of their opponents, which was many times greater than it had been in the previous battle, he called together the army and spoke as follows: "The fear which the enemy feel toward you needs no other arraignment, but voluntarily pleads guilty, bringing forward, as it does, the testimony of its own witnesses. For you see, surely, our opponents gathered in so many tens and tens of thousands, but not daring to come down to the plain and engage with us, unable to feel confidence even in their own selves, but taking refuge in the difficulty of this place. It is therefore not even necessary to address any exhortation to you, at the present time at least. For those to whom both the circumstances and the weakness of the enemy give courage, need not, I think, the additional assistance of words. But of this one thing it will be needful to remind you, that if we fight out this engagement also with brave hearts, it will remain for us, having defeated the Vandals and reduced the Moors to the same fortune, to enjoy all the good things of Libya, having no thought whatever of an enemy in our minds. But as to preventing the enemy from shooting down upon our heads, and providing that no harm come to us from the nature of the place, I myself shall make provision."

After making this exhortation Solomon commanded Theodorus, who led the "excubitores" (for thus the Romans call their guards), to take with him a thousand infantrymen toward the end of the afternoon and with some of the standards to go up secretly on the east side of Bourgaon, where the mountain is most difficult of ascent and, one might say, impracticable, commanding him that, when they arrived near the crest of the mountain, they should remain quietly there and pass the rest of the night, and that at sunrise they should appear above the enemy and displaying the standards commence to shoot. And Theodorus did as directed. And when it was well on in the night, they climbed up the precipitous slope and reached a point near the peak without being noticed either by the Moors or even by any of the Romans; for they were being sent out, it was said, as an advance guard, to prevent anyone from coming to the camp from the outside to do mischief. And at early dawn Solomon with the whole army went up against the enemy to the outskirts of Bourgaon. And when morning had come and the enemy were seen near at hand, the soldiers were completely at a loss, seeing the summit of the mountain no longer unoccupied, as formerly, but covered with men who were displaying Roman standards; for already some daylight was beginning to shew. But when those on the peak began their attack, the Romans perceived that the army was their own and the barbarians that they had been placed between their enemy's forces, and being shot at from both sides and having no opportunity to ward off the enemy, they thought no more of resistance but turned, all of them, to a hasty

flight. And since they could neither run up to the top of Bourgaon, which was held by the enemy, nor go to the plain anywhere over the lower slopes of the mountain, since their opponents were pressing upon them from that side, they went with a great rush to the vale and the unoccupied peak, some even with their horses, others on foot. But since they were a numerous throng fleeing in great fear and confusion, they kept killing each other, and as they rushed into the vale, which was exceedingly deep, those who were first were being killed constantly, but their plight could not be perceived by those who were coming up behind. And when the vale became full of dead horses and men, and the bodies made a passage from Bourgaon to the other mountain, then the remainder were saved by making the crossing over the bodies. And there perished in this struggle, among the Moors fifty thousand, as was declared by those of them who survived, but among the Romans no one at all, nor indeed did anyone receive even a wound, either at the hand of the enemy or by any accident happening to him, but they all enjoyed this victory unscathed. All of the leaders of the barbarians also made their escape, except Esdilasas, who received pledges and surrendered himself to the Romans. So great, however, was the multitude of women and children whom the Romans seized as booty, that they would sell a Moorish boy for the price of a sheep to any who wished to buy. And then the remainder of the Moors recalled the saying of their women, to the effect that their nation would be destroyed by a beardless man.

So the Roman army, together with its booty and with Esdilasas, marched into Carthage; and those of the barbarians who had not perished decided that it was impossible to settle in Byzacium, lest they, being few, should be treated with violence by the Libyans who were their neighbours, and with their leaders they went into Numidia and made themselves suppliants of Iaudas, who ruled the Moors in Aurasium.[42] And the only Moors who remained in Byzacium were those led by Antalas, who during this time had kept faith with the Romans and together with his subjects had remained unharmed.

### XIII

But during the time when these things were happening in Byzacium, Iaudas, who ruled the Moors in Aurasium, bringing more than thirty thousand fighting men, was plundering the country of Numidia and enslaving many of the Libyans. Now it so happened that Althias in Centuriae was keeping guard over the forts there; and he, being eager to take from the enemy some of their captives, went outside the fort with the Huns who were under his command, to the number of about seventy. And reasoning that he was not able to cope with such a great multitude of Moors with only seventy men, he wished to occupy some narrow pass, so that, while the enemy were marching through it, he might be able to snatch up some of the captives. And since there are no such roads there, because flat plains extend in every direction, he devised the following plan.

There is a city not far distant, named Tigisis, then an unwalled place, but having a great spring at a place which was very closely shut in. Althias therefore decided to take possession of this spring, reasoning that the enemy, compelled by thirst, would surely come there; for there is no other water at all close by. Now it seemed to all upon considering the disparity of the armies that his plan was insane. But the Moors came up feeling very much wearied and greatly oppressed by the heat in the summer weather, and naturally almost overcome by an intense thirst, and they made for the spring with a great rush, having no thought of meeting any obstacle. But when they found the water held by the enemy, they all halted, at a loss what to do, the greatest part of their strength having been already expended because of their desire for water. Iaudas therefore had a parley with Althias and agreed to



give him the third part of the booty, on condition that the Moors should all drink. But Althias was by no means willing to accept the proposal, but demanded that he fight with him in single combat for the booty. And this challenge being accepted by Iaudas, it was agreed that if it so fell out that Althias was overcome, the Moors should drink. And the whole Moorish army was rejoiced, being in good hope, since Althias was lean and not tall of body, while Iaudas was the finest and most warlike of all the Moors. Now both of them were, as it happened, mounted. And Iaudas hurled his spear first, but as it was coming toward him Althias succeeded with amazing skill in catching it with his right hand, thus filling Iaudas and the enemy with consternation. And with his left hand he drew his bow instantly, for he was ambidextrous, and hit and killed the horse of Iaudas. And as he fell, the Moors brought another horse for their commander, upon which Iaudas leaped and straightway fled; and the Moorish army followed him in complete disorder. And Althias, by thus taking from them the captives and the whole of the booty, won a great name in consequence of this deed throughout all Libya. Such, then, was the course of these events.

And Solomon, after delaying a short time in Carthage, led his army toward Mt. Aurasium and Iaudas, alleging against him that, while the Roman army was occupied in Byzacium, he had plundered many of the places in Numidia. And this was true. Solomon was also urged on against Iaudas by the other commanders of the Moors, Massonas and Ortaïas, because of their personal enmity; Massonas, because his father Mephanias, who was the father-in-law of Iaudas, had been treacherously slain by him, and Ortaïas, because Iaudas, together with Mastinas, who ruled over the barbarians in Mauretania, had purposed to drive him and all the Moors whom he ruled from the land where they had dwelt from of old. So the Roman army, under the leadership of Solomon, and those of the Moors who came into alliance with them, made their camp on the river Abigas, which flows along by Aurasium and waters the land there. But to Iaudas it seemed inexpedient to array himself against the enemy in the plain, but he made his preparations on Aurasium in such a way as seemed to him would offer most difficulty to his assailants. This mountain is about thirteen days' journey distant from Carthage, and the largest of all known to us. For its circuit is a three days' journey for an unencumbered traveller. And for one wishing to go upon it the mountain is difficult of access and extremely wild, but as one ascends and reaches the level ground, plains are seen and many springs which form rivers and a great number of altogether wonderful parks. And the grain which grows here, and every kind of fruit, is double the size of that produced in all the rest of Libya. And there are fortresses also on this mountain, which are neglected, by reason of the fact that they do not seem necessary to the inhabitants. For since the time when the Moors wrested Aurasium from the Vandals, not a single enemy had until now ever come there or so much as caused the barbarians to be afraid that they would come, but even the populous city of Tamougadis, situated against the mountain on the east at the beginning of the plain, was emptied of its population by the Moors and razed to the ground, in order that the enemy should not only not be able to encamp there, but should not even have the city as an excuse for coming near the mountain. And the Moors of that place held also the land to the west of Aurasium, a tract both extensive and fertile. And beyond these dwelt other nations of the Moors, who were ruled by Ortaïas, who had come, as was stated above, as an ally to Solomon and the Romans. And I have heard this man say that beyond the country which he ruled there was no habitation of men, but desert land extending to a great distance, and that beyond that there are men, not black-skinned like the Moors, but very white in body and fair-haired. So much, then, for these things.

And Solomon, after bribing the Moorish allies with great sums of money and earnestly exhorting them, began the ascent of Mt. Aurasium with the whole army arrayed as for battle, thinking that on that day he would do battle with the enemy and just as he was have



the matter out with them according as fortune should wish. Accordingly the soldiers did not even take with them any food, except a little, for themselves and their horses. And after proceeding over very rough ground for about fifty stades, they made a bivouac. And covering a similar distance each day they came on the seventh day to a place where there was an ancient fortress and an ever-flowing stream. The place is called "Shield Mountain" by the Romans in their own tongue. Now it was reported to them that the enemy were encamped there, and when they reached this place and encountered no enemy, they made camp and, preparing themselves for battle, remained there; and three days' time was spent by them in that place. And since the enemy kept altogether out of their way, and their provisions had failed, the thought came to Solomon and to the whole army that there had been some plot against them on the part of the Moors who were their allies; for these Moors were not unacquainted with the conditions of travel on Aurasium, and understood, probably, what had been decided upon by the enemy; they were stealthily going out to meet them each day, it was said, and had also frequently been sent to their country by the Romans to reconnoitre, and had decided to make nothing but false reports, in order, no doubt, that the Romans, with no prior knowledge of conditions, might make the ascent of Mt. Aurasium without supplies for a longer time or without preparing themselves otherwise in the way which would be best. And, all things considered, the Romans were suspicious that an ambush had been set for them by men who were their allies and began to be afraid, reasoning that the Moors are said to be by nature untrustworthy at all times and especially whenever they march as allies with the Romans or any others against Moors. So, remembering these things, and at the same time being pinched by hunger, they withdrew from there with all speed without accomplishing anything, and, upon reaching the plain, constructed a stockade.

After this Solomon established a part of the army in Numidia to serve as a guard and with the remainder went to Carthage, since it was already winter. There he arranged and set everything in order, so that at the beginning of spring he might again march against Aurasium with a larger equipment and, if possible, without Moors as allies. At the same time he prepared generals and another army and a fleet of ships for an expedition against the Moors who dwell in the island of Sardinia; for this island is a large one and flourishing besides, being about two thirds as large as Sicily (for the perimeter of the island makes a journey of twenty days for an unencumbered traveller); and lying, as it does, between Rome and Carthage, it was oppressed by the Moors who dwelt there. For the Vandals in ancient times, being enraged against these barbarians, sent some few of them with their wives to Sardinia and confined them there. But as time went on they seized the mountains which are near Caranalis, at first making plundering expeditions secretly upon those who dwelt round about, but when they became no less than three thousand, they even made their raids openly, and with no desire for concealment plundered all the country there, being called Barbaricini by the natives. It was against these barbarians, therefore, that Solomon was preparing the fleet during that winter. Such, then, was the course of events in Libya.

#### XIV

And in Italy during these same times the following events took place. Belisarius was sent against Theodatus and the Gothic nation by the Emperor Justinian, and sailing to Sicily he secured this island with no trouble. And the manner in which this was done will be told in the following pages, when the history leads me to the narration of the events in Italy. For it has not seemed to me out of order first to record all the events which happened in Libya and after that to turn to the portion of the history touching Italy and the Goths.

During this winter Belisarius remained in Syracuse and Solomon in Carthage. And it came about during this year that a most dread portent took place. For the sun gave forth its light without brightness, like the moon, during this whole year, and it seemed exceedingly like the sun in eclipse, for the beams it shed were not clear nor such as it is accustomed to shed. And from the time when this thing happened men were free neither from war nor pestilence nor any other thing leading to death. And it was the time when Justinian was in the tenth year of his reign.

536 A.D.

At the opening of spring, when the Christians were celebrating the feast which they call Easter, there arose a mutiny among the soldiers in Libya. I shall now tell how it arose and to what end it came.

After the Vandals had been defeated in the battle, as I have told previously, the Roman soldiers took their daughters and wives and made them their own by lawful marriage. And each one of these women kept urging her husband to lay claim to the possession of the lands which she had owned previously, saying that it was not right or fitting if, while living with the Vandals, they had enjoyed these lands, but after entering into marriage with the conquerors of the Vandals they were then to be deprived of their possessions. And having these things in mind, the soldiers did not think that they were bound to yield the lands of the Vandals to Solomon, who wished to register them as belonging to the commonwealth and to the emperor's house and said that while it was not unreasonable that the slaves and all other things of value should go as booty to the soldiers, the land itself belonged to the emperor and the empire of the Romans, which had nourished them and caused them to be called soldiers and to be such, not in order to win for themselves such land as they should wrest from the barbarians who were trespassing on the Roman empire, but that this land might come to the commonwealth, from which both they and all others secured their maintenance. This was one cause of the mutiny. And there was a second, concurrent, cause also, which was no less, perhaps even more, effective in throwing all Libya into confusion. It was as follows: In the Roman army there were, as it happened, not less than one thousand soldiers of the Arian faith; and the most of these were barbarians, some of these being of the Erulian nation. Now these men were urged on to the mutiny by the priests of the Vandals with the greatest zeal. For it was not possible for them to worship God in their accustomed way, but they were excluded both from all sacraments and from all sacred rites. For the Emperor Justinian did not allow any Christian who did not espouse the orthodox faith to receive baptism or any other sacrament. But most of all they were agitated by the feast of Easter, during which they found themselves unable to baptize their own children with the sacred water, or do anything else pertaining to this feast. And as if these things were not sufficient for Heaven, in its eagerness to ruin the fortunes of the Romans, it so fell out that still another thing provided an occasion for those who were planning the mutiny. For the Vandals whom Belisarius took to Byzantium were placed by the emperor in five cavalry squadrons, in order that they might be settled permanently in the cities of the East; he also called them the "Vandals of Justinian," and ordered them to betake themselves in ships to the East. Now the majority of these Vandal soldiers reached the East, and, filling up the squadrons to which they had been assigned, they have been fighting against the Persians up to the present time; but the remainder, about four hundred in number, after reaching Lesbos, waiting until the sails were bellied with the wind, forced the sailors to submission and sailed on till they reached the Peloponnesus. And setting sail from there, they came to land in Libya at a desert place, where they abandoned the ships, and, after equipping themselves, went up to Mt. Aurasium and Mauretania. Elated by their accession, the soldiers who were planning the mutiny formed a still closer conspiracy among themselves.

And there was much talk about this in the camp and oaths were already being taken. And when the rest were about to celebrate the Easter festival, the Arians, being vexed by their exclusion from the sacred rites, purposed to attack them vigorously.

And it seemed best to their leading men to kill Solomon in the sanctuary on the first day of the feast, which they call the great day.

March 23, 536 A.D.

And they were fortunate enough not to be found out, since no one disclosed this plan. For though there were many who shared in the horrible plot, no word of it was divulged to any hostile person as the orders were passed around, and thus they succeeded completely in escaping detection, for even the spearmen and guards of Solomon for the most part and the majority of his domestics had become associated with this mutiny because of their desire for the lands. And when the appointed day had now come, Solomon was sitting in the sanctuary, utterly ignorant of his own misfortune. And those who had decided to kill the man went in, and, urging one another with nods, they put their hands to their swords, but they did nothing nevertheless, either because they were filled with awe of the rites then being performed in the sanctuary, or because the fame of the general caused them to be ashamed, or perhaps also some divine power prevented them.

And when the rites on that day had been completely performed and all were betaking themselves homeward, the conspirators began to blame one another with having turned soft-hearted at no fitting time, and they postponed the plot for a second attempt on the following day. And on the next day they acted in the same manner and departed from the sanctuary without doing anything, and entering the market place, they reviled each other openly, and every single man of them called the next one soft-hearted and a demoralizer of the band, not hesitating to censure strongly the respect felt for Solomon. For this reason, indeed, they thought that they could no longer without danger remain in Carthage, inasmuch as they had disclosed their plot to the whole city. The most of them, accordingly, went out of the city quickly and began to plunder the lands and to treat as enemies all the Libyans whom they met; but the rest remained in the city, giving no indication of what their own intentions were but pretending ignorance of the plot which had been formed.

But Solomon, upon hearing what was being done by the soldiers in the country, became greatly disturbed, and ceased not exhorting those in the city and urging them to loyalty toward the emperor. And they at first seemed to receive his words with favour, but on the fifth day, when they heard that those who had gone out were secure in their power, they gathered in the hippodrome and insulted Solomon and the other commanders without restraint. And Theodorus, the Cappadocian, being sent there by Solomon, attempted to dissuade them and win them by kind words, but they listened to nothing of what was said. Now this Theodorus had a certain hostility against Solomon and was suspected of plotting against him. For this reason the mutineers straightway elected him general over them by acclamation, and with him they went with all speed to the palace carrying weapons and raising a great tumult. There they killed another Theodorus, who was commander of the guards, a man of the greatest excellence in every respect and an especially capable warrior. And when they had tasted this blood, they began immediately to kill everyone they met, whether Libyan or Roman, if he were known to Solomon or had money in his hands; and then they turned to plundering, going up into the houses which had no soldiers to defend them and seizing all the most valuable things, until the coming of night, and drunkenness following their toil, made them cease.

And Solomon succeeded in escaping unnoticed into the great sanctuary which is in the palace, and Martinus joined him there in the late afternoon. And when all the mutineers

were sleeping, they went out from the sanctuary and entered the house of Theodorus, the Cappadocian, who compelled them to dine although they had no desire to do so, and conveyed them to the harbour and put them on the skiff of a certain ship, which happened to have been made ready there by Martinus. And Procopius also, who wrote this history, was with them, and about five men of the house of Solomon. And after accomplishing three hundred stades they reached Misuas, the ship-yard of Carthage, and, since they had reached safety, Solomon straightway commanded Martinus to go into Numidia to Valerian and the others who shared his command, and endeavour to bring it about that each one of them, if it were in any way possible, should appeal to some of the soldiers known to him, either with money or by other means, and bring them back to loyalty toward the emperor. And he sent a letter to Theodorus, charging him to take care of Carthage and to handle the other matters as should seem possible to him, and he himself with Procopius went to Belisarius at Syracuse. And after reporting everything to him which had taken place in Libya, he begged him to come with all speed to Carthage and defend the emperor, who was suffering unholy treatment at the hands of his own soldiers, Solomon, then, was thus engaged.

## XV

But the mutineers, after plundering everything in Carthage, gathered in the plain of Boulla, and chose Stotzas, one of the guards of Martinus, and a passionate and energetic man, as tyrant over them, with the purpose of driving the emperor's commanders out of all Libya and thus gaining control over it. And he armed the whole force, amounting to about eight thousand men, and led them on to Carthage, thinking to win over the city instantly with no trouble. He sent also to the Vandals who had run away from Byzantium with the ships and those who had not gone there with Belisarius in the beginning, either because they had escaped notice, or because those who were taking off the Vandals at that time took no account of them. Now they were not fewer than a thousand, and after no great time they joined Stotzas and the army with enthusiasm. And a great throng of slaves also came to him. And when they drew near Carthage, Stotzas sent orders that the people should surrender the city to him as quickly as possible, on condition of their remaining free from harm. But those in Carthage and Theodorus, in reply to this, refused flatly to obey, and announced that they were guarding Carthage for the emperor. And they sent to Stotzas Joseph, the secretary of the emperor's guards, a man of no humble birth and one of the household of Belisarius, who had recently been sent to Carthage on some mission to them, and they demanded that Stotzas should go no further in his violence. But Stotzas, upon hearing this, straightway killed Joseph and commenced a siege. And those in the city, becoming terrified at the danger, were purposing to surrender themselves and Carthage to Stotzas under an agreement. Such was the course of events in the army in Libya.

But Belisarius selected one hundred men from his own spearmen and guards, and taking Solomon with him, sailed into Carthage with one ship at about dusk, at the time when the besiegers were expecting that the city would be surrendered to them on the following day. And since they were expecting this, they bivouacked that night. But when day had come and they learned that Belisarius was present, they broke up camp as quickly as possible and disgracefully and in complete disorder beat a hasty retreat. And Belisarius gathered about two thousand of the army and, after urging them with words to be loyal to the emperor and encouraging them with large gifts of money, he began the pursuit of the fugitives. And he overtook them at the city of Membresa, three hundred and fifty stades distant from Carthage. There both armies made camp and prepared themselves for battle, the forces of Belisarius making their entrenchment at the River Bagradas, and the others in a high and difficult position. For neither of them saw fit to enter the city, since it was



without walls. And on the day following they joined battle, the mutineers trusting in their numbers, and the troops of Belisarius despising their enemy as both without sense and without generals. And Belisarius, wishing that these thoughts should be firmly lodged in the minds of his soldiers, called them all together and spoke as follows:—

"The situation, fellow-soldiers, both for the emperor and for the Romans, falls far short of our hopes and of our prayers. For we have now come to a combat in which even the winning of the victory will not be without tears for us, since we are fighting against kinsmen and men who have been reared with us. But we have this comfort in our misfortune, that we are not ourselves beginning the battle, but have been brought into the conflict in our own defence. For he who has framed the plot against his dearest friends and by his own act has dissolved the ties of kinship, dies not, if he perishes, by the hands of his friends, but having become an enemy is but making atonement to those who have suffered wrong. And that our opponents are public enemies and barbarians and whatever worse name one might call them, is shewn not alone by Libya, which has become plunder under their hands, nor by the inhabitants of this land, who have been wrongfully slain, but also by the multitude of Roman soldiers whom these enemies have dared to kill, though they have had but one fault to charge them with—loyalty to their government. And it is to avenge these their victims that we have now come against them, having with good reason become enemies to those who were once most dear. For nature has made no men in the world either friends or opponents to one another, but it is the actions of men in every case which, either by the similarity of the motives which actuate them unite them in alliance, or by the difference set them in hostility to each other, making them friends or enemies as the case may be. That, therefore, we are fighting against men who are outlaws and enemies of the state, you must now be convinced; and now I shall make it plain that they deserve to be despised by us. For a throng of men united by no law, but brought together by motives of injustice, is utterly unable by nature to play the part of brave men, since valour is unable to dwell with lawlessness, but always shuns those who are unholy. Nor, indeed, will they preserve discipline or give heed to the commands given by Stotzas. For when a tyranny is newly organized and has not yet won that authority which self-confidence gives, it is, of necessity, looked upon by its subjects with contempt. Nor is it honoured through any sentiment of loyalty, for a tyranny is, in the nature of the case, hated; nor does it lead its subjects by fear, for timidity deprives it of the power to speak out openly. And when the enemy is handicapped in point of valour and of discipline, their defeat is ready at hand. With great contempt, therefore, as I said, we should go against this enemy of ours. For it is not by the numbers of the combatants, but by their orderly array and their bravery, that prowess in war is wont to be measured."

So spoke Belisarius. And Stotzas exhorted his troops as follows: "Men who with me have escaped our servitude to the Romans, let no one of you count it unworthy to die on behalf of the freedom which you have won by your courage and your other qualities. For it is not so terrible a thing to grow old and die in the midst of ills, as to return again to it after having gained freedom from oppressive conditions. For the interval which has given one a taste of deliverance makes the misfortune, naturally enough, harder to bear. And this being so, it is necessary for you to call to mind that after conquering the Vandals and the Moors you yourselves have enjoyed the labours of war, while others have become masters of all the spoils. And consider that, as soldiers, you will be compelled all your lives to be acquainted with the dangers of war, either in behalf of the emperor's cause, if, indeed, you are again his slaves, or in behalf of your own selves, if you preserve this present liberty. And whichever of the two is preferable, this it is in your power to choose, either by becoming faint-hearted at this time, or by preferring to play the part of brave men. Furthermore, this thought also should come to your minds,—that if, having taken up arms against the Romans, you come



under their power, you will have experience of no moderate or indulgent masters, but you will suffer the extreme of punishment, and, what is more, your death will not have been unmerited. To whomsoever of you, therefore, death comes in this battle, it is plain that it will be a glorious death; and life, if you conquer the enemy, will be independent and in all other respects happy; but if you are defeated,—I need mention no other bitterness than this, that all your hope will depend upon the mercy of those men yonder. And the conflict will not be evenly matched in regard to strength. For not only are the enemy greatly surpassed by us in numbers, but they will come against us without the least enthusiasm, for I think that they are praying for a share of this our freedom." Such was the speech of Stotzas.

As the armies entered the combat, a wind both violent and exceedingly troublesome began to blow in the faces of the mutineers of Stotzas. For this reason they thought it disadvantageous for them to fight the battle where they were, fearing lest the wind by its overpowering force should carry the missiles of the enemy against them, while the impetus of their own missiles would be very seriously checked. They therefore left their position and moved toward the flank, reasoning that if the enemy also should change front, as they probably would, in order that they might not be assailed from the rear, the wind would then be in their faces. But Belisarius, upon seeing that they had left their position and in complete disorder were moving to his flank, gave orders immediately to open the attack. And the troops of Stotzas were thrown into confusion by the unexpected move, and in great disorder, as each one could, they fled precipitately, and only when they reached Numidia did they collect themselves again. Few of them, however, perished in this action, and most of them were Vandals. For Belisarius did not pursue them at all, for the reason that it seemed to him sufficient, since his army was very small, if the enemy, having been defeated for the present, should get out of his way. And he gave the soldiers the enemy's stockade to plunder, and they took it with not a man inside. But much money was found there and many women, the very women because of whom this war took place. After accomplishing this, Belisarius marched back to Carthage. And someone coming from Sicily reported to him that a mutiny had broken out in the army and was about to throw everything into confusion, unless he himself should return to them with all speed and take measures to prevent it. He there therefore arranged matters in Libya as well as he could and, entrusting Carthage to Ildiger and Theodorus, went to Sicily.

And the Roman commanders in Numidia, hearing that the troops of Stotzas had come and were gathering there, prepared for battle. Now the commanders were as follows: of foederati, Marcellus and Cyril, of the cavalry forces, Barbatus, and of infantry Terentius and Sarapis. All, however, took their commands from Marcellus, as holding the authority in Numidia. He, therefore, upon hearing that Stotzas with some few men was in a place called Gazophyla, about two days' journey distant from Constantina, wished to anticipate the gathering of all the mutineers, and led his army swiftly against them. And when the two armies were near together and the battle was about to commence, Stotzas came alone into the midst of his opponents and spoke as follows:

"Fellow-soldiers, you are not acting justly in taking the field against kinsmen and those who have been reared with you, and in raising arms against men who in vexation at your misfortunes and the wrongs you have suffered have decided to make war upon the emperor and the Romans. Or do you not remember that you have been deprived of the pay which has been owing you for a long time back, and that you have been robbed of the enemy's spoil, which the law of war has set as prizes for the dangers of battle? And that the others have claimed the right to live sumptuously all their lives upon the good things of victory, while you have followed as if their servants? If, now, you are angry with me, it is within your power to vent your wrath upon this body, and to escape the pollution of killing the others;

but if you have no charge to bring against me, it is time for you to take up your weapons in your own behalf." So spoke Stotzas; and the soldiers listened to his words and greeted him with great favour. And when the commanders saw what was happening, they withdrew in silence and took refuge in a sanctuary which was in Gazophyla. And Stotzas combined both armies into one and then went to the commanders. And finding them in the sanctuary, he gave pledges and then killed them all.

## XVI

When the emperor learned this, he sent his nephew Germanus, a man of patrician rank, with some few men to Libya. And Symmachus also and Domnicus, men of the senate, followed him, the former to be prefect and charged with the maintenance of the army, while Domnicus was to command the infantry forces. For John, who had held the office of prefect, had already died of disease. And when they had sailed into Carthage, Germanus counted the soldiers whom they had, and upon looking over the books of the scribes where the names of all the soldiers were registered, he found that the third part of the army was in Carthage and the other cities, while all the rest were arrayed with the tyrant against the Romans. He did not, therefore, begin any fighting, but bestowed the greatest care upon his army. And considering that those left in Carthage were the kinsmen or tentmates of the enemy, he kept addressing many winning words to all, and in particular said that he had himself been sent by the emperor to Libya in order to defend the soldiers who had been wronged and to punish those who had unprovoked done them any injury. And when this was found out by the mutineers, they began to come over to him a few at a time. And Germanus both received them into the city in a friendly manner and, giving pledges, held them in honour, and he gave them their pay for the time during which they had been in arms against the Romans. And when the report of these acts was circulated and came to all, they began now to detach themselves in large numbers from the tyrant and to march to Carthage. Then at last Germanus, hoping that in the battle he would be evenly matched in strength with his opponents, began to make preparations for the conflict.

But in the meantime Stotzas, already perceiving the trouble, and fearing lest by the defection of still others of his soldiers the army should be reduced still more, was pressing for a decisive encounter immediately and trying to take hold of the war with more vigour. And since he had some hope regarding the soldiers in Carthage, that they would come over to him, and thought that they would readily desert if he came near them, he held out the hope to all his men; and after encouraging them exceedingly in this way, he advanced swiftly with his whole army against Carthage. And when he had come within thirty-five stades of the city, he made camp not far from the sea, and Germanus, after arming his whole army and arraying them for battle, marched forth. And when they were all outside the city, since he had heard what Stotzas was hoping for, he called together the whole army and spoke as follows:

"That there is nothing, fellow-soldiers, with which you can justly reproach the emperor, and no fault which you can find with what he has done to you, this, I think, no one of you all could deny; for it was he who took you as you came from the fields with your wallets and one small frock apiece and brought you together in Byzantium, and has caused you to be so powerful that the Roman state now depends upon you. And that he has not only been treated with wanton insult, but has also suffered the most dreadful of all things at your hands, you yourselves, doubtless, know full well. And desiring that you should preserve the memory of these things for ever, he has dismissed the accusations brought against you for your crimes, asking that this debt alone be due to him from you—shame for what you have

done. It is reasonable, therefore, that you, being thus regarded by him, should learn anew the lesson of good faith and correct your former folly. For when repentance comes at the fitting time upon those who have done wrong, it is accustomed to make those who have been injured indulgent; and service which comes in season is wont to bring another name to those who have been called ungrateful.

"And it will be needful for you to know well this also, that if at the present time you shew yourselves completely loyal to the emperor, no remembrance will remain of what has gone before. For in the nature of things every course of action is characterized by men in accordance with its final outcome; and while a wrong which has once been committed can never be undone in all time, still, when it has been corrected by better deeds on the part of those who committed it, it receives the fitting reward of silence and generally comes to be forgotten. Moreover, if you act with any disregard of duty toward these accursed rascals at the present time, even though afterwards you fight through many wars in behalf of the Romans and often win the victory over the enemy, you will never again be regarded as having requited the emperor as you can requite him to-day. For those who win applause in the very matter of their former wrong-doing always gain for themselves a fairer apology. As regards the emperor, then, let each one of you reason in some such way. But as for me, I have not voluntarily done you any injustice, and I have displayed my good-will to you by all possible means, and now, facing this danger, I have decided to ask this much of you all: let no man advance with us against the enemy contrary to his judgement. But if anyone of you is already desirous of arraying himself with them, without delay let him go with his weapons to the enemy's camp, granting us this one favour, that it be not stealthily, but openly, that he has decided to do us wrong. Indeed, it is for this reason that I am making my speech, not in Carthage, but after coming on the battle-field, in order that I might not be an obstacle to anyone who desires to desert to our opponents, since it is possible for all without danger to shew their disposition toward the state." Thus spoke Germanus. And a great uproar ensued in the Roman army, for each one demanded the right to be the first to display to the general his loyalty to the emperor and to swear the most dread oaths in confirmation.

## XVII

Now for some time the two armies remained in position opposite each other. But when the mutineers saw that nothing of what Stotzas had foretold was coming to pass, they began to be afraid as having been unexpectedly cheated of their hope, and they broke their ranks and withdrew, and marched off to Numidia, where were their women and the money from their booty. And Germanus too came there with the whole army not long afterwards, having made all preparations in the best way possible and also bringing along many wagons for the army. And overtaking his opponents in a place which the Romans call *Scalae Veteres*, he made his preparations for battle in the following manner. Placing the wagons in line facing the front, he arrayed all the infantry along them under the leadership of Domnicus, so that by reason of having their rear in security they might fight with the greater courage. And the best of the horsemen and those who had come with him from Byzantium he himself had on the left of the infantry, while all the others he placed on the right wing, not marshalled in one body but in three divisions. And Ildiger led one of them, Theodoras the Cappadocian another, while the remaining one, which was larger, was commanded by John, the brother of Pappus, with three others. Thus did the Romans array themselves.

And the mutineers took their stand opposite them, not in order, however, but scattered, more in the manner of barbarians. And at no great distance many thousands of Moors followed them, who were commanded by a number of leaders, and especially by

Iaudas and Ortaïas. But not all of them, as it happened, were faithful to Stotzas and his men, for many had sent previously to Germanus and agreed that, when they came into the fight, they would array themselves with the emperor's army against the enemy. However, Germanus could not trust them altogether, for the Moorish nation is by nature faithless to all men. It was for this reason also that they did not array themselves with the mutineers, but remained behind, waiting for what would come to pass, in order that with those who should be victorious they might join in the pursuit of the vanquished. Such was the purpose, then, of the Moors, in following behind and not mingling with the mutineers.

And when Stotzas came close to the enemy and saw the standard of Germanus, he exhorted his men and began to charge against him. But the mutinous Eruli who were arrayed about him did not follow and even tried with all their might to prevent him, saying that they did not know the character of the forces of Germanus, but that they did know that those arrayed on the enemy's right would by no means withstand them. If, therefore, they should advance against these, they would not only give way themselves and turn to flight, but would also, in all probability, throw the rest of the Roman army into confusion; but if they should attack Germanus and be driven back and put to rout, their whole cause would be ruined on the spot. And Stotzas was persuaded by these words, and permitted the others to fight with the men of Germanus, while he himself with the best men went against John and those arrayed with him. And they failed to withstand the attack and hastened to flee in complete disorder. And the mutineers took all their standards immediately, and pursued them as they fled at top speed, while some too charged upon the infantry, who had already begun to abandon their ranks. But at this juncture Germanus himself, drawing his sword and urging the whole of that part of the army to do the same, with great difficulty routed the mutineers opposed to him and advanced on the run against Stotzas. And then, since he was joined in this effort by the men of Ildiger and Theodorus, the two armies mingled with each other in such a way that, while the mutineers were pursuing some of their enemy, they were being overtaken and killed by others. And as the confusion became greater and greater, the troops of Germanus, who were in the rear, pressed on still more, and the mutineers, falling into great fear, thought no longer of resistance. But neither side could be distinguished either by their own comrades or by their opponents. For all used one language and the same equipment of arms, and they differed neither in figure nor in dress nor in any other thing whatever. For this reason the soldiers of the emperor by the advice of Germanus, whenever they captured anyone, asked who he was; and then, if he said that he was a soldier of Germanus, they bade him give the watchword of Germanus, and if he was not at all able to give this, they killed him instantly. In this struggle one of the enemy got by unnoticed and killed the horse of Germanus, and Germanus himself fell to the ground and came into danger, and would have been lost had not his guards quickly saved him by forming an enclosure around him and mounting him on another horse.

As for Stotzas, he succeeded in this tumult in escaping with a few men. But Germanus, urging on his men, went straight for the enemy's camp. There he was encountered by those of the mutineers who had been stationed to guard the stockade. A stubborn fight took place around its entrance, and the mutineers came within a little of forcing back their opponents, but Germanus sent some of his followers and bade them make trial of the camp at another point. These men, since no one was defending the camp at this place, got inside the stockade with little trouble. And the mutineers, upon seeing them, rushed off in flight, and Germanus with all the rest of the army dashed into the enemy's camp. There the soldiers, finding it easy to plunder the goods of the camp, neither took any account of the enemy nor paid any further heed to the exhortations of their general, since booty was at hand. For this reason Germanus, fearing lest the enemy should get together and come upon them, himself with some few men took his stand at the entrance of the stockade, uttering many laments



and urging his unheeding men to return to good order. And many of the Moors, when the rout had taken place in this way, were now pursuing the mutineers, and, arraying themselves with the emperor's troops, were plundering the camp of the vanquished. But Stotzas, at first having confidence in the Moorish army, rode to them in order to renew the battle. But perceiving what was being done, he fled with a hundred men, and succeeded with difficulty in making his escape. And once more many gathered about him and attempted to engage with the enemy, but being repulsed no less decisively than before, if not even more so, they all came over to Germanus. And Stotzas alone with some few Vandals withdrew to Mauretania, and taking to wife the daughter of one of the rulers, remained there. And this was the conclusion of that mutiny.

## XVIII

Now there was among the body-guards of Theodorus, the Cappadocian, a certain Maximinus, an exceedingly base man. This Maximinus had first got a very large number of the soldiers to join with him in a conspiracy against the government, and was now purposing to attempt a tyranny. And being eager to associate with himself still more men, he explained the project to others and especially to Asclepiades, a native of Palestine, who was a man of good birth and the first of the personal friends of Theodorus. Now Asclepiades, after conversing with Theodorus, straightway reported the whole matter to Germanus. And he, not wishing as yet, while affairs were still unsettled, to begin any other disturbance, decided to get the best of the man by cajoling and flattering him rather than by punishment, and to bind him by oaths to loyalty toward the government. Accordingly, since it was an old custom among all Romans that no one should become a body-guard of one of the commanders, unless he had previously taken the most dread oaths and given pledges of his loyalty both toward his own commander and toward the Roman emperor, he summoned Maximinus, and praising him for his daring, directed him to be one of his body-guards from that time forth. And he, being overjoyed at the extraordinary honour, and conjecturing that his project would in this way get on more easily, took the oath, and though from that time forth he was counted among the body-guards of Germanus, he did not hesitate to disregard his oaths immediately and to strengthen much more than ever his plans to achieve the tyranny.

Now the whole city was celebrating some general festival, and many of the conspirators of Maximinus at about the time of lunch came according to their agreement to the palace, where Germanus was entertaining his friends at a feast, and Maximinus took his stand beside the couches with the other body-guards. And as the drinking proceeded, someone entered and announced to Germanus that many soldiers were standing in great disorder before the door of the court, putting forward the charge that the government owed them their pay for a long period. And he commanded the most trusty of the guards secretly to keep close watch over Maximinus, allowing him in no way to perceive what was being done. Then the conspirators with threats and tumult proceeded on the run to the hippodrome, and those who shared their plan with them gathered gradually from the houses and were assembling there. And if it had so chanced that all of them had come together, no one, I think, would have been able easily to destroy their power; but, as it was, Germanus anticipated this, and, before the greater part had yet arrived, he straightway sent against them all who were well-disposed to himself and to the emperor. And they attacked the conspirators before they expected them. And then, since Maximinus, for whom they were waiting to begin the battle for them, was not with them, and they did not see the crowd gathered to help them, as they had thought it would be, but instead even beheld their fellow-soldiers unexpectedly fighting against them, they consequently lost heart and were



easily overcome in the struggle and rushed off in flight and in complete disorder. And their opponents slew many of them, and they also captured many alive and brought them to Germanus. Those, however, who had not already come to the hippodrome gave no indication of their sentiment toward Maximinus. And Germanus did not see fit to go on and seek them out, but he enquired whether Maximinus, since he had sworn the oath, had taken part in the plot. And since it was proved that, though numbered among his own body-guards he had carried on his designs still more than before, Germanus impaled him close by the fortifications of Carthage, and in [18-6] this way succeeded completely in putting down the sedition. As for Maximinus, then, such was the end of his plot.

## XIX

And the emperor summoned Germanus together with Symmachus and Domnicus and again entrusted all Libya to Solomon, in the thirteenth year of his reign; and he provided him with an army and officers, among whom were Rufinus and Leontius, the sons of Zaunas the son of Pharesmanas, and John, the son of Sisiniolus.

539-540 A.D.

For Martinus and Valerianus had already before this gone under summons to Byzantium. And Solomon sailed to Carthage, and having rid himself of the sedition of Stotzas, he ruled with moderation and guarded Libya securely, setting the army in order, and sending to Byzantium and to Belisarius whatever suspicious elements he found in it, and enrolling new soldiers to equal their number, and removing those of the Vandals who were left and especially all their women from the whole of Libya. And he surrounded each city with a wall, and guarding the laws with great strictness, he restored the government completely. And Libya became under his rule powerful as to its revenues and prosperous in other respects.

And when everything had been arranged by him in the best way possible, he again made an expedition against Iaudas and the Moors on Aurasium. And first he sent forward Gontharis, one of his own body-guards and an able warrior, with an army. Now Gontharis came to the Abigas River and made camp near Bagaïs, a deserted city. And there he engaged with the enemy, but was defeated in battle, and retiring to his stockade was already being hard pressed by the siege of the Moors. But afterwards Solomon himself arrived with his whole army, and when he was sixty stades away from the camp which Gontharis was commanding, he made a stockade and remained there; and hearing all that had befallen the force of Gontharis, he sent them a part of his army and bade them keep up the fight against the enemy with courage. But the Moors, having gained the upper hand in the engagement, as I have said, did as follows. The Abigas River flows from Aurasium, and descending into a plain, waters the land just as the men there desire. For the natives conduct this stream to whatever place they think it will best serve them at the moment, for in this plain there are many channels, into which the Abigas is divided, and entering all of them, it passes underground, and reappears again above the ground and gathers its stream together. This takes place over the greatest part of the plain and makes it possible for the inhabitants of the region, by stopping up the waterways with earth, or by again opening them, to make use of the waters of this river as they wish. So at that time the Moors shut off all the channels there and thus allowed the whole stream to flow about the camp of the Romans. As a result of this, a deep, muddy marsh formed there through which it was impossible to go; this terrified them exceedingly and reduced them to a state of helplessness. When this was heard by Solomon, he came quickly. But the barbarians, becoming afraid, withdrew to the foot of Aurasium. And in a place which they call Babosis they made camp and remained there. So

Solomon moved with his whole army and came to that place. And upon engaging with the enemy, he defeated them decisively and turned them to flight. Now after this the Moors did not think it advisable for them to fight a pitched battle with the Romans; for they did not hope to overcome them in this kind of contest; but they did have hope, based on the difficult character of the country around Aurasium, that the Romans would in a short time give up by reason of the sufferings they would have to endure and would withdraw from there, just as they formerly had done. The most of them, therefore, went off to Mauretania and the barbarians to the south of Aurasium, but Iaudas with twenty thousand of the Moors remained there. And it happened that he had built a fortress on Aurasium, Zerboule by name. Into this he entered with all the Moors and remained quiet. But Solomon was by no means willing that time should be wasted in the siege, and learning that the plains about the city of Tamougade were full of grain just becoming ripe, he led his army into them, and settling himself there, began to plunder the land. Then, after firing everything, he returned again to the fortress of Zerboule.

But during this time, while the Romans were plundering the land, Iaudas, leaving behind some of the Moors, about as many as he thought would be sufficient for the defence of the fortress, himself ascended to the summit of Aurasium with the rest of the army, not wishing to stand siege in the fort and have provisions fail his forces. And finding a high place with cliff's on all sides of it and concealed by perpendicular rocks, Toumar by name, he remained quietly there. And the Romans besieged the fortress of Zerboule for three days. And using their bows, since the wall was not high, they hit many of the barbarians upon the parapets. And by some chance it happened that all the leaders of the Moors were hit by these missiles and died. And when the three days' time had passed and night came on, the Romans, having learned nothing of the death of the leaders among the Moors, were planning to break up the siege. For it seemed better to Solomon to go against Iaudas and the multitude of the Moors, thinking that, if he should be able to capture that force by siege, the barbarians in Zerboule would with less trouble and difficulty yield to the Romans. But the barbarians, thinking that they could no longer hold out against the siege, since all their leaders had now been destroyed, decided to flee with all speed and abandon the fortress. Accordingly they fled immediately in silence and without allowing the enemy in any way to perceive it, and the Romans also at daybreak began to prepare for departure. And since no one appeared on the wall, although the besieging army was withdrawing, they began to wonder and fell into the greatest perplexity among themselves. And in this state of uncertainty they went around the fortress and found the gate open from which the Moors had departed in flight. And entering the fortress they treated everything as plunder, but they had no thought of pursuing the enemy, for they had set out with light equipment and were familiar with the country round about. And when they had plundered everything, they set guards over the fortress, and all moved forward on foot.

## XX

And coming to the place Toumar, where the enemy had shut themselves in and were remaining quiet, they encamped near by in a bad position, where there would be no supply of water, except a little, nor any other necessary thing. And after much time had been spent and the barbarians did not come out against them at all, they themselves, no less than the enemy, if not even more, were hard pressed by the siege and began to be impatient. And more than anything else, they were distressed by the lack of water; this Solomon himself guarded, giving each day no more than a single cupful to each man. And since he saw that they were openly discontented and no longer able to bear their present hardships, he planned to make trial of the place, although it was difficult of access, and called all together

and exhorted them as follows: "Since God has granted to the Romans to besiege the Moors on Aurasium, a thing which hitherto has been beyond hope and now, to such as do not see what is actually being done, is altogether incredible, it is necessary that we too should lend our aid to the help that has come from above, and not prove false to this favour, but undergoing the danger with enthusiasm, should reach after the good fortune which is to come from success. For in every case the turning of the scales of human affairs depends upon the moment of opportunity; but if a man, by wilful cowardice, is traitor to his fortune, he cannot justly blame it, having by his own action brought the guilt upon himself. Now as for the Moors, you see their weakness surely and the place in which they have shut themselves up and are keeping guard, deprived of all the necessities of life. And as for you, one of two things is necessary, either without feeling any vexation at the siege to await the surrender of the enemy, or, if you shrink from this, to accept the victory which goes with the danger. And fighting against these barbarians will be the more free from danger for us, inasmuch as they are already fighting with hunger and I think they will never even come to an engagement with us. Having these things in mind at the present time, it behooves you to execute all your orders with eagerness."

After Solomon had made this exhortation, he looked about to see from what point it would be best for his men to make an attempt on the place, and for a long time he seemed to be in perplexity. For the difficult nature of the ground seemed to him quite too much to contend with. But while Solomon was considering this, chance provided a way for the enterprise as follows. There was a certain Gezon in the army, a foot-soldier, "optio" of the detachment to which Solomon belonged; for thus the Romans call the paymaster. This Gezon, either in play or in anger, or perhaps even moved by some divine impulse, began to make the ascent alone, apparently going against the enemy, and not far from him went some of his fellow-soldiers, marvelling greatly at what he was doing. And three of the Moors, who had been stationed to guard the approach, suspecting that the man was coming against them, went on the run to confront him. But since they were in a narrow way, they did not proceed in orderly array, but each one went separately. And Gezon struck the first one who came upon him and killed him, and in this way he despatched each of the others. And when those in the rear perceived this, they advanced with much shouting and tumult against the enemy. And when the whole Roman army both heard and saw what was being done, without waiting either for the general to lead the way for them or for the trumpets to give the signal for battle, as was customary, nor indeed even keeping their order, but making a great uproar and urging one another on, they ran against the enemy's camp. There Rufinus and Leontius, the sons of Zaunas the son of Pharesmanes, made a splendid display of valorous deeds against the enemy. And by this the Moors were terror-stricken, and when they learned that their guards also had been destroyed, they straightway turned to flight where each one could, and the most of them were overtaken in the difficult ground and killed. And Iaudas himself, though struck by a javelin in the thigh, still made his escape and withdrew to Mauretania. But the Romans, after plundering the enemy's camp, decided not to abandon Aurasium again, but to guard fortresses which Solomon was to build there, so that this mountain might not be again accessible to the Moors.

Now there is on Aurasium a perpendicular rock which rises in the midst of precipices; the natives call it the Rock of Geminianus; there the men of ancient times had built a tower, making it very small as a place of refuge, strong and unassailable, since the nature of the position assisted them. Here, as it happened, Iaudas had a few days previously deposited his money and his women, setting one old Moor in charge as guardian of the money. For he could never have suspected that the enemy would either reach this place, or that they could in all time capture the tower by force. But the Romans at that time, searching through the rough country of Aurasium, came there, and one of them, with a laugh, attempted to climb

up to the tower; but the women began to taunt him, ridiculing him as attempting the impossible; and the old man, peering out from the tower, did the same thing. But when the Roman soldier, climbing with both hands and feet, had come near them, he drew his sword quietly and leaped forward as quickly as he could, and struck the old man a fair blow on the neck, and succeeded in cutting it through. And the head fell down to the ground, and the soldiers, now emboldened and holding to one another, ascended to the tower, and took out from there both the women and the money, of which there was an exceedingly great quantity. And by means of it Solomon surrounded many of the cities in Libya with walls.

And after the Moors had retired from Numidia, defeated in the manner described, the land of Zabe, which is beyond Mt. Aurasium and is called "First Mauretania," whose metropolis is Sitiphis, was added to the Roman empire by Solomon as a tributary province; for of the other Mauretania Caesarea is the first city, where was settled Mastigas with his Moors, having the whole country there subject and tributary to him, except, indeed, the city of Caesarea. For this city Belisarius had previously recovered for the Romans, as has been set forth in the previous narrative; and the Romans always journey to this city in ships, but they are not able to go by land, since Moors dwell in that country. And as a result of this all the Libyans who were subjects of the Romans, coming to enjoy secure peace and finding the rule of Solomon wise and very moderate, and having no longer any thought of hostility in their minds, seemed the most fortunate of all men.

## XXI

But in the fourth year after this it came about that all their blessings were turned to the opposite.

543-544 A.D.

For in the seventeenth year of the reign of the Emperor Justinian, Cyrus and Sergius, the sons of Bacchus, Solomon's brother, were assigned by the emperor to rule over the cities in Libya, Cyrus, the elder, to have Pentapolis, and Sergius Tripolis. And the Moors who are called Leuathae came to Sergius with a great army at the city of Leptimagna, spreading the report that the reason they had come was this, that Sergius might give them the gifts and insignia of office which were customary and so make the peace secure. But Sergius, persuaded by Pudentius, a man of Tripolis, of whom I made mention in the preceding narrative as having served the Emperor Justinian against the Vandals at the beginning of the Vandalic War, received eighty of the barbarians, their most notable men, into the city, promising to fulfil all their demands; but he commanded the rest to remain in the suburb. Then after giving these eighty men pledges concerning the peace, he invited them to a banquet. But they say that these barbarians had come into the city with treacherous intent, that they might lay a trap for Sergius and kill him. And when they came into conference with him, they called up many charges against the Romans, and in particular said that their crops had been plundered wrongfully. And Sergius, paying no heed to these things, rose from the seat on which he was sitting, with intent to go away. And one of the barbarians, laying hold upon his shoulder, attempted to prevent him from going. Then the others began to shout in confusion, and were already rushing together about him. But one of the bodyguards of Sergius, drawing his sword, despatched that Moor. And as a result of this a great tumult, as was natural, arose in the room, and the guards of Sergius killed all the barbarians. But one of them, upon seeing the others being slain, rushed out of the house where these things were taking place, unnoticed by anyone, and coming to his tribesmates, revealed what had befallen their fellows. And when they heard this, they betook themselves on the run to their own camp and together with all the others arrayed themselves in arms



against the Romans. Now when they came near the city of Leptimagna, Sergius and Pudentius confronted them with their whole army. And the battle becoming a hand-to-hand fight, at first the Romans were victorious and slew many of the enemy, and, plundering their camp, secured their goods and enslaved an exceedingly great number of women and children. But afterwards Pudentius, being possessed by a spirit of reckless daring, was killed; and Sergius with the Roman army, since it was already growing dark, marched into Leptimagna.

At a later time the barbarians took the field against the Romans with a greater array. And Sergius went to join his uncle Solomon, in order that he too might go to meet the enemy with a larger army; and he found there his brother Cyrus also. And the barbarians, coming into Byzacium, made raids and plundered a great part of the country there; and Antalas (whom I mentioned in the preceding narrative as having remained faithful to the Romans and as being for this reason sole ruler of the Moors in Byzacium) had by now, as it happened, become hostile to Solomon, because Solomon had deprived him of the maintenance with which the emperor had honoured him and had killed his brother, charging him with responsibility for an uprising against the people of Byzacium. So at that time Antalas was pleased to see these barbarians, and making an offensive and defensive alliance with them, led them against Solomon and Carthage.

And Solomon, as soon as he heard about this, put his whole army in motion and marched against them, and coming upon them at the city of Tebesta, distant six days' journey from Carthage, he established his camp in company with the sons of his brother Bacchus, Cyrus and Sergius and Solomon the younger. And fearing the multitude of the barbarians, he sent to the leaders of the Leuathae, reproaching them because, while at peace with the Romans, they had taken up arms and come against them, and demanding that they should confirm the peace existing between the two peoples, and he promised to swear the most dread oaths, that he would hold no remembrance of what they had done. But the barbarians, mocking his words, said that he would of course swear by the sacred writings of the Christians, which they are accustomed to call Gospels. Now since Sergius had once taken these oaths and then had slain those who trusted in them, it was their desire to go into battle and make a test of these same sacred writings, to see what sort of power they had against the perjurers, in order that they might first have absolute confidence in them before they finally entered into the agreement. When Solomon heard this, he made his preparations for the combat.

And on the following day he engaged with a portion of the enemy as they were bringing in a very large booty, conquered them in battle, seized all their booty and kept it under guard. And when the soldiers were dissatisfied and counted it an outrage that he did not give them the plunder, he said that he was awaiting the outcome of the war, in order that they might distribute everything then, according to the share that should seem to suit the merit of each. But when the barbarians advanced a second time, with their whole army, to give battle, this time some of the Romans stayed behind and the others entered the encounter with no enthusiasm. At first, then, the battle was evenly contested, but later, since the Moors were vastly superior by reason of their great numbers, the most of the Romans fled, and though Solomon and a few men about him held out for a time against the missiles of the barbarians, afterwards they were overpowered by the enemy, and fleeing in haste, reached a ravine made by a brook which flowed in that region. And there Solomon's horse stumbled and threw him to the ground, and his body-guards lifted him quickly in their arms and set him upon his horse. But overcome by great pain and unable to hold the reins longer, he was overtaken and killed by the barbarians, and many of his guards besides. Such was the end of Solomon's life.



## XXII

After the death of Solomon, Sergius, who, as has been said, was his nephew, took over the government of Libya by gift of the emperor. And this man became the chief cause of great ruin to the people of Libya, and all were dissatisfied with his rule—the officers because, being exceedingly stupid and young both in character and in years, he proved to be the greatest braggart of all men, and he insulted them for no just cause and disregarded them, always using the power of his wealth and the authority of his office to this end; and the soldiers disliked him because he was altogether unmanly and weak; and the Libyans, not only for these reasons, but also because he had shown himself strangely fond of the wives and the possessions of others. But most of all John, the son of Sisiniolus, was hostile to the power of Sergius; for, though he was an able warrior and was a man of unusually fair repute, he found Sergius absolutely ungrateful. For this reason neither he nor anyone else at all was willing to take up arms against the enemy. But almost all the Moors were following Antalas, and Stotzas came at his summons from Mauretania. And since not one of the enemy came out against them, they began to sack the country, making plunder of everything without fear. At that time Antalas sent to the Emperor Justinian a letter, which set forth the following:

"That I am a slave of thy empire not even I myself would deny, but the Moors, having suffered unholy treatment at the hands of Solomon in time of peace, have taken up arms under the most severe constraint, not lifting them against thee, but warding off our personal enemy; and this is especially true of me. For he not only decided to deprive me of the maintenance, which Belisarius long before specified and thou didst grant, but he also killed my own brother, although he had no wrongdoing to charge against him. We have therefore taken vengeance upon him who wronged us. And if it is thy will that the Moors be in subjection to thy empire and serve it in all things as they are accustomed to do, command Sergius, the nephew of Solomon, to depart from here and return to thee, and send another general to Libya. For thou wilt not be lacking in men of discretion and more worthy than Sergius in every way; for as long as this man commands thy army, it is impossible for peace to be established between the Romans and the Moors."

Such was the letter written by Antalas. But the emperor, even after reading these things and learning the common enmity of all toward Sergius, was still unwilling to remove him from his office, out of respect for the virtues of Solomon and especially the manner of his death. Such, then, was the course of these events.

But Solomon, the brother of Sergius, who was supposed to have disappeared from the world together with his uncle Solomon, was forgotten by his brother and by the rest as well; for no one had learned that he was alive. But the Moors, as it happened, had taken him alive, since he was very young; and they enquired of him who he was. And he said that he was a Vandal by birth, and a slave of Solomon. He said, moreover, that he had a friend, a physician, Pegasus by name, in the city of Laribus near by, who would purchase him by giving ransom. So the Moors came up close to the fortifications of the city and called Pegasus and displayed Solomon to him, and asked whether it was his pleasure to purchase the man. And since he agreed to purchase him, they sold Solomon to him for fifty pieces of gold. But upon getting inside the fortifications, Solomon taunted the Moors as having been deceived by him, a mere lad; for he said that he was no other than Solomon, the son of Bacchus and nephew of Solomon. And the Moors, being deeply stung by what had happened, and counting it a terrible thing that, while having a strong security for the conduct of Sergius and the Romans, they had relinquished it so carelessly, came to Laribus and laid siege to the place, in order to capture Solomon with the city. And the besieged, in terror at being shut in by the barbarians, for they had not even carried in provisions, as it

happened, opened negotiations with the Moors, proposing that upon receiving a great sum of money they should straightway abandon the siege. Whereupon the barbarians, thinking that they could never take the city by force—for the Moors are not at all practised in the storming of walls—and at the same time not knowing that provisions were scarce for the besieged, welcomed their words, and when they had received three thousand pieces of gold, they abandoned the siege, and all the Leuathae retired homeward.

### XXIII

But Antalas and the army of the Moors were gathering again in Byzacium and Stotzas was with them, having some few soldiers and Vandals. And John, the son of Sisiniolus, being earnestly entreated by the Libyans, gathered an army and marched against them. Now Himerius, the Thracian, was commander of the troops in Byzacium, and at that time he was ordered by John to bring with him all the troops there, together with the commanders of each detachment, and come to a place called Menepesse, which is in Byzacium, and join his force there. But later, upon hearing that the enemy were encamped there, John wrote to Himerius telling what had happened and directing him to unite with his forces at another place, that they might not go separately, but all together, to encounter the enemy. But by some chance those who had this letter, making use of another road, were quite unable to find Himerius, and he together with his army, coming upon the camp of the enemy, fell into their hands. Now there was in this Roman army a certain youth, Severianus, son of Asiaticus, a Phoenician and a native of Emesa, commanding a detachment of horse. This man alone, together with the soldiers under him, fifty in number, engaged with the enemy. And for some time they held out, but later, being overpowered by the great multitude, they ran to the top of a hill in the neighbourhood on which there was also a fort, but one which offered no security. For this reason they surrendered themselves to their opponents when they ascended the hill to attack them. And the Moors killed neither him nor any of the soldiers, but they made prisoners of the whole force; and Himerius they kept under guard, and handed over his soldiers to Stotzas, since they agreed with great readiness to march with the rebels against the Romans; Himerius, however, they threatened with death, if he should not carry out their commands. And they commanded him to put into their hands by some device the city of Hadrumetum on the sea. And since he declared that he was willing, they went with him against Hadrumetum. And upon coming near the city, they sent Himerius a little in advance with some of the soldiers of Stotzas, dragging along, as it seemed, some Moors in chains, and they themselves followed behind. And they directed Himerius to say to those in command of the gates of the city that the emperor's army had won a decisive victory, and that John would come very soon, bringing an innumerable multitude of Moorish captives; and when in this manner the gates had been opened to them, he was to get inside the fortifications together with those who went with him. And he carried out these instructions. And the citizens of Hadrumetum, being deceived in this way (for they could not distrust the commander of all the troops in Byzacium), opened wide the gates and received the enemy. Then, indeed, those who had entered with Himerius drew their swords and would not allow the guards there to shut the gates again, but straightway received the whole army of the Moors into the city. And the barbarians, after plundering it and establishing there some few guards, departed. And of the Romans who had been captured some few escaped and came to Carthage, among whom were Severianus and Himerius. For it was not difficult for those who wished it to make their escape from Moors. And many also, not at all unwillingly, remained with Stotzas.

Not long after this one of the priests, Paulus by name, who had been appointed to take charge of the sick, in conferring with some of the nobles, said: "I myself shall journey to

Carthage and I am hopeful that I shall return quickly with an army, and it will be your care to receive the emperor's forces into the city." So they attached some ropes to him and let him down by night from the fortifications, and he, coming to the sea-shore and happening upon a fishing-vessel which was thereabouts, won over the masters of this boat by great sums of money and sailed off to Carthage. And when he had landed there and come into the presence of Sergius, he told the whole story and asked him to give him a considerable army in order to recover Hadrumentum. And since this by no means pleased Sergius, inasmuch as the army in Carthage was not great, the priest begged him to give him some few soldiers, and receiving not more than eighty men, he formed the following plan. He collected a large number of boats and skiffs and embarked on them many sailors and Libyans also, clad in the garments which the Roman soldiers are accustomed to wear. And setting off with the whole fleet, he sailed at full speed straight for Hadrumentum. And when he had come close to it, he sent some men stealthily and declared to the notables of the city that Germanus, the emperor's nephew, had recently come to Carthage, and had sent a very considerable army to the citizens of Hadrumentum. And he bade them take courage at this and open for them one small gate that night. And they carried out his orders. Thus Paulus with his followers got inside the fortifications, and he slew all the enemy and recovered Hadrumentum for the emperor; and the rumour about Germanus, beginning there, went even to Carthage. And the Moors, as well as Stotzas and his followers, upon hearing this, at first became terrified and went off in flight to the extremities of Libya, but later, upon learning the truth, they counted it a terrible thing that they, after sparing all the citizens of Hadrumentum, had suffered such things at their hands. For this reason they made raids everywhere and wrought unholy deeds upon the Libyans, sparing no one whatever his age, and the land became at that time for the most part depopulated. For of the Libyans who had been left some fled into the cities and some to Sicily and the other islands. But almost all the notables came to Byzantium, among whom was Paulus also, who had recovered Hadrumentum for the emperor. And the Moors with still less fear, since no one came out against them, were plundering everything, and with them Stotzas, who was now powerful. For many Roman soldiers were following him, some who had come as deserters, and others who had been in the beginning captives but now remained with him of their own free will. And John, who was indeed a man of some reputation among the Moors, was remaining quiet because of the extreme hostility he had conceived against Sergius.

#### XXIV

At this time the emperor sent to Libya, with some few soldiers, another general, Areobindus, a man of the senate and of good birth, but not at all skilled in matters of warfare. And he sent with him Athanasius, a prefect, who had come recently from Italy, and some few Armenians led by Artabanus and John, sons of John, of the line of the Arsacidae, who had recently left the Persian army and as deserters had come back to the Romans, together with the other Armenians. And with Areobindus was his sister and Prejecta, his wife, who was the daughter of Vigilantia, the sister of the Emperor Justinian. The emperor, however, did not recall Sergius, but commanded both him and Areobindus to be generals of Libya, dividing the country and the detachments of soldiers between them. And he enjoined upon Sergius to carry on the war against the barbarians in Numidia, and upon Areobindus to direct his operations constantly against the Moors in Byzacium. And when this expedition lauded at Carthage, Sergius departed forthwith for Numidia with his own army, and Areobindus, upon learning that Antalas and Stotzas were encamped near the city of Siccaveneria, which is three days' journey distant from Carthage, commanded John, the son of Sisiniolus, to go against them, choosing out whatever was best of the army; and he wrote

to Sergius to unite with the forces of John, in order that they might all with one common force engage with the enemy. Now Sergius decided to pay no heed to the message and have nothing to do with this affair, and John with a small army was compelled to engage with an innumerable host of the enemy. And there had always been great enmity between him and Stotzas, and each one used to pray that he might become the slayer of the other before departing from the world. At that time, accordingly, as soon as the fighting was about to come to close quarters, both rode out from their armies and came against each other. And John drew his bow, and, as Stotzas was still advancing, made a successful shot and hit him in the right groin, and Stotzas, mortally wounded, fell there, not yet dead, but destined to survive this wound only a little time. And all came up immediately, both the Moorish army and those who followed Stotzas, and placing Stotzas with little life in him against a tree, they advanced upon their enemy with great fury; and since they were far superior in numbers, they routed John and all the Romans with no difficulty. Then, indeed, they say, John remarked that death had now a certain sweetness for him, since his prayer regarding Stotzas had reached fulfilment. And there was a steep place near by, where his horse stumbled and threw him off. And as he was trying to leap upon the horse again, the enemy caught and killed him, a man who had shown himself great both in reputation and in valour. And Stotzas learned this and then died, remarking only that now it was most sweet to die. In this battle John, the Armenian, brother of Artabanus, also died, after making a display of valorous deeds against the enemy. And the emperor, upon hearing this, was very deeply grieved because of the valour of John; and thinking it inexpedient for the two generals to administer the province, he immediately recalled Sergius and sent him to Italy with an army, and gave over the whole power of Libya to Areobindus.

## XXV

And two months after Sergius had departed from there, Gontharis essayed to set up a tyranny in the following manner. He himself, as it happened, was commanding the troops in Numidia and spending his time there for that reason, but he was secretly treating with the Moors that they might march against Carthage. Forthwith, therefore, an army of the enemy, having been gathered into one place from Numidia and Byzacium, went with great zeal against Carthage. And the Numidians were commanded by Coutzinas and Iaudas, and the men of Byzacium by Antalas. And with him was also John, the tyrant, and his followers; for the mutineers, after the death of Stotzas, had set him up as ruler over themselves. And when Areobindus learned of their attack, he summoned to Carthage a number of the officers with their men, and among them Gontharis. And he was joined also by Artabanus and the Armenians. Areobindus, accordingly, bade Gontharis lead the whole army against the enemy. And Gontharis, though he had promised to serve him zealously in the war, proceeded to act as follows. One of his servants, a Moor by birth and a cook by trade, he commanded to go to the enemy's camp, and to make it appear to all others that he had run away from his master, but to tell Antalas secretly that Gontharis wished to share with him the rule of Libya. So the cook carried out these directions, and Antalas heard the word gladly, but made no further reply than to say that worthy enterprises are not properly brought to pass among men by cooks. When this was heard by Gontharis, he immediately sent to Antalas one of his body-guards, Ulitheus by name, whom he had found especially trustworthy in his service, inviting him to come as close as possible to Carthage. For, if this were done, he promised him to put Areobindus out of the way. So Ulitheus without the knowledge of the rest of the barbarians made an agreement with Antalas that he, Antalas, should rule Byzacium, having half the possessions of Areobindus and taking with him fifteen hundred Roman soldiers, while Gontharis should assume the dignity of king, holding



the power over Carthage and the rest of Libya. And after settling these matters he returned to the Roman camp, which they had made entirely in front of the circuit-wall, distributing among themselves the guarding of each gate. And the barbarians not long afterwards proceeded straight for Carthage in great haste, and they made camp and remained in the place called Decimum. And departing from there on the following day, they were moving forward. But some of the Roman army encountered them, and engaging with them unexpectedly, slew a small number of the Moors. But these were straightway called back by Gontharis, who rebuked them for acting with reckless daring and for being willing to give the Romans foreknowledge of the danger into which they were thrown.

But in the meantime Areobindus sent to Coutzinas secretly and began to treat with him with regard to turning traitor. And Coutzinas promised him that, as soon as they should begin the action, he would turn against Antalas and the Moors of Byzacium. For the Moors keep faith neither with any other men nor with each other. This Areobindus reported to Gontharis. And he, wishing to frustrate the enterprise by having it postponed, advised Areobindus by no means to have faith in Coutzinas, unless he should receive from him his children as hostages. So Areobindus and Coutzinas, constantly sending secret messages to each other, were busying themselves with the plot against Antalas. And Gontharis sent Ulitheus once more and made known to Antalas what was being done. And he decided not to make any charges against Coutzinas nor did he allow him to know that he had discovered the plot, nor indeed did he disclose anything of what had been agreed upon by himself and Gontharis. But though enemies and hostile at heart to one another, they were arrayed together with treacherous intent, and each of them was marching with the other against his own particular friend. With such purposes Coutzinas and Antalas were leading the Moorish army against Carthage. And Gontharis was intending to kill Areobindus, but, in order to avoid the appearance of aiming at sole power, he wished to do this secretly in battle, in order that it might seem that the plot had been made by others against the general, and that he had been compelled by the Roman army to assume command over Libya. Accordingly he circumvented Areobindus by deceit, and persuaded him to go out against the enemy and engage with them, now that they had already come close to Carthage. He decided, therefore, that on the following day he would lead the whole army against the enemy at sunrise. But Areobindus, being very inexperienced in this matter and reluctant besides, kept holding back for no good reason. For while considering how he should put on his equipment of arms and armour, and making the other preparations for the sally, he wasted the greatest part of the day. He accordingly put off the engagement to the following day and remained quiet. But Gontharis, suspecting that he had hesitated purposely, as being aware of what was being done, decided openly to accomplish the murder of the general and make his attempt at the tyranny.

## XXVI

And on the succeeding day he proceeded to act as follows. Opening wide the gates where he himself kept guard, he placed huge rocks under them, that no one might be able easily to shut them, and he placed armoured men with bows in their hands about the parapet in great numbers, and he himself, having put on his breastplate, took his stand between the gates. And his purpose in doing this was not that he might receive the Moors into the city; for the Moors, being altogether fickle, are suspicious of all men. And it is not unnatural that they are so; for whoever is by nature treacherous toward his neighbours is himself unable to trust anyone at all, but he is compelled to be suspicious of all men, since he estimates the character of his neighbour by his own mind. For this reason, then, Gontharis did not hope that even the Moors would trust him and come inside the circuit-



wall, but he made this move in order that Areobindus, falling into great fear, might straightway rush off in flight, and, abandoning Carthage as quickly as he could, might betake himself to Byzantium. And he would have been right in his expectation had not winter come on just then and frustrated his plan.

544-545 A.D.

And Areobindus, learning what was being done, summoned Athanasius and some of the notables. And Artabanus also came to him from the camp with two others and he urged Areobindus neither to lose heart nor to give way to the daring of Gontharis, but to go against him instantly with all his men and engage him in battle, before any further trouble arose. At first, then, Areobindus sent to Gontharis one of his friends, Phredas by name, and commanded him to test the other's purpose. And when Phredas returned and reported that Gontharis by no means denied his intention of seizing the supreme power, he purposed immediately to go against him arrayed for battle.

But in the meantime Gontharis slandered Areobindus to the soldiers, saying that he was a coward and not only possessed with fear of the enemy, but at the same time quite unwilling to give them, his soldiers, their pay, and that he was planning to run away with Anastasius and that they were about to sail very soon from Mandracium, in order that the soldiers, fighting both with hunger and with the Moors, might be destroyed; and he enquired whether it was their wish to arrest both and keep them under guard. For thus he hoped either that Areobindus, perceiving the tumult, would turn to flight, or that he would be captured by the soldiers and ruthlessly put to death. Moreover he promised that he himself would advance to the soldiers money of his own, as much as the government owed them. And they were approving his words and were possessed with great wrath against Areobindus, but while this was going on Areobindus together with Artabanus and his followers came there. And a battle took place on the parapet and below about the gate where Gontharis had taken his stand, and neither side was worsted. And all were about to gather from the camps, as many as were well disposed to the emperor, and capture the mutineers by force. For Gontharis had not as yet deceived all, but the majority remained still uncorrupted in mind. But Areobindus, seeing then for the first time the killing of men (for he had not yet, as it happened, become acquainted with this sight), was terror-stricken and, turning coward, fled, unable to endure what he saw.

Now there is a temple inside the fortifications of Carthage hard by the sea-shore, the abode of men who are very exact in their practice of religion, whom we have always been accustomed to call "monks"; this temple had been built by Solomon not long before, and he had surrounded it with a wall and rendered it a very strong fortress. And Areobindus, fleeing for refuge, rushed into the monastery, where he had already sent his wife and sister. Then Artabanus too ran away, and all the rest withdrew from Carthage as each one could. And Gontharis, having taken the city by assault, with the mutineers took possession of the palace, and was already guarding both the gates and the harbour most carefully. First, then, he summoned Athanasius, who came to him without delay, and by using much flattery Athanasius made it appear that what had been done pleased him exceedingly. And after this Gontharis sent the priest of the city and commanded Areobindus, after receiving pledges, to come to the palace, threatening that he would besiege him if he disobeyed and would not again give him pledges of safety, but would use every means to capture and put him to death. So the priest, Reparatus, stoutly declared to Areobindus that in accordance with the decision of Gontharis he would swear that no harm would come to him from Gontharis, telling also what he had threatened in case he did not obey. But Areobindus became afraid and agreed that he would follow the priest immediately, if the priest, after performing the rite of the sacred bath in the usual manner, should swear to him by that rite and then give

him pledges for his safety. So the priest did according to this. And Areobindus without delay followed him, clad in a garment which was suitable neither for a general nor for any one else in military service, but altogether appropriate to a slave or one of private station; this garment the Romans call "casual in the Latin tongue. And when they came near the palace, he took in his hands the holy scriptures from the priest, and so went before Gontharis. And falling prone he lay there a long time, holding out to him the suppliant olive-branch and the holy scriptures, and with him was the child which had been counted worthy of the sacred bath by which the priest had given him the pledge, as has been told. And when, with difficulty, Gontharis had raised him to his feet, he enquired of Gontharis in the name of all things holy whether his safety was secure. And Gontharis now bade him most positively to be of good cheer, for he would suffer no harm at his hands, but on the following day would be gone from Carthage with his wife and his possessions. Then he dismissed the priest Reparatus, and bade Areobindus and Athanasius dine with him in the palace. And during the dinner he honoured Areobindus, inviting him to take his place first on the couch; but after the dinner he did not let him go, but compelled him to sleep in a chamber alone; and he sent there Ulitheus with certain others to assail him. And while he was wailing and crying aloud again and again and speaking many entreating words to them to move them to pity, they slew him. Athanasius, however, they spared, passing him by, I suppose, on account of his advanced age.

## XXVII

And on the following day Gontharis sent the head of Areobindus to Antalas, but decided to deprive him of the money and of the soldiers. Antalas, therefore, was outraged, because he was not carrying out anything of what had been agreed with him, and at the same time, upon considering what Gontharis had sworn and what he had done to Areobindus, he was incensed. For it did not seem to him that one who had disregarded such oaths would ever be faithful either to him or to anyone else at all. So after considering the matter long with himself, he was desirous of submitting to the Emperor Justinian; for this reason, then, he marched back. And learning that Marcentius, who commanded the troops in Byzacium, had fled to one of the islands which lie off the coast, he sent to him, and telling him the whole story and giving pledges, persuaded him by kind words to come to him. And Marcentius remained with Antalas in the camp, while the soldiers who were on duty in Byzacium, being well disposed to the emperor, were guarding the city of Hadrumentum. But the soldiers of Stotzas, being not less than a thousand, perceiving what was being done, went in great haste, with John leading them, to Gontharis; and he gladly received them into the city. Now there were five hundred Romans and about eighty Huns, while all the rest were Vandals. And Artabanes, upon receiving pledges, went up to the palace with his Armenians, and promised to serve the tyrant according to his orders. But secretly he was purposing to destroy Gontharis, having previously communicated this purpose to Gregorius, his nephew, and to Artasires, his body-guard. And Gregorius, urging him on to the undertaking, spoke as follows:

"Artabanes, the opportunity is now at hand for you, and you alone, to win the glory of Belisarius—nay more, even to surpass that glory by far. For he came here, having received from the emperor a most formidable army and great sums of money, having officers accompanying him and advisers in great numbers, and a fleet of ships whose like we have never before heard tell of, and numerous cavalry, and arms, and everything else, to put it in a word, prepared for him in a manner worthy of the Roman empire. And thus equipped he won back Libya for the Romans with much toil. But all these achievements have so completely come to naught, that they are, at this moment, as if they had never been—except

indeed, that there is at present left to the Romans from the victory of Belisarius the losses they have suffered in lives and in money, and, in addition, that they are no longer able even to guard the good things they won. But the winning back of all these things for the emperor now depends upon the courage and judgment and right hand of you alone. Therefore consider that you are of the house of the Arsacidae by ancient descent, and remember that it is seemly for men of noble birth to play the part of brave men always and in all places. Now many remarkable deeds have been performed by you in behalf of freedom. For when you were still young, you slew Acaeius, the ruler of the Armenians, and Sittas, the general of the Romans, and as a result of this becoming known to the king Chosroes, you campaigned with him against the Romans. And since you have reached so great a station that it devolves upon you not to allow the Roman power to lie subject to a drunken dog, show at this time that it was by reason of noble birth and a valorous heart that at the former time, good sir, you performed those deeds; and I as well as Artasires here will assist you in everything, so far as we have the power, in accordance with your commands."

So spoke Gregorius; and he excited the mind of Artabanes still more against the tyrant. But Gontharis, bringing out the wife and the sister of Areobindus from the fortress, compelled them to remain at a certain house, showing them no insult by any word or deed whatsoever, nor did they have provisions in any less measure than they needed, nor were they compelled to say or to do anything except, indeed, that Prejecta was forced to write to her uncle that Gontharis was honouring them exceedingly and that he was altogether guiltless of the murder of her husband, and that the base deed had been done by Ulitheus, Gontharis by no means approving. And Gontharis was persuaded to do this by Pasiphilus, a man who had been foremost among the mutineers in Byzacium, and had assisted Gontharis very greatly in his effort to establish the tyranny. For Pasiphilus maintained that, if he should do this, the emperor would marry the young woman to him, and in view of his kinship with her would give also a dowry of a large sum of money. And Gontharis commanded Artabanes to lead the army against Antalas and the Moors in Byzacium. For Coutzinas, having quarrelled with Antalas, had separated from him openly and allied himself with Gontharis; and he gave Gontharis his son and his mother as hostages. So the army, under the leadership of Artabanes, proceeded immediately against Antalas. And with Artabanes was John also, the commander of the mutineers of Stotzas, and Ulitheus, the body-guard of Gontharis; and there were Moors also following him, led by Coutzinas. And after passing by the city of Hadrumetum, they came upon their opponents somewhere near there, and making a camp a little apart from the enemy, they passed the night. And on the day after that John and Ulitheus, with a detachment of the army, remained there, while Artabanes and Coutzinas led their army against their opponents. And the Moors under Antalas did not withstand their attack and rushed off in flight. But Artabanes of a sudden wilfully played the coward, and turning his standard about marched off towards the rear. For this reason Ulitheus was purposing to kill him when he came into the camp. But Artabanes, by way of excusing himself, said he feared lest Marcentius, coming to assist the enemy from the city of Hadrumetum, where he then happened to be, would do his forces irreparable harm; but Gontharis, he said, ought to march against the enemy with the whole army. And at first he considered going to Hadrumetum with his followers and uniting with the emperor's forces. But after long deliberation it seemed to him better to put Gontharis out of the world and thus free both the emperor and Libya from a difficult situation. Returning, accordingly, to Carthage, he reported to the tyrant that he would need a larger army to meet the enemy. And Gontharis, after conferring with Pasiphilus, consented, indeed, to equip his whole army, but purposed to place a guard in Carthage, and in person to lead the army against the enemy. Each day, therefore, he was destroying many men toward whom he felt any suspicion, even though groundless. And he gave orders to

Pasiphilus, whom he was intending to appoint in charge of the garrison of Carthage, to kill all the Greeks without any consideration.

## XXVIII

And after arranging everything else in the very best way, as it seemed to him, Gontharis decided to entertain his friends at a banquet, with the intention of making his departure on the following day. And in a room where there were in readiness three couches which had been there from ancient times, he made the banquet. So he himself reclined, as was natural, upon the first couch, where were also Athanasius and Artabanes, and some of those known to Gontharis, and Peter, a Thracian by birth, who had previously been a body-guard of Solomon. And on both the other couches were the first and noblest of the Vandals. John, however, who commanded the mutineers of Stotzas; was entertained by Pasiphilus in his own house, and each of the other leaders wherever it suited the several friends of Gontharis to entertain them. Artabanes, accordingly, when he was bidden to this banquet, thinking that this occasion furnished him a suitable opportunity for the murder of the tyrant, was planning to carry out his purpose. He therefore disclosed the matter to Gregorius and to Artasires and three other body-guards, bidding the body-guards get inside the hall with their swords (for when commanders are entertained at a banquet it is customary for their body-guards to stand behind them), and after getting inside to make an attack suddenly, at whatever moment should seem to them most suitable; and Artasires was to strike the first blow. At the same time he directed Gregorius to pick out a large number of the most daring of the Armenians and bring them to the palace, carrying only their swords in their hands (for it is not lawful for the escort of officers in a city to be armed with anything else), and leaving these men in the vestibule, to come inside with the body-guards; and he was to tell the plan to no one of them, but to make only this explanation, that he was suspicious of Gontharis, fearing that he had called Artabanes to this banquet to do him harm, and therefore wished that they should stand beside the soldiers of Gontharis who had been stationed there on guard, and giving the appearance of indulging in some play, they were to take hold of the shields which these guards carried, and waving them about and otherwise moving them keep constantly turning them up and down; and if any tumult or shouting took place within, they were to take up these very shields and come to the rescue on the run. Such were the orders which Artabanes gave, and Gregorius proceeded to put them into execution. And Artasires devised the following plan: he cut some arrows into two parts and placed them on the wrist of his left arm, the sections reaching to his elbow. And after binding them very carefully with straps, he laid over them the sleeve of his tunic. And he did this in order that, if anyone should raise his sword over him and attempt to strike him, he might avoid the chance of suffering serious injury; for he had only to thrust his left arm in front of him, and the steel would break off as it crashed upon the wood, and thus his body could not be reached at any point.

With such purpose, then, Artasires did as I have said. And to Artabanes he spoke as follows: "As for me, I have hopes that I shall prove equal to the undertaking and shall not hesitate, and also that I shall touch the body of Gontharis with this sword; but as for what will follow, I am unable to say whether God in His anger against the tyrant will co-operate with me in this daring deed, or whether, avenging some sin of mine, He will stand against me there and be an obstacle in my way. If, therefore, you see that the tyrant is not wounded in a vital spot, do you kill me with my sword without the least hesitation, so that I may not be tortured by him into saying that it was by your will that I rushed into the undertaking, and thus not only perish myself most shamefully, but also be compelled against my will to destroy you as well." And after Artasires had spoken such words he too, together with



Gregorius and one of the body-guards, entered the room where the couches were and took his stand behind Artabanes. And the rest, remaining by the guards, did as they had been commanded.

So Artasires, when the banquet had only just begun, was purposing to set to work, and he was already touching the hilt of his sword. But Gregorius prevented him by saying in the Armenian tongue that Gontharis was still wholly himself, not having as yet drunk any great quantity of wine. Then Artasires groaned and said: "My good fellow, how fine a heart I have for the deed, and now you have for the moment wrongfully hindered me!" And as the drinking went on, Gontharis, who by now was thoroughly saturated with wine, began to give portions of the food to the body-guards, yielding to a generous mood. And they, upon receiving these portions, went outside the building immediately and were about to eat them, leaving beside Gontharis only three body-guards, one of whom happened to be Ulitheus. And Artasires also started to go out in order to taste the morsels with the rest. But just then a kind of fear came over him lest, when he should wish to draw his sword, something might prevent him. Accordingly, as soon as he got outside, he secretly threw away the sheath of the sword, and taking it naked under his arm, hidden by his cloak, he rushed in to Gontharis, as if to say something without the knowledge of the others. And Artabanes, seeing this, was in a fever of excitement, and became exceedingly anxious by reason of the surpassing magnitude of the issue at stake; he began to move his head, the colour of his countenance changed repeatedly, and he seemed to have become altogether like one inspired, on account of the greatness of the undertaking. And Peter, upon seeing this, understood what was being done, but he did not disclose it to any of the others, because, being well disposed to the emperor, he was exceedingly pleased by what was going on. And Artasires, having come close to the tyrant, was pushed by one of the servants, and as he retreated a little to the rear, the servant observed that his sword was bared and cried out saying: "What is this, my excellent fellow?" And Gontharis, putting his hand to his right ear, and turning his face, looked at him. And Artasires struck him with his sword as he did so, and cut off a piece of his scalp together with his fingers. And Peter cried out and exhorted Artasires to kill the most unholy of all men. And Artabanes, seeing Gontharis leaping to his feet (for he reclined close to him), drew a two-edged dagger which hung by his thigh—a rather large one—and thrusting it into the tyrant's left side clean up to the hilt, left it there. And the tyrant none the less tried to leap up, but having received a mortal wound, he fell where he was. Ulitheus then brought his sword down upon Artasires as if to strike him over the head; but he held his left arm above his head, and thus profited by his own idea in the moment of greatest need. For since Ulitheus' sword had its edge turned when it struck the sections of arrows on his arm, he himself was unscathed, and he killed Ulitheus with no difficulty. And Peter and Artabanes, the one seizing the sword of Gontharis and the other that of Ulitheus who had fallen, killed on the spot those of the body-guards who remained. Thus there arose, as was natural, an exceedingly great tumult and confusion. And when this was perceived by those of the Armenians who were standing by the tyrant's guards, they immediately picked up the shields according to the plan which had been arranged with them, and went on the run to the banquet-room. And they slew all the Vandals and the friends of Gontharis, no one resisting.

Then Artabanes enjoined upon Athanasius to take charge of the money in the palace: for all that had been left by Areobindus was there. And when the guards learned of the death of Gontharis, straightway many arrayed themselves with the Armenians; for the most of them were of the household of Areobindus. With one accord, therefore, they proclaimed the Emperor Justinian triumphant. And the cry, coming forth from a multitude of men, and being, therefore, an exceedingly mighty sound, was strong enough to reach the greater part of the city. Wherefore those who were well-disposed to the emperor leaped into the houses



of the mutineers and straightway killed them, some while enjoying sleep, others while taking food, and still others while they were awe-struck with fear and in terrible perplexity. And among these was Pasiphilus, but not John, for he with some of the Vandals fled to the sanctuary. To these Artabanes gave pledges, and making them rise from there, sent them to Byzantium, and having thus recovered the city for the emperor, he continued to guard it. And the murder of the tyrant took place on the thirty-sixth day of the tyranny, in the nineteenth year of the reign of the Emperor Justinian.

545-546 A.D.

And Artabanes won great fame for himself from this deed among all men. And straightway Prejecta, the wife of Areobindus, rewarded him with great sums of money, and the emperor appointed him general of all Libya. But not long after this Artabanes entreated the emperor to summon him to Byzantium, and the emperor fulfilled his request. And having summoned Artabanes, he appointed John, the brother of Pappus, sole general of Libya. And this John, immediately upon arriving in Libya, had an engagement with Antalas and the Moors in Byzacium, and conquering them in battle, slew many; and he wrested from these barbarians all the standards of Solomon, and sent them to the emperor—standards which they had previously secured as plunder, when Solomon had been taken from the world. And the rest of the Moors he drove as far as possible from the Roman territory. But at a later time the Leuathae came again with a great army from the country about Tripolis to Byzacium, and united with the forces of Antalas. And when John went to meet this army, he was defeated in the engagement, and losing many of his men, fled to Laribus. And then indeed the enemy, overrunning the whole country there as far as Carthage, treated in a terrible manner those Libyans who fell in their way. But not long afterward John collected those of the soldiers who had survived, and drawing into alliance with him many Moors and especially those under Coutzinas, came to battle with the enemy and unexpectedly routed them. And the Romans, following them up as they fled in complete disorder, slew a great part of them, while the rest escaped to the confines of Libya. Thus it came to pass that those of the Libyans who survived, few as they were in number and exceedingly poor, at last and after great toil found some peace.

BOOK V  
THE GOTHIC WAR

I

Such, then, were the fortunes of the Romans in Libya. I shall now proceed to the Gothic War, first telling all that befell the Goths and Italians before this war.

474-491 A.D.

During the reign of Zeno Byzantium the power in the West was held by Augustus, whom the Romans used to call by the diminutive name Augustulus because he took over the empire while still a lad, his father Orestes, a man of the greatest discretion, administering it as regent for him. Now it happened that the Romans a short time before had induced the Sciri and Alani and certain other Gothic nations to form an alliance with them; and from that time on it was their fortune to suffer at the hand of Alaric and Attila those things which have been told in the previous narrative. And in proportion as the barbarian element among them became strong, just so did the prestige of the Roman soldiers forthwith decline, and under the fair name of alliance they were more and more tyrannized over by the intruders and oppressed by them; so that the barbarians ruthlessly forced many other measures upon the Romans much against their will and finally demanded that they should divide with them the entire land of Italy. And indeed they commanded Orestes to give them the third part of this, and when he would by no means agree to do so, they killed him immediately.

Now there was a certain man among the Romans named Odoacer, one of the bodyguards of the emperor, and he at that time agreed to carry out their commands, on condition that they should set him upon the throne. And when he had received the supreme power in this way, he did the emperor no further harm, but allowed him to live thenceforth as a private citizen. And by giving the third part of the land to the barbarians, and in this way gaining their allegiance most firmly, he held the supreme power securely for ten years.

It was at about this same time that the Goths also, who were dwelling in Thrace with the permission of the emperor, took up arms against the Romans under the leadership of Theoderic, a man who was of patrician rank and had attained the consular office in Byzantium. But the Emperor Zeno, who understood how to settle to his advantage any situation in which he found himself, advised Theoderic to proceed to Italy, attack Odoacer, and win for himself and the Goths the western dominion. For it was better for him, he said, especially as he had attained the senatorial dignity, to force out a usurper and be ruler over all the Romans and Italians than to incur the great risk of a decisive struggle with the emperor.

Now Theoderic was pleased with the suggestion and went to Italy, and he was followed by the Gothic host, who placed in their waggons the women and children and such of their chattels as they were able to take with them. And when they came near the Ionian Gulf, they were quite unable to cross over it, since they had no ships at hand; and so they made the journey around the gulf, advancing through the land of the Taulantii and the other nations of that region. Here the forces of Odoacer encountered them, but after being defeated in many battles, they shut themselves up with their leader in Ravenna and such other towns as were especially strong. And the Goths laid siege to these places and captured them all, in one way or another, as it chanced in each case, except that they were unable to capture, either by surrender or by storm, the fortress of Caesena, which is three hundred stades distant from Ravenna, and Ravenna itself, where Odoacer happened to be. For this city of Ravenna lies in a level plain at the extremity of the Ionian Gulf, lacking two stades of being

on the sea, and it is so situated as not to be easily approached either by ships or by a land army. Ships cannot possibly put in to shore there because the sea itself prevents them by forming shoals for not less than thirty stades; consequently the beach at Ravenna, although to the eye of mariners it is very near at hand, is in reality very far away by reason of the great extent of the shoal-water. And a land army cannot approach it at all; for the river Po, also called the Eridanus, which flows past Ravenna, coming from the boundaries of Celtica, and other navigable rivers together with some marshes, encircle it on all sides and so cause the city to be surrounded by water. In that place a very wonderful thing takes place every day. For early in the morning the sea forms a kind of river and comes up over the land for the distance of a day's journey for an unencumbered traveller and becomes navigable in the midst of the mainland, and then in the late afternoon it turns back again, causing the inlet to disappear, and gathers the stream to itself. All those, therefore, who have to convey provisions into the city or carry them out from there for trade or for any other reason, place their cargoes in boats, and drawing them down to the place where the inlet is regularly formed, they await the inflow of the water. And when this comes, the boats are lifted little by little from the ground and float, and the sailors on them set to work and from that time on are seafaring men. And this is not the only place where this happens, but it is the regular occurrence along the whole coast in this region as far as the city of Aquileia. However, it does not always take place in the same way at every time, but when the light of the moon is faint, the advance of the sea is not strong either, but from the first half-moon until the second the inflow has a tendency to be greater. So much for this matter.

But when the third year had already been spent by the Goths and Theoderic in their siege of Ravenna, the Goths, who were weary of the siege, and the followers of Odoacer, who were hard pressed by the lack of provisions, came to an agreement with each other through the mediation of the priest of Ravenna, the understanding being that both Theoderic and Odoacer should reside in Ravenna on terms of complete equality. And for some time they observed the agreement; but afterward Theoderic caught Odoacer, as they say, plotting against him, and bidding him to a feast with treacherous intent slew him, and in this way, after gaining the adherence of such of the hostile barbarians as chanced to survive, he himself secured the supremacy over both Goths and Italians. And though he did not claim the right to assume either the garb or the name of emperor of the Romans, but was called "rex" to the end of his life (for thus the barbarians are accustomed to call their leaders), still, in governing his own subjects, he invested himself with all the qualities which appropriately belong to one who is by birth an emperor. For he was exceedingly careful to observe justice, he preserved the laws on a sure basis, he protected the land and kept it safe from the barbarians dwelling round about, and attained the highest possible degree of wisdom and manliness. And he himself committed scarcely a single act of injustice against his subjects, nor would he brook such conduct on the part of anyone else who attempted it, except, indeed, that the Goths distributed among themselves the portion of the lands which Odoacer had given to his own partisans. And although in name Theoderic was a usurper, yet in fact he was as truly an emperor as any who have distinguished themselves in this office from the beginning; and love for him among both Goths and Italians grew to be great, and that too contrary to the ordinary habits of men. For in all states men's preferences are divergent, with the result that the government in power pleases for the moment only those with whom its acts find favour, but offends those whose judgment it violates. But Theoderic reigned for thirty-seven years, and when he died, he had not only made himself an object of terror to all his enemies, but he also left to his subjects a keen sense of bereavement at his loss. And he died in the following manner.

Symmachus and his son-in-law Boetius were men of noble and ancient lineage, and both had been leading men in the Roman senate and had been consuls. But because they

practised philosophy and were mindful of justice in a manner surpassed by no other men, relieving the destitution of both citizens and strangers by generous gifts of money, they attained great fame and thus led men of the basest sort to envy them. Now such persons slandered them to Theoderic, and he, believing their slanders, put these two men to death, on the ground that they were setting about a revolution, and made their property confiscate to the public treasury. And a few days later, while he was dining, the servants set before him [15]the head of a great fish. This seemed to Theoderic to be the head of Symmachus newly slain. Indeed, with its teeth set in its lower lip and its eyes looking at him with a grim and insane stare, it did resemble exceedingly a person threatening him. And becoming greatly frightened at the extraordinary prodigy and shivering excessively, he retired running to his own chamber, and bidding them place many covers upon him, remained quiet. But afterwards he disclosed to his physician Elpidius all that had happened and wept for the wrong he had done Symmachus and Boetius. Then, having lamented and grieved exceedingly over the unfortunate occurrence, he died not long afterward. This was the first and last act of injustice which he committed toward his subjects, and the cause of it was that he had not made a thorough investigation, as he was accustomed to do, before passing judgment on the two men.

## II

After his death the kingdom was taken over by Atalaric, the son of Theoderic's daughter; he had reached the age of eight years and was being reared under the care of his mother Amalasantha. For his father had already departed from among men. And not long afterward Justinian succeeded to the imperial power in Byzantium. Now Amalasantha, as guardian of her child, administered the government, and she proved to be endowed with wisdom and regard for justice in the highest degree, displaying to a great extent the masculine temper. As long as she stood at the head of the government she inflicted punishment upon no Roman in any case either by touching his person or by imposing a fine. Furthermore, she did not give way to the Goths in their mad desire to wrong them, but she even restored to the children of Symmachus and Boetius their fathers' estates. Now Amalasantha wished to make her son resemble the Roman princes in his manner of life, and was already compelling him to attend the school of a teacher of letters. And she chose out three among the old men of the Goths whom she knew to be prudent and refined above all the others, and bade them live with Atalaric. But the Goths were by no means pleased with this. For because of their eagerness to wrong their subjects they wished to be ruled by him more after the barbarian fashion. On one occasion the mother, finding the boy doing some wrong in his chamber, chastised him; and he in tears went off thence to the men's apartments. And some Goths who met him made a great to-do about this, and reviling Amalasantha insisted that she wished to put the boy out of the world as quickly as possible, in order that she might marry a second husband and with him rule over the Goths and Italians. And all the notable men among them gathered together, and coming before Amalasantha made the charge that their king was not being educated correctly from their point of view nor to his own advantage. For letters, they said, are far removed from manliness, and the teaching of old men results for the most part in a cowardly and submissive spirit. Therefore the man who is to shew daring in any work and be great in renown ought to be freed from the timidity which teachers inspire and to take his training in arms. They added that even Theoderic would never allow any of the Goths to send their children to school; for he used to say to them all that, if the fear of the strap once came over them, they would never have the resolution to despise sword or spear. And they asked her to reflect that her father Theoderic before he died had become master of all this territory and

had invested himself with a kingdom which was his by no sort of right, although he had not so much as heard of letters. "Therefore, O Queen," they said, "have done with these tutors now, and do you give to Atalaric some men of his own age to be his companions, who will pass through the period of youth with him and thus give him an impulse toward that excellence which is in keeping with the custom of barbarians."

When Amalasantha heard this, although she did not approve, yet because she feared the plotting of these men, she made it appear that their words found favour with her, and granted everything the barbarians desired of her. And when the old men had left Atalaric, he was given the company of some boys who were to share his daily life,—lads who had not yet come of age but were only a little in advance of him in years; and these boys, as soon as he came of age, by enticing him to drunkenness and to intercourse with women, made him an exceptionally depraved youth, and of such stupid folly that he was disinclined to follow his mother's advice. Consequently he utterly refused to champion her cause, although the barbarians were by now openly leaguings together against her; for they were boldly commanding the woman to withdraw from the palace. But Amalasantha neither became frightened at the plotting of the Goths nor did she, womanlike, weakly give way, but still displaying the dignity befitting a queen, she chose out three men who were the most notable among the barbarians and at the same time the most responsible for the sedition against her, and bade them go to the limits of Italy, not together, however, but as far apart as possible from one another; but it was made to appear that they were being sent in order to guard the land against the enemy's attack. But nevertheless these men by the help of their friends and relations, who were all still in communication with them, even travelling a long journey for the purpose, continued to make ready the details of their plot against Amalasantha.

And the woman, being unable to endure these things any longer, devised the following plan. Sending to Byzantium she enquired of the Emperor Justinian whether it was his wish that Amalasantha, the daughter of Theoderic, should come to him; for she wished to depart from Italy as quickly as possible. And the emperor, being pleased by the suggestion, bade her come and sent orders that the finest of the houses in Epidamnus should be put in readiness, in order that when Amalasantha should come there, she might lodge in it and after spending such time there as she wished might then betake herself to Byzantium. When Amalasantha learned this, she chose out certain Goths who were energetic men and especially devoted to her and sent them to kill the three whom I have just mentioned, as having been chiefly responsible for the sedition against her. And she herself placed all her possessions, including four hundred centenaria of gold, in a single ship and embarked on it some of those most faithful to her and bade them sail to Epidamnus, and, upon arriving there, to anchor in its harbour, but to discharge from the ship nothing whatever of its cargo until she herself should send orders. And she did this in order that, if she should learn that the three men had been destroyed, she might remain there and summon the ship back, having no further fear from her enemies; but if it should chance that any one of them was left alive, no good hope being left her, she purposed to sail with all speed and find safety for herself and her possessions in the emperor's land. Such was the purpose with which Amalasantha was sending the ship to Epidamnus; and when it arrived at the harbour of that city, those who had the money carried out her orders. But a little later, when the murders had been accomplished as she wished, Amalasantha summoned the ship back and remaining at Ravenna strengthened her rule and made it as secure as might be.



### III

There was among the Goths one Theodatus by name, son of Amalafriada, the sister of Theoderic, a man already of mature years, versed in the Latin literature and the teachings of Plato, but without any experience whatever in war and taking no part in active life, and yet extraordinarily devoted to the pursuit of money. This Theodatus had gained possession of most of the lands in Tuscany, and he was eager by violent methods to wrest the remainder from their owners. For to have a neighbour seemed to Theodatus a kind of misfortune. Now Amalasantha was exerting herself to curb this desire of his, and consequently he was always vexed with her and resentful. He formed the plan, therefore, of handing over Tuscany to the Emperor Justinian, in order that, upon receiving from him a great sum of money and the senatorial dignity, he might pass the rest of his life in Byzantium. After Theodatus had formed this plan, there came from Byzantium to the chief priest of Rome two envoys, Hypatius, the priest of Ephesus, and Demetrius, from Philippi in Macedonia, to confer about a tenet of faith, which is a subject of disagreement and controversy among the Christians. As for the points in dispute, although I know them well, I shall by no means make mention of them; for I consider it a sort of insane folly to investigate the nature of God, enquiring of what sort it is. For man cannot, I think, apprehend even human affairs with accuracy, much less those things which pertain to the nature of God. As for me, therefore, I shall maintain a discreet silence concerning these matters, with the sole object that old and venerable beliefs may not be discredited. For I, for my part, will say nothing whatever about God save that He is altogether good and has all things in His power. But let each one say whatever he thinks he knows about these matters, both priest and layman. As for Theodatus, he met these envoys secretly and directed them to report to the Emperor Justinian what he had planned, explaining what has just been set forth by me.

But at this juncture Atalaric, having plunged into a drunken revel which passed all bounds, was seized with a wasting disease. Wherefore Amalasantha was in great perplexity; for, on the one hand, she had no confidence in the loyalty of her son, now that he had gone so far in his depravity, and, on the other, she thought that if Atalaric also should be removed from among men, her life would not be safe thereafter, since she had given offence to the most notable of the Goths. For this reason she was desirous of handing over the power of the Goths and Italians to the Emperor Justinian, in order that she herself might be saved. And it happened that Alexander, a man of the senate, together with Demetrius and Hypatius, had come to Ravenna. For when the emperor had heard that Amalasantha's boat was anchored in the harbour of Epidamnus, but that she herself was still tarrying, although much time had passed, he had sent Alexander to investigate and report to him the whole situation with regard to Amalasantha; but it was given out that the emperor had sent Alexander as an envoy to her because he was greatly disturbed by the events at Lilybaeum which have been set forth by me in the preceding narrative, and because ten Huns from the army in Libya had taken flight and reached Campania, and Uliaris, who was guarding Naples, had received them not at all against the will of Amalasantha, and also because the Goths, in making war on the Gepaedes about Sirmium, had treated the city of Gratiana, situated at the extremity of Illyricum, as a hostile town. So by way of protesting to Amalasantha with regard to these things, he wrote a letter and sent Alexander.

And when Alexander arrived in Rome, he left there the priests busied with the matters for which they had come, and he himself, journeying on to Ravenna and coming before Amalasantha, reported the emperor's message secretly, and openly delivered the letter to her. And the purport of the writing was as follows: "The fortress of Lilybaeum, which is ours, you have taken by force and are now holding, and barbarians, slaves of mine who have run away, you have received and have not even yet decided to restore them to me, and

besides all this you have treated outrageously my city of Gratiana, though it belongs to you in no way whatever. Wherefore it is time for you to consider what the end of these things will some day be." And when this letter had been delivered to her and she had read it, she replied in the following words: "One may reasonably expect an emperor who is great and lays claim to virtue to assist an orphan child who does not in the least comprehend what is being done, rather than for no cause at all to quarrel with him. For unless a struggle be waged on even terms, even the victory it gains brings no honour. But thou dost threaten Atalaric on account of Lilybaeum, and ten runaways, and a mistake, made by soldiers in going against their enemies, which through some misapprehension chanced to affect a friendly city. Nay! do not thus; do not thou thus, O Emperor, but call to mind that when them wast making war upon the Vandals, we not only refrained from hindering thee, but quite zealously even gave thee free passage against the enemy and provided a market in which to buy the indispensable supplies, furnishing especially the multitude of horses to which thy final mastery over the enemy was chiefly due. And yet it is not merely the man who offers an alliance of arms to his neighbours that would in justice be called their ally and friend, but also the man who actually is found assisting another in war in regard to his every need. And consider that at that time thy fleet had no other place at which to put in from the sea except Sicily, and that without the supplies bought there it could not go on to Libya. Therefore thou art indebted to us for the chief cause of thy victory; for the one who provides a solution for a difficult situation is justly entitled also to the credit for the results which flow from his help. And what could be sweeter for a man, O Emperor, than gaining the mastery over his enemies? And yet in our case the outcome is that we suffer no slight disadvantage, in that we do not, in accordance with the custom of war, enjoy our share of the spoils. And now thou art also claiming the right to despoil us of Lilybaeum in Sicily, which has belonged to the Goths from ancient times, a lone rock, O Emperor, worth not so much as a piece of silver, which, had it happened to belong to thy kingdom from ancient times, thou mightest in equity at least have granted to Atalaric as a reward for his services, since he lent thee assistance in the times of thy most pressing necessity." Such was the message which Amalasantha wrote openly to the emperor; but secretly she agreed to put the whole of Italy into his hands. And the envoys, returning to Byzantium, reported everything to the Emperor Justinian, Alexander telling him the course which had been decided upon by Amalasantha, and Demetrius and Hypatius all that they had heard Theodatus say, adding that Theodatus enjoyed great power in Tuscany, where he had become owner of the most of the land and consequently would be able with no trouble at all to carry his agreement into effect. And the emperor, overjoyed at this situation, immediately sent to Italy Peter, an Illyrian by birth, but a citizen of Thessalonica, a man who was one of the trained speakers in Byzantium, a discreet and gentle person withal and fitted by nature to persuade men.

#### IV

But while these things were going on as I have explained, Theodatus was denounced before Amalasantha by many Tuscans, who stated that he had done violence to all the people of Tuscany and had without cause seized their estates, taking not only all private estates but especially those belonging to the royal household, which the Romans are accustomed to call "patrimonium." For this reason the woman called Theodatus to an investigation, and when, being confronted by his denouncers, he had been proved guilty without any question, she compelled him to pay back everything which he had wrongfully seized and then dismissed him. And since in this way she had given the greatest offence to the man, from that time she was on hostile terms with him, exceedingly vexed as he was by

reason of his fondness for money, because he was unable to continue his unlawful and violent practices.

At about this same time Atalaric, being quite wasted away by the disease, came to his end, having lived eight years in office. As for Amalasintha, since it was fated that she should fare ill, she took no account of the nature of Theodatus and of what she had recently done to him, and supposed that she would suffer no unpleasant treatment at his hands if she should do the man some rather unusual favour. She accordingly summoned him, and when he came, set out to cajole him, saying that for some time she had known well that it was to be expected that her son would soon die; for she had heard the opinion of all the physicians, who agreed in their judgment, and had herself perceived that the body of Atalaric continued to waste away. And since she saw that both Goths and Italians had an unfavourable opinion regarding Theodatus, who had now come to represent the race of Theoderic, she had conceived the desire to clear him of this evil name, in order that it might not stand in his way if he were called to the throne. But at the same time, she explained, the question of justice disturbed her, at the thought that those who claimed to have been wronged by him already should find that they had no one to whom they might report what had befallen them, but that they now had their enemy as their master. For these reasons, then, although she invited him to the throne after his name should have been cleared in this way, yet it was necessary, she said, that he should be bound by the most solemn oaths that while the title of the office should be conferred upon Theodatus, she herself should in fact hold the power no less than before. When Theodatus heard this, although he swore to all the conditions which Amalasintha wished, he entered into the agreement with treacherous intent, remembering all that she had previously done to him. Thus Amalasintha, being deceived by her own judgment and the oaths of Theodatus, established him in the office. And sending some Goths as envoys to Byzantium, she made this known to the Emperor Justinian.

But Theodatus, upon receiving the supreme power, began to act in all things contrary to the hopes she had entertained and to the promises he had made. And after winning the adherence of the relatives of the Goths who had been slain by her—and they were both numerous and men of very high standing among the Goths—he suddenly put to death some of the connections of Amalasintha and imprisoned her, the envoys not having as yet reached Byzantium. Now there is a certain lake in Tuscany called Vulsina, within which rises an island, exceedingly small but having a strong fortress upon it. There Theodatus confined Amalasintha and kept her under guard.

535A.D.

But fearing that by this act he had given offence to the emperor, as actually proved to be the case, he sent some men of the Roman senate, Liberius and Opilio and certain others, directing them to excuse his conduct to the emperor with all their power by assuring him that Amalasintha had met with no harsh treatment at his hands, although she had perpetrated irreparable outrages upon him before. And he himself wrote in this sense to the emperor, and also compelled Amalasintha, much against her will, to write the same thing.

Such was the course of these events. But Peter had already been despatched by the emperor on an embassy to Italy with instructions to meet Theodatus without the knowledge of any others, and after Theodatus had given pledges by an oath that none of their dealings should be divulged, he was then to make a secure settlement with him regarding Tuscany; and meeting Amalasintha stealthily he was to make such an arrangement with her regarding the whole of Italy as would be to the profit of either party. But openly his mission was to negotiate with regard to Lilybaeum and the other matters which I have lately mentioned. For as yet the emperor had heard nothing about the death of Atalaric or the

succession of Theodatus to the throne, or the fate which had befallen Amalasantha. And Peter was already on his way when he met the envoys of Amalasantha and learned, in the first place, that Theodatus had come to the throne; and a little later, upon reaching the city of Aulon, which lies on the Ionian Gulf, he met there the company of Liberius and Opilio, and learned everything which had taken place, and reporting this to the emperor he remained there.

And when the Emperor Justinian heard these things, he formed the purpose of throwing the Goths and Theodatus into confusion; accordingly he wrote a letter to Amalasantha, stating that he was eager to give her every possible support, and at the same time he directed Peter by no means to conceal this message, but to make it known to Theodatus himself and to all the Goths. And when the envoys from Italy arrived in Byzantium, they all, with a single exception, reported the whole matter to the emperor, and especially Liberius; for he was a man unusually upright and honourable, and one who knew well how to shew regard for the truth; but Opilio alone declared with the greatest persistence that Theodatus had committed no offence against Amalasantha. Now when Peter arrived in Italy, it so happened that Amalasantha had been removed from among men. For the relatives of the Goths who had been slain by her came before Theodatus declaring that neither his life nor theirs was secure unless Amalasantha should be put out of their way as quickly as possible. And as soon as he gave in to them, they went to the island and killed Amalasantha,—an act which grieved exceedingly all the Italians and the Goths as well. For the woman had the strictest regard for every kind of virtue, as has been stated by me a little earlier. Now Peter protested openly to Theodatus and the other Goths that because this base deed had been committed by them, there would be war without truce between the emperor and themselves. But Theodatus, such was his stupid folly, while still holding the slayers of Amalasantha in honour and favour kept trying to persuade Peter and the emperor that this unholy deed had been committed by the Goths by no means with his approval, but decidedly against his will.

## V

Meanwhile it happened that Belisarius had distinguished himself by the defeat of Gelimer and the Vandals. And the emperor, upon learning what had befallen Amalasantha, immediately entered upon the war, being in the ninth year of his reign. And he first commanded Mundus, the general of Illyricum, to go to Dalmatia, which was subject to the Goths, and make trial of Salones. Now Mundus was by birth a barbarian, but exceedingly loyal to the cause of the emperor and an able warrior. Then he sent Belisarius by sea with four thousand soldiers from the regular troops and the foederati, and about three thousand of the Isaurians. And the commanders were men of note: Constantinus and Bessas from the land of Thrace, and Peranius from Iberia which is hard by Media, a man who was by birth a member of the royal family of the Iberians, but had before this time come as a deserter to the Romans through enmity toward the Persians; and the levies of cavalry were commanded by Valentinus, Magnus, and Innocentius, and the infantry by Herodian, Paulus, Demetrius, and Ursicinus, while the leader of the Isaurians was Ennes. And there were also two hundred Huns as allies and three hundred Moors. But the general in supreme command over all was Belisarius, and he had with him many notable men as spearmen and guards. And he was accompanied also by Photius, the son of his wife Antonina by a previous marriage; he was still a young man wearing his first beard, but possessed the greatest discretion and shewed a strength of character beyond his years. And the emperor instructed Belisarius to give out that his destination was Carthage, but as soon as they should arrive at Sicily, they were to disembark there as it obliged for some reason to do so, and make trial of

the island. And if it should be possible to reduce it to subjection without any trouble, they were to take possession and not let it go again; but if they should meet with any obstacle, they were to sail with all speed to Libya, giving no one an opportunity to perceive what their intention was.

And he also sent a letter to the leaders of the Franks as follows: "The Goths, having seized by violence Italy, which was ours, have not only refused absolutely to give it back, but have committed further acts of injustice against us which are unendurable and pass beyond all bounds. For this reason we have been compelled to take the field against them, and it is proper that you should join with us in waging this war, which is rendered yours as well as ours not only by the orthodox faith, which rejects the opinion of the Arians, but also by the enmity we both feel toward the Goths." Such was the emperor's letter; and making a gift of money to them, he agreed to give more as soon as they should take an active part. And they with all zeal promised to fight in alliance with him.

Now Mundus and the army under his command entered Dalmatia, and engaging with the Goths who encountered them there, defeated them in the battle and took possession of Salones. As for Belisarius, he put in at Sicily and took Catana. And making that place his base of operations, he took over Syracuse and the other cities by surrender without any trouble; except, indeed, that the Goths who were keeping guard in Panormus, having confidence in the fortifications of the place, which was a strong one, were quite unwilling to yield to Belisarius and ordered him to lead his army away from there with all speed. But Belisarius, considering that it was impossible to capture the place from the landward side, ordered the fleet to sail into the harbour, which extended right up to the wall. For it was outside the circuit-wall and entirely without defenders. Now when the ships had anchored there, it was seen that the masts were higher than the parapet. Straightway, therefore, he filled all the small boats of the ships with bowmen and hoisted them to the tops of the masts. And when from these boats the enemy were shot at from above, they fell into such an irresistible fear that they immediately delivered Panormus to Belisarius by surrender. As a result of this the emperor held all Sicily subject and tributary to himself. And at that time it so happened that there fell to Belisarius a piece of good fortune beyond the power of words to describe. For, having received the dignity of the consulship because of his victory over the Vandals, while he was still holding this honour, and after he had won the whole of Sicily, on the last day of his consulship, he marched into Syracuse, loudly applauded by the army and by the Sicilians and throwing golden coins to all. This coincidence, however, was not intentionally arranged by him, but it was a happy chance which befell the man, that after having recovered the whole of the island for the Romans he marched into Syracuse on that particular day; and so it was not in the senate house in Byzantium, as was customary, but there that he laid down the office of the consuls and so became an ex-consul. Thus, then, did good fortune attend Belisarius.

## VI

And when Peter learned of the conquest of Sicily, he was still more insistent in his efforts to frighten Theodatus and would not let him go. But he, turning coward and reduced to speechlessness no less than if he himself had become a captive with Gelimer, entered into negotiations with Peter without the knowledge of any others, and between them they formed an agreement, providing that Theodatus should retire from all Sicily in favour of the Emperor Justinian, and should send him also a golden crown every year weighing three hundred litrae, and Gothic warriors to the number of three thousand whenever he should wish; and that Theodatus himself should have no authority to kill any priest or senator, or



to confiscate his property for the public treasury except by the decision of the emperor; and that if Theodatus wished to advance any of his subjects to the patrician or some other senatorial rank this honour should not be bestowed by him, but he should ask the emperor to bestow it; and that the Roman populace, in acclaiming their sovereign, should always shout the name of the emperor first, and afterward that of Theodatus, both in the theatres and in the hippodromes and wherever else it should be necessary for such a thing to be done; furthermore, that no statue of bronze nor of any other material should ever be set up to Theodatus alone, but statues must always be made for both, and they must stand thus: on the right that of the emperor, and on the other side that of Theodatus. And after Theodatus had written in confirmation of this agreement he dismissed the ambassador.

But, a little later, terror laid hold upon the man's soul and brought him into fears which knew no bound and tortured his mind, filling him with dread at the name of war, and reminding him that if the agreement drawn up by Peter and himself did not please the emperor at all, war would straightway come upon him. Once more, therefore, he summoned Peter, who had already reached Albani, for a secret conference, and enquired of the man whether he thought that the agreement would be pleasing to the emperor. And he replied that he supposed it would. "But if," said Theodatus, "these things do not please the man at all, what will happen then?" And Peter replied "After that you will have to wage war, most noble Sir." "But what is this," he said; "is it just, my dear ambassador?" And Peter, immediately taking him up, said "And how is it not just, my good Sir, that the pursuits appropriate to each man's nature should be preserved?" "What, pray, may this mean?" asked Theodatus. "It means," was the reply, "that your great interest is to philosophize, while Justinian's is to be a worthy emperor of the Romans. And there is this difference, that for one who has practised philosophy it would never be seemly to bring about the death of men, especially in such great numbers, and it should be added that this view accords with the teachings of Plato, which you have evidently espoused, and hence it is unholy for you not to be free from all bloodshed; but for him it is not at all inappropriate to seek to acquire a land which has belonged from of old to the realm which is his own." Thereupon Theodatus, being convinced by this advice, agreed to retire from the kingship in favour of the Emperor Justinian, and both he and his wife took an oath to this effect. He then bound Peter by oaths that he would not divulge this agreement until he should see that the emperor would not accept the former convention. And he sent with him Rusticus, a priest who was especially devoted to him and a Roman citizen, to negotiate on the basis of this agreement. And he also entrusted a letter to these men.

So Peter and Rusticus, upon reaching Byzantium, reported the first decision to the emperor, just as Theodatus had directed them to do. But when the emperor was quite unwilling to accept the proposal, they revealed the plan which had been committed to writing afterwards. This was to the following effect: "I am no stranger to royal courts, but it was my fortune to have been born in the house of my uncle while he was king and to have been reared in a manner worthy of my race; and yet I have had little experience of wars and of the turmoils which wars entail. For since from my earliest years I have been passionately addicted to scholarly disputations and have always devoted my time to this sort of thing, I have consequently been up to the present time very far removed from the confusion of battles. Therefore it is utterly absurd that I should aspire to the honours which royalty confers and thus lead a life fraught with danger, when it is possible for me to avoid them both. For neither one of these is a pleasure to me; the first, because it is liable to satiety, for it is a surfeit of all sweet things, and the second, because lack of familiarity with such a life throws one into confusion. But as for me, if estates should be provided me which yielded an annual income of no less than twelve centenaria, I should regard the kingdom as of less account than them, and I shall hand over to thee forthwith the power of the Goths and

Italians. For I should find more pleasure in being a farmer free from all cares than in passing my life amid a king's anxieties, attended as they are by danger after danger. Pray send a man as quickly as possible into whose hands I may fittingly deliver Italy and the affairs of the kingdom."

Such was the purport of the letter of Theodatus. And the emperor, being exceedingly pleased, replied as follows: "From of old have I heard by report that you were a man of discretion, but now, taught by experience, I know it by the decision you have reached not to await the issue of the war. For certain men who in the past have followed such a course have been completely undone. And you will never repent having made us friends instead of enemies. But you will not only have this that you ask at our hands, but you will also have the distinction of being enrolled in the highest honours of the Romans. Now for the present I have sent Athanasius and Peter, so that each party may have surety by some agreement. And almost immediately Belisarius also will visit you to complete all the arrangements which have been agreed upon between us." After writing this the emperor sent Athanasius, the brother of Alexander, who had previously gone on an embassy to Atalari enjoining upon them to assign to Theodatus the estates of the royal household, which they call "patrimonium"; and not until after they had drawn up a written document and had secured oaths to fortify the agreement were they to summon Belisarius from Sicily, in order that he might take over the palace and all Italy and hold them under guard. And he wrote to Belisarius that as soon as they should summon him he should go thither with all speed.

## VII

But meantime, while the emperor was engaged in these negotiations and these envoys were travelling to Italy, the Goths, under command of Asinarius and Gripas and some others, had come with a great army into Dalmatia. And when they had reached the neighbourhood of Salones, Mauricius, the son of Mundus, who was not marching out for battle but, with a few men, was on a scouting expedition, encountered them. A violent engagement ensued in which the Goths lost their foremost and noblest men, but the Romans almost their whole company, including their general Mauricius. And when Mundus heard of this, being overcome with grief at the misfortune and by this time dominated by a mighty fury, he went against the enemy without the least delay and regardless of order. The battle which took place was stubbornly contested, and the result was a Cadmean victory for the Romans. For although the most of the enemy fell there and their rout had been decisive, Mundus, who went on killing and following up the enemy wherever he chanced to find them and was quite unable to restrain his mind because of the misfortune of his son, was wounded by some fugitive or other and fell. Thereupon the pursuit ended and the two armies separated. And at that time the Romans recalled the verse of the Sibyl, which had been pronounced in earlier times and seemed to them a portent. For the words of the saying were that when Africa should be held, the "world" would perish together with its offspring. This, however, was not the real meaning of the oracle, but after intimating that Libya would be once more subject to the Romans, it added this statement also, that when that time came Mundus would perish together with his son. For it runs as follows: "Africa capta Mundus cum nato peribit." But since "mundus" in the Latin tongue has the force of "world," they thought that the saying had reference to the world. So much, then, for this. As for Salones, it was not entered by anyone. For the Romans went back home, since they were left altogether without a commander, and the Goths, seeing that not one of their nobles was left them, fell into fear and took possession of the strongholds in the neighbourhood; for they had no confidence in the defences of Salones, and, besides, the Romans who lived there were not very well disposed towards them.

When Theodatus heard this, he took no account of the envoys who by now had come to him. For he was by nature much given to distrust, and he by no means kept his mind steadfast, but the present fortune always reduced him now to a state of terror which knew no measure, and this contrary to reason and the proper understanding of the situation, and again brought him to the opposite extreme of unspeakable boldness. And so at that time, when he heard of the death of Mundus and Mauricius, he was lifted up exceedingly and in a manner altogether unjustified by what had happened, and he saw fit to taunt the envoys when they at length appeared before him. And when Peter on one occasion remonstrated with him because he had transgressed his agreement with the emperor, Theodatus called both of them publicly and spoke as follows: "The position of envoys is a proud one and in general has come to be held in honour among all men; but envoys preserve for themselves these their prerogatives only so long as they guard the dignity of their embassy by the propriety of their own conduct. For men have sanctioned as just the killing of an envoy whenever he is either found to have insulted a sovereign or has had knowledge of a woman who is the wife of another." Such were the words with which Theodatus inveighed against Peter, not because he had approached a woman, but, apparently, in order to make good his claim that there were charges which might lead to the death of an ambassador. But the envoys replied as follows: "The facts are not, O Ruler of the Goths, as thou hast stated them, nor canst thou, under cover of flimsy pretexts, wantonly perpetrate unholy deeds upon men who are envoys. For it is not possible for an ambassador, even if he wishes it, to become an adulterer, since it is not easy for him even to partake of water except by the will of those who guard him. And as for the proposals which he has received from the lips of him who has sent him and then delivers, he himself cannot reasonably incur the blame which arises from them, in case they be not good, but he who has given the command would justly bear this charge, while the sole responsibility of the ambassador is to have discharged his mission. We, therefore, shall say all that we were instructed by the emperor to say when we were sent, and do thou hear us quietly; for if thou art stirred to excitement, all thou canst do will be to wrong men who are ambassadors. It is time, therefore, for thee of thine own free will to perform all that thou didst promise the emperor. This, indeed, is the purpose for which we have come. And the letter which he wrote to thee thou hast already received, but as for the writing which he sent to the foremost of the Goths, to no others shall we give it than to them." When the leading men of the barbarians, who were present, heard this speech of the envoys, they bade them give to Theodatus what had been written to them. And it ran as follows: "It has been the object of our care to receive you back into our state, whereat you may well be pleased. For you will come to us, not in order to be made of less consequence, but that you may be more honoured. And, besides, we are not bidding the Goths enter into strange or alien customs, but into those of a people with whom you were once familiar, though you have by chance been separated from them for a season. For these reasons Athanasius and Peter have been sent to you, and you ought to assist them in all things." Such was the purport of this letter. But after Theodatus had read everything, he not only decided not to perform in deed the promises he had made to the emperor, but also put the envoys under a strict guard.

But when the Emperor Justinian heard these things and what had taken place in Dalmatia, he sent Constantianus, who commanded the royal grooms, into Illyricum, bidding him gather an army from there and make an attempt on Salones, in whatever manner he might be able; and he commanded Belisarius to enter Italy with all speed and to treat the Goths as enemies. So Constantianus came to Epidamnus and spent some time there gathering an army. But in the meantime the Goths, under the leadership of Gripas, came with another army into Dalmatia and took possession of Salones; and Constantianus, when all his preparations were as complete as possible, departed from Epidamnus with his

whole force and cast anchor at Epidaurus which is on the right as one sails into the Ionian Gulf. Now it so happened that some men were there whom Gripas had sent out as spies. And when they took note of the ships and the army of Constantianus it seemed to them that both the sea and the whole land were full of soldiers, and returning to Gripas they declared that Constantianus was bringing against them an army of men numbering many tens of thousands. And he, being plunged into great fear, thought it inexpedient to meet their attack, and at the same time he was quite unwilling to be besieged by the emperor's army, since it so completely commanded the sea; but he was disturbed most of all by the fortifications of Salones (since the greater part of them had already fallen down), and by the exceedingly suspicious attitude on the part of the inhabitants of the place toward the Goths. And for this reason he departed thence with his whole army as quickly as possible and made camp in the plain which is between Salones and the city of Scardon. And Constantianus, sailing with all his ships from Epidaurus, put in at Lysina, which is an island in the gulf. Thence he sent forward some of his men, in order that they might make enquiry concerning the plans of Gripas and report them to him. Then, after learning from them the whole situation, he sailed straight for Salones with all speed. And when he had put in at a place close to the city, he disembarked his army on the mainland and himself remained quiet there; but he selected five hundred from the army, and setting over them as commander Siphilas, one of his own bodyguards, he commanded them to seize the narrow pass which, as he had been informed, was in the outskirts of the city. And this Siphilas did. And Constantianus and his whole land army entered Salones on the following day, and the fleet anchored close by. Then Constantianus proceeded to look after the fortifications of the city, building up in haste all such parts of them as had fallen down; and Gripas, with the Gothic army, on the seventh day after the Romans had taken possession of Salones, departed from there and betook themselves to Ravenna; and thus Constantianus gained possession of all Dalmatia and Liburnia, bringing over to his side all the Goths who were settled there. Such were the events in Dalmatia. And the winter drew to a close, and thus ended the first year of this war, the history of which Procopius has written.

## VIII

And Belisarius, leaving guards in Syracuse and Panormus, crossed with the rest of the army from Messina to Rhegium (where the myths of the poets say Scylla and Charybdis were), and every day the people of that region kept coming over to him. For since their towns had from of old been without walls, they had no means at all of guarding them, and because of their hostility toward the Goths they were, as was natural, greatly dissatisfied with their present government. And Ebrimous came over to Belisarius as a deserter from the Goths, together with all his followers; this man was the son-in-law of Theodatus, being married to Theodenanthe, his daughter. And he was straightway sent to the emperor and received many gifts of honour and in particular attained the patrician dignity. And the army of Belisarius marched from Rhegium through Bruttium and Lucania, and the fleet of ships accompanied it, sailing close to the mainland. But when they reached Campania, they came upon a city on the sea, Naples by name, which was strong not only because of the nature of its site, but also because it contained a numerous garrison of Goths. And Belisarius commanded the ships to anchor in the harbour, which was beyond the range of missiles, while he himself made his camp near the city. He then first took possession by surrender of the fort which is in the suburb, and afterwards permitted the inhabitants of the city at their own request to send some of their notables into his camp, in order that they might tell what their wish was and, after receiving his reply, report to the populace. Straightway, therefore, the Neapolitans sent Stephanus. And he, upon coming before Belisarius, spoke as follows:



"You are not acting justly, O general, in taking the field against men who are Romans and have done no wrong, who inhabit but a small city and have over us a guard of barbarians as masters, so that it does not even lie in our power, if we desire to do so, to oppose them. But it so happens that even these guards had to leave their wives and children, and their most precious possessions in the hands of Theodatus before they came to keep guard over us. Therefore, if they treat with you at all, they will plainly be betraying, not the city, but themselves. And if one must speak the truth with no concealment, you have not counselled to your advantage, either, in coming against us. For if you capture Rome, Naples will be subject to you without any further trouble, whereas if you are repulsed from there, it is probable that you will not be able to hold even this city securely. Consequently the time you spend on this siege will be spent to no purpose."

So spoke Stephanus. And Belisarius replied as follows:

"Whether we have acted wisely or foolishly in coming here is not a question which we propose to submit to the Neapolitans. But we desire that you first weigh carefully such matters as are appropriate to your deliberations and then act solely in accordance with your own interests. Receive into your city, therefore, the emperor's army, which has come to secure your freedom and that of the other Italians, and do not choose the course which will bring upon you the most grievous misfortunes. For those who, in order to rid themselves of slavery or any other shameful thing, go into war, such men, if they fare well in the struggle, have double good fortune, because along with their victory they have also acquired freedom from their troubles, and if defeated they gain some consolation for themselves, in that, they have not of their own free will chosen to follow the worse fortune. But as for those who have the opportunity to be free without fighting, but yet enter into a struggle in order to make their condition of slavery permanent, such men, even if it so happens that they conquer, have failed in the most vital point, and if in the battle they fare less happily than they wished, they will have, along with their general ill-fortune, also the calamity of defeat. As for the Neapolitans, then, let these words suffice. But as for these Goths who are present, we give them the choice, either to array themselves hereafter on our side under the great emperor, or to go to their homes altogether immune from harm. Because, if both you and they, disregarding all these considerations, dare to raise arms against us, it will be necessary for us also, if God so wills, to treat whomever we meet as an enemy. If, however, it is the will of the Neapolitans to choose the cause of the emperor and thus to be rid of so cruel a slavery, I take it upon myself, giving you pledges, to promise that you will receive at our hands those benefits which the Sicilians lately hoped for, and with regard to which they were unable to say that we had sworn falsely."

Such was the message which Belisarius bade Stephanus take back to the people. But privately he promised him large rewards if he should inspire the Neapolitans with good-will toward the emperor. And Stephanus, upon coming into the city, reported the words of Belisarius and expressed his own opinion that it was inexpedient to fight against the emperor. And he was assisted in his efforts by Antiochus, a man of Syria, but long resident in Naples for the purpose of carrying on a shipping business, who had a great reputation there for wisdom and justice. But there were two men, Pastor and Asclepiodotus, trained speakers and very notable men among the Neapolitans, who were exceedingly friendly toward the Goths, and quite unwilling to have any change made in the present state of affairs. These two men, planning how they might block the negotiations, induced the multitude to demand many serious concessions, and to try to force Belisarius to promise on oath that they should forthwith obtain what they asked for. And after writing down in a document such demands as nobody would have supposed that Belisarius would accept, they gave it to Stephanus. And he, returning to the emperor's army, shewed the writing to the



general, and enquired of him whether he was willing to carry out all the proposals which the Neapolitans made and to take an oath concerning them. And Belisarius promised that they should all be fulfilled for them and so sent him back. Now when the Neapolitans heard this, they were in favour of accepting the general's assurances at once and began to urge that the emperor's army be received into the city with all speed. For he declared that nothing unpleasant would befall them, if the case of the Sicilians was sufficient evidence for anyone to judge by, since, as he pointed out, it had only recently been their lot, after they had exchanged their barbarian tyrants for the sovereignty of Justinian, to be, not only free men, but also immune from all difficulties. And swayed by great excitement they were about to go to the gates with the purpose of throwing them open. And though the Goths were not pleased with what they were doing, still, since they were unable to prevent it, they stood out of the way.

But Pastor and Asclepiodotus called together the people and all the Goths in one place, and spoke as follows: "It is not at all unnatural that the populace of a city should abandon themselves and their own safety, especially if, without consulting any of their notables, they make an independent decision regarding their all. But it is necessary for us, who are on the very point of perishing together with you, to offer as a last contribution to the fatherland this advice. We see, then, fellow citizens, that you are intent upon betraying both yourselves and the city to Belisarius, who promises to confer many benefits upon you and to swear the most solemn oaths in confirmation of his promises. Now if he is able to promise you this also, that to him will come the victory in the war, no one could deny that the course you are taking is to your advantage. For it is great folly not to gratify every whim of him who is to become master. But if this outcome lies in uncertainty, and no man in the world is competent to guarantee the decision of fortune, consider what sort of misfortunes your haste is seeking to attain. For if the Goths overcome their adversaries in the war, they will punish you as enemies and as having done them the foulest wrong. For you are resorting to this act of treason, not under constraint of necessity, but out of deliberate cowardice. So that even to Belisarius, if he wins the victory over his enemies, we shall perhaps appear faithless and betrayers of our rulers, and having proved ourselves deserters, we shall in all probability have a guard set over us permanently by the emperor. For though he who has found a traitor is pleased at the moment of victory by the service rendered, yet afterwards, moved by suspicion based upon the traitor's past, he hates and fears his benefactor, since he himself has in his own possession the evidences of the other's faithlessness. If, however, we shew ourselves faithful to the Goths at the present time, manfully submitting to the danger, they will give us great rewards in case they win the mastery over the enemy, and Belisarius, if it should so happen that he is the victor, will be prone to forgive. For loyalty which fails is punished by no man unless he be lacking in understanding. But what has happened to you that you are in terror of being besieged by the enemy, you who have no lack of provisions, have not been deprived by blockade of any of the necessities of life, and hence may sit at home, confident in the fortifications and in your garrison here? And in our opinion even Belisarius would not have consented to this agreement with us if he had any hope of capturing the city by force. And yet if what he desired were that which is just and that which will be to our advantage, he ought not to be trying to frighten the Neapolitans or to establish his own power by means of an act of injustice on our part toward the Goths; but he should do battle with Theodatus and the Goths, so that without danger to us or treason on our part the city might come into the power of the victors."

When they had finished speaking, Pastor and Asclepiodotus brought forward the Jews, who promised that the city should be in want of none of the necessities, and the Goths on their part promised that they would guard the circuit-wall safely. And the Neapolitans, moved by these arguments, bade Belisarius depart thence with all speed. He, however,

began the siege. And he made many attempts upon the circuit-wall, but was always repulsed, losing many of his soldiers, and especially those who laid some claim to valour. For the wall of Naples was inaccessible, on one side by reason of the sea, and on the other because of some difficult country, and those who planned to attack it could gain entrance at no point, not only because of its general situation, but also because the ground sloped steeply. However, Belisarius cut the aqueduct which brought water into the city; but he did not in this way seriously disturb the Neapolitans, since there were wells inside the circuit-wall which sufficed for their needs and kept them from feeling too keenly the loss of the aqueduct.

## IX

So the besieged, without the knowledge of the enemy, sent to Theodatus in Rome begging him to come to their help with all speed. But Theodatus was not making the least preparation for war, being by nature unmanly, as has been said before. And they say that something else happened to him, which terrified him exceedingly and reduced him to still greater anxiety. I, for my part, do not credit this report, but even so it shall be told. Theodatus even before this time had been prone to make enquiries of those who professed to foretell the future, and on the present occasion he was at a loss what to do in the situation which confronted him—a state which more than anything else is accustomed to drive men to seek prophecies; so he enquired of one of the Hebrews, who had a great reputation for prophecy, what sort of an outcome the present war would have. The Hebrew commanded him to confine three groups of ten swine each in three huts, and after giving them respectively the names of Goths, Romans, and the soldiers of the emperor, to wait quietly for a certain number of days. And Theodatus did as he was told. And when the appointed day had come, they both went into the huts and looked at the swine; and they found that of those which had been given the name of Goths all save two were dead, whereas all except a few were living of those which had received the name of the emperor's soldiers; and as for those which had been called Romans, it so happened that, although the hair of all of them had fallen out, yet about half of them survived. When Theodatus beheld this and divined the outcome of the war, a great fear, they say, came upon him, since he knew well that it would certainly be the fate of the Romans to die to half their number and be deprived of their possessions, but that the Goths would be defeated and their race reduced to a few, and that to the emperor would come, with the loss of but a few of his soldiers, the victory in the war. And for this reason, they say, Theodatus felt no impulse to enter into a struggle with Belisarius. As for this story, then, let each one express his views according to the belief or disbelief which he feels regarding it.

But Belisarius, as he besieged the Neapolitans both by land and by sea, was beginning to be vexed. For he was coming to think that they would never yield to him, and, furthermore, he could not hope that the city would be captured, since he was finding that the difficulty of its position was proving to be a very serious obstacle. And the loss of the time which was being spent there distressed him, for he was making his calculations so as to avoid being compelled to go against Theodatus and Rome in the winter season. Indeed he had already even given orders to the army to pack up, his intention being to depart from there as quickly as possible. But while he was in the greatest perplexity, it came to pass that he met with the following good fortune. One of the Isaurians was seized with the desire to observe the construction of the aqueduct, and to discover in what manner it provided the supply of water to the city. So he entered it at a place far distant from the city, where Belisarius had broken it open, and proceeded to walk along it, finding no difficulty, since the water had stopped running because the aqueduct had been broken open. But when he

reached a point near the circuit-wall, he came upon a large rock, not placed there by the hand of man, but a part of the natural formation of the place. And those who had built the aqueduct many years before, after they had attached the masonry to this rock, proceeded to make a tunnel from that point on, not sufficiently large, however, for a man to pass through, but large enough to furnish a passage for the water. And for this reason it came about that the channel of the aqueduct was not everywhere of the same breadth, but one was confronted by a narrow place at that rock, impassable for a man, especially if he wore armour or carried a shield. And when the Isaurian observed this, it seemed to him not impossible for the army to penetrate into the city, if they should make the tunnel at that point broader by a little. But since he himself was a humble person, and never had come into conversation with any of the commanders, he brought the matter before Paucaris, an Isaurian, who had distinguished himself among the guards of Belisarius. So Paucaris immediately reported the whole matter to the general. And Belisarius, being pleased by the report, took new courage, and by promising to reward the man with great sums of money induced him to attempt the undertaking, and commanded him to associate with himself some of the Isaurians and cut out a passage in the rock as quickly as possible, taking care to allow no one to become aware of what they were doing. Paucaris then selected some Isaurians who were thoroughly suitable for the work, and secretly got inside the aqueduct with them. And coming to the place where the rock caused the passage to be narrow, they began their work, not cutting the rock with picks or mattocks, lest by their blows they should reveal to the enemy what they were doing, but scraping it very persistently with sharp instruments of iron. And in a short time the work was done, so that a man wearing a corselet and carrying a shield was able to go through at that point.

But when all his arrangements were at length in complete readiness, the thought occurred to Belisarius that if he should by act of war make his entry into Naples with the army, the result would be that lives would be lost and that all the other things would happen which usually attend the capture of a city by an enemy. And straightway summoning Stephanus, he spoke as follows: "Many times have I witnessed the capture of cities and I am well acquainted with what takes place at such a time. For they slay all the men of every age, and as for the women, though they beg to die, they are not granted the boon of death, but are carried off for outrage and are made to suffer treatment that is abominable and most pitiable. And the children, who are thus deprived of their proper maintenance and education, are forced to be slaves, and that, too, of the men who are the most odious of all—those on whose hands they see the blood of their fathers. And this is not all, my dear Stephanus, for I make no mention of the conflagration which destroys all the property and blots out the beauty of the city. When I see, as in the mirror of the cities which have been captured in times past, this city of Naples falling victim to such a fate, I am moved to pity both it and you its inhabitants. For such means have now been perfected by me against the city that its capture is inevitable. But I pray that an ancient city, which has for ages been inhabited by both Christians and Romans, may not meet with such a fortune, especially at my hands as commander of Roman troops, not least because in my army are a multitude of barbarians, who have lost brothers or relatives before the wall of this town; for the fury of these men I should be unable to control, if they should capture the city by act of war. While, therefore, it is still within your power to choose and to put into effect that which will be to your advantage, adopt the better course and escape misfortune; for when it falls upon you, as it probably will, you will not justly blame fortune but your own judgment." With these words Belisarius dismissed Stephanus. And he went before the people of Naples weeping and reporting with bitter lamentations all that he had heard Belisarius say. But they, since it was not fated that the Neapolitans should become subjects of the emperor without chastisement, neither became afraid nor did they decide to yield to Belisarius.

## X

Then at length Belisarius, on his part, made his preparations to enter the city as follows. Selecting at nightfall about four hundred men and appointing as commander over them Magnus, who led a detachment of cavalry, and Ennes, the leader of the Isaurians, he commanded them all to put on their corselets, take in hand their shields and swords, and remain quiet until he himself should give the signal. And he summoned Bessas and gave him orders to stay with him, for he wished to consult with him concerning a certain matter pertaining to the army. And when it was well on in the night, he explained to Magnus and Ennes the task before them, pointed out the place where he had previously broken open the aqueduct, and ordered them to lead the four hundred men into the city, taking lights with them. And he sent with them two men skilled in the use of the trumpet, so that as soon as they should get inside the circuit-wall, they might be able both to throw the city into confusion and to notify their own men what they were doing. And he himself was holding in readiness a very great number of ladders which had been constructed previously.

So these men entered the aqueduct and were proceeding toward the city, while he with Bessas and Photius remained at his post and with their help was attending to all details. And he also sent to the camp, commanding the men to remain awake and to keep their arms in their hands. At the same time he kept near him a large force—men whom he considered most courageous. Now of the men who were on their way to the city above half became terrified at the danger and turned back. And since Magnus could not persuade them to follow him, although he urged them again and again, he returned with them to the general. And Belisarius, after reviling these men, selected two hundred of the troops at hand, and ordered them to go with Magnus. And Photius also, wishing to lead them, leaped into the channel of the aqueduct, but Belisarius prevented him. Then those who were fleeing from the danger, put to shame by the railings of the general and of Photius, took heart to face it once more and followed with the others. And Belisarius, fearing lest their operations should be perceived by some of the enemy, who were maintaining a guard on the tower which happened to be nearest to the aqueduct, went to that place and commanded Bessas to carry on a conversation in the Gothic tongue with the barbarians there, his purpose being to prevent any clanging of the weapons from being audible to them. And so Bessas shouted to them in a loud voice, urging the Goths to yield to Belisarius and promising that they should have many rewards. But they jeered at him, indulging in many insults directed at both Belisarius and the emperor. Belisarius and Bessas, then, were thus occupied.

Now the aqueduct of Naples is not only covered until it reaches the wall, but remains covered as it extends to a great distance inside the city, being carried on a high arch of baked brick. Consequently, when the men under the command of Magnus and Ennes had got inside the fortifications, they were one and all unable even to conjecture where in the world they were. Furthermore, they could not leave the aqueduct at any point until the foremost of them came to a place where the aqueduct chanced to be without a roof and where stood a building which had entirely fallen into neglect. Inside this building a certain woman had her dwelling, living alone with utter poverty as her only companion; and an olive tree had grown out over the aqueduct. So when these men saw the sky and perceived that they were in the midst of the city, they began to plan how they might get out, but they had no means of leaving the aqueduct either with or without their arms. For the structure happened to be very high at that point and, besides, offered no means of climbing to the top. But as the soldiers were in a state of great perplexity and were beginning to crowd each other greatly as they collected there (for already, as the men in the rear kept coming up, a great throng was beginning to gather), the thought occurred to one of them to make trial of the ascent. He immediately therefore laid down his arms, and forcing his way up with hands



and feet, reached the woman's house. And seeing her there, he threatened to kill her unless she should remain silent. And she was terror-stricken and remained speechless. He then fastened to the trunk of the olive tree a strong strap, and threw the other end of it into the aqueduct. So the soldiers, laying hold of it one at a time, managed with difficulty to make the ascent. And after all had come up and a fourth part of the night still remained, they proceeded toward the wall; and they slew the garrison of two of the towers before the men in them had an inkling of the trouble. These towers were on the northern portion of the circuit-wall, where Belisarius was stationed with Bessas and Photius, anxiously awaiting the progress of events. So while the trumpeters were summoning the army to the wall, Belisarius was placing the ladders against the fortifications and commanding the soldiers to mount them. But it so happened that not one of the ladders reached as far as the parapet. For since the workmen had not made them in sight of the wall, they had not been able to arrive at the proper measure. For this reason they bound two together, and it was only by using both of them for the ascent that the soldiers got above the level of the parapet. Such was the progress of these events where Belisarius was engaged.

But on the side of the circuit-wall which faces the sea, where the forces on guard were not barbarians, but Jews, the soldiers were unable either to use the ladders or to scale the wall. For the Jews had already given offence to their enemy by having opposed their efforts to capture the city without a fight, and for this reason they had no hope if they should fall into their hands; so they kept fighting stubbornly, although they could see that the city had already been captured, and held out beyond all expectation against the assaults of their opponents. But when day came and some of those who had mounted the wall marched against them, then at last they also, now that they were being shot at from behind, took to flight, and Naples was captured by storm. By this time the gates were thrown open and the whole Roman army came in.

But those who were stationed about the gates which fronted the east, since, as it happened, they had no ladders at hand, set fire to these gates, which were altogether unguarded; for that part of the wall had been deserted, the guards having taken to flight. And then a great slaughter took place; for all of them were possessed with fury, especially those who had chanced to have a brother or other relative slain in the fighting at the wall. And they kept killing all whom they encountered, sparing neither old nor young, and dashing into the houses they made slaves of the women and children and secured the valuables as plunder; and in this the Massagetæ outdid all the rest, for they did not even withhold their hand from the sanctuaries, but slew many of those who had taken refuge in them, until Belisarius, visiting every part of the city, put a stop to this, and calling all together, spoke as follows:

"Inasmuch as God has given us the victory and has permitted us to attain the greatest height of glory, by putting under our hand a city which has never been captured before, it behooves us on our part to shew ourselves not unworthy of His grace, but by our humane treatment of the vanquished, to make it plain that we have conquered these men justly. Do not, therefore, hate the Neapolitans with a boundless hatred, and do not allow your hostility toward them to continue beyond the limits of the war. For when men have been vanquished, their victors never hate them any longer. And by killing them you will not be ridding yourselves of enemies for the future, but you will be suffering a loss through the death of your subjects. Therefore, do these men no further harm, nor continue to give way wholly to anger. For it is a disgrace to prevail over the enemy and then to shew yourselves vanquished by passion. So let all the possessions of these men suffice for you as the rewards of your valour, but let their wives, together with the children, be given back to the men. And let the



conquered learn by experience what kind of friends they have forfeited by reason of foolish counsel."

After speaking thus, Belisarius released to the Neapolitans their women and children and the slaves, one and all, no insult having been experienced by them, and he reconciled the soldiers to the citizens. And thus it came to pass for the Neapolitans that on that day they both became captives and regained their liberty, and that they recovered the most precious of their possessions. For those of them who happened to have gold or anything else of value had previously concealed it by burying it in the earth, and in this way they succeeded in hiding from the enemy the fact that in getting back their houses they were recovering their money also. And the siege, which had lasted about twenty days, ended thus. As for the Goths who were captured in the city, not less than eight hundred in number, Belisarius put them under guard and kept them from all harm, holding them in no less honour than his own soldiers.

And Pastor, who had been leading the people upon a course of folly, as has been previously set forth by me, upon seeing the city captured, fell into a fit of apoplexy and died suddenly, though he had neither been ill before nor suffered any harm from anyone. But Asclepiodotus, who was engaged in this intrigue with him, came before Belisarius with those of the notables who survived. And Stephanus mocked and reviled him with these words: "See, O basest of all men, what evils you have brought to your fatherland, by selling the safety of the citizens for loyalty to the Goths. And furthermore, if things had gone well for the barbarians, you would have claimed the right to be yourself a hireling in their service and to bring to court on the charge of trying to betray the city to the Romans each one of us who have given the better counsel. But now that the emperor has captured the city, and we have been saved by the uprightness of this man, and you even so have had the hardihood recklessly to come into the presence of the general as if you had done no harm to the Neapolitans or to the emperor's army, you will meet with the punishment you deserve." Such were the words which Stephanus, who was deeply grieved by the misfortune of the city, hurled against Asclepiodotus. And Asclepiodotus replied to him as follows: "Quite unwittingly, noble Sir, you have been heaping praise upon us, when you reproach us for our loyalty to the Goths. For no one could ever be loyal to his masters when they are in danger, except it be by firm conviction. As for me, then, the victors will have in me as true a guardian of the state as they lately found in me an enemy, since he whom nature has endowed with the quality of fidelity does not change his conviction when he changes his fortune. But you, should their fortunes not continue to prosper as before, would readily listen to the overtures of their assailants. For he who has the disease of inconstancy of mind no sooner takes fright than he denies his pledge to those most dear." Such were the words of Asclepiodotus. But the populace of the Neapolitans, when they saw him returning from Belisarius, gathered in a body and began to charge him with responsibility for all that had befallen them. And they did not leave him until they had killed him and torn his body into small pieces. After that they came to the house of Pastor, seeking for the man. And when the servants insisted that Pastor was dead, they were quite unwilling to believe them until they were shown the man's body. And the Neapolitans impaled him in the outskirts of the town. Then they begged Belisarius to pardon them for what they had done while moved with just anger, and receiving his forgiveness, they dispersed. Such was the fate of the Neapolitans.

## XI

But the Goths who were at Rome and in the country round about had even before this regarded with great amazement the inactivity of Theodatus, because, though the enemy was in his neighbourhood, he was unwilling to engage them in battle, and they felt among themselves much suspicion toward him, believing that he was betraying the cause of the Goths to the Emperor Justinian of his own free will, and cared for nothing else than that he himself might live in quiet, possessed of as much money as possible. Accordingly, when they heard that Naples had been captured, they began immediately to make all these charges against him openly and gathered at a place two hundred and eighty stades distant from Rome, which the Romans call Regata. And it seemed best to them to make camp in that place; for there are extensive plains there which furnish pasture for horses. And a river also flows by the place, which the inhabitants call Decennovium in the Latin tongue, because it flows past nineteen milestones, a distance which amounts to one hundred and thirteen stades, before it empties into the sea near the city of Taracina; and very near that place is Mt. Circaeum, where they say Odysseus met Circe, though the story seems to me untrustworthy, for Homer declares that the habitation of Circe was on an island. This, however, I am able to say, that this Mt. Circaeum, extending as it does far into the sea, resembles an island, so that both to those who sail close to it and to those who walk to the shore in the neighbourhood it has every appearance of being an island. And only when a man gets on it does he realize that he was deceived in his former opinion. And for this reason Homer perhaps called the place an island. But I shall return to the previous narrative.

The Goths, after gathering at Regata, chose as king over them and the Italians Vittigis, a man who, though not of a conspicuous house, had previously won great renown in the battles about Sirmium, when Theoderic was carrying on the war against the Gepaedes. Theodatus, therefore, upon hearing this, rushed off in flight and took the road to Ravenna. But Vittigis quickly sent Optaris, a Goth, instructing him to bring Theodatus alive or dead. Now it happened that this Optaris was hostile to Theodatus for the following cause. Optaris was wooing a certain young woman who was an heiress and also exceedingly beautiful to look upon. But Theodatus, being bribed to do so, took the woman he was wooing from him, and betrothed her to another. And so, since he was not only satisfying his own rage, but rendering a service to Vittigis as well, he pursued Theodatus with great eagerness and enthusiasm, stopping neither day nor night. And he overtook him while still on his way, laid him on his back on the ground, and slew him like a victim for sacrifice. Such was the end of Theodatus' life and of his rule, which had reached the third year.

536 A.D.

And Vittigis, together with the Goths who were with him, marched to Rome. And when he learned what had befallen Theodatus, he was pleased and put Theodatus' son Theodegisclus under guard. But it seemed to him that the preparations of the Goths were by no means complete, and for this reason he thought it better first to go to Ravenna, and after making everything ready there in the best possible way, then at length to enter upon the war. He therefore called all the Goths together and spoke as follows:

"The success of the greatest enterprises, fellow-soldiers, generally depends, not upon hasty action at critical moments, but upon careful planning. For many a time a policy of delay adopted at the opportune moment has brought more benefit than the opposite course, and haste displayed at an unseasonable time has upset for many men their hope of success. For in most cases those who are unprepared, though they fight on equal terms so far as their forces are concerned, are more easily conquered than those who, with less strength, enter

the struggle with the best possible preparation. Let us not, therefore, be so lifted up by the desire to win momentary honour as to do ourselves irreparable harm; for it is better to suffer shame for a short time and by so doing gain an undying glory, than to escape insult for the moment and thereby, as would probably be the case, be left in obscurity for all after time. And yet you doubtless know as well as I that the great body of the Goths and practically our whole equipment of arms is in Gaul and Venetia and the most distant lands. Furthermore, we are carrying on against the nations of the Franks a war which is no less important than this one, and it is great folly for us to proceed to another war without first settling that one satisfactorily. For it is natural that those who become exposed to attack on two sides and do not confine their attention to a single enemy should be worsted by their opponents. But I say that we must now go straight from here to Ravenna, and after bringing the war against the Franks to an end and settling all our other affairs as well as possible, then with the whole army of the Goths we must fight it out with Belisarius. And let no one of you, I say, try to dissemble regarding this withdrawal, nor hesitate to call it flight. For the title of coward, fittingly applied, has saved many, while the reputation for bravery which some men have gained at the wrong time, has afterward led them to defeat. For it is not the names of things, but the advantage which comes from what is done, that is worth seeking after. For a man's worth is revealed by his deeds, not at their commencement, but at their end. And those do not flee before the enemy who, when they have increased their preparation, forthwith go against them, but those who are so anxious to save their own lives for ever that they deliberately stand aside. And regarding the capture of this city, let no fear come to any one of you. For if, on the one hand, the Romans are loyal to us, they will guard the city in security for the Goths, and they will not experience any hardship, for we shall return to them in a short time. And if, on the other hand, they harbour any suspicions toward us, they will harm us less by receiving the enemy into the city; for it is better to fight in the open against one's enemies. None the less I shall take care that nothing of this sort shall happen. For we shall leave behind many men and a most discreet leader, and they will be sufficient to guard Rome so effectively that not only will the situation here be favourable for us, but also that no harm may possibly come from this withdrawal of ours."

Thus spoke Vittigis. And all the Goths expressed approval and prepared for the journey. After this Vittigis exhorted at length Silverius, the priest of the city, and the senate and people of the Romans, reminding them of the rule of Theoderic, and he urged upon all to be loyal to the nation of the Goths, binding them by the most solemn oaths to do so; and he chose out no fewer than four thousand men, and set in command over them Leuderis, a man of mature years who enjoyed a great reputation for discretion, that they might guard Rome for the Goths. Then he set out for Ravenna with the rest of the army, keeping the most of the senators with him as hostages. And when he had reached that place, he made Matasuntha, the daughter of Amalasintha, who was a maiden now of marriageable age, his wedded wife, much against her will, in order that he might make his rule more secure by marrying into the family of Theoderic. After this he began to gather all the Goths from every side and to organize and equip them, duly distributing arms and horses to each one; and only the Goths who were engaged in garrison duty in Gaul he was unable to summon, through fear of the Franks. These Franks were called "Germani" in ancient times. And the manner in which they first got a foothold in Gaul, and where they had lived before that, and how they became hostile to the Goths, I shall now proceed to relate.

## XII

As one sails from the ocean into the Mediterranean at Gadira, the land on the left, as was stated in the preceding narrative, is named Europe, while the land opposite to this is

called Libya, and, farther on, Asia. Now as to the region beyond Libya I am unable to speak with accuracy; for it is almost wholly destitute of men, and for this reason the first source of the Nile, which they say flows from that land toward Egypt, is quite unknown. But Europe at its very beginning is exceedingly like the Peloponnesus, and fronts the sea on either side. And the land which is first toward the ocean and the west is named Spain, extending as far as the alps of the Pyrenees range. For the men of this country are accustomed to call a narrow, shut-in pass "alps." And the land from there on as far as the boundaries of Liguria is called Gaul. And in that place other alps separate the Gauls and the Ligurians. Gaul, however, is much broader than Spain, and naturally so, because Europe, beginning with a narrow peninsula, gradually widens as one advances until it attains an extraordinary breadth. And this land is bounded by water on either side, being washed on the north by the ocean, and having on the south the sea called the Tuscan Sea. And in Gaul there flow numerous rivers, among which are the Rhone and the Rhine. But the course of these two being in opposite directions, the one empties into the Tuscan Sea, while the Rhine empties into the ocean. And there are many lakes in that region, and this is where the Germans lived of old, a barbarous nation, not of much consequence in the beginning, who are now called Franks. Next to these lived the Arborychi, who, together with all the rest of Gaul, and, indeed, Spain also, were subjects of the Romans from of old. And beyond them toward the east were settled the Thuringian barbarians, Augustus, the first emperor, having given them this country. And the Burgundians lived not far from them toward the south, and the Suevi also lived beyond the Thuringians, and the Alamani, powerful nations. All these were settled there as independent peoples in earlier times.

But as time went on, the Visigoths forced their way into the Roman empire and seized all Spain and the portion of Gaul lying beyond the Rhone River and made them subject and tributary to themselves. By that time it so happened that the Arborychi had become soldiers of the Romans. And the Germans, wishing to make this people subject to themselves, since their territory adjoined their own and they had changed the government under which they had lived from of old, began to plunder their land and, being eager to make war, marched against them with their whole people. But the Arborychi proved their valour and loyalty to the Romans and shewed themselves brave men in this war, and since the Germans were not able to overcome them by force, they wished to win them over and make the two peoples kin by intermarriage. This suggestion the Arborychi received not at all unwillingly; for both, as it happened, were Christians. And in this way they were united into one people, and came to have great power.

Now other Roman soldiers, also, had been stationed at the frontiers of Gaul to serve as guards. And these soldiers, having no means of returning to Rome, and at the same time being unwilling to yield to their enemy who were Arians, gave themselves, together with their military standards and the land which they had long been guarding for the Romans, to the Arborychi and Germans; and they handed down to their offspring all the customs of their fathers, which were thus preserved, and this people has held them in sufficient reverence to guard them even up to my time. For even at the present day they are clearly recognized as belonging to the legions to which they were assigned when they served in ancient times, and they always carry their own standards when they enter battle, and always follow the customs of their fathers. And they preserve the dress of the Romans in every particular, even as regards their shoes.

Now as long as the Roman polity remained unchanged, the emperor held all Gaul as far as the Rhone River; but when Odoacer changed the government into a tyranny, then, since the tyrant yielded to them, the Visigoths took possession of all Gaul as far as the alps which mark the boundary between Gaul and Liguria. But after the fall of Odoacer, the



Thuringians and the Visigoths began to fear the power of the Germans, which was now growing greater (for their country had become exceedingly populous and they were forcing into subjection without any concealment those who from time to time came in their way), and so they were eager to win the alliance of the Goths and Theoderic. And since Theoderic wished to attach these peoples to himself, he did not refuse to intermarry with them. Accordingly he betrothed to Alaric the younger, who was then leader of the Visigoths, his own unmarried daughter Theodichusa, and to Hermenefridus, the ruler of the Thuringians, Amalaberga, the daughter of his sister Amalafrida. As a result of this the Franks refrained from violence against these peoples through fear of Theoderic, but they began a war against the Burgundians. But later on the Franks and the Goths entered into an offensive alliance against the Burgundians, agreeing that each of the two should send an army against them; and it was further agreed that if either army should be absent when the other took the field against the nation of the Burgundians and overthrew them and gained the land which they had, then the victors should receive as a penalty from those who had not joined in the expedition a fixed sum of gold, and that only on these terms should the conquered land belong to both peoples in common. So the Germans went against the Burgundians with a great army according to the agreement between themselves and the Goths; but Theoderic was still engaged with his preparations, as he said, and purposely kept putting off the departure of the army to the following day, and waiting for what would come to pass. Finally, however, he sent the army, but commanded the generals to march in a leisurely fashion, and if they should hear that the Franks had been victorious, they were thenceforth to go quickly, but if they should learn that any adversity had befallen them, they were to proceed no farther, but remain where they were. So they proceeded to carry out the commands of Theoderic, but meanwhile the Germans joined battle alone with the Burgundians. The battle was stubbornly contested and a great slaughter took place on both sides, for the struggle was very evenly matched; but finally the Franks routed their enemy and drove them to the borders of the land which they inhabited at that time, where they had many strongholds, while the Franks took possession of all the rest. And the Goths, upon hearing this, were quickly at hand. And when they were bitterly reproached by their allies, they blamed the difficulty of the country, and laying down the amount of the penalty, they divided the land with the victors according to the agreement made. And thus the foresight of Theoderic was revealed more clearly than ever, because, without losing a single one of his subjects, he had with a little gold acquired half of the land of his enemy. Thus it was that the Goths and Germans in the beginning got possession of a certain part of Gaul.

But later on, when the power of the Germans was growing greater, they began to think slightly of Theoderic and the fear he inspired, and took the field against Alaric and the Visigoths. And when Alaric learned this, he summoned Theoderic as quickly as possible. And he set out to his assistance with a great army. In the meantime, the Visigoths, upon learning that the Germans were in camp near the city of Carcasiana, went to meet them, and making a camp remained quiet. But since much time was being spent by them in blocking the enemy in this way, they began to be vexed, and seeing that their land was being plundered by the enemy, they became indignant. And at length they began to heap many insults upon Alaric, reviling him on account of his fear of the enemy and taunting him with the delay of his father-in-law. For they declared that they by themselves were a match for the enemy in battle and that even though unaided they would easily overcome the Germans in the war. For this reason Alaric was compelled to do battle with the enemy before the Goths had as yet arrived. And the Germans, gaining the upper hand in this engagement, killed the most of the Visigoths and their ruler Alaric. Then they took possession of the greater part of Gaul and held it; and they laid siege to Carcasiana with great enthusiasm, because they had learned that the royal treasure was there, which Alaric the elder in earlier



times had taken as booty when he captured Rome. Among these were also the treasures of Solomon, the king of the Hebrews, a most noteworthy sight. For the most of them were adorned with emeralds; and they had been taken from Jerusalem by the Romans in ancient times. Then the survivors of the Visigoths declared Giselic, an illegitimate son of Alaric, ruler over them, Amalaric, the son of Theoderic's daughter, being still a very young child. And afterwards, when Theoderic had come with the army of the Goths, the Germans became afraid and broke up the siege. So they retired from there and took possession of the part of Gaul beyond the Rhone River as far as the ocean. And Theoderic, being unable to drive them out from there, allowed them to hold this territory, but he himself recovered the rest of Gaul. Then, after Giselic had been put out of the way, he conferred the rule of the Visigoths upon his grandson Amalaric, for whom, since he was still a child, he himself acted as regent. And taking all the money which lay in the city of Carcasiana, he marched quickly back to Ravenna; furthermore, he continued to send commanders and armies into Gaul and Spain, thus holding the real power of the government himself, and by way of providing that he should hold it securely and permanently, he ordained that the rulers of those countries should bring tribute to him. And though he received this every year, in order not to give the appearance of being greedy for money he sent it as an annual gift to the army of the Goths and Visigoths. And as a result of this, the Goths and Visigoths, as time went on, ruled as they were by one man and holding the same land, betrothed their children to one another and thus joined the two races in kinship.

But afterwards, Theudis, a Goth, whom Theoderic had sent as commander of the army, took to wife a woman from Spain; she was not, however, of the race of the Visigoths, but belonged to the house of one of the wealthy inhabitants of that land, and not only possessed great wealth but also owned a large estate in Spain. From this estate he gathered about two thousand soldiers and surrounded himself with a force of bodyguards, and while in name he was a ruler over the Goths by the gift of Theoderic, he was in fact an out and out tyrant. And Theoderic, who was wise and experienced in the highest degree, was afraid to carry on a war against his own slave, lest the Franks meanwhile should take the field against him, as they naturally would, or the Visigoths on their part should begin a revolution against him; accordingly he did not remove Theudis from his office, but even continued to command him, whenever the army went to war, to lead it forth. However, he directed the first men of the Goths to write to Theudis that he would be acting justly and in a manner worthy of his wisdom, if he should come to Ravenna and salute Theoderic. Theudis, however, although he carried out all the commands of Theoderic and never failed to send in the annual tribute, would not consent to go to Ravenna, nor would he promise those who had written to him that he would do so.

### XIII

526 A.D.

After Theoderic had departed from the world, the Franks, now that there was no longer anyone to oppose them, took the field against the Thuringians, and not only killed their leader Hermenefridus but also reduced to subjection the entire people. But the wife of Hermenefridus took her children and secretly made her escape, coming to Theodatus, her brother, who was at that time ruling over the Goths. After this the Germans made an attack upon the Burgundians who had survived the former war, and defeating them in battle confined their leader in one of the fortresses of the country and kept him under guard, while they reduced the people to subjection and compelled them, as prisoners of war, to march with them from that time forth against their enemies, and the whole land which the

Burgundians had previously inhabited they made subject and tributary to themselves. And Amalaric, who was ruling over the Visigoths, upon coming to man's estate, became thoroughly frightened at the power of the Germans and so took to wife the sister of Theudibert, ruler of the Germans, and divided Gaul with the Goths and his cousin Atalaric. The Goths, namely, received as their portion the land to the east of the Rhone River, while that to the west fell under the control of the Visigoths. And it was agreed that the tribute which Theoderic had imposed should no longer be paid to the Goths, and Atalaric honestly and justly restored to Amalaric all the money which he had taken from the city of Carcasiana. Then, since these two nations had united with one another by intermarriage, they allowed each man who had espoused a wife of the other people to choose whether he wished to follow his wife, or bring her among his own people. And there were many who led their wives to the people they preferred and many also who were led by their wives. But later on Amalaric, having given offence to his wife's brother, suffered a great calamity. For while his wife was of the orthodox faith, he himself followed the heresy of Arius, and he would not allow her to hold to her customary beliefs or to perform the rites of religion according to the tradition of her fathers, and, furthermore, because she was unwilling to conform to his customs, he held her in great dishonour. And since the woman was unable to bear this, she disclosed the whole matter to her brother. For this reason, then, the Germans and Visigoths entered into war with each other. And the battle which took place was for a long time very stoutly contested, but finally Amalaric was defeated, losing many of his men, and was himself slain. And Theudibert took his sister with all the money, and as much of Gaul as the Visigoths held as their portion. And the survivors of the vanquished emigrated from Gaul with their wives and children and went to Theudis in Spain, who was already acting the tyrant openly. Thus did the Goths and Germans gain possession of Gaul.

But at a later time Theodatus, the ruler of the Goths, upon learning that Belisarius had come to Sicily, made a compact with the Germans, in which it was agreed that the Germans should have that portion of Gaul which fell to the Goths, and should receive twenty centenaria of gold, and that in return they should assist the Goths in this war. But before he had as yet carried out the agreement he fulfilled his destiny. It was for this reason, then, that many of the noblest of the Goths, with Marcias as their leader, were keeping guard in Gaul. It was these men whom Vittigis was unable to recall from Gaul, and indeed he did not think them numerous enough even to oppose the Franks, who would, in all probability, overrun both Gaul and Italy, if he should march with his whole army against Rome. He therefore called together all who were loyal among the Goths and spoke as follows:

"The advice which I have wished to give you, fellow-countrymen, in bringing you together here at the present time, is not pleasant, but it is necessary; and do you hear me kindly, and deliberate in a manner befitting the situation which is upon us. For when affairs do not go as men wish, it is inexpedient for them to go on with their present arrangements in disregard of necessity or fortune. Now in all other respects our preparations for war are in the best possible state. But the Franks are an obstacle to us; against them, our ancient enemies, we have indeed been spending both our lives and our money, but nevertheless we have succeeded in holding our own up to the present time, since no other hostile force has confronted us. But now that we are compelled to go against another foe, it will be necessary to put an end to the war against them, in the first place because, if they remain hostile to us, they will certainly array themselves with Belisarius against us; for those who have the same enemy are by the very nature of things induced to enter into friendship and alliance with each other. In the second place, even if we carry on the war separately against each army, we shall in the end be defeated by both of them. It is better, therefore, for us to accept a little loss and thus preserve the greatest part of our kingdom, than in our eagerness to hold everything to be destroyed by the enemy and lose at the same time the whole power of our

supremacy. So my opinion is that if we give the Germans the provinces of Gaul which adjoin them, and together with this land all the money which Theodatus agreed to give them, they will not only be turned from their enmity against us, but will even lend us assistance in this war. But as to how at a later time, when matters are going well for us, we may regain possession of Gaul, let no one of you consider this question. For an ancient saying comes to my mind, which bids us 'settle well the affairs of the present.'"

Upon hearing this speech the notables of the Goths, considering the plan advantageous, wished it to be put into effect. Accordingly envoys were immediately sent to the nation of the Germans, in order to give them the lands of Gaul together with the gold, and to make an offensive and defensive alliance. Now at that time the rulers of the Franks were Ildibert, Theudibert, and Cloadarius, and they received Gaul and the money, and divided the land among them according to the territory ruled by each one, and they agreed to be exceedingly friendly to the Goths, and secretly to send them auxiliary troops, not Franks, however, but soldiers drawn from the nations subject to them. For they were unable to make an alliance with them openly against the Romans, because they had a little before agreed to assist the emperor in this war. So the envoys, having accomplished the mission on which they had been sent, returned to Ravenna. At that time also Vittigis summoned Marcias with his followers.

#### XIV

But while Vittigis was carrying on these negotiations, Belisarius was preparing to go to Rome. He accordingly selected three hundred men from the infantry forces with Herodian as their leader, and assigned them the duty of guarding Naples. And he also sent to Cumae as large a garrison as he thought would be sufficient to guard the fortress there. For there was no stronghold in Campania except those at Cumae and at Naples. It is in this city of Cumae that the inhabitants point out the cave of the Sibyl, where they say her oracular shrine was; and Cumae is on the sea, one hundred and twenty-eight stades distant from Naples. Belisarius, then, was thus engaged in putting his army in order; but the inhabitants of Rome, fearing lest all the calamities should befall them which had befallen the Neapolitans, decided after considering the matter that it was better to receive the emperor's army into the city. And more than any other Silverius, the chief priest of the city, urged them to adopt this course. So they sent Fidelius, a native of Milan, which is situated in Liguria, a man who had been previously an adviser of Atalaric (such an official is called "quaestor" by the Romans), and invited Belisarius to come to Rome, promising to put the city into his hands without a battle. So Belisarius led his army from Naples by the Latin Way, leaving on the left the Appian Way, which Appius, the consul of the Romans, had made nine hundred years before and to which he had given his name.

Now the Appian Way is in length a journey of five days for an unencumbered traveller; for it extends from Rome to Capua. And the breadth of this road is such that two waggons going in opposite directions can pass one another, and it is one of the noteworthy sights of the world. For all the stone, which is mill-stone and hard by nature, Appius quarried in another place far away and brought there; for it is not found anywhere in this district. And after working these stones until they were smooth and flat, and cutting them to a polygonal shape, he fastened them together without putting concrete or anything else between them. And they were fastened together so securely and the joints were so firmly closed, that they give the appearance, when one looks at them, not of being fitted together, but of having grown together. And after the passage of so long a time, and after being traversed by many waggons and all kinds of animals every day, they have neither separated at all at the joints,

nor has any one of the stones been worn out or reduced in thickness,—nay, they have not even lost any of their polish. Such, then, is the Appian Way.

But as for the Goths who were keeping guard in Rome, it was not until they learned that the enemy were very near and became aware of the decision of the Romans, that they began to be concerned for the city, and, being unable to meet the attacking army in battle, they were at a loss; but later, with the permission of the Romans, they all departed thence and proceeded to Ravenna, except that Leuderis, who commanded them, being ashamed, I suppose, because of the situation in which he found himself, remained there. And it so happened on that day that at the very same time when Belisarius and the emperor's army were entering Rome through the gate which they call the Asinarian Gate, the Goths were withdrawing from the city through another gate which bears the name Flaminian; and Rome became subject to the Romans again after a space of sixty years, on the ninth day of the last month, which is called "December" by the Romans, in the eleventh year of the reign of the Emperor Justinian. Now Belisarius sent Leuderis, the commander of the Goths, and the keys of the gates to the emperor, but he himself turned his attention to the circuit-wall, which had fallen into ruin in many places; and he constructed each merlon of the battlement with a wing, adding a sort of flanking wall on the left side, in order that those fighting from the battlement against their assailants might never be hit by missiles thrown by those storming the wall on their left; and he also dug a moat about the wall of sufficient depth to form a very important part of the defences. And the Romans applauded the forethought of the general and especially the experience displayed in the matter of the battlement; but they marvelled greatly and were vexed that he should have thought it possible for him to enter Rome if he had any idea that he would be besieged, for it cannot possibly endure a siege because it cannot be supplied with provisions, since it is not on the sea, is enclosed by a wall of so huge a circumference, and, above all, lying as it does in a very level plain, is naturally exceedingly easy of access for its assailants. But although Belisarius heard all these criticisms, he nevertheless continued to make all his preparations for a siege, and the grain which he had in his ships when he came from Sicily he stored in public granaries and kept under guard, and he compelled all the Romans, indignant though they were, to bring all their provisions in from the country.

## XV

At that time Pitzas, a Goth, coming from Samnium, also put himself and all the Goths who were living there with him into the hands of Belisarius, as well as the half of that part of Samnium which lies on the sea, as far as the river which flows through the middle of that district. For the Goths who were settled on the other side of the river were neither willing to follow Pitzas nor to be subjects of the emperor. And Belisarius gave him a small number of soldiers to help him guard that territory. And before this the Calabrians and Apulians, since no Goths were present in their land, had willingly submitted themselves to Belisarius, both those on the coast and those who held the interior.

Among the interior towns is Beneventus, which in ancient times the Romans had named "Maleventus," but now they call it Beneventus, avoiding the evil omen of the former name, "ventus" having the meaning "wind" in the Latin tongue. For in Dalmatia, which lies across from this city on the opposite mainland, a wind of great violence and exceedingly wild is wont to fall upon the country, and when this begins to blow, it is impossible to find a man there who continues to travel on the road, but all shut themselves up at home and wait. Such, indeed, is the force of the wind that it seizes a man on horseback together with his horse and carries him through the air, and then, after whirling him about in the air to a



great distance, it throws him down wherever he may chance to be and kills him. And it so happens that Beneventus, being opposite to Dalmatia, as I have said, and situated on rather high ground, gets some of the disadvantage of this same wind. This city was built of old by Diomedes, the son of Tydeus, when after the capture of Troy he was repulsed from Argos. And he left to the city as a token the tusks of the Calydonian boar, which his uncle Meleager had received as a prize of the hunt, and they are there even up to my time, a noteworthy sight and well worth seeing, measuring not less than three spans around and having the form of a crescent. There, too, they say that Diomedes met Aeneas, the son of Anchises, when he was coming from Ilium, and in obedience to the oracle gave him the statue of Athena which he had seized as plunder in company with Odysseus, when the two went into Troy as spies before the city was captured by the Greeks. For they tell the story that when he fell sick at a later time, and made enquiry concerning the disease, the oracle responded that he would never be freed from his malady unless he should give this statue to a man of Troy. And as to where in the world the statue itself is, the Romans say they do not know, but even up to my time they shew a copy of it chiselled on a certain stone in the temple of Fortune, where it lies before the bronze statue of Athena, which is set up under the open sky in the eastern part of the temple. And this copy on the stone represents a female figure in the pose of a warrior and extending her spear as if for combat; but in spite of this she has a chiton reaching to the feet. But the face does not resemble the Greek statues of Athena, but is altogether like the work of the ancient Egyptians. The Byzantines, however, say that the Emperor Constantine dug up this statue in the forum which bears his name and set it there. So much, then, for this.

In this way Belisarius won over the whole of that part of Italy which is south of the Ionian Gulf, as far as Rome and Samnium, and the territory north of the gulf, as far as Liburnia, had been gained by Constantianus, as has been said. But I shall now explain how Italy is divided among the inhabitants of the land. The Adriatic Sea sends out a kind of outlet far into the continent and thus forms the Ionian Gulf, but it does not, as in other places where the sea enters the mainland, form an isthmus at its end. For example, the so-called Crisaean Gulf, ending at Lechaem, where the city of Corinth is, forms the isthmus of that city, about forty stades in breadth; and the gulf off the Hellespont, which they call the Black Gulf, makes the isthmus at the Chersonese no broader than the Corinthian, but of about the same size. But from the city of Ravenna, where the Ionian Gulf ends, to the Tuscan Sea is not less than eight days' journey for an unencumbered traveller. And the reason is that the arm of the sea, as it advances, always inclines very far to the right. And below this gulf the first town is Dryus, which is now called Hydrus. And on the right of this are the Calabrians, Apulians, and Samnites, and next to them dwell the Piceni, whose territory extends as far as the city of Ravenna. And on the other side are the remainder of the Calabrians, the Bruttii, and the Lucani, beyond whom dwell the Campani as far as the city of Taracina, and their territory is adjoined by that of Rome. These peoples hold the shores of the two seas, and all the interior of that part of Italy. And this is the country called Magna Graecia in former times. For among the Bruttii are the Epizephyrian Locrians and the inhabitants of Croton and Thurii. But north of the gulf the first inhabitants are Greeks, called Epirotes, as far as the city of Epidamnus, which is situated on the sea. And adjoining this is the land of Precalis, beyond which [157] is the territory called Dalmatia, all of which is counted as part of the western empire. And beyond that point is Liburnia, and Istria, and the land of the Veneti extending to the city of Ravenna. These countries are situated on the sea in that region. But above them are the Siscii and Suevi (not those who are subjects of the Franks, but another group), who inhabit the interior. And beyond these are settled the Carnii and Norici. On the right of these dwell the Dacians and Pannonians, who hold a number of towns, including Singidunum and Sirmium, and extend as far as the Ister River.



Now these peoples north of the Ionian Gulf were ruled by the Goths at the beginning of this war, but beyond the city of Ravenna on the left of the river Po the country was inhabited by the Ligurians. And to the north of them live the Albani in an exceedingly good land called Langovilla, and beyond these are the nations subject to the Franks, while the country to the west is held by the Gauls and after them the Spaniards. On the right of the Po are Aemilia and the Tuscan peoples, which extend as far as the boundaries of Rome. So much, then, for this.

## XVI

So Belisarius took possession of all the territory of Rome as far as the river Tiber, and strengthened it. And when all had been settled by him in the best possible manner, he gave to Constantinus a large number of his own guards together with many spearmen, including the Massagetae Zarter, Chorsomanus, and Aeschmanus, and an army besides, commanding him to go into Tuscany, in order to win over the towns of that region. And he gave orders to Bessas to take possession of Narnia, a very strong city in Tuscany. Now this Bessas was a Goth by birth, one of those who had dwelt in Thrace from of old and had not followed Theoderic when he led the Gothic nation thence into Italy, and he was an energetic man and a capable warrior. For he was both a general of the first rank, and a skilful man in action. And Bessas took Narnia not at all against the will of the inhabitants, and Constantinus won over Spolitium and Perusia and certain other towns without any trouble. For the Tuscans received him into their cities willingly. So after establishing a garrison in Spolitium, he himself remained quietly with his army in Perusia, the first city in Tuscany.

Now when Vittigis heard this, he sent against them an army with Unilas and Pissas as its commanders. And Constantinus confronted these troops in the outskirts of Perusia and engaged with them. The battle was at first evenly disputed, since the barbarians were superior in numbers, but afterwards the Romans by their valour gained the upper hand and routed the enemy, and while they were fleeing in complete disorder the Romans killed almost all of them; and they captured alive the commanders of the enemy and sent them to Belisarius. Now when Vittigis heard this, he was no longer willing to remain quietly in Ravenna, where he was embarrassed by the absence of Marcias and his men, who had not yet come from Gaul. So he sent to Dalmatia a great army with Asinarius and Uligisalus as its commanders, in order to recover Dalmatia for the Gothic rule. And he directed them to add to their own troops an army from the land of the Suevi, composed of the barbarians there, and then to proceed directly to Dalmatia and Salones. And he also sent with them many ships of war, in order that they might be able to besiege Salones both by land and by sea. But he himself was hastening to go with his whole army against Belisarius and Rome, leading against him horsemen and infantry to the number of not less than one hundred and fifty thousand, and the most of them as well as their horses were clad in armour.

So Asinarius, upon reaching the country of the Suevi, began to gather the army of the barbarians, while Uligisalus alone led the Goths into Liburnia. And when the Romans engaged with them at a place called Scardon, they were defeated in the battle and retired to the city of Burnus; and there Uligisalus awaited his colleague. But Constantianus, upon hearing of the preparations of Asinarius, became afraid for Salones, and summoned the soldiers who were holding all the fortresses in that region. He then dug a moat around the whole circuit-wall and made all the other preparations for the siege in the best manner possible. And Asinarius, after gathering an exceedingly large army of barbarians, came to the city of Burnus. There he joined Uligisalus and the Gothic army and proceeded to Salones. And they made a stockade about the circuit-wall, and also, filling their ships with

soldiers, kept guard over the side of the fortifications which faced the sea. In this manner they proceeded to besiege Salones both by land and by sea; but the Romans suddenly made an attack upon the ships of the enemy and turned them to flight, and many of them they sunk, men and all, and also captured many without their crews. However, the Goths did not raise the siege, but maintained it vigorously and kept the Romans still more closely confined to the city than before. Such, then, were the fortunes of the Roman and Gothic armies in Dalmatia.

But Vittigis, upon hearing from the natives who came from Rome that the army which Belisarius had was very small, began to repent of his withdrawal from Rome, and was no longer able to endure the situation, but was now so carried away by fury that he advanced against them. And on his way thither he fell in with a priest who was coming from Rome. Whereupon they say that Vittigis in great excitement enquired of this man whether Belisarius was still in Rome, shewing that he was afraid he would not be able to catch him, but that Belisarius would forestall him by running away. But the priest, they say, replied that he need not be at all concerned about that; for he, the priest, was able to guarantee that Belisarius would never resort to flight, but was remaining where he was. But Vittigis, they say, kept hastening still more than before, praying that he might see with his own eyes the walls of Rome before Belisarius made his escape from the city.

## XVII

But Belisarius, when he heard that the Goths were marching against him with their whole force, was in a dilemma. For he was unwilling, on the one hand, to dispense with the troops of Constantinus and Bessas, especially since his army was exceedingly small, and, on the other, it seemed to him inexpedient to abandon the strongholds in Tuscany, lest the Goths should hold these as fortresses against the Romans. So after considering the matter he sent word to Constantinus and Bessas to leave garrisons in the positions which absolutely required them, large enough to guard them, while they themselves with the rest of the army should come to Rome with all speed. And Constantinus acted accordingly. For he established garrisons in Perusia and Spolitium, and with all the rest of his troops marched off to Rome. But while Bessas, in a more leisurely manner, was making his dispositions in Narnia, it so happened that, since the enemy were passing that way, the plains in the outskirts of the city were filled with Goths. These were an advance guard preceding the rest of the army; and Bessas engaged with them and unexpectedly routed those whom he encountered and killed many; but then, since he was overpowered by their superior numbers, he retired into Narnia. And leaving a garrison there according to the instructions of Belisarius, he went with all speed to Rome, and reported that the enemy would be at hand almost instantly. For Narnia is only three hundred and fifty stades distant from Rome. But Vittigis made no attempt at all to capture Perusia and Spolitium; for these places are exceedingly strong and he was quite unwilling that his time should be wasted there, his one desire having come to be to find Belisarius not yet fled from Rome. Moreover, even when he learned that Narnia also was held by the enemy, he was unwilling to attempt anything there, knowing that the place was difficult of access and on steep ground besides; for it is situated on a lofty hill. And the river Narnus flows by the foot of the hill, and it is this which has given the city its name. There are two roads leading up to the city, the one on the east, and the other on the west. One of these is very narrow and difficult by reason of precipitous rocks, while the other cannot be reached except by way of the bridge which spans the river and provides a passage over it at that point. This bridge was built by Caesar Augustus in early times, and is a very noteworthy sight; for its arches are the highest of any known to us.

So Vittigis, not enduring to have his time wasted there, departed thence with all speed and went with the whole army against Rome, making the journey through Sabine territory. And when he drew near to Rome, and was not more than fourteen stades away from it, he came upon a bridge over the Tiber River. There a little while before Belisarius had built a tower, furnished it with gates, and stationed in it a guard of soldiers, not because this is the only point at which the Tiber could be crossed by the enemy (for there are both boats and bridges at many places along the river), but because he wished the enemy to have to spend more time in the journey, since he was expecting another army from the emperor, and also in order that the Romans might bring in still more provisions. For if the barbarians, repulsed at that point, should try to cross on a bridge somewhere else, he thought that not less than twenty days would be consumed by them, and if they wished to launch boats in the Tiber to the necessary number, a still longer time would probably be wasted by them. These, then, were the considerations which led him to establish the garrison at that point; and the Goths bivouacked there that day, being at a loss and supposing that they would be obliged to storm the tower on the following day; but twenty-two deserters came to them, men who were barbarians by race but Roman soldiers, from the cavalry troop commanded by Innocentius. Just at that time it occurred to Belisarius to establish a camp near the Tiber River, in order that they might hinder still more the crossing of the enemy and make some kind of a display of their own daring to their opponents. But all the soldiers who, as has been stated, were keeping guard at the bridge, being overcome with terror at the throng of Goths and quailing at the magnitude of their danger, abandoned by night the tower they were guarding and rushed off in flight. But thinking that they could not enter Rome, they stealthily marched off toward Campania, either because they were afraid of the punishment the general would inflict or because they were ashamed to appear before their comrades.

## XVIII

On the following day the Goths destroyed the gates of the tower with no trouble and made the crossing, since no one tried to oppose them. But Belisarius, who had not as yet learned what had happened to the garrison, was bringing up a thousand horsemen to the bridge over the river, in order to look over the ground and decide where it would be best for his forces to make camp. But when they had come rather close, they met the enemy already across the river, and not at all willingly they engaged with some of them. And the battle was carried on by horsemen on both sides. Then Belisarius, though he was safe before, would no longer keep the general's post, but began to fight in the front ranks like a soldier; and consequently the cause of the Romans was thrown into great danger, for the whole decision of the war rested with him. But it happened that the horse he was riding at that time was unusually experienced in warfare and knew well how to save his rider; and his whole body was dark grey, except that his face from the top of his head to the nostrils was the purest white. Such a horse the Greeks call "phalius" and the barbarians "balan." And it so happened that the most of the Goths threw their javelins and other missiles at him and at Belisarius for the following reason. Those deserters who on the previous day had come to the Goths, when they saw Belisarius fighting in the front ranks, knowing well that, if he should fall, the cause of the Romans would be ruined instantly, cried aloud urging them to "shoot at the white-faced horse." Consequently this saying was passed around and reached the whole Gothic army, and they did not question it at all, since they were in a great tumult of fighting, nor did they know clearly that it referred to Belisarius. But conjecturing that it was not by mere accident that the saying had gained such currency as to reach all, the most of them, neglecting all others, began to shoot at Belisarius. And every man among them who laid any claim to valour was immediately possessed with a great eagerness to win honour, and

getting as close as possible they kept trying to lay hold of him and in a great fury kept striking with their spears and swords. But Belisarius himself, turning from side to side, kept killing as they came those who encountered him, and he also profited very greatly by the loyalty of his own spearmen and guards in this moment of danger. For they all surrounded him and made a display of valour such, I imagine, as has never been shewn by any man in the world to this day; for, holding out their shields in defence of both the general and his horse, they not only received all the missiles, but also forced back and beat off those who from time to time assailed him. And thus the whole engagement was centred about the body of one man. In this struggle there fell among the Goths no fewer than a thousand, and they were men who fought in the front ranks; and of the household of Belisarius many of the noblest were slain, and Maxentius, the spearman, after making a display of great exploits against the enemy. But by some chance Belisarius was neither wounded nor hit by a missile on that day, although the battle was waged around him alone.

Finally by their valour the Romans turned the enemy to flight, and an exceedingly great multitude of barbarians fled until they reached their main army. For there the Gothic infantry, being entirely fresh, withstood their enemy and forced them back without any trouble. And when another body of cavalry in turn reinforced the Goths, the Romans fled at top speed until they reached a certain hill, which they climbed, and there held their position. But the enemy's horsemen were upon them directly, and a second cavalry battle took place. There Valentinus, the groom of Photius, the son of Antonina, made a remarkable exhibition of valour. For by leaping alone into the throng of the enemy he opposed himself to the onrush of the Goths and thus saved his companions. In this way the Romans escaped, and arrived at the fortifications of Rome, and the barbarians in pursuit pressed upon them as far as the wall by the gate which has been named the Salarian Gate. But the people of Rome, fearing lest the enemy should rush in together with the fugitives and thus get inside the fortifications, were quite unwilling to open the gates, although Belisarius urged them again and again and called upon them with threats to do so. For, on the one hand, those who peered out of the tower were unable to recognise the man, for his face and his whole head were covered with gore and dust, and at the same time no one was able to see very clearly, either; for it was late in the day, about sunset. Moreover, the Romans had no reason to suppose that the general survived; for those who had come in flight from the rout which had taken place earlier reported that Belisarius had died fighting bravely in the front ranks. So the throng of the enemy, which had rushed up in strength and possessed with great fury, were purposing to cross the moat straightway and attack the fugitives there; and the Romans, finding themselves massed along the wall, after they had come inside the moat, and so close together that they touched one another, were being crowded into a small space. Those inside the fortifications, however, since they were without a general and altogether unprepared, and being in a panic of fear for themselves and for the city, were quite unable to defend their own men, although these were now in so perilous a situation.

Then a daring thought came to Belisarius, which unexpectedly saved the day for the Romans. For urging on all his men he suddenly fell upon the enemy. And they, even before this, had been in great disorder because of the darkness and the fact that they were making a pursuit, and now when, much to their surprise, they saw the fugitives attacking them, they supposed that another army also had come to their assistance from the city, and so were thrown into a great panic and all fled immediately at top speed. But Belisarius by no means rushed out to pursue them, but returned straightway to the wall. And at this the Romans took courage and received him and all his men into the city. So narrowly did Belisarius and the emperor's cause escape peril; and the battle which had begun early in the morning did not end until night. And those who distinguished themselves above all others by their valour in this battle were, among the Romans, Belisarius, and among the Goths, Visandus



Vandalarius, who had fallen upon Belisarius at the first when the battle took place about him, and did not desist until he had received thirteen wounds on his body and fell. And since he was supposed to have died immediately, he was not cared for by his companions, although they were victorious, and he lay there with the dead. But on the third day, when the barbarians had made camp hard by the circuit-wall of Rome and had sent some men in order to bury their dead and to perform the customary rites of burial, those who were searching out the bodies of the fallen found Visandus Vandalarius with life still in him, and one of his companions entreated him to speak some word to him. But he could not do even this, for the inside of his body was on fire because of the lack of food and the thirst caused by his suffering, and so he nodded to him to put water into his [181]mouth. Then when he had drunk and become himself again, they lifted and carried him to the camp. And Visandus Vandalarius won a great name for this deed among the Goths, and he lived on a very considerable time, enjoying the greatest renown. This, then, took place on the third day after the battle.

But at that time Belisarius, after reaching safety with his followers, gathered the soldiers and almost the whole Roman populace to the wall, and commanded them to burn many fires and keep watch throughout the whole night. And going about the circuit of the fortifications, he set everything in order and put one of his commanders in charge of each gate. But Bessas, who took command of the guard at the gate called the Praenestine, sent a messenger to Belisarius with orders to say that the city was held by the enemy, who had broken in through another gate which is across the Tiber River and bears the name of Pancratius, a holy man. And all those who were in the company of Belisarius, upon hearing this, urged him to save himself as quickly as possible through some other gate. He, however, neither became panic-stricken, nor did he hesitate to declare that the report was false. And he also sent some of his horsemen across the Tiber with all speed, and they, after looking over the ground there, brought back word that no hostile attack had been made on the city in that quarter. He therefore sent immediately to each gate and instructed the commanders everywhere that, whenever they heard that the enemy had broken in at any other part of [183]the fortifications, they should not try to assist in the defence nor abandon their post, but should remain quiet; for he himself would take care of such matters. And he did this in order that they might not be thrown into disorder a second time by a rumour which was not true.

But Vittigis, while the Romans were still in great confusion, sent to the Salarian Gate one of his commanders, Vacis by name, a man of no mean station. And when he had arrived there, he began to reproach the Romans for their faithlessness to the Goths and upbraided them for the treason which he said they had committed against both their fatherland and themselves, for they had exchanged the power of the Goths for Greeks who were not able to defend them, although they had never before seen any men of the Greek race come to Italy except actors of tragedy and mimes and thieving sailors. Such words and many like them were spoken by Vacis, but since no one replied to him, he returned to the Goths and Vittigis. As for Belisarius, he brought upon himself much ridicule on the part of the Romans, for though he had barely escaped from the enemy, he bade them take courage thenceforth and look with contempt upon the barbarians; for he knew well, he said, that he would conquer them decisively. Now the manner in which he had come to know this with certainty will be told in the following narrative. At length, when it was well on in the night, Belisarius, who had been fasting up to this time, was with difficulty compelled by his wife and those of his friends who were present to taste a very little bread. Thus, then, the two armies passed this night.



## XIX

But on the following day they arrayed themselves for the struggle, the Goths thinking to capture Rome by siege without any trouble on account of the great size of the city, and the Romans defending it. Now the wall of the city has fourteen large gates and several smaller ones. And the Goths, being unable with their entire army to envelop the wall on every side, made six fortified camps from which they harassed the portion of the wall containing five gates, from the Flaminian as far as the one called the Praenestine Gate; and all these camps were made by them on the left bank of the Tiber River. Wherefore the barbarians feared lest their enemy, by destroying the bridge which bears the name of Mulvius, should render inaccessible to them all the land on the right bank of the river as far as the sea, and in this way have not the slightest experience of the evils of a siege, and so they fixed a seventh camp across the Tiber in the Plain of Nero, in order that the bridge might be between their two armies. So in this way two other gates came to be exposed to the attacks of the enemy, the Aurelian (which is now named after Peter, the chief of the Apostles of Christ, since he lies not far from there) and the Transtiburtine Gate. Thus the Goths surrounded only about one-half of the wall with their army, but since they were in no direction wholly shut off from the wall by the river, they made attacks upon it throughout its whole extent whenever they wished.

Now the way the Romans came to build the city-wall on both sides of the river I shall now proceed to tell. In ancient times the Tiber used to flow alongside the circuit-wall for a considerable distance, even at the place where it is now enclosed. But this ground, on which the wall rises along the stream of the river, is flat and very accessible. And opposite this flat ground, across the Tiber, it happens that there is a great hill where all the mills of the city have been built from of old, because much water is brought by an aqueduct to the crest of the hill, and rushes thence down the incline with great force. For this reason the ancient Romans determined to surround the hill and the river bank near it with a wall, so that it might never be possible for an enemy to destroy the mills, and crossing the river, to carry on operations with ease against the circuit-wall of the city. So they decided to span the river at this point with a bridge, and to attach it to the wall; and by building many houses in the district across the river they caused the stream of the Tiber to be in the middle of the city. So much then for this.

And the Goths dug deep trenches about all their camps, and heaped up the earth, which they took out from them, on the inner side of the trenches, making this bank exceedingly high, and they planted great numbers of sharp stakes on the top, thus making all their camps in no way inferior to fortified strongholds. And the camp in the Plain of Nero was commanded by Marcias (for he had by now arrived from Gaul with his followers, with whom he was encamped there), and the rest of the camps were commanded by Vittigis with five others; for there was one commander for each camp. So the Goths, having taken their positions in this way, tore open all the aqueducts, so that no water at all might enter the city from them. Now the aqueducts of Rome are fourteen in number, and were made of baked brick by the men of old, being of such breadth and height that it is possible for a man on horseback to ride in them. And Belisarius arranged for the defence of the city in the following manner. He himself held the small Pincian Gate and the gate next to this on the right, which is named the Salarian. For at these gates the circuit-wall was assailable, and at the same time it was possible for the Romans to go out from them against the enemy. The Praenestine Gate he gave to Bessas. And at the Flaminian, which is on the other side of the Pincian, he put Constantinus in command, having previously closed the gates and blocked them up most securely by building a wall of great stones on the inside, so that it might be impossible for anyone to open them. For since one of the camps was very near, he feared

least some secret plot against the city should be made there by the enemy. And the remaining gates he ordered the commanders of the infantry forces to keep under guard. And he closed each of the aqueducts as securely as possible by filling their channels with masonry for a considerable distance, to prevent anyone from entering through them from the outside to do mischief.

But after the aqueducts had been broken open, as I have stated, the water no longer worked the mills, and the Romans were quite unable to operate them with any kind of animals owing to the scarcity of all food in time of siege; indeed they were scarcely able to provide for the horses which were indispensable to them. And so Belisarius hit upon the following device. Just below the bridge which I lately mentioned as being connected with the circuit-wall, he fastened ropes from the two banks of the river and stretched them as tight as he could, and then attached to them two boats side by side and two feet apart, where the flow of the water comes down from the arch of the bridge with the greatest force, and placing two mills on either boat, he hung between them the mechanism by which mills are customarily turned. And below these he fastened other boats, each attached to the one next behind in order, and he set the water-wheels between them in the same manner for a great distance. So by the force of the flowing water all the wheels, one after the other, were made to revolve independently, and thus they worked the mills with which they were connected and ground sufficient flour for the city. Now when the enemy learned this from the deserters, they destroyed the wheels in the following manner. They gathered large trees and bodies of Romans newly slain and kept throwing them into the river; and the most of these were carried with the current between the boats and broke off the mill-wheels. But Belisarius, observing what was being done, contrived the following device against it. He fastened above the bridge long iron chains, which reached completely across the Tiber. All the objects which the river brought down struck upon these chains, and gathered there and went no farther. And those to whom this work was assigned kept pulling out these objects as they came and bore them to the land. And Belisarius did this, not so much on account of the mills, as because he began to think with alarm that the enemy might get inside the bridge at this point with many boats and be in the middle of the city before their presence became known. Thus the barbarians abandoned the attempt, since they met with no success in it. And thereafter the Romans continued to use these mills; but they were entirely excluded from the baths because of the scarcity of water. However, they had sufficient water to drink, since even for those who lived very far from the river it was possible to draw water from wells. But as for the sewers, which carry out from the city whatever is unclean, Belisarius was not forced to devise any plan of safety, for they all discharge into the Tiber River, and therefore it was impossible for any plot to be made against the city by the enemy in connection with them.

## XX

Thus, then, did Belisarius make his arrangements for the siege. And among the Samnites a large company of children, who were pasturing flocks in their own country, chose out two among them who were well favoured in strength of body, and calling one of them by the name of Belisarius, and naming the other Vittigis, bade them wrestle. And they entered into the struggle with the greatest vehemence and it so fell out that the one who impersonated Vittigis was thrown. Then the crowd of boys in play hung him to a tree. But a wolf by some chance appeared there, whereupon the boys all fled, and the one called Vittigis, who was suspended from the tree, remained for some time suffering this punishment and then died. And when this became known to the Samnites, they did not

inflict any punishment upon these children, but divining the meaning of the incident declared that Belisarius would conquer decisively. So much for this.

But the populace of Rome was entirely unacquainted with the evils of war and siege. When, therefore, they began to be distressed by their inability to bathe and the scarcity of provisions, and found themselves obliged to forgo sleep in guarding the circuit-wall, and suspected that the city would be captured at no distant date; and when, at the same time, they saw the enemy plundering their fields and other possessions, they began to be dissatisfied and indignant that they, who had done no wrong, should suffer siege and be brought into peril of such magnitude. And gathering in groups by themselves, they railed openly against Belisarius, on the ground that he had dared to take the field against the Goths before he had received an adequate force from the emperor. And these reproaches against Belisarius were secretly indulged in also by the members of the council which they call the senate. And Vittigis, hearing all this from the deserters and desiring to embroil them with one another still more, and thinking that in this way the affairs of the Romans would be thrown into great confusion, sent to Belisarius some envoys, among whom was Albis. And when these men came before Belisarius, they spoke as follows in the presence of the Roman senators and all the commanders of the army:

"From of old, general, mankind has made true and proper distinctions in the names they give to things; and one of these distinctions is this—rashness is different from bravery. For rashness, when it takes possession of a man, brings him into danger with discredit, but bravery bestows upon him an adequate prize in reputation for valour. Now one of these two has brought you against us, but which it is you will straightway make clear. For if, on the one hand, you placed your confidence in bravery when you took the field against the Goths, there is ample opportunity, noble sir, for you to do the deeds of a brave man, since you have only to look down from your wall to see the army of the enemy; but if, on the other hand, it was because you were possessed by rashness that you came to attack us, certainly you now repent you of the reckless undertaking. For the opinions of those who have made a desperate venture are wont to undergo a change whenever they find themselves in serious straits. Now, therefore, do not cause the sufferings of these Romans to be prolonged any further, men whom Theoderic fostered in a life not only of soft luxury but also of freedom, and cease your resistance to him who is the master both of the Goths and of the Italians. Is it not monstrous that you should sit in Rome hemmed in as you are and in abject terror of the enemy, while the king of this city passes his time in a fortified camp and inflicts the evils of war upon his own subjects? But we shall give both you and your followers an opportunity to take your departure forthwith in security, retaining all your possessions. For to trample upon those who have learned to take a new view of prudence we consider neither holy nor worthy of the ways of men. And, further, we should gladly ask these Romans what complaints they could have had against the Goths that they betrayed both us and themselves, seeing that up to this time they have enjoyed our kindness, and now are acquainted by experience with the assistance to be expected from you."

Thus spoke the envoys. And Belisarius replied as follows: "It is not to rest with you to choose the moment for conference. For men are by no means wont to wage war according to the judgment of their enemies, but it is customary for each one to arrange his own affairs for himself, in whatever manner seems to him best. But I say to you that there will come a time when you will want to hide your heads under the thistles but will find no shelter anywhere. As for Rome, moreover, which we have captured, in holding it we hold nothing which belongs to others, but it was you who trespassed upon this city in former times, though it did not belong to you at all, and now you have given it back, however unwillingly, to its ancient possessors. And whoever of you has hopes of setting foot in Rome without a fight is

mistaken in his judgment. For as long as Belisarius lives, it is impossible for him to relinquish this city." Such were the words of Belisarius. But the Romans, being overcome by a great fear, sat in silence, and, even though they were abused by the envoys at length for their treason to the Goths, dared make no reply to them, except, indeed, that Fidelius saw fit to taunt them. This man was then praetorian prefect, having been appointed to the office by Belisarius, and for this reason he seemed above all others to be well disposed toward the emperor.

## XXI

The envoys then betook themselves to their own army. And when Vittigis enquired of them what manner of man Belisarius was and how his purpose stood with regard to the question of withdrawing from Rome, they replied that the Goths were hoping for vain things if they supposed that they would frighten Belisarius in any way whatsoever. And when Vittigis heard this, he began in great earnest to plan an assault upon the wall, and the preparations he made for the attempt upon the fortifications were as follows. He constructed wooden towers equal in height to the enemy's wall, and he discovered its true measure by making many calculations based upon the courses of stone. And wheels were attached to the floor of these towers under each corner, which were intended, as they turned, to move the towers to any point the attacking army might wish at a given time, and the towers were drawn by oxen yoked together. After this he made ready a great number of ladders, that would reach as far as the parapet, and four engines which are called rams. Now this engine is of the following sort. Four upright wooden beams, equal in length, are set up opposite one another. To these beams they fit eight horizontal timbers, four above and an equal number at the base, thus binding them together. After they have thus made the frame of a four-sided building, they surround it on all sides, not with walls of wood or stone, but with a covering of hides, in order that the engine may be light for those who draw it and that those within may still be in the least possible danger of being shot by their opponents. And on the inside they hang another horizontal beam from the top by means of chains which swing free, and they keep it at about the middle of the interior. They then sharpen the end of this beam and cover it with a large iron head, precisely as they cover the round point of a missile, or they sometimes make the iron head square like an anvil. And the whole structure is raised upon four wheels, one being attached to each upright beam, and men to the number of no fewer than fifty to each ram move it from the inside. Then when they apply it to the wall, they draw back the beam which I have just mentioned by turning a certain mechanism, and then they let it swing forward with great force against the wall. And this beam by frequent blows is able quite easily to batter down and tear open a wall wherever it strikes, and it is for this reason that the engine has the name it bears, because the striking end of the beam, projecting as it does, is accustomed to butt against whatever it may encounter, precisely as do the males among sheep. Such, then, are the rams used by the assailants of a wall. And the Goths were holding in readiness an exceedingly great number of bundles of faggots, which they had made of pieces of wood and reeds, in order that by throwing them into the moat they might make the ground level, and that their engines might not be prevented from crossing it. Now after the Goths had made their preparations in this manner, they were eager to make an assault upon the wall.

But Belisarius placed upon the towers engines which they call "ballistae." Now these engines have the form of a bow, but on the under side of them a grooved wooden shaft projects; this shaft is so fitted to the bow that it is free to move, and rests upon a straight iron bed. So when men wish to shoot at the enemy with this, they make the parts of the bow which form the ends bend toward one another by means of a short rope fastened to them,



and they place in the grooved shaft the arrow, which is about one half the length of the ordinary missiles which they shoot from bows, but about four times as wide. However, it does not have feathers of the usual sort attached to it, but by inserting thin pieces of wood in place of feathers, they give it in all respects the form of an arrow, making the point which they put on very large and in keeping with its thickness. And the men who stand on either side wind it up tight by means of certain appliances, and then the grooved shaft shoots forward and stops, but the missile is discharged from the shaft, and with such force that it attains the distance of not less than two bow-shots, and that, when it hits a tree or a rock, it pierces it easily. Such is the engine which bears this name, being so called because it shoots with very great force. And they fixed other engines along the parapet of the wall adapted for throwing stones. Now these resemble slings and are called "wild asses." And outside the gates they placed "wolves," which they make in the following manner. They set up two timbers which reach from the ground to the battlements; then they fit together beams which have been mortised to one another, placing some upright and others crosswise, so that the spaces between the intersections appear as a succession of holes. And from every joint there projects a kind of beak, which resembles very closely a thick goad. Then they fasten the cross-beams to the two upright timbers, beginning at the top and letting them extend half way down, and then lean the timbers back against the gates. And whenever the enemy come up near them, those above lay hold of the ends of the timbers and push, and these, falling suddenly upon the assailants, easily kill with the projecting beaks as many as they may catch. So Belisarius was thus engaged.

## XXII

On the eighteenth day from the beginning of the siege the Goths moved against the fortifications at about sunrise under the leadership of Vittigis in order to assault the wall, and all the Romans were struck with consternation at the sight of the advancing towers and rams, with which they were altogether unfamiliar. But Belisarius, seeing the ranks of the enemy as they advanced with the engines, began to laugh, and commanded the soldiers to remain quiet and under no circumstances to begin fighting until he himself should give the signal. Now the reason why he laughed he did not reveal at the moment, but later it became known. The Romans, however, supposing him to be hiding his real feelings by a jest, abused him and called him shameless, and were indignant that he did not try to check the enemy as they came forward. But when the Goths came near the moat, the general first of all stretched his bow and with a lucky aim hit in the neck and killed one of the men in armour who were leading the army on. And he fell on his back mortally wounded, while the whole Roman army raised an extraordinary shout such as was never heard before, thinking that they had received an excellent omen. And twice did Belisarius send forth his bolt, and the very same thing happened again a second time, and the shouting rose still louder from the circuit-wall, and the Romans thought that the enemy were conquered already. Then Belisarius gave the signal for the whole army to put their bows into action, but those near himself he commanded to shoot only at the oxen. And all the oxen fell immediately, so that the enemy could neither move the towers further nor in their perplexity do anything to meet the emergency while the fighting was in progress. In this way the forethought of Belisarius in not trying to check the enemy while still at a great distance came to be understood, as well as the reason why he had laughed at the simplicity of the barbarians, who had been so thoughtless as to hope to bring oxen up to the enemy's wall. Now all this took place at the Salarian Gate. But Vittigis, repulsed at this point, left there a large force of Goths, making of them a very deep phalanx and instructing the commanders on no condition to make an assault upon the fortifications, but remaining in position to shoot rapidly at the parapet,



and give Belisarius no opportunity whatever to take reinforcements to any other part of the wall which he himself might propose to attack with a superior force; he then went to the Praenestine Gate with a great force, to a part of the fortifications which the Romans call the "Vivarium," where the wall was most assailable. Now it so happened that engines of war were already there, including towers and rams and a great number of ladders.

But in the meantime another Gothic assault was being made at the Aurelian Gate in the following manner. The tomb of the Roman Emperor Hadrian stands outside the Aurelian Gate, removed about a stone's throw from the fortifications, a very noteworthy sight. For it is made of Parian marble, and the stones fit closely one upon the other, having nothing at all between them. And it has four sides which are all equal, each being about a stone's throw in length, while their height exceeds that of the city wall; and above there are statues of the same marble, representing men and horses, of wonderful workmanship. But since this tomb seemed to the men of ancient times a fortress threatening the city, they enclosed it by two walls, which extend to it from the circuit-wall, and thus made it a part of the wall. And, indeed, it gives the appearance of a high tower built as a bulwark before the gate there. So the fortifications at that point were most adequate. Now Constantinus, as it happened, had been appointed by Belisarius to have charge of the garrison at this tomb. And he had instructed him also to attend to the guarding of the adjoining wall, which had a small and inconsiderable garrison. For, since that part of the circuit-wall was the least assailable of all, because the river flows along it, he supposed that no assault would be made there, and so stationed an insignificant garrison at that place, and, since the soldiers he had were few, he assigned the great majority to the positions where there was most need of them. For the emperor's army gathered in Rome at the beginning of this siege amounted at most to only five thousand men. But since it was reported to Constantinus that the enemy were attempting the crossing of the Tiber, he became fearful for that part of the fortifications and went thither himself with all speed, accompanied by some few men to lend assistance, commanding the greater part of his men to attend to the guarding of the gate and the tomb. But meanwhile the Goths began an assault upon the Aurelian Gate and the Tower of Hadrian, and though they had no engines of war, they brought up a great quantity of ladders, and thought that by shooting a vast number of arrows they would very easily reduce the enemy to a state of helplessness and overpower the garrison there without any trouble on account of its small numbers. And as they advanced, they held before them shields no smaller than the long shields used by the Persians, and they succeeded in getting very close to their opponents without being perceived by them. For they came hidden under the colonnade which extends to the church of the Apostle Peter. From that shelter they suddenly appeared and began the attack, so that the guards were neither able to use the engine called the ballista (for these engines do not send their missiles except straight out), nor, indeed, could they ward off their assailants with their arrows, since the situation was against them on account of the large shields. But the Goths kept pressing vigorously upon them, shooting many missiles at the battlements, and they were already about to set their ladders against the wall, having practically surrounded those who were fighting from the tomb; for whenever the Goths advanced they always got in the rear of the Romans on both flanks; and for a short time consternation fell upon the Romans, who knew not what means of defence they should employ to save themselves, but afterwards by common agreement they broke in pieces the most of the statues, which were very large, and taking up great numbers of stones thus secured, threw them with both hands down upon the heads of the enemy, who gave way before this shower of missiles. And as they retreated a little way, the Romans, having by now the advantage, plucked up courage, and with a mighty shout began to drive back their assailants by using their bows and hurling stones at them. And putting their hands to the engines, they reduced their opponents to great fear, and their assault was

quickly ended. And by this time Constantinus also was present, having frightened back those who had tried the river and easily driven them off, because they did not find the wall there entirely unguarded, as they had supposed they would. And thus safety was restored at the Aurelian Gate.

### XXIII

But at the gate beyond the Tiber River, which is called the Pancratan Gate, a force of the enemy came, but accomplished nothing worth mentioning because of the strength of the place; for the fortifications of the city at this point are on a steep elevation and are not favourably situated for assaults. Paulus was keeping guard there with an infantry detachment which he commanded in person. In like manner they made no attempt on the Flaminian Gate, because it is situated on a precipitous slope and is not very easy of access. The "Reges," an infantry detachment, were keeping guard there with Ursicinus, who commanded them. And between this gate and the small gate next on the right, which is called the Pincian, a certain portion of the wall had split open of its own accord in ancient times, not clear to the ground, however, but about half way down, but still it had not fallen or been otherwise destroyed, though it leaned so to either side that one part of it appeared outside the rest of the wall and the other inside. And from this circumstance the Romans from ancient times have called the place "Broken Wall" in their own tongue. But when Belisarius in the beginning undertook to tear down this portion and rebuild it, the Romans prevented him, declaring that the Apostle Peter had promised them that he would care for the guarding of the wall there. This Apostle is revered by the Romans and held in awe above all others. And the outcome of events at this place was in all respects what the Romans contemplated and expected. For neither on that day nor throughout the whole time during which the Goths were besieging Rome did any hostile force come to that place, nor did any disturbance occur there. And we marvelled indeed that it never occurred to us nor to the enemy to remember this portion of the fortifications during the whole time, either while they were making their assaults or carrying out their designs against the wall by night; and yet many such attempts were made. It was for this reason, in fact, that at a later time also no one ventured to rebuild this part of the defences, but up to the present day the wall there is split open in this way. So much, then, for this.

And at the Salarian Gate a Goth of goodly stature and a capable warrior, wearing a corselet and having a helmet on his head, a man who was of no mean station in the Gothic nation, refused to remain in the ranks with his comrades, but stood by a tree and kept shooting many missiles at the parapet. But this man by some chance was hit by a missile from an engine which was on a tower at his left. And passing through the corselet and the body of the man, the missile sank more than half its length into the tree, and pinning him to the spot where it entered the tree, it suspended him there a corpse. And when this was seen by the Goths they fell into great fear, and getting outside the range of missiles, they still remained in line, but no longer harassed those on the wall.

But Bessas and Peranius summoned Belisarius, since Vittigis was pressing most vigorously upon them at the Vivarium. And he was fearful concerning the wall there (for it was most assailable at that point, as has been said), and so came to the rescue himself with all speed, leaving one of his friends at the Salarian Gate. And finding that the soldiers in the Vivarium dreaded the attack of the enemy, which was being pressed with great vigour and by very large numbers, he bade them look with contempt upon the enemy and thus restored their confidence. Now the ground there was very level, and consequently the place lay open to the attacks of any assailant. And for some reason the wall at that point had crumbled a

great deal, and to such an extent that the binding of the bricks did not hold together very well. Consequently the ancient Romans had built another wall of short length outside of it and encircling it, not for the sake of safety (for it was neither strengthened with towers, nor indeed was there any battlement built upon it, nor any other means by which it would have been possible to repulse an enemy's assault upon the fortifications), but in order to provide for an unseemly kind of luxury, namely, that they might confine and keep there lions and other wild animals. And it is for this reason that this place has been named the Vivarium; for thus the Romans call a place where untamed animals are regularly cared for. So Vittigis began to make ready various engines at different places along the wall and commanded the Goths to mine the outside wall, thinking that, if they should get inside that, they would have no trouble in capturing the main wall, which he knew to be by no means strong. But Belisarius, seeing that the enemy was undermining the Vivarium and assaulting the fortifications at many places, neither allowed the soldiers to defend the wall nor to remain at the battlement, except a very few, although he had with him whatever men of distinction the army contained. But he held them all in readiness below about the gates, with their corselets on and carrying only swords in their hands. And when the Goths, after making a breach in the wall, got inside the Vivarium, he quickly sent Cyprian with some others into the enclosure against them, commanding them to set to work. And they slew all who had broken in, for these made no defence and at the same time were being destroyed by one another in the cramped space about the exit. And since the enemy were thrown into dismay by the sudden turn of events and were not drawn up in order, but were rushing one in one direction and one in another, Belisarius suddenly opened the gates of the circuit-wall and sent out his entire army against his opponents. And the Goths had not the least thought of resistance, but rushed off in flight in any and every direction, while the Romans, following them up, found no difficulty in killing all whom they fell in with, and the pursuit proved a long one, since the Goths, in assaulting the wall at that place, were far away from their own camps. Then Belisarius gave the order to burn the enemy's engines, and the flames, rising to a great height, naturally increased the consternation of the fugitives.

Meanwhile it chanced that the same thing happened at the Salarian Gate also. For the Romans suddenly opened the gates and fell unexpectedly upon the barbarians, and, as these made no resistance but turned their backs, slew them; and they burned the engines of war which were within their reach. And the flames at many parts of the wall rose to a great height, and the Goths were already being forced to retire from the whole circuit-wall; and the shouting on both sides was exceedingly loud, as the men on the wall urged on the pursuers, and those in the camps bewailed the overwhelming calamity they had suffered. Among the Goths there perished on that day thirty thousand, as their leaders declared, and a larger number were wounded; for since they were massed in great numbers, those fighting from the battlement generally hit somebody when they shot at them, and at the same time those who made the sallies destroyed an extraordinary number of terrified and fleeing men. And the fighting at the wall, which had commenced early in the morning, did not end until late in the afternoon. During that night, then, both armies bivouacked where they were, the Romans singing the song of victory on the fortifications and lauding Belisarius to the skies, having with them the spoils stripped from the fallen, while the Goths cared for their wounded and bewailed their dead.

#### XXIV

And Belisarius wrote a letter to the emperor of the following purport: "We have arrived in Italy, as thou didst command, and we have made ourselves masters of much territory in it and have taken possession of Rome also, after driving out the barbarians who were here,

whose leader, Leuderis, I have recently sent to you. But since we have stationed a great number of soldiers both in Sicily and in Italy to guard the strongholds which we have proved able to capture, our army has in consequence been reduced to only five thousand men. But the enemy have come against us, gathered together to the number of one hundred and fifty thousand. And first of all, when we went out to spy upon their forces along the Tiber River and were compelled, contrary to our intention, to engage with them, we lacked only a little of being buried under a multitude of spears. And after this, when the barbarians attacked the wall with their whole army and assaulted the fortifications at every point with sundry engines of war, they came within a little of capturing both us and the city at the first onset, and they would have succeeded had not some chance snatched us from ruin. For achievements which transcend the nature of things may not properly and fittingly be ascribed to man's valour, but to a stronger power. Now all that has been achieved by us hitherto, whether it has been due to some kind fortune or to valour, is for the best; but as to our prospects from now on, I could wish better things for thy cause. However, I shall never hide from you anything that it is my duty to say and yours to do, knowing that while human affairs follow whatever course may be in accordance with God's will, yet those who are in charge of any enterprise always win praise or blame according to their own deeds. Therefore let both arms and soldiers be sent to us in such numbers that from now on we may engage with the enemy in this war with an equality of strength. For one ought not to trust everything to fortune, since fortune, on its part, is not given to following the same course forever. But do thou, O Emperor, take this thought to heart, that if at this time the barbarians win the victory over us, we shall be cast out of Italy which is thine and shall lose the army in addition, and besides all this we shall have to bear the shame, however great it may be, that attaches to our conduct. For I refrain from saying that we should also be regarded as having ruined the Romans, men who have held their safety more lightly than their loyalty to thy kingdom. Consequently, if this should happen, the result for us will be that the successes we have won thus far will in the end prove to have been but a prelude to calamities. For if it had so happened that we had been repulsed from Rome and Campania and, at a much earlier time, from Sicily, we should only be feeling the sting of the lightest of all misfortunes, that of having found ourselves unable to grow wealthy on the possessions of others. And again, this too is worthy of consideration by you, that it has never been possible even for many times ten thousand men to guard Rome for any considerable length of time, since the city embraces a large territory, and, because it is not on the sea, is shut off from all supplies. And although at the present time the Romans are well disposed toward us, yet when their troubles are prolonged, they will probably not hesitate to choose the course which is better for their own interests. For when men have entered into friendship with others on the spur of the moment, it is not while they are in evil fortune, but while they prosper, that they are accustomed to keep faith with them. Furthermore, the Romans will be compelled by hunger to do many things they would prefer not to do. Now as for me, I know I am bound even to die for thy kingdom, and for this reason no man will ever be able to remove me from this city while I live; but I beg thee to consider what kind of a fame such an end of Belisarius would bring thee."

Such was the letter written by Belisarius. And the emperor, greatly distressed, began in haste to gather an army and ships, and sent orders to the troops of Valerian and Martinus to proceed with all speed. For they had been sent, as it happened, with another army at about the winter solstice, with instructions to sail to Italy. But they had sailed as far as Greece, and since they were unable to force their way any farther, they were passing the winter in the land of Aetolia and Acarnania. And the Emperor Justinian sent word of all this to Belisarius, and thus filled him and all the Romans with still greater courage and confirmed their zeal.



At this time it so happened that the following event took place in Naples. There was in the market-place a picture of Theoderic, the ruler of the Goths, made by means of sundry stones which were exceedingly small and tinted with nearly every colour. At one time during the life of Theoderic it had come to pass that the head of this picture fell apart, the stones as they had been set having become disarranged without having been touched by anyone, and by a coincidence Theoderic finished his life forthwith. And eight years later the stones which formed the body of the picture fell apart suddenly, and Atalaric, the grandson of Theoderic, immediately died. And after the passage of a short time, the stones about the groin fell to the ground, and Amalasintha, the child of Theoderic, passed from the world. Now these things had already happened as described. But when the Goths began the siege of Rome, as chance would have it, the portion of the picture from the thighs to the tips of the feet fell into ruin, and thus the whole picture disappeared from the wall. And the Romans, divining the meaning of the incident, maintained that the emperor's army would be victorious in the war, thinking that the feet of Theoderic were nothing else than the Gothic people whom he ruled, and, in consequence, they became still more hopeful.

In Rome, moreover, some of the patricians brought out the Sibylline oracles, declaring that the danger which had come to the city would continue only up till the month of July. For it was fated that at that time someone should be appointed king over the Romans, and thenceforth Rome should have no longer any Getic peril to fear; for they say that the Goths are of the Getic race. And the oracle was as follows: "In the fifth (Quintilis) month . . . under . . . as king nothing Getic longer. . . ." And they declared that the "fifth month" was July, some because the siege began on the first day of March, from which July is the fifth month, others because March was considered the first month until the reign of Numa, the full year before that time containing ten months and our July for this reason having its name Quintilis. But after all, none of these predictions came true. For neither was a king appointed over the Romans at that time, nor was the siege destined to be broken up until a year later, and Rome was again to come into similar perils in the reign of Totila, ruler of the Goths, as will be told by me in the subsequent narrative. For it seems to me that the oracle does not indicate this present attack of the barbarians, but some other attack which has either happened already or will come at some later time. Indeed, in my opinion, it is impossible for a mortal man to discover the meaning of the Sibyl's oracles before the actual event. The reason for this I shall now set forth, having read all the oracles in question. The Sibyl does not invariably mention events in their order, much less construct a well-arranged narrative, but after uttering some verse or other concerning the troubles in Libya she leaps straightway to the land of Persia, thence proceeds to mention the Romans, and then transfers the narrative to the Assyrians. And again, while uttering prophecies about the Romans, she foretells the misfortunes of the Britons. For this reason it is impossible for any man soever to comprehend the oracles of the Sibyl before the event, and it is only time itself, after the event has already come to pass and the words can be tested by experience, that can shew itself an accurate interpreter of her sayings. But as for these things, let each one reason as he desires. But I shall return to the point from which I have strayed.

## XXV

When the Goths had been repulsed in the fight at the wall, each army bivouacked that night in the manner already described. But on the following day Belisarius commanded all the Romans to remove their women and children to Naples, and also such of their domestics as they thought would not be needed by them for the guarding of the wall, his purpose being, naturally, to forestall a scarcity of provisions. And he issued orders to the soldiers to do the same thing, in case anyone had a male or female attendant. For, he went



on to say, he was no longer able while besieged to provide them with food to the customary amount, but they would have to accept one half their daily ration in actual supplies, taking the remainder in silver. So they proceeded to carry out his instructions. And immediately a great throng set out for Campania. Now some, who had the good fortune to secure such boats as were lying at anchor in the harbour of Rome, secured passage, but the rest went on foot by the road which is called the Appian Way. And no danger or fear, as far as the besiegers were concerned, arose to disturb either those who travelled this way on foot or those who set out from the harbour. For, on the one hand, the enemy were unable to surround the whole of Rome with their camps on account of the great size of the city, and, on the other, they did not dare to be found far from the camps in small companies, fearing the sallies of their opponents. And on this account abundant opportunity was afforded for some time to the besieged both to move out of the city and to bring provisions into it from outside. And especially at night the barbarians were always in great fear, and so they merely posted guards and remained quietly in their camps. For parties were continually issuing from the city, and especially Moors in great numbers, and whenever they found their enemies either asleep or walking about in small companies (as is accustomed to happen often in a large army, the men going out not only to attend to the needs of nature, but also to pasture horses and mules and such animals as are suitable for food), they would kill them and speedily strip them, and if perchance a larger number of the enemy should fall upon them, they would retire on the run, being men swift of foot by nature and lightly equipped, and always distancing their pursuers in the flight. Consequently, the great majority were able to withdraw from Rome, and some went to Campania, some to Sicily, and others wherever they thought it was easier or better to go. But Belisarius saw that the number of soldiers at his command was by no means sufficient for the whole circuit of the wall, for they were few, as I have previously stated, and the same men could not keep guard constantly without sleeping, but some would naturally be taking their sleep while others were stationed on guard. At the same time he saw that the greatest part of the populace were hard pressed by poverty and in want of the necessities of life; for since they were men who worked with their hands, and all they had was what they got from day to day, and since they had been compelled to be idle on account of the siege, they had no means of procuring provisions. For these reasons Belisarius mingled soldiers and citizens together and distributed them to each post, appointing a certain fixed wage for an unenlisted man for each day. In this way companies were made up which were sufficient for the guarding of the wall, and the duty of keeping guard on the fortifications during a stated night was assigned to each company, and the members of the companies all took turns in standing guard. In this manner, then, Belisarius did away with the distress of both soldiers and citizens.

But a suspicion arose against Silverius, the chief priest of the city, that he was engaged in treasonable negotiations with the Goths, and Belisarius sent him immediately to Greece, and a little later appointed another man, Vigilius by name, to the office of chief priest. And he banished from Rome on the same charge some of the senators, but later, when the enemy had abandoned the siege and retired, he restored them again to their homes. Among these was Maximus, whose ancestor Maximus had committed the crime against the Emperor Valentinian. And fearing lest the guards at the gates should become involved in a plot, and lest someone should gain access from the outside with intent to corrupt them with money, twice in each month he destroyed all the keys and had new ones made, each time of a different design, and he also changed the guards to other posts which were far removed from those they had formerly occupied, and every night he set different men in charge of those who were doing guard-duty on the fortifications. And it was the duty of these officers to make the rounds of a section of the wall, taking turns in this work, and to write down the names of the guards, and if anyone was missing from that section, they put another man on

duty in his stead for the moment, and on the morrow reported the missing man to Belisarius himself, whoever he might be, in order that the fitting punishment might be given him. And he ordered musicians to play their instruments on the fortifications at night, and he continually sent detachments of soldiers, especially Moors, outside the walls, whose duty it was always to pass the night about the moat, and he sent dogs with them in order that no one might approach the fortifications, even at a distance, without being detected.

At that time some of the Romans attempted secretly to force open the doors of the temple of Janus. This Janus was the first of the ancient gods whom the Romans call in their own tongue "Penates." And he has his temple in that part of the forum in front of the senate-house which lies a little above the "Tria Fata"; for thus the Romans are accustomed to call the Moirai. And the temple is entirely of bronze and was erected in the form of a square, but it is only large enough to cover the statue of Janus. Now this statue, is of bronze, and not less than five cubits high; in all other respects it resembles a man, but its head has two faces, one of which is turned toward the east and the other toward the west. And there are brazen doors fronting each face, which the Romans in olden times were accustomed to close in time of peace and prosperity, but when they had war they opened them. But when the Romans came to honour, as truly as any others, the teachings of the Christians, they gave up the custom of opening these doors, even when they were at war. During this siege, however, some, I suppose, who had in mind the old belief, attempted secretly to open them, but they did not succeed entirely, and moved the doors only so far that they did not close tightly against one another as formerly. And those who had attempted to do this escaped detection; and no investigation of the act was made, as was natural in a time of great confusion, since it did not become known to the commanders, nor did it reach the ears of the multitude, except of a very few.

## XXVI

Now Vittigis, in his anger and perplexity, first sent some of his bodyguards to Ravenna with orders to kill all the Roman senators whom he had taken there at the beginning of this war. And some of them, learning of this beforehand, succeeded in making their escape, among them being Vergentinus and Reparatus, the brother of Vigilius, the chief priest of Rome, both of whom betook themselves into Liguria and remained there; but all the rest were destroyed. After this Vittigis, seeing that the enemy were enjoying a large degree of freedom, not only in taking out of the city whatever they wished, but also in bringing in provisions both by land and by sea, decided to seize the harbour, which the Romans call "Portus."

This harbour is distant from the city one hundred and twenty-six stades; for Rome lacks only so much of being on the sea; and it is situated where the Tiber River has its mouth. Now as the Tiber flows down from Rome, and reaches a point rather near the sea, about fifteen stades from it, the stream divides into two parts and makes there the Sacred Island, as it is called. As the river flows on the island becomes wider, so that the measure of its breadth corresponds to its length, for the two streams have between them a distance of fifteen stades; and the Tiber remains navigable on both sides. Now the portion of the river on the right empties into the harbour, and beyond the mouth the Romans in ancient times built on the shore a city, which is surrounded by an exceedingly strong wall; and it is called, like the harbour, "Portus." But on the left at the point where the other part of the Tiber empties into the sea is situated the city of Ostia, lying beyond the place where the river-bank ends, a place of great consequence in olden times, but now entirely without walls. Moreover, the Romans at the very beginning made a road leading from Portus to Rome, which was

smooth and presented no difficulty of any kind. And many barges are always anchored in the harbour ready for service, and no small number of oxen stand in readiness close by. Now when the merchants reach the harbour with their ships, they unload their cargoes and place them in the barges, and sail by way of the Tiber to Rome; but they do not use sails or oars at all, for the boats cannot be propelled in the stream by any wind since the river winds about exceedingly and does not follow a straight course, nor can oars be employed, either, since the force of the current is always against them. Instead of using such means, therefore, they fasten ropes from the barges to the necks of oxen, and so draw them just like waggons up to Rome. But on the other side of the river, as one goes from the city of Ostia to Rome, the road is shut in by woods and in general lies neglected, and is not even near the bank of the Tiber, since there is no towing of barges on that road.

So the Goths, finding the city at the harbour unguarded, captured it at the first onset and slew many of the Romans who lived there, and so took possession of the harbour as well as the city. And they established a thousand of their number there as guards, while the remainder returned to the camps. In consequence of this move it was impossible for the besieged to bring in the goods which came by sea, except by way of Ostia, a route which naturally involved great labour and danger besides. For the Roman ships were not even able to put in there any longer, but they anchored at Anthium, a day's journey distant from Ostia. And they found great difficulty in carrying the cargoes thence to Rome, the reason for this being the scarcity of men. For Belisarius, fearing for the fortifications of Rome, had been unable to strengthen the harbour with any garrison at all, though I think that if even three hundred men had been on guard there, the barbarians would never have made an attempt on the place, which is exceedingly strong.

## XXVII

This exploit, then, was accomplished by the Goths on the third day after they were repulsed in the assault on the wall. But twenty days after the city and harbour of Portus were captured, Martinus and Valerian arrived, bringing with them sixteen hundred horsemen, the most of whom were Huns and Sclaveni and Antae, who are settled above the Ister River not far from its banks. And Belisarius was pleased by their coming and thought that thenceforth his army ought to carry the war against the enemy. On the following day, accordingly, he commanded one of his own bodyguards, Trajan by name, an impetuous and active fighter, to take two hundred horsemen of the guards and go straight towards the enemy, and as soon as they came near the camps to go up on a high hill (which he pointed out to him) and remain quietly there. And if the enemy should come against them, he was not to allow the battle to come to close quarters, nor to touch sword or spear in any case, but to use bows only, and as soon as he should find that his quiver had no more arrows in it, he was to flee as hard as he could with no thought of shame and retire to the fortifications on the run. Having given these instructions, he held in readiness both the engines for shooting arrows and the men skilled in their use. Then Trajan with the two hundred men went out from the Salarian Gate against the camp of the enemy. And they, being filled with amazement at the suddenness of the thing, rushed out from the camps, each man equipping himself as well as he could. But the men under Trajan galloped to the top of the hill which Belisarius had shewn them, and from there began to ward off the barbarians with missiles. And since their shafts fell among a dense throng, they were for the most part successful in hitting a man or a horse. But when all their missiles had at last failed them, they rode off to the rear with all speed, and the Goths kept pressing upon them in pursuit. But when they came near the fortifications, the operators of the engines began to shoot arrows from them, and the barbarians became terrified and abandoned the pursuit. And it is said that not less

than one thousand Goths perished in this action. A few days later Belisarius sent Mundilas, another of his own bodyguard, and Diogenes, both exceptionally capable warriors, with three hundred guardsmen, commanding them to do the same thing as the others had done before. And they acted according to his instructions. Then, when the enemy confronted them, the result of the encounter was that no fewer than in the former action, perhaps even more, perished in the same way. And sending even a third time the guardsman Oilas with three hundred horsemen, with instructions to handle the enemy in the same way, he accomplished the same result. So in making these three sallies, in the manner told by me, Belisarius destroyed about four thousand of his antagonists.

But Vittigis, failing to take into account the difference between the two armies in point of equipment of arms and of practice in warlike deeds, thought that he too would most easily inflict grave losses upon the enemy, if only he should make his attack upon them with a small force. He therefore sent five hundred horsemen, commanding them to go close to the fortifications, and to make a demonstration against the whole army of the enemy of the very same tactics as had time and again been used against them, to their sorrow, by small bands of the foe. And so, when they came to a high place not far from the city, but just beyond the range of missiles, they took their stand there. But Belisarius selected a thousand men, putting Bessas in command, and ordered them to engage with the enemy. And this force, by forming a circle around the enemy and always shooting at them from behind, killed a large number, and by pressing hard upon the rest compelled them to descend into the plain. There a hand-to-hand battle took place between forces not evenly matched in strength, and most of the Goths were destroyed, though some few with difficulty made their escape and returned to their own camp. And Vittigis reviled these men, insisting that cowardice had been the cause of their defeat, and undertaking to find another set of men to retrieve the loss after no long time, he remained quiet for the present; but three days later he selected men from all the camps, five hundred in number, and bade them make a display of valorous deeds against the enemy. Now as soon as Belisarius saw that these men had come rather near, he sent out against them fifteen hundred men under the commanders Martinus and Valerian. And a cavalry battle taking place immediately, the Romans, being greatly superior to the enemy in numbers, routed them without any trouble and destroyed practically all of them.

And to the enemy it seemed in every way a dreadful thing and a proof that fortune stood against them, if, when they were many and the enemy who came against them were few, they were defeated, and when, on the other hand, they in turn went in small numbers against their enemy, they were likewise destroyed. Belisarius, however, received a public vote of praise from the Romans for his wisdom, at which they not unnaturally marvelled greatly, but in private his friends asked him on what he had based his judgment on that day when he had escaped from the enemy after being so completely defeated, and why he had been confident that he would overcome them decisively in the war. And he said that in engaging with them at the first with only a few men he had noticed just what the difference was between the two armies, so that if he should fight his battles with them with a force which was in strength proportionate to theirs, the multitudes of the enemy could inflict no injury upon the Romans by reason of the smallness of their numbers. And the difference was this, that practically all the Romans and their allies, the Huns, are good mounted bowmen, but not a man among the Goths has had practice in this branch, for their horsemen are accustomed to use only spears and swords, while their bowmen enter battle on foot and under cover of the heavy-armed men. So the horsemen, unless the engagement is at close quarters, have no means of defending themselves against opponents who use the bow, and therefore can easily be reached by the arrows and destroyed; and as for the foot-soldiers, they can never be strong enough to make sallies against men on horseback. It was



for these reasons, Belisarius declared, that the barbarians had been defeated by the Romans in these last engagements. And the Goths, remembering the unexpected outcome of their own experiences, desisted thereafter from assaulting the fortifications of Rome in small numbers and also from pursuing the enemy when harassed by them, except only so far as to drive them back from their own camps.

## XXVIII

But later on the Romans, elated by the good fortune they had already enjoyed, were with one accord eager to do battle with the whole Gothic army and thought that they should make war in the open field. Belisarius, however, considering that the difference in size of the two armies was still very great, continued to be reluctant to risk a decisive battle with his whole army; and so he busied himself still more with his sallies and kept planning them against the enemy. But when at last he yielded his point because of the abuse heaped upon him by the army and the Romans in general, though he was willing to fight with the whole army, yet nevertheless he wished to open the engagement by a sudden sally. And many times he was frustrated when he was on the point of doing this, and was compelled to put off the attack to the following day, because he found to his surprise that the enemy had been previously informed by deserters as to what was to be done and were unexpectedly ready for him. For this reason, then, he was now willing to fight a decisive battle even in the open field, and the barbarians gladly came forth for the encounter. And when both sides had been made ready for the conflict as well as might be, Belisarius gathered his whole army and exhorted them as follows:

"It is not because I detected any cowardice on your part, fellow-soldiers, nor because I was terrified at the strength of the enemy, that I have shrunk from the engagement with them, but I saw that while we were carrying on the war by making sudden sallies matters stood well with us, and consequently I thought that we ought to adhere permanently to the tactics which were responsible for our success. For I think that when one's present affairs are going to one's satisfaction, it is inexpedient to change to another course of action. But since I see that you are eager for this danger, I am filled with confidence and shall never oppose your ardour. For I know that the greatest factor in the decision of war is always the attitude of the fighting men, and it is generally by their enthusiasm that successes are won. Now, therefore, the fact that a few men drawn up for battle with valour on their side are able to overcome a multitude of the enemy, is well known by every man of you, not by hearsay, but by daily experience of fighting. And it will rest with you not to bring shame upon the former glories of my career as general, nor upon the hope which this enthusiasm of yours inspires. For the whole of what has already been accomplished by us in this war must of necessity be judged in accordance with the issue of the present day. And I see that the present moment is also in our favour, for it will, in all probability, make it easier for us to gain the mastery over the enemy, because their spirit has been enslaved by what has gone before. For when men have often met with misfortune, their hearts are no longer wont to thrill even slightly with manly valour. And let no one of you spare horse or bow or any weapon. For I will immediately provide you with others in place of all that are destroyed in the battle."

After speaking these words of exhortation, Belisarius led out his army through the small Pincian Gate and the Salarian Gate, and commanded some few men to go through the Aurelian Gate into the Plain of Nero. These he put under the command of Valentinus, a commander of a cavalry detachment, and he directed him not to begin any fighting, or to go too close to the camp of the enemy, but constantly to give the appearance of being about to



attack immediately, so that none of the enemy in that quarter might be able to cross the neighbouring bridge and come to the assistance of the soldiers from the other camps. For since, as I have previously stated, the barbarians encamped in the Plain of Nero were many, it seemed to him sufficient if these should all be prevented from taking part in the engagement and be kept separated from the rest of the army. And when some of the Roman populace took up arms and followed as volunteers, he would not allow them to be drawn up for battle along with the regular troops, fearing lest, when they came to actual fighting, they should become terrified at the danger and throw the entire army into confusion, since they were labouring men and altogether unpractised in war. But outside the Pancratan Gate, which is beyond the Tiber River, he ordered them to form a phalanx and remain quiet until he himself should give the signal, reasoning, as actually proved to be the case, that if the enemy in the Plain of Nero should see both them and the men under Valentinus, they would never dare leave their camp and enter battle with the rest of the Gothic army against his own forces. And he considered it a stroke of good luck and a very important advantage that such a large number of men should be kept apart from the army of his opponents.

Such being the situation, he wished on that day to engage in a cavalry battle only; and indeed most of the regular infantry were now unwilling to remain in their accustomed condition, but, since they had captured horses as booty from the enemy and had become not unpractised in horsemanship, they were now mounted. And since the infantry were few in number and unable even to make a phalanx of any consequence, and had never had the courage to engage with the barbarians, but always turned to flight at the first onset, he considered it unsafe to draw them up at a distance from the fortifications, but thought it best that they should remain in position where they were, close by the moat, his purpose being that, if it should so happen that the Roman horsemen were routed, they should be able to receive the fugitives and, as a fresh body of men, help them to ward off the enemy.

But there were two men among his bodyguards, a certain Principius, who was a man of note and a Pisidian by birth, and Tarmutus, an Isaurian, brother of Ennes who was commander of the Isaurians. These men came before Belisarius and spoke as follows: "Most excellent of generals, we beg you neither to decide that your army, small as it is and about to fight with many tens of thousands of barbarians, be cut off from the phalanx of the infantry, nor to think that one ought to treat with contumely the infantry of the Romans, by means of which, as we hear, the power of the ancient Romans was brought to its present greatness. For if it so happens that they have done nothing of consequence in this war, this is no evidence of the cowardice of the soldiers, but it is the commanders of the infantry who would justly bear the blame, for they alone ride on horseback in the battle-line and are not willing to consider the fortunes of war as shared by all, but as a general thing each one of them by himself takes to flight before the struggle begins. But do you keep all the commanders of infantry, since you see that they have become cavalry and that they are quite unwilling to take their stand beside their subordinates, and include them with the rest of the cavalry and so enter this battle, but permit us to lead the infantry into the combat. For since we also are unmounted, as are these troops, we shall do our part in helping them to support the attack of the multitude of barbarians, full of hope that we shall inflict upon the enemy whatever chastisement God shall permit."

When Belisarius heard this request, at first he did not assent to it; for he was exceedingly fond of these two men, who were fighters of marked excellence, and he was unwilling to have a small body of infantry take such a risk. But finally, overborne by the eagerness of the men, he consented to leave only a small number of their soldiers, in company with the Roman populace, to man the gates and the battlement along the top of the wall where the engines of war were, and to put the rest under command of Principius

and Tarmutus, ordering them to take position in the rear in regular formation. His purpose in this was, in the first place, to keep these troops from throwing the rest of the army into confusion if they themselves should become panic-stricken at the danger, and, in the second place, in case any division of the cavalry should be routed at any time, to prevent the retreat from extending to an indefinite distance, but to allow the cavalry simply to fall back upon the infantry and make it possible for them, with the infantry's help, to ward off the pursuers.

## XXIX

In this fashion the Romans had made their preparations for the encounter. As for Vittigis, he had armed all the Goths, leaving not a man behind in the camps, except those unfit for fighting. And he commanded the men under Marcias to remain in the Plain of Nero, and to attend to the guarding of the bridge, that the enemy might not attack his men from that direction. He himself then called together the rest of the army and spoke as follows:

"It may perhaps seem to some of you that I am fearful about my sovereignty, and that this is the motive which has led me, in the past, to shew a friendly spirit toward you and, on the present occasion, to address you with seductive words in order to inspire you with courage. And such reasoning is not out of accord with the ways of men. For unenlightened men are accustomed to shew gentleness toward those whom they want to make use of, even though these happen to be in a much humbler station than they, but to be difficult of access to others whose assistance they do not desire. As for me, however, I care neither for the end of life nor for the loss of power. Nay, I should even pray that I might put off this purple to-day, if a Goth were to put it on. And I have always regarded the end of Theodatus as one of the most fortunate, in that he was privileged to lose both his sovereignty and his life at the hands of men of his own nation. For a calamity which falls upon an individual without involving his nation also in destruction does not lack an element of consolation, in the view, at least, of men who are not wanting in wisdom. But when I reflect upon the fate of the Vandals and the end of Gelimer, the thoughts which come to my mind are of no ordinary kind; nay, I seem to see the Goths and their children reduced to slavery, your wives ministering in the most shameful of all ways to the most hateful of men, and myself and the granddaughter of Theoderic led wherever it suits the pleasure of those who are now our enemies; and I would have you also enter this battle fearing lest this fate befall us. For if you do this, on the field of battle you will count the end of life as more to be desired than safety after defeat. For noble men consider that there is only one misfortune—to survive defeat at the hands of their enemy. But as for death, and especially death which comes quickly, it always brings happiness to those who were before not blest by fortune. It is very clear that if you keep these thoughts in mind as you go through the present engagement, you will not only conquer your opponents most easily, few as they are and Greeks, but will also punish them forthwith for the injustice and insolence with which they, without provocation, have treated us. For although we boast that we are their superiors in valour, in numbers, and in every other respect, the boldness which they feel in confronting us is due merely to elation at our misfortunes; and the only asset they have is the indifference we have shewn. For their self-confidence is fed by their undeserved good fortune."

With these words of exhortation Vittigis proceeded to array his army for battle, stationing the infantry in the centre and the cavalry on the two wings. He did not, however, draw up his phalanx far from the camps, but very near them, in order that, as soon as the rout should take place, the enemy might easily be overtaken and killed, there being abundance of room for the pursuit. For he expected that if the struggle should become a

pitched battle in the plain, they would not withstand him even a short time; since he judged by the great disparity of numbers that the army of the enemy was no match for his own.

So the soldiers on both sides, beginning in the early morning, opened battle; and Vittigis and Belisarius were in the rear urging on both armies and inciting them to fortitude. And at first the Roman arms prevailed, and the barbarians kept falling in great numbers before their archery, but no pursuit of them was made. For since the Gothic cavalry stood in dense masses, other men very easily stepped into the places of those who were killed, and so the loss of those who fell among them was in no way apparent. And the Romans evidently were satisfied, in view of their very small number, that the struggle should have such a result for them. So after they had by midday carried the battle as far as the camps of their opponents, and had already slain many of the enemy, they were anxious to return to the city if any pretext should present itself to them. In this part of the action three among the Romans proved themselves brave men above all others, Athenodorus, an Isaurian, a man of fair fame among the guards of Belisarius, and Theodoriscus and George, spearmen of Martinus and Cappadocians by birth. For they constantly kept going out beyond the front of the phalanx, and there despatched many of the barbarians with their spears. Such was the course of events here.

But in the Plain of Nero the two armies remained for a long time facing one another, and the Moors, by making constant sallies and hurling their javelins among the enemy, kept harrying the Goths. For the Goths were quite unwilling to go out against them through fear of the forces of the Roman populace which were not far away, thinking, of course, that they were soldiers and were remaining quiet because they had in mind some sort of an ambush against themselves with the object of getting in their rear, exposing them to attack on both sides, and thus destroying them. But when it was now the middle of the day, the Roman army suddenly made a rush against the enemy, and the Goths were unexpectedly routed, being paralyzed by the suddenness of the attack. And they did not succeed even in fleeing to their camp, but climbed the hills near by and remained quiet. Now the Romans, though many in number, were not all soldiers, but were for the most part a throng of men without defensive armour. For inasmuch as the general was elsewhere, many sailors and servants in the Roman camp, in their eagerness to have a share in the war, mingled with that part of the army. And although by their mere numbers they did fill the barbarians with consternation and turn them to flight, as has been said, yet by reason of their lack of order they lost the day for the Romans. For the intermixture of the above-mentioned men caused the soldiers to be thrown into great disorder, and although Valentinus kept constantly shouting orders to them, they could not hear his commands at all. For this reason they did not even follow up the fugitives or kill a man, but allowed them to stand at rest on the hills and in security to view what was going on. Nor did they take thought to destroy the bridge there, and thus prevent the city from being afterwards besieged on both sides; for, had they done so, the barbarians would have been unable to encamp any longer on the farther side of the Tiber River. Furthermore, they did not even cross the bridge and get in the rear of their opponents who were fighting there with the troops of Belisarius. And if this had been done, the Goths, I think, would no longer have thought of resistance, but they would have turned instantly to flight, each man as he could. But as it was, they took possession of the enemy's camp and turned to plundering his goods, and they set to work carrying thence many vessels of silver and many other valuables. Meanwhile the barbarians for some time remained quietly where they were and observed what was going on, but finally by common consent they advanced against their opponents with great fury and shouting. And finding men in complete disorder engaged in plundering their property, they slew many and quickly drove out the rest. For all who were caught inside the camp and escaped slaughter were glad to cast their plunder from their shoulders and take to flight.

While these things were taking place in the Plain of Nero, meantime the rest of the barbarian army stayed very near their camps and, protecting themselves with their shields, vigorously warded off their opponents, destroying many men and a much larger number of horses. But on the Roman side, when those who had been wounded and those whose horses had been killed left the ranks, then, in an army which had been small even before, the smallness of their numbers was still more evident, and the difference between them and the Gothic host was manifestly great. Finally the horsemen of the barbarians who were on the right wing, taking note of this, advanced at a gallop against the enemy opposite them. And the Romans there, unable to withstand their spears, rushed off in flight and came to the infantry phalanx. However, the infantry also were unable to hold their ground against the oncoming horsemen, and most of them began to join the cavalry in flight. And immediately the rest of the Roman army also began to retire, the enemy pressing upon their heels, and the rout became decisive. But Principius and Tarmutus with some few of the infantry of their command made a display of valorous deeds against the Goths. For as they continued to fight and disdained to turn to flight with the others, most of the Goths were so amazed that they halted. And consequently the rest of the infantry and most of the horsemen made their escape in greater security. Now Principius fell where he stood, his whole body hacked to pieces, and around him fell forty-two foot-soldiers. But Tarmutus, holding two Isaurian javelins, one in each hand, continued to thrust them into his assailants as he turned from side to side, until, finally, he desisted because his body was covered with wounds; but when his brother Ennes came to the rescue with a detachment of cavalry, he revived, and running swiftly, covered as he was with gore and wounds, he made for the fortifications without throwing down either of his javelins. And being fleet of foot by nature, he succeeded in making his escape, in spite of the plight of his body, and did not fall until he had just reached the Pincian Gate. And some of his comrades, supposing him to be dead, lifted him on a shield and carried him. But he lived on two days before he died, leaving a high reputation both among the Isaurians and in the rest of the army.

The Romans, meanwhile, being by now thoroughly frightened, attended to the guarding of the wall, and shutting the gates they refused, in their great excitement, to receive the fugitives into the city, fearing that the enemy would rush in with them. And such of the fugitives as had not already got inside the fortifications, crossed the moat, and standing with their backs braced against the wall were trembling with fear, and stood there forgetful of all valour and utterly unable to ward off the barbarians, although they were pressing upon them and were about to cross the moat to attack them. And the reason was that most of them had lost their spears, which had been broken in the engagement and during the flight, and they were not able to use their bows because they were huddled so closely together. Now so long as not many defenders were seen at the battlement, the Goths kept pressing on, having hopes of destroying all those who had been shut out and of overpowering the men who held the circuit-wall. But when they saw a very great number both of soldiers and of the Roman populace at the battlements defending the wall, they immediately abandoned their purpose and rode off thence to the rear, heaping much abuse upon their opponents. And the battle, having begun at the camps of the barbarians, ended at the moat and the wall of the city.

**BOOK VI**  
**THE GOTHIC WAR (*continued*)**

**I**

After this the Romans no longer dared risk a battle with their whole army; but they engaged in cavalry battles, making sudden sallies in the same manner as before, and were generally victorious over the barbarians. Foot-soldiers also went out from both sides, not, however, arrayed in a phalanx, but accompanying the horsemen. And once Bessas in the first rush dashed in among the enemy carrying his spear and killed three of their best horsemen and turned the rest to flight. And another time, when Constantinus had led out the Huns in the Plain of Nero in the late afternoon, and saw that they were being overpowered by the superior numbers of their opponents, he took the following measures. There has been in that place from of old a great stadium where the gladiators of the city used to fight in former times, and the men of old built many other buildings round about this stadium; consequently there are, as one would expect, narrow passages all about this place. Now on the occasion in question, since Constantinus could neither overcome the throng of the Goths nor flee without great danger, he caused all the Huns to dismount from their horses, and on foot, in company with them, took his stand in one of the narrow passages there. Then by shooting from that safe position they slew large numbers of the enemy. And for some time the Goths withstood their missiles. For they hoped, as soon as the supply of missiles in the quivers of the Huns should be exhausted, to be able to surround them without any trouble, take them prisoners, and lead them back to their camp. But since the Massagetæ, who were not only good bowmen but also had a dense throng to shoot into, hit an enemy with practically every shot, the Goths perceived that above half their number had perished, and since the sun was about to set, they knew not what to do and so rushed off in flight. Then indeed many of them fell; for the Massagetæ followed them up, and since they know how to shoot the bow with the greatest accuracy even when running at great speed, they continued to discharge their arrows no less than before, shooting at their backs, and kept up the slaughter. And thus Constantinus with his Huns came back to Rome at night.

And when Peranius, not many days later, led some of the Romans through the Salarian Gate against the enemy, the Goths, indeed, fled as hard as they could, but about sunset a counter-pursuit was made suddenly, and a Roman foot-soldier, becoming greatly confused, fell into a deep hole, many of which were made there by the men of old, for the storage of grain, I suppose. And he did not dare to cry out, supposing that the enemy were encamped near by, and was not able in any way whatever to get out of the pit, for it afforded no means of climbing up; he was therefore compelled to pass the night there. Now on the next day, when the barbarians had again been put to flight, one of the Goths fell into the same hole. And there the two men were reconciled to mutual friendship and good-will, brought together as they were by their necessity, and they exchanged solemn pledges, each that he would work earnestly for the salvation of the other; and then both of them began shouting with loud and frantic cries. Now the Goths, following the sound, came and peered over the edge of the hole, and enquired who it was who shouted. At this, the Roman, in accordance with the plan decided upon by the two men, kept silence, and the Goth in his native tongue said that he had just recently fallen in there during the rout which had taken place, and asked them to let down a rope that he might come up. And they as quickly as possible threw down the ends of ropes, and, as they thought, were pulling up the Goth, but the Roman laid hold of the ropes and was pulled up, saying only that if he should go up first the Goths



would never abandon their comrade, but if they should learn that merely one of the enemy was there they would take no account of him. So saying, he went up. And when the Goths saw him, they wondered and were in great perplexity, but upon hearing the whole story from him they drew up his comrade next, and he told them of the agreement they had made and of the pledges both had given. So he went off with his companions, and the Roman was released unharmed and permitted to return to the city. After this horsemen in no great numbers armed themselves many times for battle, but the struggles always ended in single combats, and the Romans were victorious in all of them. Such, then, was the course of these events.

A little after this an engagement took place in the Plain of Nero, wherein various small groups of horsemen were engaged in pursuing their opponents in various directions; in one group was Chorsamantis, a man of note among the guards of Belisarius, by birth a Massagete, who with some others was pursuing seventy of the enemy. And when he had got well out in the plain the other Romans rode back, but Chorsamantis went on with the pursuit alone. As soon as the Goths perceived this, they turned their horses about and came against him. And he advanced into their midst, killed one of the best of them with his spear, and then went after the others, but they again turned and rushed off in flight. But they were ashamed before their comrades in the camp, who, they suspected, could already see them, and wished to attack him again. They had, however, precisely the same experience as before and lost one of their best men, and so turned to flight in spite of their shame, and after Chorsamantis had pursued them as far as their stockade he returned alone. And a little later, in another battle, this man was wounded in the left shin, and it was his opinion that the weapon had merely grazed the bone. However, he was rendered unfit for fighting for a certain number of days by reason of this wound, and since he was a barbarian he did not endure this patiently, but threatened that he would right speedily have vengeance upon the Goths for this insult to his leg. So when not long afterwards he had recovered and was drunk at lunch time, as was his custom, he purposed to go alone against the enemy and avenge the insult to his leg; and when he had come to the small Pincian Gate he stated that he was sent by Belisarius to the enemy's camp. And the guards at the gate, who could not doubt the word of a man who was the best of the guards of Belisarius, opened the gates and allowed him to go wherever he would. And when the enemy spied him, they thought at first that some deserter was coming over to them, but when he came near and put his hand to his bow, twenty men, not knowing who he might be, went out against him. These he easily drove off, and then began to ride back at a walk, and when more Goths came against him he did not flee. But when a great throng gathered about him and he still insisted upon fighting them, the Romans, watching the sight from the towers, suspected that the man was crazy, but they did not yet know that it was Chorsamantis. At length, after making a display of great and very noteworthy deeds, he found himself surrounded by the army of the enemy, and paid the penalty for his unreasonable daring. And when Belisarius and the Roman army learned this, they mourned greatly, lamenting that the hope which all placed in the man had come to naught.

## II

Now a certain Euthalius, at about the spring equinox, came to Taracina from Byzantium with the money which the emperor owed the soldiers. And fearing lest the enemy should come upon him on the road and both rob him of the money and kill him, he wrote to Belisarius requesting him to make the journey to Rome safe for him. Belisarius accordingly selected one hundred men of note from among his own bodyguards and sent them with two spearmen to Taracina to assist him in bringing the money. And at the same

time he kept trying to make the barbarians believe that he was about to fight with his whole army, his purpose being to prevent any of the enemy from leaving the vicinity, either to bring in provisions or for any other purpose. But when he found out that Euthalius and his men would arrive on the morrow, he arrayed his army and set it in order for battle, and the barbarians were in readiness. Now throughout the whole forenoon he merely held his soldiers near the gates; for he knew that Euthalius and those who accompanied him would arrive at night. Then, at midday, he commanded the army to take their lunch, and the Goths did the same thing, supposing that he was putting off the engagement to the following day. A little later, however, Belisarius sent Martinus and Valerian to the Plain of Nero with the troops under their command, directing them to throw the enemy's camp into the greatest possible confusion. And from the small Pincian Gate he sent out six hundred horsemen against the camps of the barbarians, placing them under command of three of his own spearmen, Artasires, a Persian, and Bochas, of the race of the Massagetae, and Cutilas, a Thracian. And many of the enemy came out to meet them. For a long time, however, the battle did not come to close quarters, but each side kept retreating when the other advanced and making pursuits in which they quickly turned back, until it looked as if they intended to spend the rest of the day at this sort of thing. But as they continued, they began at last to be filled with rage against each other. The battle then settled down to a fierce struggle in which many of the best men on both sides fell, and support came up for each of the two armies, both from the city and from the camps. And when these fresh troops were mingled with the fighters the struggle became still greater. And the shouting which filled the city and the camps terrified the combatants. But finally the Romans by their valour forced back the enemy and routed them.

In this action Cutilas was struck in the middle of the head by a javelin, and he kept on pursuing with the javelin still embedded in his head. And after the rout had taken place, he rode into the city at about sunset together with the other survivors, the javelin in his head waving about, a most extraordinary sight. During the same encounter Arzes, one of the guards of Belisarius, was hit by one of the Gothic archers between the nose and the right eye. And the point of the arrow penetrated as far as the neck behind, but it did not shew through, and the rest of the shaft projected from his face and shook as the man rode. And when the Romans saw him and Cutilas they marvelled greatly that both men continued to ride, paying no heed to their hurt. Such, then, was the course of events in that quarter.

But in the Plain of Nero the barbarians had the upper hand. For the men of Valerian and Martinus, fighting with a great multitude of the enemy, withstood them stoutly, to be sure, but suffered most terribly, and came into exceedingly great danger. And then Belisarius commanded Bochas to take his troops, which had returned from the engagement unwearied, men as well as horses, and go to the Plain of Nero. Now it was already late in the day. And when the men under Bochas had come to the assistance of the Romans, suddenly the barbarians were turned to flight, and Bochas, who had impetuously followed the pursuit to a great distance, came to be surrounded by twelve of the enemy, who carried spears. And they all struck him at once with their spears. But his corselet withstood the other blows, which therefore did not hurt him much; but one of the Goths succeeded in hitting him from behind, at a place where his body was uncovered, above the right armpit, very close to the shoulder, and smote the youth, though not with a mortal stroke, nor even one which brought him into danger of death. But another Goth struck him in front and pierced his left thigh, and cut the muscles there; it was not a straight blow, however, but only a slanting cut. But Valerian and Martinus saw what was happening, and coming to his rescue as quickly as possible, they routed the enemy, and both took hold of the bridle of Bochas' horse, and so came into the city. Then night came on and Euthalius entered the city with the money.

And when all had returned to the city, they attended to the wounded men. Now in the case of Arzes, though the physicians wished to draw the weapon from his face, they were for some time reluctant to do so, not so much on account of the eye, which they supposed could not possibly be saved, but for fear lest, by the cutting of membranes and tissues such as are very numerous in that region, they should cause the death of a man who was one of the best of the household of Belisarius. But afterwards one of the physicians, Theoctistus by name, pressed on the back of his neck and asked whether he felt much pain. And when the man said that he did feel pain, he said, "Then both you yourself will be saved and your sight will not be injured." And he made this declaration because he inferred that the barb of the weapon had penetrated to a point not far from the skin. Accordingly he cut off that part of the shaft which shewed outside and threw it away, and cutting open the skin at the back of the head, at the place where the man felt the most pain, he easily drew toward him the barb, which with its three sharp points now stuck out behind and brought with it the remaining portion of the weapon. Thus Arzes remained entirely free from serious harm, and not even a trace of his wound was left on his face. But as for Cutilas, when the javelin was drawn rather violently from his head (for it was very deeply embedded), he fell into a swoon. And since the membranes about the wound began to be inflamed, he fell a victim to phrenitis and died not long afterwards. Bochas, however, immediately had a very severe hemorrhage in the thigh, and seemed like one who was presently to die. And the reason for the hemorrhage, according to what the physicians said, was that the blow had severed the muscle, not directly from the front, but by a slanting cut. In any event he died three days later. Because of these things, then, the Romans spent that whole night in deep grief; while from the Gothic camps were heard many sounds of wailing and loud lamentation. And the Romans indeed wondered, because they thought that no calamity of any consequence had befallen the enemy on the previous day, except, to be sure, that no small number of them had perished in the encounters. This had happened to them before in no less degree, perhaps even to a greater degree, but it had not greatly distressed them, so great were their numbers. However, it was learned on the following day that men of the greatest note from the camp in the Plain of Nero were being bewailed by the Goths, men whom Bochas had killed in his first charge.

And other encounters also, though of no great importance, took place, which it has seemed to me unnecessary to chronicle. This, however, I will state, that altogether sixty-seven encounters occurred during this siege, besides two final ones which will be described in the following narrative. And at that time the winter drew to its close, and thus ended the second year of this war, the history of which Procopius has written.

### III

But at the beginning of the spring equinox famine and pestilence together fell upon the inhabitants of the city. There was still, it is true, some grain for the soldiers, though no other kind of provisions, but the grain-supply of the rest of the Romans had been exhausted, and actual famine as well as pestilence was pressing hard upon them. And the Goths, perceiving this, no longer cared to risk a decisive battle with their enemy, but they kept guard that nothing in future should be brought in to them. Now there are two aqueducts between the Latin and the Appian Ways, exceedingly high and carried on arches for a great distance. These two aqueducts meet at a place fifty stades distant from Rome and cross each other, so that for a little space they reverse their relative position. For the one which previously lay to the right from then on continues on the left side. And again coming together, they resume their former places, and thereafter remain apart. Consequently the space between them, enclosed, as it is, by the aqueducts, comes to be a fortress. And the barbarians walled up the

lower arches of the aqueducts here with stones and mud and in this way gave it the form of a fort, and encamping there to the number of no fewer than seven thousand men, they kept guard that no provisions should thereafter be brought into the city by the enemy.

Then indeed every hope of better things abandoned the Romans, and every form of evil encompassed them round about. As long as there was ripe grain, however, the most daring of the soldiers, led on by lust of money, went by night to the grain-fields not far from the city mounted on horses and leading other horses after them. Then they cut off the heads of grain, and putting them on the horses which they led, would carry them into the city without being seen by the enemy and sell them at a great price to such of the Romans as were wealthy. But the other inhabitants lived on various herbs such as grow in abundance not only in the outskirts but also inside the fortifications. For the land of the Romans is never lacking in herbs either in winter or at any other season, but they always flourish and grow luxuriantly at all times. Wherefore the besieged also pastured their horses in those places. And some too made sausages of the mules that died in Rome and secretly sold them. But when the corn-lands had no more grain and all the Romans had come into an exceedingly evil plight, they surrounded Belisarius and tried to compel him to stake everything on a single battle with the enemy, promising that not one of the Romans would be absent from the engagement. And when he was at a loss what to do in that situation and greatly distressed, some of the populace spoke to him as follows:

"General, we were not prepared for the fortune which has overtaken us at the present time; on the contrary, what has happened has been altogether the opposite of our expectations. For after achieving what we had formerly set our hearts upon, we have now come into the present misfortune, and we realize at length that our previous opinion that we did well to crave the emperor's watchful care was but folly and the beginning of the greatest evils. Indeed, this course has brought us to such straits that at the present time we have taken courage to use force once more and to arm ourselves against the barbarians. And while we may claim forgiveness if we boldly come into the presence of Belisarius—for the belly knows not shame when it lacks its necessities—our plight must be the apology for our rashness; for it will be readily agreed that there is no plight more intolerable for men than a life prolonged amid the adversities of fortune. And as to the fortune which has fallen upon us, you cannot fail to see our distress. These fields and the whole country have fallen under the hand of the enemy; and this city has been shut off from all good things for we know not how long a time. And as for the Romans, some already lie in death, and it has not been their portion to be hidden in the earth, and we who survive, to put all our terrible misfortunes in a word, only pray to be placed beside those who lie thus. For starvation shews to those upon whom it comes that all other evils can be endured, and wherever it appears it is attended by oblivion of all other sufferings, and causes all other forms of death, except that which proceeds from itself, to seem pleasant to men. Now, therefore, before the evil has yet mastered us, grant us leave on our own behalf to take up the struggle, which will result either in our overcoming the enemy or in deliverance from our troubles. For when delay brings men hope of safety, it would be great folly for them prematurely to enter into a danger which involves their all, but when tarrying makes the struggle more difficult, to put off action even for a little time is more reprehensible than immediate and precipitate haste."

So spoke the Romans. And Belisarius replied as follows: "Well, as for me, I have been quite prepared for your conduct in every respect, and nothing that has happened has been contrary to my expectation. For long have I known that a populace is a most unreasoning thing, and that by its very nature it cannot endure the present or provide for the future, but only knows how rashly in every case to attempt the impossible and recklessly to destroy itself. But as for me, I shall never, willingly at least, be led by your carelessness either to



destroy you or to involve the emperor's cause in ruin with you. For war is wont to be brought to a successful issue, not by unreasoning haste, but by the use of good counsel and forethought in estimating the turn of the scale at decisive moments. You, however, act as though you were playing at dice, and want to risk all on a single cast; but it is not my custom to choose the short course in preference to the advantageous one. In the second place, you promise that you will help us do battle against the enemy; but when have you ever taken training in war? Or who that has learned such things by the use of arms does not know that battle affords no room for experiment? Nor does the enemy, on his part, give opportunity, while the struggle is on, to practise on him. This time, indeed, I admire your zeal and forgive you for making this disturbance; but that you have taken this action at an unseasonable time and that the policy of waiting which we are following is prudent, I shall now make clear. The emperor has gathered for us from the whole earth and despatched an army too great to number, and a fleet such as was never brought together by the Romans now covers the shore of Campania and the greater part of the Ionian Gulf. And within a few days these reinforcements will come to us and bring with them all kinds of provisions, to put an end to our destitution and to bury the camps of the barbarians under a multitude of missiles. I have therefore reasoned that it was better to put off the time of conflict until they are present, and thus gain the victory in the war with safety, than to make a show of daring in unreasoning haste and thus throw away the salvation of our whole cause. To secure their immediate arrival and to prevent their loitering longer shall be my concern."

#### IV

With these words Belisarius encouraged the Roman populace and then dismissed them; and Procopius, who wrote this history, he immediately commanded to go to Naples. For a rumour was going about that the emperor had sent an army there. And he commissioned him to load as many ships as possible with grain, to gather all the soldiers who at the moment had arrived from Byzantium, or had been left about Naples in charge of horses or for any other purpose whatever—for he had heard that many such were coming to the various places in Campania—and to withdraw some of the men from the garrisons there, and then to come back with them, convoying the grain to Ostia, where the harbour of the Romans was. And Procopius, accompanied by Mundilas the guardsman and a few horsemen, passed out by night through the gate which bears the name of the Apostle Paul, eluding the enemy's camp which had been established very close to the Appian Way to keep guard over it. And when Mundilas and his men, returning to Rome, announced that Procopius had already arrived in Campania without meeting any of the barbarians,—for at night, they said, the enemy never went outside their camp,—everybody became hopeful, and Belisarius, now emboldened, devised the following plan. He sent out many of his horsemen to the neighbouring strongholds, directing them, in case any of the enemy should come that way in order to bring provisions into their camps, that they should constantly make sallies upon them from their positions and lay ambushes everywhere about this region, and thus keep them from succeeding; on the contrary, they should with all their might hedge them in, so that the city might be in less distress than formerly through lack of provisions, and also that the barbarians might seem to be besieged rather than to be themselves besieging the Romans. So he commanded Martinus and Trajan with a thousand men to go to Taracina. And with them he sent also his wife Antonina, commanding that she be sent with a few men to Naples, there to await in safety the fortune which would befall the Romans. And he sent Magnus and Sinthues the guardsman, who took with them about five hundred men, to the fortress of Tibur, one hundred and forty stades distant from Rome. But to the town of Albani, which was situated on the Appian Way at the same distance from the city, he had



already, as it happened, sent Gontharis with a number of Eruli, and these the Goths had driven out from there by force not long afterward.

Now there is a certain church of the Apostle Paul, fourteen stades distant from the fortifications of Rome, and the Tiber River flows beside it. In that place there is no fortification, but a colonnade extends all the way from the city to the church, and many other buildings which are round about it render the place not easy of access. But the Goths shew a certain degree of actual respect for sanctuaries such as this. And indeed during the whole time of the war no harm came to either church of the two Apostles at their hands, but all the rites were performed in them by the priests in the usual manner. At this spot, then, Belisarius commanded Valerian to take all the Huns and make a stockade by the bank of the Tiber, in order that their horses might be kept in greater security and that the Goths might be still further checked from going at their pleasure to great distances from their camps. And Valerian acted accordingly. Then, after the Huns had made their camp in the place where the general directed, he rode back to the city.

So Belisarius, having accomplished this, remained quiet, not offering battle, but eager to carry on the defence from the wall, if anyone should advance against it from outside with evil intent. And he also furnished grain to some of the Roman populace. But Martinus and Trajan passed by night between the camps of the enemy, and after reaching Taracina sent Antonina with a few men into Campania; and they themselves took possession of the fortified places in that district, and using them as their bases of operations and making thence their sudden attacks, they checked such of the Goths as were moving about in that region. As for Magnus and Sinthues, in a short time they rebuilt such parts of the fortress as had fallen into ruin, and as soon as they had put themselves in safety, they began immediately to make more trouble for the enemy, whose fortress was not far away, not only by making frequent raids upon them, but also by keeping such of the barbarians as were escorting provision-trains in a constant state of terror by the unexpectedness of their movements; but finally Sinthues was wounded in his right hand by a spear in a certain battle, and since the sinews were severed, he became thereafter unfit for fighting. And the Huns likewise, after they had made their camp near by, as I have said, were on their part causing the Goths no less trouble, so that these as well as the Romans were now feeling the pressure of famine, since they no longer had freedom to bring in their food-supplies as formerly. And pestilence too fell upon them and was destroying many, and especially in the camp which they had last made, close by the Appian Way, as I have previously stated. And the few of their number who had not perished withdrew from that camp to the other camps. The Huns also [325]suffered in the same way, and so returned to Rome. Such was the course of events here. But as for Procopius, when he reached Campania, he collected not fewer than five hundred soldiers there, loaded a great number of ships with grain, and held them in readiness. And he was joined not long afterwards by Antonina, who immediately assisted him in making arrangements for the fleet.

At that time the mountain of Vesuvius rumbled, and though it did not break forth in eruption, still because of the rumbling it led people to expect with great certainty that there would be an eruption. And for this reason it came to pass that the inhabitants fell into great terror. Now this mountain is seventy stades distant from Naples and lies to the north of it—an exceedingly steep mountain, whose lower parts spread out wide on all sides, while its upper portion is precipitous and exceedingly difficult of ascent. But on the summit of Vesuvius and at about the centre of it appears a cavern of such depth that one would judge that it extends all the way to the bottom of the mountain. And it is possible to see fire there, if one should dare to peer over the edge, and although the flames as a rule merely twist and turn upon one another, occasioning no trouble to the inhabitants of that region, yet, when

the mountain gives forth a rumbling sound which resembles bellowing, it generally sends up not long afterward a great quantity of ashes. And if anyone travelling on the road is caught by this terrible shower, he cannot possibly survive, and if it falls upon houses, they too fall under the weight of the great quantity of ashes. But whenever it so happens that a strong wind comes on, the ashes rise to a great height, so that they are no longer visible to the eye, and are borne wherever the wind which drives them goes, falling on lands exceedingly far away. And once, they say, they fell in Byzantium and so terrified the people there, that from that time up to the present the whole city has seen fit to propitiate God with prayers every year; and at another time they fell on Tripolis in Libya. Formerly this rumbling took place, they say, once in a hundred years or even more, but in later times it has happened much more frequently. This, however, they declare emphatically, that whenever Vesuvius belches forth these ashes, the country round about is bound to flourish with an abundance of all crops. Furthermore, the air on this mountain is very light and by its nature the most favourable to health in the world. And indeed those who are attacked by consumption have been sent to this place by physicians from remote times. So much, then, may be said regarding Vesuvius.

## V

At this time another army also arrived by sea from Byzantium, three thousand Isaurians who put in at the harbour of Naples, led by Paulus and Conon, and eight hundred Thracian horsemen who landed at Dyrus led by John, the nephew of the Vitalian who had formerly been tyrant, and with them a thousand other soldiers of the regular cavalry, under various commanders, among whom were Alexander and Marcentius. And it happened that Zeno with three hundred horsemen had already reached Rome by way of Samnium and the Latin Way. And when John with all the others came to Campania, provided with many waggons by the inhabitants of Calabria, his troops were joined by five hundred men who, as I have said, had been collected in Campania. These set out by the coast road with the waggons, having in mind, if any hostile force should confront them, to make a circle of the waggons in the form of a stockade and thus to ward off the enemy; and they commanded the men under Paulus and Conon to sail with all speed and join them at Ostia, the harbour of Rome; and they put sufficient grain in the waggons and loaded all the ships, not only with grain, but also with wine and all kinds of provisions. And they, indeed, expected to find the forces of Martinus and Trajan in the neighbourhood of Taracina and to have their company from that point on, but when they approached Taracina, they learned that these forces had recently been recalled and had retired to Rome.

But Belisarius, learning that the forces of John were approaching and fearing that the enemy might confront them in greatly superior numbers and destroy them, took the following measures. It so happened that the enemy had encamped very close to the Flaminian Gate; this gate Belisarius himself had blocked up at the beginning of this war by a structure of stone, as has been told by me in the previous narrative, his purpose of course being to make it difficult for the enemy either to force their way in or to make any attempt upon the city at that point. Consequently no engagement had taken place at this gate, and the barbarians had no suspicion that there would be any attack upon them from there. Now Belisarius tore down by night the masonry which blocked this gate, without giving notice to anyone at all, and made ready the greatest part of the army there. And at daybreak he sent Trajan and Diogenes with a thousand horsemen through the Pincian Gate, commanding them to shoot missiles into the camps, and as soon as their opponents came against them, to flee without the least shame and to ride up to the fortifications at full speed. And he also stationed some men inside this gate. So the men under Trajan began to harass the

barbarians, as Belisarius had directed them to do, and the Goths, gathering from all the camps, began to defend themselves. And both armies began to move as fast as they could toward the fortifications of the city, the one giving the appearance of fleeing, and the other supposing that they were pursuing the enemy.

But as soon as Belisarius saw the enemy take up the pursuit, he opened the Flaminian Gate and sent his army out against the barbarians, who were thus taken unawares. Now it so happened that one of the Gothic camps was on the road near this gate, and in front of it there was a narrow passage between steep banks which was exceedingly difficult of access. And one of the barbarians, a man of splendid physique and clad in a corselet, when he saw the enemy advancing, reached this place before them and took his stand there, at the same time calling his comrades and urging them to help in guarding the narrow passage. But before any move could be made Mundilas slew him and thereafter allowed none of the barbarians to go into this passage. The Romans therefore passed through it without encountering opposition, and some of them, arriving at the Gothic camp near by, for a short time tried to take it, but were unable to do so because of the strength of the stockade, although not many barbarians had been left behind in it. For the trench had been dug to an extraordinary depth, and since the earth taken from it had invariably been placed along its inner side, this reached a great height and so served as a wall; and it was abundantly supplied with stakes, which were very sharp and close together, thus making a palisade. These defences so emboldened the barbarians that they began to repel the enemy vigorously. But one of the guards of Belisarius, Aquilinus by name, an exceedingly active man, seized a horse by the bridle and, bestriding it, leaped from the trench into the middle of the camp, where he slew some of the enemy. And when his opponents gathered about him and hurled great numbers of missiles, the horse was wounded and fell, but he himself unexpectedly made his escape through the midst of the enemy. So he went on foot with his companions toward the Pincian Gate. And overtaking the barbarians, who were still engaged in pursuing Roman horsemen, they began to shoot at them from behind and killed some of them.

Now when Trajan and his men perceived this, since they had meanwhile been reinforced by the horsemen who had been standing near by in readiness, they charged at full speed against their pursuers. Then at length the Goths, being now outgeneraled and unexpectedly caught between the forces of their enemy, began to be killed indiscriminately. And there was great slaughter of them, and very few escaped to their camps, and that with difficulty; meanwhile the others, fearing for the safety of all their strongholds, shut themselves in and remained in them thereafter, thinking that the Romans would come against them without the least delay. In this action one of the barbarians shot Trajan in the face, above the right eye and not far from the nose. And the whole of the iron point, penetrated the head and disappeared entirely, although the barb on it was large and exceedingly long, but the remainder of the arrow immediately fell to the ground without the application of force by anyone, in my opinion because the iron point had never been securely fastened to the shaft. Trajan, however, paid no heed to this at all, but continued none the less killing and pursuing the enemy. But in the fifth year afterward the tip of the iron of its own accord began to project visibly from his face. And this is now the third year since it has been slowly but steadily coming out. It is to be expected, therefore, that the whole barb will eventually come out, though not for a long time. But it has not been an impediment to the man in any way. So much then for these matters.

## VI

Now the barbarians straightway began to despair of winning the war and were considering how they might withdraw from Rome, inasmuch as they had suffered the ravages both of the pestilence and of the enemy, and were now reduced from many tens of thousands to a few men; and, not least of all, they were in a state of distress by reason of the famine, and while in name they were carrying on a siege, they were in fact being besieged by their opponents and were shut off from all necessities. And when they learned that still another army had come to their enemy from Byzantium both by land and by sea—not being informed as to its actual size, but supposing it to be as large as the free play of rumour was able to make it,—they became terrified at the danger and began to plan for their departure. They accordingly sent three envoys to Rome, one of whom was a Roman of note among the Goths, and he, coming before Belisarius, spoke as follows:

"That the war has not turned out to the advantage of either side each of us knows well, since we both have had actual experience of its hardships. For why should anyone in either army deny facts of which neither now remains in ignorance. And no one, I think, could deny, at least no one who does not lack understanding, that it is only senseless men who choose to go on suffering indefinitely merely to satisfy the contentious spirit which moves them for the moment, and refuse to find a solution of the troubles which harass them. And whenever this situation arises, it is the duty of the commanders on both sides not to sacrifice the lives of their subjects to their own glory, but to choose the course which is just and expedient, not for themselves alone, but also for their opponents, and thus to put an end to present hardships. For moderation in one's demands affords a way out of all difficulties, but it is the very nature of contentiousness that it cannot accomplish any of the objects which are essential. Now we, on our part, have deliberated concerning the conclusion of this war and have come before you with proposals which are of advantage to both sides, wherein we waive, as we think, some portion even of our rights. And see to it that you likewise in your deliberations do not yield to a spirit of contentiousness respecting us and thus destroy yourselves as well as us, in preference to choosing the course which will be of advantage to yourselves. And it is fitting that both sides should state their case, not in continuous speech, but each interrupting the other on the spur of the moment, if anything that is said shall seem inappropriate. For in this way each side will be able to say briefly whatever it is minded to say, and at the same time the essential things will be accomplished." Belisarius replied: "There will be nothing to prevent the debate from proceeding in the manner you suggest, only let the words spoken by you be words of peace and of justice."

So the ambassadors of the Goths in their turn said: "You have done us an injustice, O Romans, in taking up arms wrongfully against us, your friends and allies. And what we shall say is, we think, well known to each one of you as well as to ourselves. For the Goths did not obtain the land of Italy by wresting it from the Romans by force, but Odoacer in former times dethroned the emperor, changed the government of Italy to a tyranny, and so held it. And Zeno, who then held the power of the East, though he wished to avenge his partner in the imperial office and to free this land from the usurper, was unable to destroy the authority of Odoacer. Accordingly he persuaded Theoderic, our ruler, although he was on the point of besieging him and Byzantium, not only to put an end to his hostility towards himself, in recollection of the honour which Theoderic had already received at his hands in having been made a patrician and consul of the Romans, but also to punish Odoacer for his unjust treatment of Augustulus, and thereafter, in company with the Goths, to hold sway over the land as its legitimate and rightful rulers. It was in this way, therefore, that we took over the dominion of Italy, and we have preserved both the laws and the form of

government as strictly as any who have ever been Roman emperors, and there is absolutely no law, either written or unwritten, introduced by Theoderic or by any of his successors on the throne of the Goths. And we have so scrupulously guarded for the Romans their practices pertaining to the worship of God and faith in Him, that not one of the Italians has changed his belief, either willingly or unwillingly, up to the present day, and when Goths have changed, we have taken no notice of the matter. And indeed the sanctuaries of the Romans have received from us the highest honour; for no one who has taken refuge in any of them has ever been treated with violence by any man; nay, more, the Romans themselves have continued to hold all the offices of the state, and not a single Goth has had a share in them. Let someone come forward and refute us, if he thinks that this statement of ours is not true. And one might add that the Goths have conceded that the dignity of the consulship should be conferred upon Romans each year by the emperor of the East. Such has been the course followed by us; but you, on your side, did not take the part of Italy while it was suffering at the hands of the barbarians and Odoacer, although it was not for a short time, but for ten years, that he treated the land outrageously; but now you do violence to us who have acquired it legitimately, though you have no business here. Do you therefore depart hence out of our way, keeping both that which is your own and whatever you have gained by plunder."

And Belisarius said: "Although your promise gave us to understand that your words would be brief and temperate, yet your discourse has been both long and not far from fraudulent in its pretensions. For Theoderic was sent by the Emperor Zeno in order to make war on Odoacer, not in order to hold the dominion of Italy for himself. For why should the emperor have been concerned to exchange one tyrant for another? But he sent him in order that Italy might be free and obedient to the emperor. And though Theoderic disposed of the tyrant in a satisfactory manner, in everything else he shewed an extraordinary lack of proper feeling; for he never thought of restoring the land to its rightful owner. But I, for my part, think that he who robs another by violence and he who of his own will does not restore his neighbour's goods are equal. Now, as for me, I shall never surrender the emperor's country to any other. But if there is anything you wish to receive in place of it, I give you leave to speak."

And the barbarians said: "That everything which we have said is true no one of you can be unaware. But in order that we may not seem to be contentious, we give up to you Sicily, great as it is and of such wealth, seeing that without it you cannot possess Libya in security."

And Belisarius replied: "And we on our side permit the Goths to have the whole of Britain, which is much larger than Sicily and was subject to the Romans in early times. For it is only fair to make an equal return to those who first do a good deed or perform a kindness."

The barbarians: "Well, then, if we should make you a proposal concerning Campania also, or about Naples itself, will you listen to it?"

Belisarius: "No, for we are not empowered to administer the emperor's affairs in a way which is not in accord with his wish."

The barbarians: "Not even if we impose upon ourselves the payment of a fixed sum of money every year?"

Belisarius: "No, indeed. For we are not empowered to do anything else than guard the land for its owner."



The barbarians: "Come now, we must send envoys to the emperor and make with him our treaty concerning the whole matter. And a definite time must also be appointed during which the armies will be bound to observe an armistice."

Belisarius: "Very well; let this be done. For never shall I stand in your way when you are making plans for peace."

After saying these things they each left the conference, and the envoys of the Goths withdrew to their own camp. And during the ensuing days they visited each other frequently and made the arrangements for the armistice, and they agreed that each side should put into the hands of the other some of its notable men as hostages to ensure the keeping of the armistice.

## VII

But while these negotiations were in progress at Rome, meanwhile the fleet of the Isaurians put in at the harbour of the Romans and John with his men came to Ostia, and not one of the enemy hindered them either while bringing their ships to land or while making their camp. But in order that they might be able to pass the night safe from a sudden attack by the enemy, the Isaurians dug a deep trench close to the harbour and kept a constant guard by shifts of men, while John's soldiers made a barricade of their waggons about the camp and remained quiet. And when night came on Belisarius went to Ostia with a hundred horsemen, and after telling what had taken place in the engagement and the agreement which had been made between the Romans and the Goths and otherwise encouraging them, he bade them bring their cargoes and come with all zeal to Rome. "For," he said, "I shall take care that the journey is free from danger." So he himself at early dawn rode back to the city, and Antonina together with the commanders began at daybreak to consider means of transporting the cargoes. But it seemed to them that the task was a hard one and beset with the greatest difficulties. For the oxen could hold out no longer, but all lay half-dead, and, furthermore, it was dangerous to travel over a rather narrow road with the waggons, and impossible to tow the barges on the river, as had formerly been the custom. For the road which is on the left of the river was held by the enemy, as stated by me in the previous narrative, and not available for the use of the Romans at that time, while the road on the other side of it is altogether unused, at least that part of it which follows the river-bank. They therefore selected the small boats belonging to the larger ships, put a fence of high planks around them on all sides, in order that the men on board might not be exposed to the enemy's shots, and embarked archers and sailors on them in numbers suitable for each boat. And after they had loaded the boats with all the freight they could carry, they waited for a favouring wind and set sail toward Rome by the Tiber, and a portion of the army followed them along the right bank of the river to support them. But they left a large number of Isaurians to guard the ships. Now where the course of the river was straight, they found no trouble in sailing, simply raising the sails of the boats; but where the stream wound about and took a course athwart the wind, and the sails received no impulse from it, the sailors had no slight toil in rowing and forcing the boats against the current. As for the barbarians, they sat in their camps and had no wish to hinder their enemy, either because they were terrified at the danger, or because they thought that the Romans would never by such means succeed in bringing in any provisions, and considered it contrary to their own interest, when a matter of no consequence was involved, to frustrate their hope of the armistice which Belisarius had already promised. Moreover, the Goths who were in Portus, though they could see their enemy constantly sailing by almost near enough to touch, made no move against them, but sat there wondering in amazement at the plan they had hit upon.

And when the Romans had made the voyage up the river many times in the same way, and had thus conveyed all the cargoes into the city without interference, the sailors took the ships and withdrew with all speed, for it was already about the time of the winter solstice; and the rest of the army entered Rome, except, indeed, that Paulus remained in Ostia with some of the Isaurians.

And afterwards they gave hostages to one another to secure the keeping of the armistice, the Romans giving Zeno, and the Goths Ulias, a man of no mean station, with the understanding that during three months they should make no attack upon one another, until the envoys should return from Byzantium and report the will of the emperor. And even if the one side or the other should initiate offences against their opponents, the envoys were nevertheless to be returned to their own nation. So the envoys of the barbarians went to Byzantium escorted by Romans, and Ildiger, the son-in-law of Antonina, came to Rome from Libya with not a few horsemen. And the Goths who were holding the stronghold at Portus abandoned the place by the order of Vittigis because their supplies were exhausted, and came to the camp in obedience to his summons. Whereupon Paulus with his Isaurians came from Ostia and took possession of it and held it. Now the chief reason why these barbarians were without provisions was that the Romans commanded the sea and did not allow any of the necessary supplies to be brought in to them. And it was for this reason that they also abandoned at about the same time a sea-coast city of great importance, Centumcellae by name, that is, because they were short of provisions. This city is large and populous, lying to the west of Rome, in Tuscany, distant from it about two hundred and eighty stades. And after taking possession of it the Romans went on and extended their power still more, for they took also the town of Albani, which lies to the east of Rome, the enemy having evacuated it at that time for the same reason, and they had already surrounded the barbarians on all sides and now held them between their forces. The Goths, therefore, were in a mood to break the agreement and do some harm to the Romans. So they sent envoys to Belisarius and asserted that they had been unjustly treated during a truce; for when Vittigis had summoned the Goths who were in Portus to perform some service for him, Paulus and the Isaurians had seized and taken possession of the fort there for no good reason. And they made this same false charge regarding Albani and Centumcellae, and threatened that, unless he should give these places back to them, they would resent it. But Belisarius laughed and sent them away, saying that this charge was but a pretext, and that no one was ignorant of the reason why the Goths had abandoned these places. And thereafter the two sides were somewhat suspicious of one another.

But later, when Belisarius saw that Rome was abundantly supplied with soldiers, he sent many horsemen to places far distant from Rome, and commanded John, the nephew of Vitalian, and the horsemen under his command, eight hundred in number, to pass the winter near the city of Alba, which lies in Picenum; and with him he sent four hundred of the men of Valerian, whom Damianus, the nephew of Valerian, commanded, and eight hundred men of his own guards who were especially able warriors. And in command of these he put two spearmen, Suntas and Adegis, and ordered them to follow John wherever he should lead; and he gave John instructions that as long as he saw the enemy was keeping the agreement made between them, he should remain quiet; but whenever he found that the armistice had been violated by them, he should do as follows: With his whole force he was to make a sudden raid and overrun the land of Picenum, visiting all the districts of that region and reaching each one before the report of his coming. For in this whole land there was virtually not a single man left, since all, as it appeared, had marched against Rome, but everywhere there were women and children of the enemy and money. He was instructed, therefore, to enslave or plunder whatever he found, taking care never to injure any of the Romans living there. And if he should happen upon any place which had men and defences,

as he probably would, he was to make an attempt upon it with his whole force. And if he was able to capture it, he was to go forward, but if it should so happen that his attempt was unsuccessful, he was to march back or remain there. For if he should go forward and leave such a fortress in his rear, he would be involved in the greatest danger, since his men would never be able to defend themselves easily, if they should be harassed by their opponents. He was also to keep the whole booty intact, in order that it might be divided fairly and properly among the army. Then with a laugh he added this also: "For it is not fair that the drones should be destroyed with great labour by one force, while others, without having endured any hardship at all, enjoy the honey." So after giving these instructions, Belisarius sent John with his army.

And at about the same time Datius, the priest of Milan, and some notable men among the citizens came to Rome and begged Belisarius to send them a few guards. For they declared that they were themselves able without any trouble to detach from the Goths not only Milan, but the whole of Liguria also, and to recover them for the emperor. Now this city is situated in Liguria, and lies about half way between the city of Ravenna and the Alps on the borders of Gaul; for from either one it is a journey of eight days to Milan for an unencumbered traveller; and it is the first of the cities of the West, after Rome at least, both in size and in population and in general prosperity. And Belisarius promised to fulfil their request, but detained them there during the winter season.

## VIII

Such was the course of these events. But the envy of fortune was already swelling against the Romans, when she saw their affairs progressing successfully and well, and wishing to mingle some evil with this good, she inspired a quarrel, on a trifling pretext, between Belisarius and Constantinus; and how this grew and to what end it came I shall now go on to relate. There was a certain Presidius, a Roman living at Ravenna, and a man of no mean station. This Presidius had given offence to the Goths at the time when Vittigis was about to march against Rome, and so he set out with some few of his domestics ostensibly on a hunting expedition, and went into exile; he had communicated his plan to no one and took none of his property with him, except indeed that he himself carried two daggers, the scabbards of which happened to be adorned with much gold and precious stones. And when he came to Spolitium, he lodged in a certain temple outside the fortifications. And when Constantinus, who happened to be still tarrying there, heard of this, he sent one of his guards, Maxentiolus, and took away from him both the daggers for no good reason. The man was deeply offended by what had taken place, and set out for Rome with all speed and came to Belisarius, and Constantinus also arrived there not long afterward; for the Gothic army was already reported to be not far away. Now as long as the affairs of the Romans were critical and in confusion, Presidius remained silent; but when he saw that the Romans were gaining the upper hand and that the envoys of the Goths had been sent to the emperor, as has been told by me above, he frequently approached Belisarius reporting the injustice and demanding that he assist him in obtaining his rights. And Belisarius reproached Constantinus many times himself, and many times through others, urging him to clear himself of the guilt of an unjust deed and of a dishonouring report. But Constantinus—for it must needs be that evil befall him—always lightly evaded the charge and taunted the wronged man. But on one occasion Presidius met Belisarius riding on horseback in the forum, and he laid hold of the horse's bridle, and crying out with a loud voice asked whether the laws of the emperor said that, whenever anyone fleeing from the barbarians comes to them as a suppliant, they should rob him by violence of whatever he may chance to have in his hands. And though many men gathered about and commanded him with threats to let

go his hold of the bridle, he did not let go until at last Belisarius promised to give him the daggers. On the following day, therefore, Belisarius called Constantinus and many of the commanders to an apartment in the palace, and after going over what had happened on the previous day urged him even at that late time to restore the daggers. But Constantinus refused to do so; nay, he would more gladly throw them into the waters of the Tiber than give them to Presidius. And Belisarius, being by now mastered by anger, enquired whether Constantinus did not think that he was subject to his orders. And he agreed to obey him in all other things, for this was the emperor's will; this command, however, which at the present time he was laying upon him, he would never obey. Belisarius then commanded his guards to enter, whereupon Constantinus said: "In order, plainly, to have them kill me." "By no means," said Belisarius, "but to have them compel your bodyguard Maxentiolus, who forcibly carried away the daggers for you, to restore to the man what he took from him by violence." But Constantinus, thinking that he was to die that very instant, wished to do some great deed before he should suffer anything himself. He accordingly drew the dagger which hung by his thigh and suddenly thrust it at the belly of Belisarius. And he in consternation stepped back, and by throwing his arms around Bessas, who was standing near, succeeded in escaping the blow. Then Constantinus, still boiling with anger, made after him; but Ildiger and Valerian, seeing what was being done, laid hold of his hands, one of the right and the other of the left, and dragged him back. And at this point the guards entered whom Belisarius had summoned a moment before, snatched the dagger of Constantinus from his hand with great violence, and seized him amid a great uproar. At the moment they did him no harm, out of respect, I suppose, to the officers present, but led him away to another room at the command of Belisarius, and at a somewhat later time put him to death. This was the only unholy deed done by Belisarius, and it was in no way worthy of the character of the man; for he always shewed great gentleness in his treatment of all others. But it had to be, as I have said, that evil should befall Constantinus.

## IX

And the Goths not long after this wished to strike a blow at the fortifications of Rome. And first they sent some men by night into one of the aqueducts, from which they themselves had taken out the water at the beginning of this war. And with lamps and torches in their hands they explored the entrance into the city by this way. Now it happened that not far from the small Pincian Gate an arch of this aqueduct had a sort of crevice in it, and one of the guards saw the light through this and told his companions; but they said that he had seen a wolf passing by his post. For at that point it so happened that the structure of the aqueduct did not rise high above the ground, and they thought that the guard had imagined the wolf's eyes to be fire. So those barbarians who explored the aqueduct, upon reaching the middle of the city, where there was an upward passage built in olden times leading to the palace itself, came upon some masonry there which allowed them neither to advance beyond that point nor to use the ascent at all. This masonry had been put in by Belisarius as an act of precaution at the beginning of this siege, as has been set forth by me in the preceding narrative. So they decided first to remove one small stone from the wall and then to go back immediately, and when they returned to Vittigis, they displayed the stone and reported the whole situation. And while he was considering his scheme with the best of the Goths, the Romans who were on guard at the Pincian Gate recalled among themselves on the following day the suspicion of the wolf. But when the story was passed around and came to Belisarius, the general did not treat the matter carelessly, but immediately sent some of the notable men in the army, together with the guardsman Diogenes, down into the aqueduct and bade them investigate everything with all speed. And

they found all along the aqueduct the lamps of the enemy and the ashes which had dropped from their torches, and after observing the masonry where the stone had been taken out by the Goths, they reported to Belisarius. For this reason he personally kept the aqueduct under close guard; and the Goths, perceiving it, desisted from this attempt.

But later on the barbarians went so far as to plan an open attack against the fortifications. So they waited for the time of lunch, and bringing up ladders and fire, when their enemy were least expecting them, made an assault upon the small Pincian Gate, emboldened by the hope of capturing the city by a sudden attack, since not many soldiers had been left there. But it happened that Ildiger and his men were keeping guard at that time; for all were assigned by turns to guard-duty. So when he saw the enemy advancing in disorder, he went out against them before they were yet drawn up in line of battle and while they were advancing in great disarray, and routing those who were opposite him without any trouble he slew many. And a great outcry and commotion arose throughout the city, as was to be expected, and the Romans gathered as quickly as possible to all parts of the fortifications; whereupon the barbarians after a short time retired to their camp baffled.

But Vittigis resorted again to a plot against the wall. Now there was a certain part of it that was especially vulnerable, where the bank of the Tiber is, because at this place the Romans of old, confident in the protection afforded by the stream, had built the wall carelessly, making it low and altogether without towers; Vittigis therefore hoped to capture the city rather easily from that quarter. For indeed there was not even any garrison there of any consequence, as it happened. He therefore bribed with money two Romans who lived near the church of Peter the Apostle to pass along by the guards there at about nightfall carrying a skin full of wine, and in some way or other, by making a show of friendship, to give it to them, and then to sit drinking with them well on into the night; and they were to throw into the cup of each guard a sleep-producing drug which Vittigis had given them. And he stealthily got ready some skiffs, which he kept at the other bank; as soon as the guards should be overcome by sleep, some of the barbarians, acting in concert, were to cross the river in these, taking ladders with them, and make the assault on the wall. And he made ready the entire army with the intention of capturing the whole city by storm. After these arrangements were all complete, one of the two men who had been prepared by Vittigis for this service (for it was not fated that Rome should be captured by this army of the Goths) came of his own accord to Belisarius and revealed everything, and told who the other man was. So this man under torture brought to light all that he was about to do and displayed the drug which Vittigis had given him. And Belisarius first mutilated his nose and ears and then sent him riding on an ass into the enemy's camp. And when the barbarians saw him, they realised that God would not allow their purposes to have free course, and that therefore the city could never be captured by them.

## X

But while these things were happening, Belisarius wrote to John and commanded him to begin operations. And he with his two thousand horsemen began to go about the land of Picenum and to plunder everything before him, treating the women and children of the enemy as slaves. And when Ulitheus, the uncle of Vittigis, confronted him with an army of Goths, he defeated them in battle and killed Ulitheus himself and almost the whole army of the enemy. For this reason no one dared any longer to engage with him. But when he came to the city of Auximus, though he learned that it contained a Gothic garrison of inconsiderable size, yet in other respects he observed that the place was strong and impossible to capture. And for this reason he was quite unwilling to lay siege to it, but



departing from there as quickly as he could, he moved forward. And he did this same thing at the city of Urbinus, but at Ariminum, which is one day's journey distant from Ravenna, he marched into the city at the invitation of the Romans. Now all the barbarians who were keeping guard there were very suspicious of the Roman inhabitants, and as soon as they learned that this army was approaching, they withdrew and ran until they reached Ravenna. And thus John secured Ariminum; but he had meanwhile left in his rear a garrison of the enemy both at Auximus and at Urbinus, not because he had forgotten the commands of Belisarius, nor because he was carried away by unreasoning boldness, since he had wisdom as well as energy, but because he reasoned—correctly, as it turned out—that if the Goths learned that the Roman army was close to Ravenna, they would instantly break up the siege of Rome because of their fears regarding this place. And in fact his reasoning proved to be true. For as soon as Vittigis and the army of the Goths heard that Ariminum was held by him, they were plunged into great fear regarding Ravenna, and abandoning all other considerations, they straightway made their withdrawal, as will be told by me directly. And John won great fame from this deed, though he was renowned even before. For he was a daring and efficient man in the highest degree, unflinching before danger, and in his daily life shewing at all times a certain austerity and ability to endure hardship unsurpassed by any barbarian or common soldier. Such a man was John. And Matasuntha, the wife of Vittigis, who was exceedingly hostile to her husband because he had taken her to wife by violence in the beginning, upon learning that John had come to Ariminum was absolutely overcome by joy, and sending a messenger to him opened secret negotiations with him concerning marriage and the betrayal of the city.

So these two kept sending messengers to each other without the knowledge of the rest and arranging these matters. But when the Goths learned what had happened at Ariminum, and when at the same time all their provisions had failed them, and the three months' time had already expired, they began to make their withdrawal, although they had not as yet received any information as far as the envoys were concerned. Now it was about the spring equinox, and one year had been spent in the siege and nine days in addition, when the Goths, having burned all their camps, set out at daybreak. And the Romans, seeing their opponents in flight, were at a loss how to deal with the situation. For it so happened that the majority of the horsemen were not present at that time, since they had been sent to various places, as has been stated by me above, and they did not think that by themselves they were a match for so great a multitude of the enemy. However, Belisarius armed all the infantry and cavalry. And when he saw that more than half of the enemy had crossed the bridge, he led the army out through the small Pincian Gate, and the hand-to-hand battle which ensued proved to be equal to any that had preceded it. At the beginning the barbarians withstood their enemy vigorously, and many on both sides fell in the first encounter; but afterwards the Goths turned to flight and brought upon themselves a great and overwhelming calamity; for each man for himself was rushing to cross the bridge first. As a result of this they became very much crowded and suffered most cruelly, for they were being killed both by each other and by the enemy. Many, too, fell off the bridge on either side into the Tiber, sank with all their arms, and perished. Finally, after losing in this way the most of their number, the remainder joined those who had crossed before. And Longinus the Isaurian and Mundilas, the guards of Belisarius, made themselves conspicuous for their valour in this battle. But while Mundilas, after engaging with four barbarians in turn and killing them all, was himself saved, Longinus, having proved himself the chief cause of the rout of the enemy, fell where he fought, leaving the Roman army great regret for his loss.

## XI

Now Vittigis with the remainder of his army marched toward Ravenna; and he strengthened the fortified places with a great number of guards, leaving in Clusium, the city of Tuscany, one thousand men and Gibimer as commander, and in Urviventus an equal number, over whom he set Albilas, a Goth, as commander. And he left Uligisalus in Tudera with four hundred men. And in the land of Picenum he left in the fortress of Petra four hundred men who had lived there previously, and in Auximus, which is the largest of all the cities of that country, he left four thousand Goths selected for their valour and a very energetic commander, Visandus by name, and two thousand men with Moras in the city of Urbinus. There are also two other fortresses, Caesena and Montefereetra, in each of which he established a garrison of not less than five hundred men. Then he himself with the rest of the army moved straight for Ariminum with the purpose of laying siege to it.

But it happened that Belisarius, as soon as the Goths had broken up the siege of Rome, had sent Ildiger and Martinus with a thousand horsemen, in order that by travelling more quickly by another road they might arrive at Ariminum first, and he directed them promptly to remove John from the city and all those with him, and to put in their place fully enough men to guard the city, taking them from the fortress which is on the Ionian Gulf, Ancon by name, two days' journey distant from Ariminum. For he had already taken possession of it not long before, having sent Conon with no small force of Isaurians and Thracians. It was his hope that if unsupported infantry under commanders of no great note should hold Ariminum, the Gothic forces would never undertake its siege, but would regard it with contempt and so go at once to Ravenna, and that if they should decide to besiege Ariminum, the provisions there would suffice for the infantry for a somewhat longer time; and he thought also that two thousand horsemen, attacking from outside with the rest of the army, would in all probability do the enemy great harm and drive them more easily to abandon the siege. It was with this purpose that Belisarius gave such orders to Martinus and Ildiger and their men. And they, by travelling over the Flaminian Way, arrived long before the barbarians. For since the Goths were moving in a great throng, they proceeded in a more leisurely manner, and they were compelled to make certain long detours, both because of the lack of provisions, and because they preferred not to pass close to the fortresses on the Flaminian Way, Narnia and Spolitium and Perugia, since these were in the hands of the enemy, as has been stated above.

When the Roman army arrived at Petra, they made an attack upon the fortress there, regarding it as an incident of their expedition. Now this fortress was not devised by man, but it was made by the nature of the place; for the road passes through an extremely mountainous country at that place. On the right of this road a river descends which no man can ford because of the swiftness of the current, and on the left not far away rises a sheer rock which reaches to such a height that men who might chance to be standing on its summit, as seen by those below, resemble in size the smallest birds. And in olden times there was no passage through as one went forward. For the end of the rock reaches to the very stream of the river, affording no room for those who travel that way to pass by. So the men of ancient times constructed a tunnel at that point, and made there a gate for the place. And they also closed up the greatest part of the other entrance, leaving only enough space for a small gate there also, and thus rendered the place a natural fortress, which they call by the fitting name of Petra. So the men of Martinus and Ildiger first made an attack upon one of the two gates, and shot many missiles, but they accomplished nothing, although the barbarians there made no defence at all; but afterwards they forced their way up the cliff behind the fortress and hurled stones from there upon the heads of the Goths. And they, hurriedly and in great confusion, entered their houses and remained quiet. And then the

Romans, unable to hit any of the enemy with the stones they threw, devised the following plan. They broke off large pieces from the cliff and, many of them pushing together, hurled them down, aiming at the houses. And wherever these in their fall did no more than just graze the building, they yet gave the whole fortress a considerable shock and reduced the barbarians to great fear. Consequently the Goths stretched out their hands to those who were still about the gate and surrendered themselves and the fort, with the condition that they themselves should remain free from harm, being slaves of the emperor and subject to Belisarius. And Ildiger and Martinus removed the most of them and led them away, putting them on a basis of complete equality with themselves, but some few they left there, together with their wives and children. And they also left something of a garrison of Romans. Thence they proceeded to Ancon, and taking with them many of the infantry in that place on the third day reached Ariminum, and announced the will of Belisarius. But John was not only unwilling himself to follow them, but also proposed to retain Damianus with the four hundred. So they left there the infantry and retired thence with all speed, taking the spearmen and guards of Belisarius.

## XII

And not long afterward Vittigis and his whole army arrived at Ariminum, where they established their camp and began the siege. And they immediately constructed a wooden tower higher than the circuit-wall of the city and resting on four wheels, and drew it toward that part of the wall which seemed to them most vulnerable. But in order that they might not have the same experience here which they had before the fortifications of Rome, they did not use oxen to draw the tower, but hid themselves within it and thus hauled it forward. And there was a stairway of great breadth inside the tower on which the barbarians in great numbers were to make the ascent easily, for they hoped that as soon as they should place the tower against the fortifications, they would have no trouble in stepping thence to the parapet of the wall; for they had made the tower high with this in view. So when they had come close to the fortifications with this engine of war, they remained quiet for the time, since it was already growing dark, and stationing guards about the tower they all went off to pass the night, supposing that they would meet with no obstacle whatever. And indeed there was nothing in their way, not even a trench between them and the wall, except an exceedingly small one.

As for the Romans, they passed the night in great fear, supposing that on the morrow they would perish. But John, neither yielding to despair in face of the danger nor being greatly agitated by fear, devised the following plan. Leaving the others on guard at their posts, he himself took the Isaurians, who carried pickaxes and various other tools of this kind, and went outside the fortifications; it was late in the night and no word had been given beforehand to anyone in the city; and once outside the wall, he commanded his men in silence to dig the trench deeper. So they did as directed, and as they dug they kept putting the earth which they took out of the trench upon the side of it nearer the city-wall, and there it served them as an earthwork. And since they were unobserved for a long time by the enemy, who were sleeping, they soon made the trench both deep and sufficiently wide, at the place where the fortifications were especially vulnerable and where the barbarians were going to make the assault with their engine of war. But far on in the night the enemy, perceiving what was being done, charged at full speed against those who were digging, and John went inside the fortifications with the Isaurians, since the trench was now in a most satisfactory condition.

But at daybreak Vittigis noted what had been accomplished and in his exceeding vexation at the occurrence executed some of the guards; however, he was as eager as before to bring his engine to bear, and so commanded the Goths to throw a great number of faggots as quickly as possible into the trench, and then by drawing the tower over them to bring it into position. This they proceeded to do as Vittigis commanded, with all zeal, although their opponents kept fighting them back from the wall with the utmost vigour. But when the weight of the tower came upon the faggots they naturally yielded and sank down. For this reason the barbarians were quite unable to go forward with the engine, because the ground became still more steep before them, where the Romans had heaped up the earth as I have stated. Fearing, therefore, that when night came on the enemy would sally forth and set fire to the engine, they began to draw it back again. This was precisely what John was eager to prevent with all his power, and so he armed his soldiers, called them all together, and exhorted them as follows:

"My men, who share this danger common to us all, if it would please any man among you to live and see those whom he has left at home, let him realize that the only hope he has of obtaining these things lies in nothing but his own hands. For when Belisarius sent us forth in the beginning, hope and desire for many things made us eager for the task. For we never suspected that we should be besieged in the country along the coast, since the Romans command the sea so completely, nor would one have supposed that the emperor's army would so far neglect us. But apart from these considerations, at that time we were prompted to boldness by an opportunity to display our loyalty to the state and by the glory which we should acquire in the sight of all men as the result of our struggles. But as things now stand, we cannot possibly survive save by courage, and we are obliged to undergo this danger with no other end in view than the saving of our own lives. Therefore, if any of you perchance lay claim to valour, all such have the opportunity to prove themselves brave men, if any men in the world have, and thereby to cover themselves with glory. For they achieve a fair name, not who overpower those weaker than themselves, but who, though inferior in equipment, still win the victory by the greatness of their souls. And as for those in whom the love of life has been more deeply implanted, it will be of advantage to these especially to be bold, for it is true of all men, as a general thing, that when their fortunes stand on the razor's edge, as is now the case with us, they may be saved only by scorning the danger."

With these words John led his army out against the enemy, leaving some few men to guard the battlement. But the enemy withstood them bravely, and the battle became exceedingly fierce. And with great difficulty and late in the day the barbarians succeeded in bringing the tower back to their own camp. However, they lost so great a number of their fighting men that they decided thenceforth to make no further attacks upon the wall, but in despair of succeeding that way, they remained quiet, expecting that their enemy would yield to them under stress of famine. For all their provisions had already failed them completely, since they had not found any place from which they could bring in a sufficient supply.

Such was the course of events here. But as for Belisarius, he sent to the representatives of Milan a thousand men, Isaurians and Thracians. The Isaurians were commanded by Ennes, the Thracians by Paulus, while Mundilas was set over them all and commanded in person, having as his guard some few of the guardsmen of Belisarius. And with them was also Fidelius, who had been made praetorian prefect. For since he was a native of Milan, he was regarded as a suitable person to go with this army, having as he did some influence in Liguria. They set sail, accordingly, from the harbour of Rome and put in at Genoa, which is the last city in Tuscany and well situated as a port of call for the voyage to Gaul and to Spain. There they left their ships and travelling by land moved forward, placing the boats of the ships on their waggons, in order that nothing might prevent their crossing the river Po.



It was by this means, in any event, that they made the crossing of the river. And when they reached the city of Ticinum, after crossing the Po, the Goths came out against them and engaged them in battle. And they were not only numerous but also excellent troops, since all the barbarians who lived in that region had deposited the most valuable of their possessions in Ticinum, as being a place which had strong defences, and had left there a considerable garrison. So a fierce battle took place, but the Romans were victorious, and routing their opponents, they slew a great number and came within a little of capturing the city in the pursuit. For it was only with difficulty that the barbarians succeeded in shutting the gates, so closely did their enemy press upon their heels. And as the Romans were marching away, Fidelius went into a temple there to pray, and was the last to leave. But by some chance his horse stumbled and he fell. And since he had fallen very near the fortifications, the Goths seeing him came out and killed him without being observed by the enemy. Wherefore, when this was afterwards discovered by Mundilas and the Romans, they were greatly distressed.

Then, leaving Ticinum, they arrived at the city of Milan and secured this city with the rest of Liguria without a battle. When Vittigis learned about this, he sent a large army with all speed and Uraïas, his own nephew, as commander. And Theudibert, the leader of the Franks, sent him at his request ten thousand men as allies, not of the Franks themselves, but Burgundians, in order not to appear to be doing injury to the emperor's cause. For it was given out that the Burgundians made the expedition willingly and of their own choice, not as obeying the command of Theudibert. And the Goths, joined by these troops, came to Milan, made camp and began a siege when the Romans were least expecting them. At any rate the Romans, through this action, found it impossible to bring in any kind of provisions, but they were immediately in distress for want of necessities. Indeed, even the guarding of the walls was not being maintained by the regular soldiers, for it so happened that Mundilas had occupied all the cities near Milan which had defences, namely Bergomum, Comum, and Novaria, as well as some other strongholds, and in every place had established a considerable garrison, while he himself with about three hundred men remained in Milan, and with him Ennes and Paulus. Consequently and of necessity the inhabitants of the city were regularly keeping guard in turn. Such was the progress of events in Liguria, and the winter drew to its close, and the third year came to an end in this war, the history of which Procopius has written.

### XIII

And Belisarius at about the time of the summer solstice marched against Vittigis and the Gothic army, leaving a few men to act as a garrison in Rome, but taking all the others with him. And he sent some men to Tudera and Clusium, with orders to make fortified camps there, and he was intending to follow them and assist in besieging the barbarians at those places. But when the barbarians learned that the army was approaching, they did not wait to face the danger, but sent envoys to Belisarius, promising to surrender both themselves and the two cities, with the condition that they should remain free from harm. And when he came there, they fulfilled their promise. And Belisarius removed all the Goths from these towns and sent them to Sicily and Naples, and after establishing a garrison in Clusium and in Tudera, he led his army forward.

But meanwhile Vittigis had sent another army, under command of Vacimus, to Auximus, commanding it to join forces with the Goths there, and with them to go against the enemy in Ancon and make an attempt upon that fortress. Now this Ancon is a sort of pointed rock, and indeed it is from this circumstance that it has taken its name; for it is exceedingly like an "elbow." And it is about eighty stades distant from the city of Auximus,



whose port it is. And the defences of the fortress lie upon the pointed rock in a position of security, but all the buildings outside, though they are many, have been from ancient times unprotected by a wall. Now as soon as Conon, who was in command of the garrison of the place, heard that the forces of Vacimus were coming against him and were already not far away, he made an exhibition of thoughtless folly. For thinking it too small a thing to preserve free from harm merely the fortress and its inhabitants together with the soldiers, he left the fortifications entirely destitute of soldiers, and leading them all out to a distance of about five stades, arrayed them in line of battle, without, however, making the phalanx a deep one at all, but thin enough to surround the entire base of the mountain, as if for a hunt. But when these troops saw that the enemy were greatly superior to them in number, they turned their backs and straightway fled to the fortress. And the barbarians, following close upon them, slew on the spot most of their number—those who did not succeed in getting inside the circuit-wall in time—and then placed ladders against the wall and attempted the ascent. Some also began burning the houses outside the fortress. And the Romans who resided habitually in the fortress, being terror-stricken at what was taking place, at first opened the small gate and received the soldiers as they fled in complete disorder. But when they saw the barbarians close at hand and pressing upon the fugitives, fearing that they would charge in with them, they closed the gates as quickly as they could, and letting down ropes from the battlement, saved a number by drawing them up, and among them Conon himself. But the barbarians scaled the wall by means of their ladders and came within a little of capturing the fortress by storm, and would have succeeded if two men had not made a display of remarkable deeds by valorously pushing off the battlements those who had already got upon the wall; one of these two was a bodyguard of Belisarius, a Thracian named Ulimuth, and the other a bodyguard of Valerian, named Gouboulgoudou, a Massagete by birth. These two men had happened by some chance to come by ship to Ancon a little before; and in this struggle, by warding off with their swords those who were scaling the wall, they saved the fortress contrary to expectation, but they themselves were carried from the battlement half dead, their whole bodies hacked with many wounds.

At that time it was reported to Belisarius that Narses had come with a great army from Byzantium and was in Picenum. Now this Narses was a eunuch and guardian of the royal treasures, but for the rest keen and more energetic than would be expected of a eunuch. And five thousand soldiers followed him, of whom the several detachments were commanded by different men, among whom were Justinus, the general of Illyricum, and another Narses, who had previously come to the land of the Romans as a deserter from the Armenians who are subject to the Persians; with him had come his brother Aratius, who, as it happened, had joined Belisarius a little before this with another army. And about two thousand of the Erulian nation also followed him, commanded by Visandus and Aluith and Phanitheus.

#### XIV

Now as to who in the world the Eruli are, and how they entered into alliance with the Romans, I shall forthwith explain. They used to dwell beyond the Ister River from of old, worshipping a great host of gods, whom it seemed to them holy to appease even by human sacrifices. And they observed many customs which were not in accord with those of other men. For they were not permitted to live either when they grew old or when they fell sick, but as soon as one of them was overtaken by old age or by sickness, it became necessary for him to ask his relatives to remove him from the world as quickly as possible. And these relatives would pile up a quantity of wood to a great height and lay the man on top of the wood, and then they would send one of the Eruli, but not a relative of the man, to his side with a dagger; for it was not lawful for a kinsman to be his slayer. And when the slayer of

their relative had returned, they would straightway burn the whole pile of wood, beginning at the edges. And after the lire had ceased, they would immediately collect the bones and bury them in the earth. And when a man of the Eruli died, it was necessary for his wife, if she laid claim to virtue and wished to leave a fair name behind her, to die not long afterward beside the tomb of her husband by hanging herself with a rope. And if she did not do this, the result was that she was in ill repute thereafter and an offence to the relatives of her husband. Such were the customs observed by the Eruli in ancient times.

But as time went on they became superior to all the barbarians who dwelt about them both in power and in numbers, and, as was natural, they attacked and vanquished them severally and kept plundering their possessions by force. And finally they made the Lombards, who were Christians, together with several other nations, subject and tributary to themselves, though the barbarians of that region were not accustomed to that sort of thing; but the Eruli were led to take this course by love of money and a lawless spirit. When, however, Anastasius took over the Roman empire, the Eruli, having no longer anyone in the world whom they could assail, laid down their arms and remained quiet, and they observed peace in this way for a space of three years. But the people themselves, being exceedingly vexed, began to abuse their leader Rodolphus without restraint, and going to him constantly they called him cowardly and effeminate, and railed at him in a most unruly manner, taunting him with certain other names besides. And Rodolphus, being quite unable to bear the insult, marched against the Lombards, who were doing no wrong, without charging against them any fault or alleging any violation of their agreement, but bringing upon them a war which had no real cause. And when the Lombards got word of this, they sent to Rodolphus and made enquiry and demanded that he should state the charge on account of which the Eruli were coming against them in arms, agreeing that if they had deprived the Eruli of any of the tribute, then they would instantly pay it with large interest; and if their grievance was that only a moderate tribute had been imposed upon them, then the Lombards would never be reluctant to make it greater. Such were the offers which the envoys made, but Rodolphus with a threat sent them away and marched forward. And they again sent other envoys to him on the same mission and supplicated him with many entreaties. And when the second envoys had fared in the same way, a third embassy came to him and forbade the Eruli on any account to bring upon them a war without excuse. For if they should come against them with such a purpose, they too, not willingly, but under the direst necessity, would array themselves against their assailants, calling upon God as their witness, the slightest breath of whose favour, turning the scales, would be a match for all the strength of men; and He, in all likelihood, would be moved by the causes of the war and would determine the issue of the fight for both sides accordingly. So they spoke, thinking in this way to terrify their assailants, but the Eruli, shrinking from nothing whatever, decided to meet the Lombards in battle. And when the two armies came close to one another, it so happened that the sky above the Lombards was obscured by a sort of cloud, black and very thick, but above the Eruli it was exceedingly clear. And judging by this one would have supposed that the Eruli were entering the conflict to their own harm; for there ran be no more forbidding portent than this for barbarians as they go into battle. However, the Eruli gave no heed even to this, but in absolute disregard of it they advanced against their enemy with utter contempt, estimating the outcome of war by mere superiority of numbers. But when the battle came to close quarters, many of the Eruli perished and Rodolphus himself also perished, and the rest fled at full speed, forgetting all their courage. And since their enemy followed them up, the most of them fell on the field of battle and only a few succeeded in saving themselves.

For this reason the Eruli were no longer able to tarry in their ancestral homes, but departing from there as quickly as possible they kept moving forward, traversing the whole

country which is beyond the Ister River, together with their wives and children. But when they reached a land where the Rogi dwelt of old, a people who had joined the Gothic host and gone to Italy, they settled in that place. But since they were pressed by famine, because they were in a barren land, they removed from there not long afterward, and came to a place close to the country of the Gepaedes. And at first the Gepaedes permitted them to dwell there and be neighbours to them, since they came as suppliants. But afterwards for no good reason the Gepaedes began to practise unholy deeds upon them. For they violated their women and seized their cattle and other property, and abstained from no wickedness whatever, and finally began an unjust attack upon them. And the Eruli, unable to bear all this any longer, crossed the Ister River and decided to live as neighbours to the Romans in that region; this was during the reign of the Emperor Anastasius, who received them with great friendliness and allowed them to settle where they were. But a short time afterwards these barbarians gave him offence by their lawless treatment of the Romans there, and for this reason he sent an army against them. And the Romans, after defeating them in battle, slew most of their number, and had ample opportunity to destroy them all. But the remainder of them threw themselves upon the mercy of the generals and begged them to spare their lives and to have them as allies and servants of the emperor thereafter. And when Anastasius learned this, he was pleased, and consequently a number of the Eruli were left; however, they neither became allies of the Romans, nor did they do them any good.

But when Justinian took over the empire, he bestowed upon them good lands and other possessions, and thus completely succeeded in winning their friendship and persuaded them all to become Christians. As a result of this they adopted a gentler manner of life and decided to submit themselves wholly to the laws of the Christians, and in keeping with the terms of their alliance they are generally arrayed with the Romans against their enemies. They are still, however, faithless toward them, and since they are given to avarice, they are eager to do violence to their neighbours, feeling no shame at such conduct. And they mate in an unholy manner, especially men with asses, and they are the basest of all men and utterly abandoned rascals.

Afterwards, although some few of them remained at peace with the Romans, as will be told by me in the following narrative, all the rest revolted for the following reason. The Eruli, displaying their beastly and fanatical character against their own "rex," one Ochus by name, suddenly killed the man for no good reason at all, laying against him no other charge than that they wished to be without a king thereafter. And yet even before this, while their king did have the title, he had practically no advantage over any private citizen whomsoever. But all claimed the right to sit with him and eat with him, and whoever wished insulted him without restraint; for no men in the world are less bound by convention or more unstable than the Eruli. Now when the evil deed had been accomplished, they were immediately repentant. For they said that they were not able to live without a ruler and without a general; so after much deliberation it seemed to them best in every way to summon one of their royal family from the island of Thule. And the reason for this I shall now explain.

## XV

When the Eruli, being defeated by the Lombards in the above-mentioned battle, migrated from their ancestral homes, some of them, as has been told by me above, made their home in the country of Illyricum, but the rest were averse to crossing the Ister River, but settled at the very extremity of the world; at any rate, these men, led by many of the royal blood, traversed all the nations of the Slaveni one after the other, and after next crossing a large tract of barren country, they came to the Varni, as they are called. After

these they passed by the nations of the Dani, without suffering violence at the hands of the barbarians there. Coming thence to the ocean, they took to the sea, and putting in at Thule,<sup>L</sup> remained there on the island.

Now Thule is exceedingly large; for it is more than ten times greater than Britain. And it lies far distant from it toward the north. On this island the land is for the most part barren, but in the inhabited country thirteen very numerous nations are settled; and there are kings over each nation. In that place a very wonderful thing takes place each year. For the sun at the time of the summer solstice never sets for forty days, but appears constantly during this whole time above the earth. But not less than six months later, at about the time of the winter solstice, the sun is never seen on this island for forty days, but never-ending night envelops it; and as a result of this dejection holds the people there during this whole time, because they are unable by any means to mingle with one another during this interval. And although I was eager to go to this island and become an eye-witness of the things I have told, no opportunity ever presented itself. However, I made enquiry from those who come to us from the island as to how in the world they are able to reckon the length of the days, since the sun never rises nor sets there at the appointed times. And they gave me an account which is true and trustworthy. For they said that the sun during those forty days does not indeed set just as has been stated, but is visible to the people there at one time toward the east, and again toward the west. Whenever, therefore, on its return, it reaches the same place on the horizon where they had previously been accustomed to see it rise, they reckon in this way that one day and night have passed. When, however, the time of the nights arrives, they always take note of the courses of the moon and stars and thus reckon the measure of the days. And when a time amounting to thirty-five days has passed in this long night, certain men are sent to the summits of the mountains—for this is the custom among them—and when they are able from that point barely to see the sun, they bring back word to the people below that within five days the sun will shine upon them. And the whole population celebrates a festival at the good news, and that too in the darkness. And this is the greatest festival which the natives of Thule have; for, I imagine, these islanders always become terrified, although they see the same thing happen every year, fearing that the sun may at some time fail them entirely.

But among the barbarians who are settled in Thule, one nation only, who are called the Scythiphini, live a kind of life akin to that of the beasts. For they neither wear garments of cloth nor do they walk with shoes on their feet, nor do they drink wine nor derive anything edible from the earth. For they neither till the land themselves, nor do their women work it for them, but the women regularly join the men in hunting, which is their only pursuit. For the forests, which are exceedingly large, produce for them a great abundance of wild beasts and other animals, as do also the mountains which rise there. And they feed exclusively upon the flesh of the wild beasts slain by them, and clothe themselves in their skins, and since they have neither flax nor any implement with which to sew, they fasten these skins together by the sinews of the animals, and in this way manage to cover the whole body. And indeed not even their infants are nursed in the same way as among the rest of mankind. For the children of the Scythiphini do not feed upon the milk of women nor do they touch their mother's breast, but they are nourished upon the marrow of the animals killed in the hunt, and upon this alone. Now as soon as a woman gives birth to a child, she throws it into a skin and straightway hangs it to a tree, and after putting marrow into its mouth she immediately sets out with her husband for the customary hunt. For they do everything in common and likewise engage in this pursuit together. So much for the daily life of these barbarians.

But all the other inhabitants of Thule, practically speaking, do not differ very much from the rest of men, but they reverence in great numbers gods and demons both of the

heavens and of the air, of the earth and of the sea, and sundry other demons which are said to be in the waters of springs and rivers. And they incessantly offer up all kinds of sacrifices, and make oblations to the dead, but the noblest of sacrifices, in their eyes, is the first human being whom they have taken captive in war; for they sacrifice him to Ares, whom they regard as the greatest god. And the manner in which they offer up the captive is not by sacrificing him on an altar only, but also by hanging him to a tree, or throwing him among thorns, or killing him by some of the other most cruel forms of death. Thus, then, do the inhabitants of Thule live. And one of their most numerous nations is the Gauti, and it was next to them that the incoming Eruli settled at the time in question.

On the present occasion, therefore, the Eruli who dwelt among the Romans, after the murder of their king had been perpetrated by them, sent some of their notables to the island of Thule to search out and bring back whomsoever they were able to find there of the royal blood. And when these men reached the island, they found many there of the royal blood, but they selected the one man who pleased them most and set out with him on the return journey. But this man fell sick and died when he had come to the country of the Dani. These men therefore went a second time to the island and secured another man, Datus by name. And he was followed by his brother Aordus and two hundred youths of the Eruli in Thule. But since much time passed while they were absent on this journey, it occurred to the Eruli in the neighbourhood of Singidunum that they were not consulting their own interests in importing a leader from Thule against the wishes of the Emperor Justinian. They therefore sent envoys to Byzantium, begging the emperor to send them a ruler of his own choice. And he straightway sent them one of the Eruli who had long been sojourning in Byzantium, Suartuas by name. At first the Eruli welcomed him and did obeisance to him and rendered the customary obedience to his commands; but not many days later a messenger arrived with the tidings that the men from the island of Thule were near at hand. And Suartuas commanded them to go out to meet those men, his intention being to destroy them, and the Eruli, approving his purpose, immediately went with him. But when the two forces were one day's journey distant from each other, the king's men all abandoned him at night and went over of their own accord to the newcomers, while he himself took to flight and set out unattended for Byzantium. There upon the emperor earnestly undertook with all his power to restore him to his office, and the Eruli, fearing the power of the Romans, decided to submit themselves to the Gepaedes. This, then, was the cause of the revolt of the Eruli.



# The Secret History of the Court of Justinian

## INTRODUCTION

I have thus described the fortunes of the Romans in their wars up to the present day, as far as possible assigning the description of events to their proper times and places. What follows will not be arranged with the same exactness, but everything shall be written down as it took place throughout the whole extent of the Roman empire. My reason for this is, that it would not have been expedient for me to describe these events fully while those who were their authors were still alive; for, had I done so, I could neither have escaped the notice of the multitude of spies, nor, had I been detected, could I have avoided a most horrible death; for I could not even have relied upon my nearest relatives with confidence. Indeed, I have been forced to conceal the real causes of many of the events recounted in my former books. It will now be my duty, in this part of my history, to tell what has hitherto remained untold, and to state the real motives and origin of the actions which I have already recounted. But, when undertaking this new task, how painful and hard will it be, to be obliged to falter and contradict myself as to what I have said about the lives of Justinian and Theodora: and particularly so, when I reflect that what I am about to write will not appear to future generations either credible or probable, especially when a long lapse of years shall have made them old stories; for which reason I fear that I may be looked upon as a romancer, and reckoned among playwrights. However, I shall have the courage not to shrink from this important work, because my story will not lack witnesses; for the men of to-day, who are the best informed witnesses of these facts, will hand on trustworthy testimony of their truth to posterity. Yet, when I was about to undertake this work, another objection often presented itself to my mind, and for a long time held me in suspense.

I doubted whether it would be right to hand down these events to posterity; for the wickedest actions had better remain unknown to future times than come to the ears of tyrants, and be imitated by them. For most rulers are easily led by lack of knowledge into imitating the evil deeds of their predecessors, and find it their easiest plan to walk in the evil ways of their forefathers.

Later, however, I was urged to record these matters, by the reflection that those who hereafter may wish to play the tyrant will clearly see, in the first place, that it is probable that retribution will fall upon them for the evil that they may do, seeing that this was what befell these people; and, secondly, that their actions and habits of life will be published abroad for all time, and therefore they will perhaps be less ready to transgress. Who, among posterity, would have known of the licentious life of Semiramis, or of the madness of Sardanapalus or Nero, if no memorials of them had been left to us by contemporary writers? The description of such things, too, will not be entirely without value to such as hereafter may be so treated by tyrants; for unhappy people are wont to console themselves by the thought that they are not the only persons who have so suffered. For these reasons, I shall first give a description of the evil wrought by Belisarius, and afterwards I shall describe the misdeeds of Justinian and Theodora.

## CHAPTER I

The wife of Belisarius, whom I have spoken of in my previous writings, was the daughter and grand-daughter of chariot-drivers, men who had practised their art in the circus at Byzantium and at Thessalonica. Her mother was one of the prostitutes of the theatre. She herself at first lived a lewd life, giving herself up to unbridled debauchery; besides this, she devoted herself to the study of the drugs which had long been used in her family, and learned the properties of those which were essential for carrying out her plans. At last she was betrothed and married to Belisarius, although she had already borne many children.

She formed adulterous connections as soon as she was married, but took pains to conceal the fact, by making use of familiar artifices, not out of any respect for her husband (for she never felt any shame at any crime whatever, and hoodwinked him by enchantments), but because she dreaded the vengeance of the Empress; for Theodora was very bitter against her, and had already shown her teeth. But, after she had made Theodora her humble friend by helping her when in the greatest difficulties, first of all by making away with Silverius, as shall be told hereafter, and afterwards by ruining John of Cappadocia, as I have already described, she became less timid, and, scorning all concealment, shrank from no kind of wickedness.

There was a Thracian youth, named Theodosius, in the household of Belisarius, who by descent was of the Eunomian faith. On the eve of his departure for Libya, Belisarius held the youth over the font, received him into his arms after baptism, and thenceforth made him a member of his household, with the consent of his wife, according to the Christian rite of adoption. Antonina therefore received Theodosius as a son consecrated by religion, and in consequence loved him, paid him especial attention, and obtained complete dominion over him. Afterwards, during this voyage, she became madly enamoured of him, and, being beside herself with passion, cast away all fear of everything human or divine, together with all traces of modesty, and enjoyed him at first in secret, afterwards even in the presence of her servants and handmaidens; for she was by this time so mad with lust, that she disregarded everything that stood in the way of her passion.

Once, when they were at Carthage, Belisarius caught her in the act, but permitted himself to be deceived by his wife. He found them both together in an underground chamber, and was furiously enraged at the sight; but she showed no sign of fear or a desire to avoid him, and said, "I came to this place with this youth, to hide the most precious part of our plunder, that the Emperor might not come to know of it." This she said by way of an excuse, and he, pretending to be convinced, let it pass, although he saw that the belt which held Theodosius's drawers over his private parts was undone; for he was so overpowered by his love for the creature that he preferred not to believe his own eyes. However, Antonina's debauchery went on from bad to worse, till it reached a shameful pitch. All who beheld it were silent, except one slave woman, named Macedonia, who, when Belisarius was at Syracuse after the conquest of Sicily, first made her master swear the most solemn oaths that he never would betray her to her mistress, and then told him the whole story, bringing as her witnesses two boys who attended on Antonina's bed-chamber.

When Belisarius heard this, he told some of his guards to make away with Theodosius, but the latter, being warned in time, fled to Ephesus: for the greater part of Belisarius's followers, influenced by the natural weakness of his character, were at more pains to please his wife than to show their devotion to him; and this was why they disclosed to her the orders they had received concerning Theodosius. When Constantine saw Belisarius's sorrow

at what had befallen him, he sympathized with him, but was so imprudent as to add: "For my own part, I would have killed the woman rather than the youth."

This having been reported to Antonina, she conceived a secret hatred for him, until she could make him feel the weight of her resentment; for she was like a scorpion, and knew how to hide her venom.

Not long afterwards, either by enchantments or by caresses, she persuaded her husband that the accusation brought against her was false; whereupon, without any hesitation, he sent for Theodosius, and promised to deliver up to his wife Macedonia and the boys, which he afterwards did. It is said that she first cut out their tongues, and then ordered them to be hewn in pieces, put into sacks and thrown into the sea. In this bloody deed she was assisted by one of her slaves named Eugenius, who had also been one of those who perpetrated the outrage on Silverius.

Shortly afterwards, Belisarius was persuaded by his wife to kill Constantine. What I have already recounted about Praesidius and his daggers belongs to this period. Belisarius would have let him go, but Antonina would not rest until she had exacted vengeance for the words which I have just repeated. This murder stirred up a great hatred against Belisarius on the part of the Emperor and of the chief nobles of the Empire.

Such was the course of events. Meanwhile, Theodosius refused to return to Italy, where Belisarius and Antonina were then staying, unless Photius were sent out of the way; for Photius was naturally disposed to show his spite against anyone who supplanted him in another's good graces; but he was quite right in feeling jealous of Theodosius, because he himself, although Antonina's son, was quite neglected, whereas the other was exceedingly powerful and had amassed great riches. They say that he had taken treasure amounting to a hundred centenars of gold [about £400,000] from the treasure-houses of the two cities of Carthage and Ravenna, since he had obtained sole and absolute control of the management of them.

When Antonina heard this determination of Theodosius, she never ceased to lay traps for her son and to concoct unnatural plots against him, until she made him see that he must leave her and retire to Byzantium; for he could no longer endure the designs against his life. At the same time she made Theodosius return to Italy, where she enjoyed to the full the society of her lover, thanks to the easy good-nature of her husband. Later on, she returned to Byzantium in company with both of them. It was there that Theodosius became alarmed lest their intimacy should become known, and was greatly embarrassed, not knowing what to do. That it could remain undetected to the end he felt was impossible, for he saw that the woman was no longer able to conceal her passion, and indulge it in secret, but was an open and avowed adulteress, and did not blush to be called so.

For this reason he returned to Ephesus, and after having submitted to the tonsure, joined the monastic order. At this Antonina entirely lost her reason, showed her distress by putting on mourning and by her general behaviour, and roamed about the house, wailing and lamenting (even in the presence of her husband) the good friend she had lost--so faithful, so pleasant, so tender a companion, so prompt in action. At last she even won over her husband, who began to utter the same lamentations. The poor fool kept calling for the return of his well-beloved Theodosius, and afterwards went to the Emperor and besought him and the Empress, till he prevailed upon them to send for Theodosius, as a man whose services always had been and always would be indispensable in the household. Theodosius, however, refused to obey, declaring that it was his fixed determination to remain in the cloister and embrace the monastic life. But this language was by no means sincere, for it was

his intention, as soon as Belisarius left the country, to rejoin Antonina by stealth at Byzantium, as, in fact, he did.

## CHAPTER II

Shortly afterwards Belisarius was sent by the Emperor to conduct the war against Chosroes, and Photius accompanied him. Antonina remained behind, contrary to her usual custom; for, before this, she had always desired to accompany her husband on all his travels wherever he went, for fear that, when he was by himself, he might return to his senses, and, despising her enchantments, form a true estimate of her character. But now, in order that Theodosius might have free access to her, Antonina began to intrigue in order to get Photius out of her way. She induced some of Belisarius's suite to lose no opportunity of provoking and insulting him, while she herself wrote letters almost every day, in which she continually slandered her son and set every one against him. Driven to bay, the young man was forced to accuse his mother, and, when a witness arrived from Byzantium who told him of Theodosius's secret commerce with Antonina, Photius led him straightway into the presence of Belisarius and ordered him to reveal the whole story. When Belisarius learned this, he flew into a furious rage, fell at Photius's feet, and besought him to avenge him for the cruel wrongs which he had received at the hands of those who should have been the last to treat him in such a manner. "My dearest boy," he exclaimed, "you have never known your father, whoever he may have been, for he ended his life while you were still in your nurse's arms; his property has been of little or no assistance to you, for he was by no means wealthy. Bred under my care, though I was but your stepfather, you have now reached an age when you are capable of assisting me to avenge the wrongs from which I suffer. I have raised you to the consulship, and have heaped riches upon you, so that I may justly be regarded by you as your father, your mother, and your whole family; for it is not by the ties of blood but by deeds that men are accustomed to measure their attachment to each other. The hour has now come when you must not remain an indifferent spectator of the ruin of my house and of the loss with which I am threatened, of so large a sum of money, nor of the immeasurable shame which your mother has incurred in the sight of all men. Remember that the sins of women reflect disgrace not only on their husbands, but also upon their children, whose honour suffers all the more because of their natural likeness to their mothers.

"Be well assured that, for my own part, I love my wife with all my heart; and should it be granted to me to punish the dishonourer of my house, I will do her no hurt; but, as long as Theodosius remains alive, I cannot condone her misconduct."

On hearing these words Photius replied that he would do all that he could to aid his stepfather, but, at the same time, he feared that he himself might come to some harm by so doing; for he was unable to feel any confidence in Belisarius, because of his weakness of character, especially where his wife was concerned. He dreaded the fate of Macedonia, and of many other victims. For this reason he insisted that Belisarius should swear fidelity to him by the most sacred oaths known to Christians, and they bound themselves never to abandon each other, even at the cost of their lives.

For the present, they both agreed that it would be unwise to make any attempt; and they resolved to wait until Antonina had left Byzantium to join them, and Theodosius had returned to Ephesus, which would give Photius the opportunity of going thither and easily

disposing of both Theodosius and his fortune. They had just invaded the Persian territory with all their forces, and during this time the ruin of John of Cappadocia was accomplished at Byzantium, as I have told in the former books of my history. I have there only been silent, through fear, on one point, that it was not by mere hazard that Antonina succeeded in deceiving John and his daughter, but by numerous oaths, sworn on all that Christians deem most holy, she made them believe that she intended to do them no harm.

After this, having risen greatly in favour with the Empress, she sent Theodosius to Ephesus, and herself, foreseeing no trouble, set out for the East.

Belisarius had just captured the fortress of Sisauranum, when he was told of his wife's arrival; whereupon he immediately ordered his army to turn back, disregarding the interests of the Empire for the sake of his private feelings. Certain matters had indeed happened, as I have already set forth, which made a retreat advisable, but his wife's presence hastened it considerably. But, as I said at the beginning, I did not then think it safe to describe the real motives of men's actions.

Belisarius was reproached by all the Romans for having sacrificed the interests of his country to his domestic affairs. The reason was that, in his first transport of passion against his wife, he could not bring himself to go far away from Roman territory; for he felt that the nearer he was, the easier it would be for him to take vengeance upon Theodosius, as soon as he heard of the arrival of Antonina.

He therefore ordered Arethas and his people to cross the river Tigris, and they returned home, without having performed anything worthy of record, while he himself took care not to retire more than an hour's journey from the Roman frontier. The fortress of Sisauranum, indeed, for an active man, is not more than a day's journey from the frontier by way of Nisibis, and only half that distance if one goes by another route. But had he chosen to cross the river Tigris at first with all his host, I have no doubt that he would have been able to carry off all the riches of Assyria, and extend his conquests as far as the city of Ctesiphon, without meeting with any opposition. He might even have secured the release of the Antiochians, and all the other Romans who were there in captivity, before returning home.

Furthermore, he was chiefly to blame for the extreme ease with which Chosroes led his army home from Colchis. I will now relate how this came to pass. When Chosroes, the son of Cabades, invaded Colchis, with the result which I have recounted elsewhere, and took Petra, the Medes nevertheless sustained severe losses, both in battle and owing to the difficulties of the country; for, as I have said already, Lazica is a country almost inaccessible, owing to its rocks and precipices. They had at the same time been attacked by pestilence, which carried off the greater part of the troops, and many died from want of food and necessaries. It was at this crisis of affairs that certain men from Persia came into that country, bringing the news that Belisarius had beaten Nabedes in a battle near the city of Nisibis, and was pressing forward; that he had taken the fortress of Sisauranum, and had made prisoners of Bleschames and eight hundred Persian lancers; that another corps of Romans under Arethas, the chief of the Saracens, had been detached to cross the Tigris, and ravage the land to the east of that river, which up to that time had remained free from invasion.

It happened also that the army of Huns, whom Chosroes had sent into Roman Armenia, in order, by this diversion, to prevent the Romans from hindering his expedition against the Lazi, had fallen in with and been defeated by Valerian, at the head of a Roman army, and almost annihilated. When this news was brought to the Persians, having been reduced to desperate straits by their ill success at Lazica, they feared that, if an army should cut them off in their critical position, they might all die of hunger amidst the crags and precipices of



that inaccessible country. They feared, too, for their children, their wives and their country; and all the flower of Chosroes' army railed bitterly at him for having broken his plighted word and violated the common law of nations, by invading a Roman State in a most unwarrantable manner, in time of peace, and for having insulted an ancient and most powerful State which he would not be able to conquer in war. The soldiers were on the point of breaking out into revolt, had not Chosroes, alarmed at the state of affairs, discovered a remedy for it. He read to them a letter which the Empress had just written to Zaberganes, in the following terms:

"You must know, O Zaberganes, since you were ambassador at our Court not long ago, that we are well disposed towards you, and that we do not doubt that you have our interests at heart. You will easily realise the good opinion which I have formed of you, if you will persuade King Chosroes to maintain peaceful relations with our empire. I promise you, in that case, the fullest recompense on the part of my husband, who never does anything without my advice."

When Chosroes had read this, he reproachfully asked the spokesmen of the Persians whether they thought that that was an Empire which was managed by a woman, and thus managed to quell their impetuosity; but, nevertheless, he retired from his position in alarm, expecting that his retreat would be cut off by Belisarius and his forces; but, as he found himself unopposed on his march, he gladly made his way home.

### CHAPTER III

When Belisarius entered Roman territory, he found that his wife had arrived from Byzantium. He kept her in custody in disgrace, and was frequently minded to put her to death, but had not the heart to do so, being overpowered, I believe, by the ardour of his love. Others, however, say that his mind and resolution were destroyed by the enchantments which his wife employed against him.

Meanwhile, Photius arrived in a state of fury at Ephesus, having taken with him in chains Calligonus, a eunuch and pander of Antonina, whom, by frequently flogging him during the journey, he forced to tell all his mistress's secrets. Theodosius, however, was warned in time, and took sanctuary in the temple of St. John the Apostle, which is revered in that town as a most sacred spot; but Andrew, the bishop of Ephesus, was bribed into delivering him up into the hands of Photius.

Meanwhile, Theodora was very anxious about Antonina, when she heard what had befallen her. She summoned both Belisarius and his wife to Byzantium: on hearing this, Photius sent Theodosius away to Cilicia, where his own spearmen were in winter quarters, giving orders to his escort to take the man thither as secretly as possible, and, when they arrived at Cilicia, to guard him with exceeding strictness, and not to let anyone know in what part of the world he was. He himself, with Calligonus and Theodosius's treasures, which were very considerable, repaired to Byzantium.

At that juncture, the Empress clearly proved to all that she knew how to recompense the murderous services which Antonina had rendered her, by even greater crimes committed to further her plans. Indeed, Antonina had only betrayed one man to her by her wiles, her enemy John of Cappadocia, but the Empress caused the death of a large number of innocent persons, whom she sacrificed to the vengeance of Antonina. The intimates of Belisarius and

Photius were some of them flogged, although the only charge against them was their friendship for these two persons; and no one, to the present day, knows what afterwards became of them; while she sent others into exile, who were accused of the same crime--friendship for Photius and Belisarius. One of those who accompanied Photius to Ephesus, Theodosius by name, although he had attained the rank of senator, was deprived of all his property, and imprisoned by Theodora in an underground dungeon, where she kept him fastened to a kind of manger by a rope round his neck, which was so short that it was always quite tense and never slack. The wretched man was always forced to stand upright at this manger, and there to eat and sleep, and do all his other needs; there was no difference between him and an ass, save that he did not bray. No less than four months were passed by him in this condition, until he was seized with melancholy and became violently mad, upon which he was released from his prison and soon afterwards died.

As for Belisarius, she forced him against his will to become reconciled to his wife Antonina. Photius, by her orders, was tortured like a slave, and was beaten with rods upon the back and shoulders, and ordered to disclose where Theodosius and the pander eunuch were. But he, although cruelly tortured, kept the oath which he had sworn inviolate; and although he was naturally weak and delicate, and had always been forced to take care of his health, and had never had any experience of ill-treatment or discomfort of any kind, yet he never revealed any of Belisarius's secrets.

But afterwards all that had hitherto been kept secret came to light. Theodora discovered the whereabouts of Calligonus, and restored him to Antonina. She also found where Theodosius was, and had him conveyed to Byzantium, and, on his arrival, concealed him straightway in the palace. On the morrow she sent for Antonina, and said to her, "Dearest lady, a pearl fell into my hands yesterday, so beautiful that I think no one has ever seen its like. If you would like to see it, I will not grudge you the sight of it, but will gladly show it to you."

Antonina, who did not understand what was going on, begged eagerly to be shown the pearl, whereupon Theodora led Theodosius by the hand out of the chamber of one of her eunuchs and displayed him to her. Antonina was at first speechless through excess of joy, and when she had recovered herself, warmly protested her gratitude to Theodora, whom she called her saviour, her benefactress, and truly her mistress. Theodora kept Theodosius in her palace, treated him with every luxury, and even boasted that, before long, she would appoint him generalissimo of the Roman armies. But divine justice, which carried him off through dysentery, prevented this.

Theodora had at her disposal secret and absolutely secluded dungeons, so solitary and so dark that it was impossible to distinguish between night and day. In one of these she kept Photius imprisoned for a long time. He managed, however, to escape, not only once, but twice. The first time he took sanctuary in the Church of the Mother of God, which is one of the most sacred and famous churches in Byzantium, wherein he sat as a suppliant at the holy table; but she ordered him to be removed by main force and again imprisoned. The second time he fled to the Church of St. Sophia, and suddenly took refuge in the holy font, which is held in reverence by Christians above all other places; but the woman was able to drag him even from thence, for to her no place ever was sacred or unassailable; and she thought nothing of violating the holiest of sanctuaries. The Christian priests and people were struck with horror at her impiety, but nevertheless yielded and submitted to her in everything.

Photius had lived in this condition for nearly three years, when the prophet Zacharias appeared to him in a dream, commanded him to escape, and promised his assistance.

Relying upon this vision, he rose, escaped from his prison, and made his way to Jerusalem in disguise; though tens of thousands must have seen the youth, yet none recognised him. There he shaved off all his hair, assumed the monastic habit, and in this manner escaped the tortures which Theodora would have inflicted upon him.

Belisarius took no account of the oaths which he had sworn, and made no effort to avenge Photius's sufferings, in spite of the solemn vows which he had made to do so. Hereafter, probably by God's will, all his warlike enterprises failed. Some time afterwards he was dispatched against the Medes and Chosroes, who had for the third time invaded the Roman Empire, and fell under suspicion of treachery, although he was considered to have performed a notable achievement in driving the enemy away from the frontier; but when Chosroes, after crossing the Euphrates, took the populous city of Callinikus without a blow, and made slaves of tens of thousands of Romans, Belisarius remained quiet, and never so much as offered to attack the enemy, whereby he incurred the reproach of either treachery or cowardice.

#### CHAPTER IV

About this time Belisarius underwent another disgrace. The people of Byzantium were ravaged by the pestilence of which I have already spoken. The Emperor Justinian was attacked by it so severely that it was reported that he had died. Rumour spread these tidings abroad till they reached the Roman camp, whereupon some of the chief officers said that, if the Romans set up any other emperor in Byzantium, they would not acknowledge him. Shortly after this, the Emperor recovered from his malady, whereupon the chiefs of the army accused one another of having used this language. The General Peter, and John, surnamed "The Glutton," declared that Belisarius and Buzes had used the words which I have just quoted. The Empress Theodora, thinking that these words applied to herself, was greatly enraged. She straightway summoned all the commanders to Byzantium to make an inquiry into the matter, and suddenly sent for Buzes to come into her private apartments, on the pretext of discussing important matters of business with him. There was in the palace an underground building, which was securely fastened, and as complicated as a labyrinth, and which might be compared to the nether world, wherein she kept imprisoned most of those who had offended her. Into this pit she cast Buzes; and although he was of a consular family, nothing was known for certain concerning him; as he sat in the darkness, he could not tell day from night; nor could he ask, for he who flung him his daily food never spoke, but acted like one dumb beast with another. All thought him dead, but none dared to mention him or allude to him. Two years and four months afterwards, Theodora relented and released him, and he appeared in the world like one raised from the dead; but ever afterwards he was short-sighted and diseased in body. Such was the fate of Buzes.

Belisarius, although none of the charges brought against him could be proved, was removed by the Emperor, at the instance of Theodora, from the command of the army in the East, which was given to Martinus. The command of the Doryphori and Hypaspitæ of Belisarius, and of those of his servants who had distinguished themselves in war, was by his orders divided amongst the generals and certain of the palace eunuchs. They cast lots for these soldiers, together with their arms, and divided them amongst themselves as the lot fell. As for his friends and the many people who had before served under him, Justinian

forbade them to visit him. Thus was seen in the city a piteous spectacle which men could scarce believe to be real, that of Belisarius simply a private individual, almost alone, gloomy and thoughtful, ever dreading to be set upon and assassinated.

When the Empress learned that he had amassed much treasure in the East; she sent one of the palace eunuchs to fetch it away to the Court. Antonina, as I have already said, was now at variance with her husband, and the nearest and dearest friend of the Empress, because she had just destroyed John of Cappadocia. To please Antonina, the Empress arranged everything in such a fashion that she appeared to have pleaded for her husband's pardon, and to have saved him from these great disasters; whereby the unhappy man not only became finally reconciled to her, but her absolute slave, as though he had been preserved by her from death. This was brought about as follows:

One day Belisarius came early to the palace as usual, accompanied by a small and miserable retinue. He was ungraciously received by the Emperor and Empress, and even insulted in their presence by low-born villains. He went home towards evening, often turning himself about, and looking in every direction for those whom he expected to set upon him. In this state of dread, he went up to his chamber, and sat down alone upon his couch, without a brave man's spirit, and scarce remembering that he had ever been a man, but bathed with sweat, his head dizzy, trembling and despairing, racked by slavish fears and utterly unmanly thoughts. Antonina, who knew nothing of what was going on, and was far from expecting what was about to come to pass, kept walking up and down the hall, on pretence of suffering from heartburn; for they still regarded each other with suspicion. Meanwhile, an officer of the palace, named Quadratus, came just after sunset, passed through the court, and suddenly appeared at the door of the men's apartments, saying that he brought a message from the Empress.

Belisarius, on hearing him approach, drew up his hands and feet on to the bed, and lay on his back in the readiest posture to receive the final stroke, so completely had he lost his courage.

Quadratus, before entering, showed him the Empress' letter. It ran as follows:

"You are not ignorant, my good sir, of all your offences against me; but I owe so much to your wife, that I have determined to pardon all your offences for her sake, and I make her a present of your life. For the future you may be of good cheer as regards your life and fortune: we shall know by your future conduct what sort of husband you will be to your wife!"

When Belisarius read this, he was greatly excited with joy, and, as he wished at the same time to give some present proof of his gratitude, he straightway rose, and fell on his face at his wife's feet. He embraced her legs with either hand, and kissed the woman's ankles and the soles of her feet, declaring that it was to her that he owed his life and safety, and that hereafter he would be her faithful slave, and no longer her husband.

The Empress divided Belisarius's fortune into two parts; she gave thirty centenars of gold to the Emperor, and allowed Belisarius to keep the rest. Such was the fortune of the General Belisarius, into whose hands Fate had not long before given Gelimer and Vitiges as prisoners of war. The man's wealth had for a long time excited the jealousy of Justinian and Theodora, who considered it too great, and fit only for a king. They declared that he had secretly embezzled most of the property of Gelimer and Vitiges, which belonged to the State, and that he had restored a small part alone, and one hardly worthy of an Emperor's acceptance. But, when they thought of what great things the man had done, and how they would raise unpopular clamour against themselves, especially as they had no ground whatever for accusing him of peculation, they desisted; but, on this occasion, the Empress,

having surprised him at a time when he was quite unmanned by fear, managed at one stroke to become mistress of his entire fortune; for she straightway established a relationship between them, betrothing Joannina, Belisarius's only daughter, to her grandson Anastasius.

Belisarius now asked to be restored to his command, and to be nominated general of the army of the East, in order to conduct the war against Chosroes and the Medes, but Antonina would not permit this; she declared that she had been insulted by her husband in those countries, and never wished to see them again.

For this reason Belisarius was appointed Constable, and was sent for a second time into Italy, with the understanding, they say, with the Emperor, that he should not ask for any money to defray the cost of this war, but should pay all its expenses out of his own private purse. Everyone imagined that Belisarius made these arrangements with his wife and with the Emperor in order that he might get away from Byzantium, and, as soon as he was outside the city walls, straightway take up arms and do some brave and manly deed against his wife and his oppressors. But he made light of all that had passed, forgot the oaths which he had sworn to Photius and his other intimates, and followed his wife in a strange ecstasy of passion for her, though she was already sixty years of age.

When he arrived in Italy, things went wrong with him daily, for he had clearly incurred the enmity of heaven. In his former campaign against Theodatus and Vitiges, the tactics which he had adopted as general, though they were not thought to be suitable to the circumstances, yet, as a rule, turned out prosperously: in this second campaign, he gained the credit of having laid his plans better, as was to be expected from his greater experience in the art of war; but, as matters for the most part turned out ill, people began to have a poor opinion of him and his judgment. So true it is that human affairs are guided, not by men's counsel, but by the influence of heaven, which we commonly call fortune, because we see how events happen, but know not the cause which determines them. Therefore, to that which seems to come to pass without reason is given the name of "chance." But this is a subject upon which everyone must form his own opinion.

## CHAPTER V

At the end of Belisarius's second expedition to Italy, he was obliged to retire in disgrace; for, as I have told already, he was unable for a space of five years to effect a landing on the continent, because he had no stronghold there, but spent the whole time in hovering off the coast. Totila was very eager to meet him in the open field, but never found an opportunity, for both the Roman general and all the army were afraid to fight. For this reason he recovered nothing of all that had been lost, but even lost Rome as well, and pretty nearly everything else. During this time he became exceedingly avaricious and greedy for ignoble gain. Because he had received no funds from the Emperor, he plundered all the Italian peoples of Ravenna and Sicily, and the rest of Italy without mercy, by way of exacting vengeance for irregularities in their past lives. Thus he fell upon Herodianus, and asked him for money with the most dreadful threats; whereupon he, in his rage, threw off his allegiance to Rome and went over with his troops to Totila and the Goths, and handed over to them the town of Spoleto.



I will now tell how Belisarius fell out with John, the nephew of Vitalianus, a matter which was exceedingly prejudicial to the interests of Rome. The Empress was so violently incensed against Germanus, and showed her dislike of him so plainly, that no one dared to connect himself with him by marriage, although he was the Emperor's nephew, and his children remained unmarried as long as she lived, while his daughter Justina was also without a husband at the age of eighteen. For this reason, when John was sent by Belisarius on a mission to Byzantium, Germanus was forced to enter upon negotiations with him with a view to marriage with his daughter, although such an alliance was far beneath him. When both had settled the matter to their satisfaction, they bound each other by the most solemn oaths, to use their best endeavours to bring about this alliance; for neither of them trusted the other, as John knew that he was seeking an alliance above his station, and Germanus despaired of finding another husband for his daughter. The Empress was beside herself at this, and endeavoured to thwart them in every possible way; but as her threats had no effect upon either, she openly threatened to put John to death. After this, John was ordered to return to Italy, and, fearing Antonina's designs upon him, held no further communication with Belisarius until her departure for Byzantium; for he had good reason to suspect that the Empress had sent instructions to Antonina to have him murdered; and when he considered the character of Antonina and Belisarius's infatuation for his wife, which made him yield to her in everything, he was greatly alarmed.

From this time forth the power of Rome, which had long been unstable, utterly fell to the ground for want of capable support. Such were the fortunes of Belisarius in the Gothic war. After this, despairing of success, he begged the Emperor to allow him to leave Italy with all speed. When he heard that his prayer had been granted, he joyfully retired, bidding a long farewell to the Roman army and the Italians. He left the greater part of Italy in the enemy's power and Perugia in the last agonies of a terrible siege: while he was on his road home, it was taken, and endured all the miseries of a city taken by assault, as I have already related. In addition to his ill-success abroad, he also had to submit to a domestic misfortune, which came about as follows:--The Empress Theodora was eager to bring about the marriage of her grandson, Anastasius, with Belisarius's daughter, and wearied her parents with frequent letters on the subject; but they, not being desirous of contracting this alliance, put off the marriage until they could appear in person at Byzantium, and when the Empress sent for them, made the excuse that they could not leave Italy. But she persisted in her determination to make her grandson master of Belisarius's fortune, for she knew that the girl would be his heiress, as he had no other children. She did not, however, trust Antonina's character, and feared lest, after her own death, Antonina might prove unfaithful to her house, although she had found her so helpful in emergencies, and might break the compact. These considerations prompted her to a most abominable act. She made the boy and girl live together without any marriage ceremony, in violation of the laws. It is said that the girl was unwilling to cohabit with him, and that the Empress had her secretly forced to do so, that the marriage might be consummated by the dishonour of the bride, and so the Emperor might not be able to oppose it. After this had taken place, Anastasius and the girl fell passionately in love with each other, and lived together in this manner for eight months.

Immediately after the Empress's death, Antonina came to Byzantium. She found it easy to ignore the outrage which Theodora had committed upon her, and, without considering that, if she united the girl to another, she would be no better than a harlot, she drove away Theodora's grandson with insults, and forcibly separated her daughter from the man whom she loved.

This action caused her to be regarded as one of the most heartless women upon earth, but nevertheless the mother obtained, without any difficulty, Belisarius's approval of her

conduct, on his return home. Thus did this man's true character reveal itself. Although he had sworn a solemn oath to Photius and to several of his intimates and broken it, yet all men readily forgave him, because they suspected that the reason of his faithlessness was not the dominion of his wife over him, but his fear of Theodora; but now that Theodora was dead, as I have told you, he thought nothing about Photius or any of his intimates, but entirely submitted to the sway of his wife, and her pander Calligonus. Then at last all men ceased to believe in him, scorned and flouted him, and railed at him for an idiot. Such were the offences of Belisarius, about which I have been obliged to speak freely in this place.

In its proper place, I have said enough about the shortcomings of Sergius, the son of Bacchus, in Libya. I have told how he was the chief cause of the ruin of the Roman power in that country, how he broke the oath which he swore to the Levathae on the Gospels, and how he, without excuse, put to death the eighty ambassadors. I need only add in this place, that these men did not come to Sergius with any treacherous intent, and that Sergius had not the slightest reason for suspecting them, but having invited them to a banquet and taken an oath not to harm them, he cruelly butchered them.

Solomon, the Roman army, and all the Libyans were lost owing to this crime; for, in consequence of what he had done, especially after Solomon's death, no officer or soldier would expose himself to the dangers of war. John, the son of Sisinniolus, was especially averse to taking the field, out of the hatred which he bore to Sergius, until Areobindus arrived in Libya.

Sergius was effeminate and unwarlike, very young both in years and in mind, excessively jealous and insolent to all men, luxurious in his habits, and inflated with pride. However, after he had become the accepted husband of the niece of Antonina, Belisarius's wife, the Empress would not permit him to be punished in any way or removed from his office, although she saw distinctly that the state of affairs in Libya threatened its utter ruin; and she even induced the Emperor to pardon Solomon, Sergius's brother, for the murder of Pegasus. How this came to pass I will now explain.

After Pegasus had ransomed Solomon from captivity among the Levathae, and the barbarians had returned home, Solomon and Pegasus, who had ransomed him, set out, accompanied by a few soldiers, to Carthage. On the way Pegasus reproached Solomon with the wrong he had done, and bade him remember that Heaven had only just rescued him from the enemy. Solomon, enraged at being taunted with his captivity, straightway slew Pegasus, and thus requited him for having ransomed him. But when Solomon reached Byzantium, the Emperor absolved him from the guilt of murder, on the pretext that he had slain a traitor to the Roman Empire, and gave him letters of acquittal. Solomon, having thus escaped all punishment for his crime, departed gladly for the East, to visit his own country and his family; but the vengeance of God fell upon him on the way, and removed him from amongst mankind. This is what happened in regard to Solomon and Pegasus.

## CHAPTER VI

I now come to the description of the private life and character of Justinian and Theodora, and of the manner in which they rent the Roman Empire asunder.

At the time when Leo occupied the imperial throne, three young husbandmen, of Illyrian birth, named Zimarchus, Ditybistus, and Justin of Bederiane, in order to escape from their

utter poverty at home, determined to enlist in the army. They made their way to Byzantium on foot, with knapsacks of goat's-hair on their shoulders, containing nothing but a few biscuits which they had brought from home. On their arrival they were enrolled in the army, and chosen by the Emperor amongst the palace guards, being all three very handsome young men.

Afterwards, when Anastasius succeeded to the throne, war broke out with the Isaurians who had rebelled against him. He sent a considerable army against them, under the command of John, surnamed "The Hunchback." This John arrested Justin for some offence and imprisoned him, and on the following day would have put him to death, had not a vision which he beheld in his sleep prevented him. He said that, in his dream, a man of great stature, and in every way more than human, bade him release the man whom he had that day cast into prison. When he awoke, he made light of this vision; and, although he saw again the same vision and heard the same words on the following night, not even then would he obey the command. But the vision appeared for the third time, and threatened him terribly if he did not do what he was commanded, and warned him that he would thereafter stand in great need of this man and his family when his wrath should fall upon him. Thus did Justin escape death.

As time went on, this Justin rose to great power. The Emperor Anastasius appointed him commander of the palace guard, and when that prince died, he, by the influence of his position, seized the throne. He was by this time an old man with one foot in the grave, so utterly ignorant of letters, that one may say that he did not know the alphabet--a thing which had never happened before amongst the Romans. It had been customary for the Emperor to sign the decrees which were issued by him with his own hand, whereas he neither made decrees, nor was capable of conducting affairs; but Proclus, who acted as his quaestor and colleague, arranged everything at his own pleasure. However, in order that the Emperor's signature might appear in public documents, his officers invented the following device. They had the shapes of four Latin letters cut in a thin piece of wood, and then, having dipped the pen in the imperial ink used by the Emperors in writing, they put it in the Emperor's hand, and laying the piece of wood on the paper to be signed, they guided the Emperor's hand and pen round the outline of the four letters, making it follow all the convolutions cut in the wood, and then retired with the result as the Emperor's signature. This was how the affairs of the Empire were managed under Justin. His wife was named Lupicina; she was a slave and a barbarian, whom he had bought for his mistress, and at the close of his life she ascended the throne with him. Justin was not strong enough to do his subjects either good or harm; he was utterly simple, a very poor speaker, and a complete boor. Justinian was his sister's son, who, when quite a young man, practically governed the State, and brought more woe upon the Romans than anyone we have ever heard of before. He was ever ready to commit unrighteous murders and rob men of their estates, and thought nothing of making away with tens of thousands of men who had given him no cause for doing so. He had no respect for established institutions, but loved innovations in everything, and was, in short, the greatest destroyer of all the best of his country's institutions. As for the plague, of which I have made mention in the former books of my history, although it ravaged the whole earth, yet as many men escaped it as perished by it, some of them never taking the contagion, and others recovering from it. But no human being in all the Roman Empire could escape from this man, for he was like some second plague sent down from heaven to prey upon the whole human race, which left no man untouched. Some he slew without cause, others he reduced to a struggle with poverty, so that their case was more piteous than that of the dead, and they prayed daily to be relieved from their misery even by the most cruel death, while he robbed others of their lives and their property at the same time.

Not content with ruining the Roman Empire, he carried out the conquest of Italy and Africa, merely that he might treat them in the same way, and destroy the inhabitants, together with those who were already his subjects. He had not been in authority ten days before he put to death Amantius, the chief of the palace eunuchs, with several others. He had no complaint whatever against the man beyond that he had said something offensive about John the archbishop of the city. Owing to this, he became the most dreaded of all men in the world.

Immediately afterwards he sent for the usurper Vitalianus, to whom he had given the most solemn pledges for his safety, and had partaken of the Christian sacrament with him. Shortly afterwards, he conceived some suspicion of him, and made away with him and his companions in the palace, for no reason whatever, thus showing that he scorned to observe even the most solemn oaths.

## CHAPTER VII

In the former part of my history I have explained how the people had long been divided into two factions. Justinian associated himself with one of these, the Blues, which had previously favoured him, and was thus enabled to upset everything and throw all into disorder. Thereby the Roman constitution was beaten to its knees. However, all the Blues did not agree to follow his views, but only those who were inclined to revolutionary measures. Yet, as the evil spread, these very men came to be regarded as the most moderate of mankind, for they used their opportunities of doing wrong less than they might have done. Nor did the revolutionists of the Green faction remain idle, but they also, as far as they were able, continually perpetrated all kinds of excesses, although individuals of their number were continually being punished. This only made them bolder, for men, when they are treated harshly, usually become desperate.

At this time Justinian, by openly encouraging and provoking the Blue faction, shook the Roman Empire to its foundation, like an earthquake or a flood, or as though each city had been taken by the enemy. Everything was everywhere thrown into disorder; nothing was left alone. The laws and the whole fabric of the State were altogether upset, and became the very opposite of what they had been. First of all, the revolutionists altered the fashion of wearing the hair, for they cut it short, in a manner quite different to that of the rest of the Romans. They never touched the moustache and beard, but let them grow like the Persians: but they shaved the hair off the front part of their heads as far as the temples, and let it hang down long and in disorder behind, like the Massagetæ. Wherefore they called this the Hunnic fashion of wearing the hair.

In the next place they all chose to wear richly-embroidered dresses, far finer than became their several stations in life, but they were able to pay for them out of their illicit gains. The sleeves of their tunics were made as tight as possible at the wrists, but from thence to the shoulder were of an astounding width, and whenever they moved their hands, in applauding in the theatre or the hippodrome, or encouraging the competitors, this part of the tunic was waved aloft, to convey to the ignorant the impression that they were so beautifully made and so strong that they were obliged to wear such robes as these to cover their muscles. They did not perceive that the empty width of their sleeves only made their bodies appear even more stunted than they were. The cloaks, drawers and shoes which they mostly affected were called after the Huns, and made in their fashion.

At first they almost all openly went about armed at night, but by day hid short two-edged swords upon their thighs under their cloaks. They gathered together in gangs as soon as it became dusk, and robbed respectable people in the market-place and in the narrow lanes, knocking men down and taking their cloaks, belts, gold buckles, and anything else that they had in their hands. Some they murdered as well as robbed, that they might not tell others what had befallen them. These acts roused the indignation of all men, even the least disaffected members of the Blue faction; but as they began not to spare even these, the greater part began to wear brazen belts and buckles and much smaller cloaks than became their station, lest their fine clothes should be their death, and, before the sun set, they went home and hid themselves. But the evil spread, and as the authorities in charge of the people did nothing to punish the criminals, these men became very daring; for crime, when encouraged to manifest itself openly, always increases enormously, seeing that even when punished it cannot be entirely suppressed. Indeed, most men are naturally inclined to evil-doing. Such was the behaviour of the Blues.

As for the opposite faction, some of them joined the bands of their opponents, hoping thus to be able to avenge themselves upon the party which had ill-used them; some fled secretly to other lands, while many were caught on the spot and killed by their adversaries, or by order of the government. A number of young men also joined this party without having previously taken any interest in such matters, being attracted by the power and the licence which it gave them to do evil. Indeed, there was no sort of villany known amongst men which was not committed at this time unpunished.

In the beginning men put away their own opponents, but, as time went on, they murdered men who had done them no hurt. Many bribed the Blues to kill their personal enemies, whom they straightway slew, and declared that they were Greens, though they might never have seen them before. And these things were not done in the dark or by stealth, but at all hours of the day and in every part of the city, before the eyes, as it might be, of the chief men of the State; for they no longer needed to conceal their crimes, because they had no fear of punishment; but to kill an unarmed passer-by with one blow was a sort of claim to public esteem, and a means of proving one's strength and courage.

Life became so uncertain that people lost all expectation of security, for everyone continually had death before his eyes, and no place or time seemed to offer any hope of safety, seeing that men were slain indiscriminately in the holiest churches, and even during divine service. No one could trust friends or relations, for many were slain at the instance of their nearest of kin. No inquiry took place into such occurrences, but these blows fell unexpectedly upon everyone, and no one helped the fallen. Laws and contracts, which were considered confirmed, had no longer any force; everything was thrown into confusion and settled by violence. The government resembled a despotism, not a securely established one, but one which was changed almost daily, and was ever beginning afresh. The minds of the chief magistrates seemed stricken with consternation, and their spirits cowed by fear of one single man. The judges gave sentence on disputed points not according to what they thought to be lawful and right, but according as each of the litigants was a friend or an enemy of the ruling faction; for any judge who disregarded their instructions was punished with death. Many creditors also were compelled by main force to restore their bills to their debtors without having received anything of what was owing them, and many, against their will, had to bestow freedom upon their slaves.

It is said that some ladies were forced to submit to the embraces of their own slaves; and the sons of leading men who had been mixed up with these youths, forced their fathers to hand over their property to them, and to do many other things against their will. Many boys, with their fathers' knowledge, were forced to undergo dishonour at the hands of the



Blues, and women living with their own husbands were forced to submit to the like treatment.

We are told that a woman, who was not over-well dressed, was sailing with her husband in a boat towards the suburb across the strait; they met on their way some men of this faction, who took her away from her husband with threats, and placed her in their own boat. When she entered the boat together with these young men, she secretly told her husband to take courage, and not to fear any evil for her. "Never," said she, "will I permit myself to be outraged;" and while her husband was gazing on her with the greatest sorrow, she sprang into the sea, and was never seen again. Such were the outrages which the people of this faction dared to commit in Byzantium.

Yet all this did not so much gall the victims as Justinian's offences against the State; for those who suffer most cruelly from evil-doers are in great part consoled by the expectation that the law and the authorities will avenge them. If they have any hope for the future, men bear their present sufferings with a much lighter heart; but when they are outraged by the established government, they are naturally much more hurt by the evil which befalls them, and the improbability of redress drives them to despair. Justinian's fault was, not only that he turned a deaf ear to the complaints of the injured, but did not even disdain to behave himself as the avowed chief of this party; that he gave great sums of money to these youths, and kept many of them in his own retinue; that he even went so far as to appoint some of them to governments and other official posts.

## CHAPTER VIII

These excesses took place not only in Byzantium, but in every city of the Empire: for these disorders were like bodily diseases, and spread from thence over the whole Roman Empire. But the Emperor cared not at all for what was going on, although he daily beheld what took place in the hippodrome, for he was exceedingly stupid, very much like a dull-witted ass, which follows whoever holds its bridle, shaking its ears the while. This behaviour on the part of Justinian ruined everything.

As soon as he found himself the head of his uncle's empire, he at once did his utmost to squander the public treasure over which he now had control. For he lavished wealth extravagantly upon the Huns who from time to time came across and, ever afterwards, the Roman provinces were subjected to constant incursions; for these barbarians, having once tasted our wealth, could not tear themselves away from the road which led to it. Justinian also threw away great sums upon the construction of large moles, as if he thought to restrain the force of the never-resting waves. He ran out stone breakwaters from the beach far into the water to divert the currents of the ocean, and, as it were, to match his wealth against the power of the sea.

As for the private fortunes of individual Romans, he confiscated them for his own use in all parts of the empire, either by accusing their possessors of some crime of which they were innocent, or by distorting their words into a free gift of their property to him. Many were convicted on these charges of murder and other crimes, and in order to escape paying the penalty for them, gave him all that they had. Some who were engaged in making frivolous claims to land belonging to their neighbours, when they found that they had no chance of

winning their cause, as the law was against them, would make him a present of the land in dispute, and so get out of the difficulty. Thus they gained his favour by a gift that cost them nothing, and got the better of their adversaries by the most illegal means.

It will not be out of place, I think, to describe his personal appearance. He was neither tall nor too short, but of a medium height, not thin, but inclined to be fat. His face was round and not ill-favoured, and showed colour, even after a two days' fast. In a word, he greatly resembled Domitian, Vespasian's son, more than anybody else. This was the Emperor whom the Romans detested so much that they could not slake their hatred for him, even when they had torn him to pieces, but a decree of the Senate was passed to remove his name from all documents, and that all statues of him should be destroyed; wherefore his name has been erased from every inscription at Rome and everywhere else, except where it occurs in a list together with other emperors, and no statue of him is to be found in the Roman Empire, save one only, the history of which is as follows: Domitian had married a lady of noble birth and admirable conduct, who never harmed anyone, and always disapproved of her husband's evil deeds. As she was so much beloved, the Senate sent for her, after the death of Domitian, and bade her ask whatever favour she pleased. All that she asked was to receive Domitian's body for burial, and permission to erect a bronze statue to him in whatever place she might choose. The Senate consented, and Domitian's wife, not wishing to leave to posterity a memorial of the brutality of those who had butchered her husband, adopted the following plan. She collected the pieces of his body, pieced them accurately together, joined them properly, and sewed the body together again. She then sent for the statuary, and bade them reproduce this pitiable object in a brazen statue. The workmen straightway made the statue, and his wife, having received it from them, set it up in the street which leads up to the Capitol from the Forum, on the right hand side, where to this day one may see Domitian's statue, showing the marks of his tragic end. One may say that the whole of Justinian's person, his expression, and all his features can be traced in this statue.

Such was his portrait; but it would be exceedingly difficult to give an accurate estimate of his character; he was an evil-doer, and yet easily led by the nose, being, in common parlance, a fool as well as a knave. He never was truthful with anyone, but always spoke and acted cunningly, yet any who chose could easily outwit him. His character was a sorry mixture of folly and bad principles. One may say of him what one of the Peripatetic philosophers of old said long ago, that in men, as in the mixing of colours, the most opposite qualities combine. I will therefore only describe his disposition as far as I have been able to fathom it.

This prince was deceitful, fond of crooked ways, artificial, given to hiding his wrath, double-faced, and cruel, exceedingly clever in concealing his thoughts, and never moved to tears either by joy or grief, but capable of weeping if the occasion required it. He was always a liar not merely on the spur of the moment; he drew up documents and swore the most solemn oaths to respect the covenants which he made with his subjects; then he would straightway break his plighted word and his oath, like the vilest of slaves, who perjure themselves and are only driven to confess through fear of torture. He was a faithless friend, an inexorable foe, and mad for murder and plunder; quarrelsome and revolutionary, easily led to do evil, never persuaded to act rightly, he was quick to contrive and carry out what was evil, but loathed even to hear of good actions.

How could any man fully describe Justinian's character? He had all these vices and other even greater ones, in larger proportion than any man; indeed, Nature seemed to have taken away all other men's vices and to have implanted them all in this man's breast. Besides all this, he was ever disposed to give ear to accusations, and quick to punish. He never tried a

case before deciding it, but as soon as he had heard the plaintiff he straightway pronounced his judgment upon it. He wrote decrees, without the slightest hesitation, for the capture of fortresses, the burning of cities, the enslaving of whole races of men for no crime whatever, so that, if anyone were to reckon all the calamities of this nature which have befallen the Roman people before his time, and weigh them against those which were brought about by him, I imagine that it would be found that this man was guilty of far more bloodshed than any ruler of previous times.

He had no hesitation in coolly appropriating people's property, and did not even trouble himself to put forward any pretext or colourable legal ground for taking another man's goods; and, when he had got it, he was quite ready to squander it in foolish munificence or to spend it in unreasonable largesses to the barbarians. In fine, he neither had any property himself, nor would he suffer anyone else of all his subjects to have any; so that he did not seem to be so much governed by avarice as by jealousy of those who possessed wealth. He carelessly drove all the wealth of the Romans out of the country, and was the cause of general impoverishment. Such was the character of Justinian, as far as I am able to describe it.

## CHAPTER IX

As for Justinian's wife, I shall now describe her birth, how she was brought up, how she married him, and how in conjunction with him she utterly ruined the Roman Empire.

There was one Acacius at Byzantium, of the Green faction, who was keeper of the wild beasts used in the amphitheatre, and was called the Bear-keeper. This man died of some malady during the reign of Anastasius, and left three daughters, Comito, Theodora and Anastasia, the eldest of whom was not yet seven years of age. His widow married her husband's successor in his house and profession; but the chief dancer of the Green faction, named Asterius, was easily bribed into taking away the office from this man and giving it to one who paid him for it: for the dancers had the power to manage these matters as they pleased.

When Theodora's mother saw the whole populace assembled in the amphitheatre to see the show of the wild beasts, she placed fillets on her daughters' heads and hands, and made them sit in the attitude of suppliants. The Greens regarded their appeal with indifference, but the Blues, who had lately lost their own bear-keeper, bestowed the office upon them. As the children grew up, their mother straightway sent them on the stage, for they were handsome girls. She did not send them on all at once, but as each one arrived at a fit age so to do. The eldest girl, Comito, had already become one of the most celebrated prostitutes of her time.

Theodora, the next eldest, was dressed in a little sleeved tunic, such as a slave-girl would wear, and waited on her sister, carrying on her shoulders the stool in which she was wont to sit in public. Theodora was still too young to have intercourse with a man after the manner of women, but she satisfied the unnatural passions of certain wretches, even the vilest slaves, who followed their masters to the theatre and amused their leisure by this infamy. She remained for some time also in a brothel, where she practised this hateful form of vice.

As soon, however, as she reached the age of puberty, as she was handsome, her mother sent her into the theatrical troupe, and she straightway became a simple harlot, as old-fashioned people called it; for she was neither a musician nor a dancer, but merely prostituted herself to everyone whom she met, giving up every part of her body to debauchery. She associated chiefly with the theatrical "pantomimes," and took part in their performances, playing in comic scenes, for she was exceedingly witty and amusing; so that she soon became well known by her acting. She had no shame whatever, and no one ever saw her put out of countenance, but she lent herself to scandalous purposes without the least hesitation.

She excelled in raising a laugh by being slapped on her puffed-out cheeks, and used to uncover herself so far as to show the spectators everything before and behind which decency forbids to be shown to men. She stimulated her lovers by lascivious jests, and continually invented new postures of coition, by which means she completely won the hearts of all libertines; for she did not wait to be solicited by anyone whom she met, but herself, with joke and gestures, invited everyone whom she fell in with, especially beardless boys.

She never succumbed to these transports; for she often went to a supper at which each one paid his share, with ten or more young men, in the full vigour of their age and practised in debauchery, and would pass the whole night with all of them. When they were all exhausted, she would go to their servants, thirty in number, it may be, and fornicate with each one of them; and yet not even so did she quench her lust. Once she went to the house of some great man, and while the guests were drinking pulled up her clothes on the edge of the couch and did not blush to exhibit her wantonness without reserve. Though she received the male in three orifices she nevertheless complained of Nature for not having made the passage of her breasts wider, that she might contrive a new form of coition in that part of her person also.

She frequently became pregnant, but as she employed all known remedies without delay, she promptly procured abortion. Often, even on the stage, she stripped before the eyes of all the people, and stood naked in their midst, wearing only a girdle about her private parts and groin; not because she had any modesty about showing that also to the people, but because no one was allowed to go on the stage without a girdle about those parts. In this attitude she would throw herself down on the floor, and lie on her back. Slaves, whose duty it was, would then pour grains of barley upon her girdle, which trained geese would then pick up with their beaks one by one and eat. She did not blush or rise up, but appeared to glory in this performance; for she was not only without shame, but especially fond of encouraging others to be shameless, and often would strip naked in the midst of the actors, and swing herself backwards and forwards, explaining to those who had already enjoyed her and those who had not, the peculiar excellences of that exercise.

She proceeded to such extremities of abuse as to make her face become what most women's private parts are: wherefore her lovers became known at once by their unnatural tastes, and any respectable man who met her in the public streets turned away, and made haste to avoid her, lest his clothes should be soiled by contact with such an abandoned creature, for she was a bird of ill-omen, especially for those who saw her early in the day. As for her fellow-actresses, she always abused them most savagely, for she was exceedingly jealous.

Afterwards she accompanied Hecebolus, who had received the appointment of Governor of Pentapolis, to that country, to serve his basest passions, but quarrelled with him, and was straightway sent out of the country. In consequence of this she fell into want of common necessaries, with which she hereafter provided herself by prostitution, as she had been

accustomed to do. She first went to Alexandria, and afterwards wandered all through the East, until she reached Byzantium, plying her trade in every city on her way--a trade which, I imagine, Heaven will not pardon a man for calling by its right name--as if the powers of evil would not allow any place on earth to be free from the debaucheries of Theodora. Such was the birth, and such the training of this woman, and her name became better known than that of any other prostitute of her time.

On her return to Byzantium, Justinian became excessively enamoured of her. At first he had intercourse with her merely as her lover, although he raised her to the position of a patrician. By this means Theodora was straightway enabled to gain very great influence and to amass considerable sums of money. She charmed Justinian beyond all the world, and, like most infatuated lovers, he delighted to show her all the favour and give her all the money that he could. This lavishness added fuel to the flame of passion. In concert with her he plundered the people more than ever, not only in the capital, but throughout the Roman Empire; for, as both of them had for a long time been members of the Blue faction, they had placed unlimited power in its hands, although the evil was subsequently somewhat checked, in the manner which I will now relate.

Justinian had for some time suffered from a dangerous illness; in fact, it was even reported that he was dead. The Blue faction were committing the crimes of which I have spoken, and slew Hypatius, a person of consequence, in the Church of St. Sophia, in broad daylight. When the murderer had accomplished his work, clamour was raised which reached the Emperor's ears, and all his courtiers seized upon the opportunity of pointing out the outrageous character of the offence which, owing to Justinian's absence from public affairs, the murderer had been enabled to perpetrate, and enumerated all the crimes that had been committed from the outset. Hereupon the Emperor gave orders to the prefect of the city to punish these crimes. This man was named Theodotus, nick-named Colocynthus. [1] He instituted an inquiry into the whole matter, and had the courage to seize and put to death, according to the law, many of the malefactors, several of whom, however, hid themselves and so escaped, being destined to perish afterwards together with the Roman Empire. Justinian, who miraculously recovered, straightway began to plan the destruction of Theodotus, on the pretext that he was a magician and used philtres. However, as he found no proofs on which the man could be condemned, he flogged and tortured some of his intimates until he forced them to make most unfounded accusations against him. When no one dared to oppose Justinian, but silently bewailed the plot against Theodotus, Proclus, the Quaestor, alone declared that the man was innocent and did not deserve to die. Theodotus was therefore sentenced by the Emperor to banishment to Jerusalem. But, learning that certain men had been sent thither to assassinate him, he took sanctuary in the temple, where he spent the rest of his life in concealment until he died. Such was the end of Theodotus.

From this time forth, however, the Blue party behaved with the greatest moderation; they did not venture to perpetrate such crimes, although they had it in their power to abuse their authority more outrageously and with greater impunity than before. Here is a proof of this; when a few of them afterwards showed the same audacity in evil-doing, they were not punished in any way; for those who had the power to punish always gave malefactors an opportunity to escape, and by this indulgence encouraged them to trample upon the laws.



## CHAPTER X

As long as the Empress Euphemia was alive, Justinian could not contrive to marry Theodora. Though she did not oppose him on any other point, she obstinately refused her consent to this one thing. She was altogether free from vice, although she was a homely person and of barbarian descent, as I have already said. She never cultivated any active virtues, but remained utterly ignorant of State affairs. She did not bear her own name, which was a ridiculous one, when she came to the palace, but was re-named Euphemia. Soon afterwards, however, she died.

Justin was in his second childhood and so sunk in senility that he was the laughing-stock of his subjects. All despised him utterly, and disregarded him because he was incompetent to control State affairs, but they paid their court to Justinian with awe, for he terrified them all by his love of disturbance and reckless innovations.

He then resolved to bring about his marriage with Theodora. It was forbidden by the most ancient laws of the State that anyone of the senatorial order should marry a courtesan; so he prevailed upon the Emperor to repeal the existing law and introduce a new one, whereby he was allowed to live with Theodora as his legitimate wife, and it became possible for anyone else to marry a courtesan. He also straightway assumed the demeanour of absolute despot, veiling his forcible seizure of power under the pretext of reasons of State. He was proclaimed Emperor of the Romans, as his uncle's colleague. Whether this was legal or not may be doubted, since he owed his election to the terror with which he inspired those who gave him their votes.

So Justinian and Theodora ascended the Imperial throne three days before Easter, at a time when it is forbidden to make visits or even to greet one's friends. A few days later Justin was carried off by disease, after a reign of nine years, and Justinian and Theodora reigned alone.

Thus did Theodora, as I have told you, in spite of her birth and bringing-up, reach the throne without finding any obstacle in her way. Justinian felt no shame at having wedded her, although he might have chosen the best born, the best educated, the most modest and virtuously nurtured virgin in all the Roman Empire, with outstanding breasts, as the saying is; whereas he preferred to take to himself the common refuse of all mankind, and without a thought of all that has been told, married a woman stained with the shame of many abortions and many other crimes. Nothing more, I conceive, need be said about this creature's character, for all the vices of his heart are thoroughly displayed in the fact of so unworthy a marriage. When a man feels no shame at an act of this kind, and braves the loathing of the world, there is thereafter no path of wickedness which may not be trodden by him, but, with a face incapable of blushing, he plunges, utterly devoid of scruple, into the deepest baseness.

However, no one in the Senate had the courage to show dissatisfaction at seeing the State fasten this disgrace upon itself, but all were ready to worship Theodora as if she had been a goddess. Neither did any of the clergy show any indignation, but bestowed upon her the title of "Lady." The people who had formerly seen her upon the stage now declared themselves, with uplifted hands, to be her slaves, and made no secret of the name. None of the army showed irritation at having to face the dangers of war in the service of Theodora, nor did anyone of all mankind offer her the least opposition. All, I suppose, yielded to circumstances, and suffered this disgraceful act to take place, as though Fortune had wished to display her power by disposing human affairs so that events came about in utter defiance of reason, and human counsel seemed to have no share in directing them. Fortune does thus

raise men suddenly to great heights of power, by means in which reason has no share, in spite of all obstacles that may bar the way, for nothing can check her course, but she proceeds straight on towards her goal, and everything makes way for her. But let all this be, and be represented as it pleases God.

Theodora was at this time handsome and of a graceful figure, but she was short, without much colour, but rather of a pale complexion, and with brilliant and piercing eyes. It would take a life-time to tell of all her adventures during her theatrical life, but I think what little I have selected above will be sufficient to give an indication of her character. We must now briefly set forth what she and her husband did, for during their married life neither ever did anything without the other. For a long time they appeared to all to be at variance both in their characters and in their actions; but afterwards this disagreement was seen to have been purposely arranged between them, in order that their subjects might not come to an agreement and rise against them, but might all be divided in their opinion. First, they split up the Christians into two parties and brought them to ruin, as I shall tell you hereafter, by this plan of pretending to take different sides. Next they created divisions amongst the State factions. Theodora feigned to be an eager partisan of the Blues, and gave them permission to commit the greatest atrocities and deeds of violence against the opposite faction, while Justinian pretended to be grieved and annoyed in his secret soul, as though he could not oppose his wife's orders; and often they would pretend to act in opposition. The one would declare that the Blues must be punished because they were evil-doers, while the other pretended to be enraged, and angrily declared that she was overruled by her husband against her will. Yet, as I have said, the Blue faction seemed wondrously quiet, for they did not outrage their neighbours as much as they might have done.

In legal disputes, each of them would pretend to favour one of the litigants, and of necessity made the man with the worse case win; by this means they plundered both the parties of most of the disputed property. The Emperor received many persons into his intimacy, and gave them appointments with liberty to do what they pleased in the way of violent injustice and fraud against the State; but when they were seen to have amassed a considerable amount of wealth, they straightway fell into disgrace for having offended the Empress. At first Justinian would take upon himself to inquire kindly into their case, but soon he would drop the pretence of good-will, and his zeal on their behalf would throw the whole matter into confusion. Upon this, Theodora would treat them in the most shameful way, while he, pretending not to understand what was going on, would shamelessly confiscate their entire property. They used to carry on these machinations by appearing to be at variance, while really playing into each other's hands, and were thus able to set their subjects by their ears and firmly establish their own power.

## CHAPTER XI

When Justinian came to the throne, he straightway succeeded in upsetting everything. What had previously been forbidden by the laws he introduced, while he abolished all existing institutions, as though he had assumed the imperial robe for no other purpose than to alter completely the form of government. He did away with existing offices, and established other new ones for the management of affairs. He acted in the same manner in regard to the laws and the army; not that he was led to do so by any love of justice or the

public advantage, but merely in order that all institutions might be new and might bear his name; if there was any institution that he was unable to abolish at once, he gave it his name, that at least it might appear new. He could never satisfy his insatiable desire, either of money or blood; but after he had plundered one wealthy house, he would seek for another to rob, and straightway squander the plunder upon subsidies to barbarians, or senseless extravagance in building. After he had destroyed his victims by tens of thousands, he immediately began to lay plots against even greater numbers. As the Roman Empire was at peace with foreign nations, his impatience of quiet led him, out of uncontrollable love of bloodshed, to set the barbarians fighting with one another. Sending for the chieftains of the Huns for no reason whatever, he took a pride in lavishing great sums of money upon them, under the pretext of securing their friendship, just as he did in the time of the Emperor Justin, as I have already told you. These Huns, when they had got the money, sent to some of their fellow-chieftains with their retainers, and bade them make inroads into the Emperor's territory, that they also might make a bargain with him for the peace which he was so ready to purchase. These men straightway subjugated the Empire, and nevertheless remained in the Emperor's pay; and, following their examples, others straightway began to harass the wretched Romans, and, after they had secured their booty, were graciously rewarded by the Emperor for their invasion. Thus the whole Hunnish nation, one tribe after another, never ceased at any time to lay waste and plunder the Empire; for these barbarians are under several independent chieftains, and the war, having once begun through his foolish generosity, never came to an end, but always kept beginning anew; so that, during this time, there was no mountain, no cave, no spot whatever in the Roman Empire that remained unravaged, and many countries were harried and plundered by the enemy more than five several times.

These calamities, and those which were brought upon the Empire by the Medes, the Saracens, the Sclavonians, the Antes, and other barbarians, I have described in the previous books of my history; but, as I have said at the beginning of this story, I was here obliged to explain the causes which led thereto.

Justinian paid Chosroes many centenars in order to secure peace, and then, with unreasonable arbitrariness, did more than anyone to break the truce, by employing every effort to bring Alamundur and his Huns over to his own side, as I have already set forth in plain terms in my history.

While he was stirring up all this strife and war to plague the Romans, he also endeavoured, by various devices, to drench the earth in human blood, to carry off more riches for himself, and to murder many of his subjects. He proceeded as follows. There prevail in the Roman Empire many Christian doctrines which are known as heresies, such as those of the Montanists and Sabbatians and all the others by which men's minds are led astray. Justinian ordered all these beliefs to be abandoned in favour of the old religion, and threatened the recusants with legal disability to transmit their property to their wives and children by will. The churches of these so-called heretics--especially those belonging to the Arian heresy--were rich beyond belief. Neither the whole of the Senate, or any other of the greatest corporations in the Roman Empire, could be compared with these churches in wealth. They had gold and silver plate and jewels more than any man could count or describe; they owned many mansions and villages, and large estates everywhere, and everything else which is reckoned and called wealth among men.

As none of the previous Emperors had interfered with them, many people, even of the orthodox faith, procured, through this wealth, work and the means of livelihood. But the Emperor Justinian first of all sequestrated all the property of these churches, and suddenly took away all that they possessed, by which many people lost the means of subsistence.

Many agents were straightway sent out to all parts of the Empire to force whomsoever they met to change the faith of his forefathers. These homely people, considering this an act of impiety, decided to oppose the Emperor's agents. Hereupon many were put to death by the persecuting faction, and many made an end of themselves, thinking, in their superstitious folly, that this course best satisfied the claims of religion; but the greater part of them voluntarily quitted the land of their forefathers, and went into exile. The Montanists, who were settled in Phrygia, shut themselves up in their churches, set them on fire, and perished in the flames; and, from this time forth, nothing was to be seen in the Roman Empire except massacres and flight.

Justinian straightway passed a similar law with regard to the Samaritans, which produced a riot in Palestine. In my own city of Caesarea and other cities, the people, thinking that it was a foolish thing to suffer for a mere senseless dogma, adopted, in place of the name which they had hitherto borne, the appellation of "Christians," and so avoided the danger with which they were threatened by this law. Such of them as had any claims to reason and who belonged to the better class, thought it their duty to remain stedfast to their new faith; but the greater part, as though out of pique at having been forced against their will by the law to abandon the faith of their fathers, adopted the belief of the Manicheans, or what is known as Polytheism.

But all the country people met together in a body and determined to take up arms against the Emperor. They chose a leader of their own, named Julian, the son of Sabarus, and for some time held their own in the struggle with the Imperial troops, but were at last defeated and cut to pieces, together with their leader. It is said that one hundred thousand men fell in this engagement, and the most fertile country on the earth has ever since been without cultivators. This did great harm to the Christian landowners in that country, for, although they received nothing from their property, yet they were forced to pay heavy taxes yearly to the Emperor for the rest of their lives, and no abatement or relief from this burden was granted to them.

After this he began to persecute those who were called Gentiles, torturing their persons and plundering their property. All of these people, who decided to adopt the Christian faith nominally, saved themselves for the time, but not long afterwards most of them were caught offering libations and sacrifices and performing other unholy rites. How he treated the Christians I will subsequently relate.

Next he forbade paederasty by law, and he made this law apply not only to those who transgressed it after it had been passed, but even to those who had practised this wickedness long before. The law was applied to these persons in the loosest fashion, the testimony of one man or boy, who possibly might be a slave unwilling to bear witness against his master, was held to be sound evidence. Those who were convicted were carried through the city, after having had their genitals cut off. This cruelty was not at first practised against any except those who belonged to the Green faction or were thought to be very rich, or had otherwise offended.

Justinian and Theodora also dealt very harshly with the astrologers, so that the officers appointed to punish thieves proceeded against these men for no other cause than that they were astrologers, dealt many stripes on their backs, and paraded them on camels through the city; yet they were old and respectable men, against whom no reproach could be brought except that they dwelt in Byzantium and were learned about the stars.

There was a continual stream of emigration, not only to the lands of the barbarians, but also to the nations most remote from Rome; and one saw a very great number of foreigners

both in the country and in each city of the Empire, for men lightly exchanged their native land for another, as though their own country had been captured by an enemy.

## CHAPTER XII

Those who were considered the wealthiest persons in Byzantium and the other cities of the Empire, next after members of the Senate, were robbed of their wealth by Justinian and Theodora in the manner which I have described above. I shall now describe how they managed to take away all the property of members of the Senate.

There was at Constantinople one Zeno, the grandson of that Anthemius who formerly had been Emperor of the West. They sent this man to Egypt as governor. He delayed his departure, while he loaded his ship with precious valuables; for he had silver beyond any man's counting, and gold plate set with pearls and emeralds, and with other like precious stones. But Justinian and Theodora bribed some of those who passed for his most faithful servants, to take everything out of the ship as fast as they could, set it on fire in the hold, and then go and tell Zeno that his ship had taken fire of its own accord, and that all his property was lost. Some time after this Zeno died suddenly, and they took possession of his property as his heirs, producing a will which, it is currently reported, was never made by him.

In like manner they made themselves the heirs of Tatian, of Demosthenes, and of Hilara, persons who at that time held the first rank in the Roman Senate. They obtained other persons' fortunes by the production, not of formal wills, but of counterfeit conveyances. This was how they became the heirs of Dionysius, who dwelt in Libanus, and of John the son of Basil, who was the leading man in Edessa, and had been delivered up to the Persians as a hostage against his will by Belisarius, as I have told already. Chosroes kept this John a prisoner, and refused to let him go, declaring that the Romans had not performed all the terms of the treaty for which John had been given in pledge by Belisarius, but he was prepared to let him be ransomed as a prisoner of war. His grandmother, who was still alive, got together the money for his ransom, not less than two thousand pounds of silver, and would have ransomed her grandson; but when this money arrived at Dara, the Emperor heard of the transaction and forbade it, that the wealth of Romans might not be conveyed to barbarians. Not long after this John fell ill and died; whereupon the governor of the city forged a letter which he said John had written to him as a friend not long before, to the effect that he desired the Emperor to succeed to his property.

I could not give the list of all the other people whose heirs Justinian and Theodora became by the free will of the testators. However, up to the time of the insurrection called Nika, they only plundered rich men of their property one by one; but when this broke out, as I have described in my former works, they then sequestered nearly all the property of the Senate. They laid their hands upon all movables and the finest parts of the estates, but set apart such lands as were burdened with grievous imposts, and, under pretence of kindness, restored them to their former possessors. So these people, oppressed by the tax-gatherers, and tormented by the never-ceasing interest to be paid upon their debts, became weary of their lives.



For the reasons which I have stated, I, and many of my position, never believed that they were really two human beings, but evil demons, and what the poets call scourges of mankind, who laid their heads together to see how they could fastest and most easily destroy the race and the works of man, but who had assumed human forms, and become something between men and demons, and thus convulsed the whole world. One can find proofs of this theory more particularly in the superhuman power with which they acted.

There is a wide distinction between the human and the supernatural. Many men have been born in every age who, either by circumstances or their own character, have shown themselves terrible beings, who became the ruin of cities, countries, and whatever else fell into their hands; but to destroy all men and to ruin the whole earth has been granted to none save these two, who have been helped by Fortune in their schemes to destroy the whole human race. For, about this time, much ruin was caused by earthquakes, pestilences and inundations of rivers, as I shall immediately tell you. Thus it was not by mere human power, but by something greater, that they were enabled to work their evil will.

It is said that Justinian's mother told some of her intimates that Justinian was not the son of Sabbatius, her husband, or of any human being; but that, at the time when she became pregnant, an unseen demon companied with her, whom she only felt as when a man has connection with a woman, and who then vanished away as in a dream.

Some who have been in Justinian's company in the palace very late at night, men with a clear conscience, have thought that in his place they have beheld a strange and devilish form. One of them said that Justinian suddenly arose from his royal throne and walked about (although, indeed, he never could sit still for long), and that at that moment his head disappeared, while the rest of his body still seemed to move to and fro. The man who beheld this stood trembling and troubled in mind, not knowing how to believe his eyes. Afterwards the head joined the body again, and united itself to the parts from which it had so strangely been severed.

Another declared that he stood beside Justinian as he sat, and of a sudden his face turned into a shapeless mass of flesh, without either eyebrows or eyes in their proper places, or anything else which makes a man recognisable; but after a while he saw the form of his face come back again. What I write here I did not see myself, but I heard it told by men who were positive that they had seen it.

They say, too, that a certain monk, highly in favour with God, was sent to Byzantium by those who dwelt with him in the desert, to beg that favour might be shown to their neighbours, who had been wronged and outraged beyond endurance. When he arrived at Byzantium, he straightway obtained an audience of the Emperor; but just as he was about to enter his apartment, he started back, and, turning round, suddenly withdrew. The eunuch, who was escorting him, and also the bystanders, besought him earnestly to go forward, but he made no answer, but like one who has had a stroke of the palsy, made his way back to his lodging. When those who had come with him asked why he acted thus, they say that he distinctly stated that he saw the chief of the devils sitting on his throne in the midst of the palace, and he would not meet him or ask anything of him. How can one believe this man to have been anything but an evil demon, who never took his fill of drink, food, or sleep, but snatched at the meals which were set before him anyhow, and roamed about the palace at untimely hours of the night, and yet was so passionately addicted to venery.

Some of Theodora's lovers, when she was still on the stage, declare that a demon had fallen upon them and driven them out of her bedchamber that it might pass the night with her. There was a dancer named Macedonia, who belonged to the Blue faction at Antioch, and had very great influence with Justinian. This woman used to write letters to him while

Justin was still on the throne, and thus easily made away with any great man in the East whom she chose, and caused their property to be confiscated for the public use. They say that this Macedonia once greeted Theodora, when she saw her very much troubled and cast down at the ill-treatment which she had received at the hands of Hecebolius, and at the loss of her money on her journey, and encouraged and cheered her, bidding her remember the fickleness of fortune, which might again grant her great possessions. They say that Theodora used to tell how, that night, she had a dream which bade her take no thought about money, for that when she came to Byzantium, she would share the bed of the chief of the demons; that she must manage by all means to become his wedded wife, and that afterwards she would have all the wealth of the world at her disposal.

This was the common report in regard to these matters.

### CHAPTER XIII

Although Justinian's character was such as I have already explained, he was easy of access, and affable to those whom he met. No one was ever denied an audience, and he never was angry even with those who did not behave or speak properly in his presence. But, on the other hand, he never felt ashamed of any of the murders which he committed. However, he never displayed any anger or pettishness against those who offended him, but preserved a mild countenance and an unruffled brow, and with a gentle voice would order tens of thousands of innocent men to be put to death, cities to be taken by storm, and property to be confiscated. One would think, from his manner, that he had the character of a sheep; but if anyone, pitying his victims, were to endeavour, by prayers and supplications, to make him relent, he would straightway become savage, show his teeth, and vent his rage upon his subjects. As for the priests, he let them override their neighbours with impunity, and delighted to see them plunder those round about them, thinking that in this manner he was showing piety. Whenever he had to decide any lawsuit of this sort, he thought that righteous judgment consisted in letting the priest win his cause and leave the court in triumph with some plunder to which he had no right whatever; for, to him, justice meant the success of the priest's cause.

He himself, when by malpractices he had obtained possession of the property of people, alive or dead, would straightway present his plunder to one of the churches, by which means he would hide his rapacity under the cloak of piety, and render it impossible for his victims ever to recover their possessions. Indeed, he committed numberless murders through his notion of piety; for, in his zeal to bring all men to agree in one form of Christian doctrine, he recklessly murdered all who dissented therefrom, under the pretext of piety, for he did not think that it was murder, if those whom he slew were not of the same belief as himself. Thus, his thoughts were always fixed upon slaughter, and, together with his wife, he neglected no excuse which could bring it about; for both of these beings had for the most part the same passions, but sometimes they played a part which was not natural to them; for each of them was thoroughly wicked, and by their pretended differences of opinion, brought their subjects to ruin. Justinian's character was weaker than water, and anyone could lead him whither he would, provided it was not to commit any act of kindness or incur the loss of money. He especially delighted in flattery, so that his flatterers could easily make him believe that he should soar aloft and tread upon the clouds. Once indeed, Tribonianus,

when sitting by him, declared that he was afraid that some day Justinian would be caught up into heaven because of his righteousness, and would be lost to men. Such praises, or rather sneers, as these he constantly bore in mind; yet, if he admired any man for his goodness, he would shortly afterwards upbraid him for a villain, and after having railed at one of his subjects without any cause, he would suddenly take to praising him, having changed his mind on no grounds whatever; for what he really thought was always the opposite of what he said, and wished to appear to think. How he was affected by emotions of love or hate I think I have sufficiently indicated by what I have said concerning his actions. As an enemy, he was obstinate and relentless; as a friend, inconstant; for he made away with many of his strongest partisans, but never became the friend of anyone whom he had once disliked. Those whom he appeared to consider his nearest and dearest friends he would in a short time deliver up to ruin to please his wife or anyone else, although he knew well that they died only because of devotion for him; for he was untrustworthy in all things save cruelty and avarice, from which nothing could restrain him. Whenever his wife could not persuade him to do a thing, she used to suggest that great gain was likely to result from it, and this enabled her to lead him into any course of action against his will. He did not blush to make laws and afterwards repeal them, that he might make some infamous profit thereby. Nor did he give judgment according to the laws which he himself had made, but in favour of the side which promised him the biggest and most splendid bribe. He thought it no disgrace to steal away the property of his subjects, little by little, in cases where he had no grounds for taking it away all at one swoop, either by some unexpected charge or a forged will. While he was Emperor of the Romans neither faith in God nor religion was secure, no law continued in force, no action, no contract was binding. When he intrusted any business to his officials, if they put to death numbers of those who fell into their hands and carried off great wealth as plunder, they were looked upon as faithful servants of the Emperor, and were spoken of as men who had accurately carried out his instructions; but, if they came back after having shown any mercy, he took a dislike to them and was their enemy for life, and never again would employ them, being disgusted with their old-fashioned ways. For this reason many men were anxious to prove to him that they were villains, although they really were not such. He would often make men repeated promises, and confirm his promise by an oath or by writing, and then purposely forget all about it, and think that such an action did him credit. Justinian behaved in this manner not only towards his own subjects, but also towards many of his enemies, as I have already told. As a rule he dispensed with both rest and sleep, and never took his fill of either food or drink, but merely picked up a morsel to taste with the tips of his fingers, and then left his dinner, as if eating had been a bye-work imposed upon him by nature. He would often go without food for two days and nights, especially when fasting was enjoined, on the eve of the feast of Easter, when he would often fast for two days, taking no sustenance beyond a little water and a few wild herbs, and sleeping, as it might be, for one hour only, passing the rest of the time in walking to and fro. Had he spent all this time in useful works, the State would have nourished exceedingly; but, as it was, he used his natural powers to work the ruin of the Romans, and succeeded in thoroughly disorganizing the constitution. His constant wakefulness, his privations, and his labour were undergone for no other purpose than to make the sufferings of his subjects every day more grievous; for, as I have said before, he was especially quick in devising crimes, and swift to carry them out, so that even his good qualities seemed to have been so largely bestowed upon him merely for the affliction of his people.

## CHAPTER XIV

Everything was done at the wrong time, and nothing that was established was allowed to continue. To prevent my narrative being interminable, I will merely mention a few instances, and pass over the remainder in silence. In the first place, Justinian neither possessed in himself the appearance of Imperial dignity, nor demanded that it should be respected by others, but imitated the barbarians in language, appearance, and ideas. When he had to issue an Imperial decree, he did not intrust it to the Quaestor in the usual way, but for the most part delivered it himself by word of mouth, although he spoke his own language like a foreigner; or else he left it in the hands of one of those by whom he was surrounded, so that those who had been injured by such resolutions did not know to whom to apply. Those who were called *A Secretis*, and had from very ancient times fulfilled the duty of writing the secret dispatches of the Emperor, were no longer allowed to retain their privileges; for he himself wrote them nearly all, even the sentences of the municipal magistrates, no one throughout the Roman world being permitted to administer justice with a free hand. He took everything upon himself with unreasoning arrogance, and so managed cases that were to be decided, that, after he had heard one of the litigants, he immediately pronounced his verdict and obliged them to submit to it, acting in accordance with no law or principle of justice, but being evidently overpowered by shameful greed. For the Emperor was not ashamed to take bribes, since his avarice had deprived him of all feelings of shame. It frequently happened that the decrees of the Senate and the edicts of the Emperor were opposed to each other; for the Senate was as it were but an empty shadow, without the power of giving its vote or of keeping up its dignity; it was assembled merely for form's sake and in order to keep up an ancient custom, for none of its members were allowed to utter a single word. But the Emperor and his consort took upon themselves the consideration of questions that were to be discussed, and whatever resolutions they came to between themselves prevailed. If he whose cause had been victorious had any doubt as to the legality of his success, all he had to do was to make a present of gold to the Emperor, who immediately promulgated a law contrary to all those formerly in force. If, again, anyone else desired the revival of the law that had been repealed, the autocrat did not disdain to revoke the existing order of things and to reestablish it. There was nothing stable in his authority, but the balance of justice inclined to one side or the other, according to the weight of gold in either scale. In the market-place there were buildings under the management of palace officials, where traffic was carried on, not only in judicial, but also in legislative decisions. The officers called "*Referendars*" (or mediators) found it difficult to present the requests of petitioners to the Emperor, and still more difficult to bring before the council in the usual manner the answer proper to be made to each of them; but, gathering together from all quarters worthless and false testimony, they deceived Justinian, who was naturally a fit subject for deception, by fallacious reports and misleading statements. Then, immediately going out to the contending parties, without acquainting them with the conversation that had taken place, they extorted from them as much money as they required, without anyone venturing to oppose them.

Even the soldiers of the Praetorian guard, whose duty it was to attend the judges in the court of the palace, forced from them whatsoever judgments they pleased. All, so to speak, abandoned their own sphere of duty, and followed the paths that pleased them, however difficult or untrodden they had previously been. Everything was out of gear; offices were degraded, not even their names being preserved. In a word, the Empire resembled a queen

over boys at play. But I must pass over the rest, as I hinted at the commencement of this work.

I will now say something about the man who first taught the Emperor to traffic in the administration of justice. His name was Leo; he was a native of Cilicia, and passionately eager to enrich himself. He was the most utterly shameless of flatterers, and most apt in ingratiating himself with the ignorant, and with the Emperor, whose folly he made use of in order to ruin his subjects. It was this Leo who first persuaded Justinian to barter justice for money. When this man had once discovered these means of plunder, he never stopped. The evil spread and reached such a height that, if anyone desired to come off victorious in an unjust cause against an honest man, he immediately repaired to Leo, and, promising to give half of his claim to be divided between the latter and the Emperor, left the palace, having already gained his cause, contrary to all principles of right and justice. In this manner Leo acquired a vast fortune, and a great quantity of land, and became the chief cause of the ruin of the State. There was no longer any security in contracts, in law, in oaths, in written documents, in any penalty agreed upon, or in any other security, unless money had been previously given to Leo and the Emperor. Nor was even this method certain, for Justinian would accept bribes from both parties; and, after having drained the pockets of both of those who had put confidence in him, he was not ashamed to cheat one or other of them (no matter which), for, in his eyes, there was nothing disgraceful in playing a double part, provided only that it turned out profitable for him.

Such a man was Justinian.

## CHAPTER XV

As for Theodora, her disposition was governed by the most hardened and inveterate cruelty. She never did anything either under persuasion or compulsion, but employed all her self-willed efforts to carry out her resolutions, and no one ventured to intercede in favour of those who fell in her way. Neither length of time, nor fulness of punishment, nor carefully drawn-up prayers, nor the fear of death, nor the vengeance of Heaven, by awe of which the whole human race is impressed, could persuade her to abate her wrath. In a word, no one ever saw Theodora reconciled to one who had offended her, either during his lifetime or after his death; for the children of the deceased father inherited the hatred of the Empress, as if it were part of his patrimony; and, when he died, left it in turn to his sons. Her mind was ever most readily stirred to the destruction of men, and was incapable of being checked. She bestowed upon her person greater care than necessity demanded, but less than her desire prompted her to. She entered the bath very early in the morning; and, having spent a long time over her ablutions, went to breakfast, and afterwards again retired to rest. At dinner and supper she partook of every kind of food and drink. She slept a great deal: during the day, till nightfall, and, during the night, till sunrise. And, although she thus abandoned herself to every intemperance, she considered that the little time she had left was sufficient for the conduct of the affairs of the Roman Empire. If the Emperor intrusted anyone with a commission without having previously consulted Theodora, the unfortunate man soon found himself deprived of his office, in the deepest disgrace, and perished by a most dishonourable death. Justinian was speedy in the conduct of business of all kinds, not only owing to his continual sleeplessness (as has been mentioned before), but also by reason



of his easiness of temper, and, above all, his affability. For he allowed people to approach him, although they were altogether obscure and unknown; and the interview was not limited to mere admission to the presence of the Emperor, but he permitted them to converse and associate with him on confidential terms. With the Empress the case was different; even the highest officials were not admitted until they had waited a long time, and after a great deal of trouble. They all waited patiently every day, like so many slaves, in a body, in a narrow and stifling room; for the risk they ran if they absented themselves was most serious. There they remained standing all the time on tip-toe, each trying to keep his face above his fellow's, that the eunuchs, as they came out, might see them. Some were invited to her presence, but rarely, and after several days of attendance; when at last they were admitted, they merely did obeisance to her, kissed both her feet, and then hastily retired in great awe; for they were not allowed to address her or to prefer any request except at her bidding; so slavishly had the spirit of Roman society degenerated under the instruction of Theodora, and to such a state of decay had the affairs of the Empire sunk, partly in consequence of the too great apparent easiness of the Emperor, partly owing to the harsh and peevish nature of Theodora; for the easiness of the one was uncertain, while the peevishness of the other hindered the transaction of public business.

There was this difference in their disposition and manner of life; but, in their love of money, thirst of blood, and aversion to truth, they were in perfect accord. They were, both of them, exceedingly clever inventors of falsehoods; if any one of those who had incurred the displeasure of Theodora was accused of any offence, however trivial and unimportant, she immediately trumped up against him charges with which he was in no way concerned, and greatly aggravated the matter. A number of accusations were heard, and a court was immediately appointed to put down and plunder the subjects; judges were called together by her, who would compete amongst themselves to see which of them might best be able to accommodate his decision to the cruelty of Theodora. The property of the accused was immediately confiscated, after he had first been cruelly flogged by her orders (although he might be descended from an illustrious family), nor had she any scruples about banishing, or even putting him to death. On the other hand, if any of her favourites were found guilty of murder or any other great crime, she pulled to pieces and scoffed at the efforts of the accusers, and forced them, against their will, to abandon proceedings. Whenever it pleased her, she turned affairs of the greatest importance into ridicule, as if they were taking place upon the stage of the theatre. A certain patrician, of advanced age, and who had for a long time held office (whose name is known to me, although I will not disclose it, in order to avoid bringing infinite disgrace upon him), being unable to recover a large sum of money which was owing to him from one of Theodora's attendants, applied to her, intending to press his claim against the debtor, and to beg her to assist him in obtaining his rights. Having heard of this beforehand, Theodora ordered her eunuchs to surround the patrician in a body on his arrival, and to listen to what was said by her, so that they might reply in a set form of words previously suggested by her. When the patrician entered her chamber, he prostrated himself at her feet in the usual manner, and, with tears in his eyes, thus addressed her:

"O sovereign lady! it is hard for a patrician to be in want of money; for that which in the case of others excites pity and compassion, becomes, in the case of a person of rank, a calamity and a disgrace. When any ordinary individual is in great straits, and informs his creditors, this immediately affords him relief from his trouble; but a patrician, when unable to pay his creditors, would, in the first place, be ashamed to own it; and, if he did so, he would never make them believe it, since the world is firmly convinced that poverty can never be associated with our class; even if he *should* persuade them to believe it, it would be the greatest blow to his dignity and reputation that could happen. Well, my lady, I owe

money to some, while others owe money to me. Out of respect for my rank, I cannot cheat my creditors, who are pressing me sorely, whereas my debtors, not being patricians, have recourse to cruel subterfuges. Wherefore, I beg and entreat and implore your majesty to assist me to gain my rights, and to deliver me from my present misfortunes!"

Such were his words. Theodora then commenced to sing, "O patrician," and the eunuchs took up her words and joined in chorus, "you have a large tumour." When he again entreated her, and added a few words to the same effect as before, her only answer was the same refrain, which was taken up by the chorus of eunuchs. At length the unhappy man, tired of the whole affair, did reverence to the Empress in the usual manner, and returned home.

During the greater part of the year, Theodora resided in the suburbs on the coast, chiefly in the Heraeum, where her numerous retinue and attendants suffered great inconvenience, for they were short of the necessaries of life, and were exposed to the perils of the sea, of sudden storms, or the attacks of sea-monsters. However, they regarded the greatest misfortunes as of no importance, if only they had the means of enjoying the pleasures of the court.

## CHAPTER XVI

I will now relate how Theodora treated those who had offended her, merely giving a few details, that I may not seem to have undertaken a task without end.

When Amalasueta, as I have narrated in the earlier books, desiring to abandon her connection with the affairs of the Goths, resolved to change her manner of life, and to retire to Byzantium, Theodora, considering that she was of illustrious descent and a princess, that she was of singular beauty, and exceedingly active in forming plans to carry out her wishes, was seized with suspicion of her distinguished qualities and eminent courage, and at the same time with apprehensions on account of her husband's fickleness. This made her exceedingly jealous; and she determined to compass the death of her rival by intrigue. She immediately persuaded the Emperor to send a man named Peter, by himself, to Italy, as ambassador to her. On his setting out, the Emperor gave him the instructions which I have mentioned in the proper place, where it was impossible for me to inform my readers of the truth, for fear of the Empress. The only order she gave the ambassador was to compass the death of Amalasueta with all possible despatch, having bribed him with the promise of great rewards if he successfully carried out his instructions. This man, expecting either preferment or large sums of money (for under such circumstances men are not slow to commit an unjust murder), when he reached Italy, by some arguments or other persuaded Theodatus to make away with Amalasueta. After this, Peter was advanced to the dignity of "Master of Offices," and attained to the highest influence, in spite of the detestation with which he was universally regarded. Such was the end of the unhappy Amalasueta.

Justinian had a secretary named Priscus, a Paphlagonian by birth, a man distinguished in every kind of villainy, a likely person to please the humour of his master, to whom he was exceedingly devoted, and from whom he expected to receive similar consideration; and by these means, in a short time, he unjustly amassed great wealth. Theodora, unable to endure his insolence and opposition, accused him to the Emperor. At first she was unsuccessful,

but, shortly afterwards, she put him on board a ship, sent him away to a place she had previously determined upon, and having ordered him to be shaved, forced him to become a priest. In the meantime, Justinian, pretending that he knew nothing of what was going on, neither inquired to what part of the world Priscus had been banished, nor ever thought of him again afterwards, but remained silent, as if he had fallen into a state of lethargy. However, he seized the small fortune that he had left behind him.

Theodora had become suspicious of one of her servants named Areobindus, a barbarian by birth, but a youth of great comeliness, whom she had appointed her steward. Wishing to purge the imagined offence, (although, as was said) she was violently enamoured of him, she caused him to be cruelly beaten with rods, for no apparent reason. What became of him afterwards we do not know; nor has anyone seen him up to the present day. For when Theodora desired to keep any of her actions secret, she took care to prevent their being talked about or remembered. None of those who were privy to them were permitted to disclose them even to their nearest relations, or to any who desired to obtain information on the subject, however curious they might be. No tyrant had ever yet inspired such fear, since it was impossible for any word or deed of her opponents to pass unnoticed. For she had a number of spies in her employ who informed her of everything that was said and done in public places and private houses. When she desired to punish anyone who had offended her, she adopted the following plan. If he were a patrician, she sent for him privately, and handed him over to one of her confidential attendants, with instructions to carry him to the furthest boundaries of the empire. In the dead of night, her agent, having bound the unfortunate man and muffled his face, put him on board a ship, and, having accompanied him to the place whither he had been instructed to convey him, departed, having first delivered him secretly to another who was experienced in this kind of service, with orders that he was to be kept under the strictest watch, and that no one should be informed of it, until either the Empress took pity upon the unfortunate man, or, worn out by his sufferings, he at length succumbed and died a miserable death.

A youth of distinguished family, belonging to the Green faction, named Basianus, had incurred the Empress's displeasure by speaking of her in sarcastic terms. Hearing that she was incensed against him, he fled for refuge to the church of St. Michael the Archangel. Theodora immediately sent the Praetor of the people to seize him, bidding him charge him, however, not with insolence towards herself, but with the crime of sodomy. The magistrate, having dragged him from the church, subjected him to such intolerable torments, that the whole assembled people, deeply moved at seeing a person of such noble mien, and one who had been so delicately brought up, exposed to such shameful treatment, immediately commiserated his sufferings, and cried out with loud lamentations that reached the heavens, imploring pardon for the young man.

But Theodora persisted in her work of punishment, and caused his death by ordering him to be castrated, although he had been neither tried nor condemned. His property was confiscated by the Emperor. Thus this woman, when infuriated, respected neither the sanctuary of the church, nor the prohibitive authority of the laws, nor the intercession of the people, nor any other obstacle whatsoever. Nothing was able to save from her vengeance anyone who had given her offence. She conceived a hatred, on the ground of his belonging to the Green faction, for a certain Diogenes, a native of Constantinople, an agreeable person, who was liked by the Emperor and everyone else. In her wrath, she accused him, in like manner, of sodomy, and, having suborned two of his servants, put them up to give evidence against and to accuse their master. But, as he was not tried secretly and in private, as was the usual custom, but in public, owing to the reputation he enjoyed, a number of distinguished persons were selected as judges, and they, scrupulous in the discharge of their

duties, rejected the testimony of his servants as insufficient, especially on the ground of their not being of legal age. The Empress thereupon caused one of the intimate friends of Diogenes, named Theodorus, to be shut up in one of her ordinary prisons, and endeavoured to win him over, at one time by flattery, at another by ill-treatment. When none of these measures proved successful, she ordered a cord of ox-hide to be bound round his head, over his forehead and ears and then to be twisted and tightened. She expected that, under this treatment, his eyes would have started from their sockets, and that he would have lost his sight. But Theodorus refused to tell a lie. The judges, for want of proof, acquitted him; and his acquittal was made the occasion of public rejoicing.

Such was the manner in which Theodorus was treated.

## CHAPTER XVII

As for the manner in which she treated Belisarius, Photius, and Buzes, I have already spoken of it at the commencement of this work.

Two Cilicians, belonging to the Blue faction, during a mutiny, laid violent hands upon Callinicus, governor of the second Cilicia, and slew his groom, who was standing near him, and endeavoured to defend his master, in the presence of the governor and all the people. Callinicus condemned them to death, since they had been convicted of several other murders besides this. When Theodora heard of this, in order to show her devotion to the party of the Blues, she ordered that the governor, while he still held office, should be crucified in the place where the two offenders had been executed, although he had committed no crime. The Emperor, pretending that he bitterly lamented his loss, remained at home, grumbling and threatening all kinds of vengeance upon the perpetrators of the deed. He did nothing, however; but, without scruple, appropriated the property of the dead man to his own use. Theodora likewise devoted her attention to punishing those women who prostituted their persons. She collected more than five hundred harlots, who sold themselves for three obols in the market-place, thereby securing a bare subsistence, and transported them to the other side of the Bosphorus, where she shut them up in the Monastery of Repentance, with the object of forcing them to change their manner of life. Some of them, however, threw themselves from the walls during the night, and in this manner escaped a change of life so contrary to their inclinations.

There were at Byzantium two young sisters, illustrious not only by the consulships of their father and grandfather, but by a long descent of nobility, and belonging to one of the chief families of the Senate. They had married early and lost their husbands. Theodora, charging them with living an immoral life, selected two debauchees from the common people and designed to make them their husbands. The young widows, fearing that they might be forced to obey, took refuge in the church of St. Sophia, and, approaching the sacred bath, clung closely to the font. But the Empress inflicted such privations and cruel treatment upon them, that they preferred marriage in order to escape from their immediate distress. In this manner Theodora showed that she regarded no sanctuary as inviolable, no spot as sacred. Although suitors of noble birth were ready to espouse these ladies, they were married against their will to two men, poor and outcast, and far below them in rank. Their mother, who was a widow like themselves, was present at the marriage, but did not venture to cry out or express her sorrow at this atrocious act. Afterwards, Theodora, repenting of

what she had done, endeavoured to console them by promoting their husbands to high offices to the public detriment. But even this was no consolation to these young women, for their husbands inflicted incurable and insupportable woes upon almost all their subjects, as I will describe later; for Theodora paid no heed to the dignity of the office, the interests of the State, or any other consideration, provided only she could accomplish her wishes.

While still on the stage, she became with child by one of her friends, but did not perceive her misfortune until it was too late. She tried all the means she had formerly employed to procure abortion, but she was unable prematurely to destroy the living creature by any means whatsoever, since it had nearly assumed the form of a human being. Therefore, finding her remedies unsuccessful, she abandoned the attempt, and was obliged to bring forth the child. Its father, seeing that Theodora was at a loss what to do, and was indignant because, now that she had become a mother, she was no longer able to traffic with her person as before, and being with good reason in fear for the child's life, took it up, named it John, and carried it away with him to Arabia, whither he had resolved to retire. The father, just before his death, gave John, who was now grown up, full information concerning his mother.

John, having performed the last offices for his dead father, some time afterwards repaired to Byzantium, and explained the state of affairs to those who were charged with the duty of arranging admission to an audience with the Empress. They, not suspecting that she would conceive any inhuman designs against him, announced to the mother the arrival of her son. She, fearing that the report might reach the ears of the Emperor, ordered her son to be brought to her. When she saw him approaching, she went to meet him and handed him over to one of her confidants, whom she always intrusted with commissions of this kind. In what manner the unfortunate youth disappeared I cannot say. He has never been seen to this day--not even after his mother's death.

At that time the morals of women were almost without exception corrupt. They were faithless to their husbands with absolute licence, since the crime of adultery brought neither danger nor harm upon them. When convicted of the offence, they escaped punishment, thanks to the Empress, to whom they immediately applied. Then, getting the verdict quashed on the ground that the charges were not proved, they in turn accused their husbands, who, although not convicted, were condemned to refund twice the amount of the dower, and, for the most part, were flogged and led away to prison, where they were permitted to look upon their adulterous wives again, decked out in fine garments and in the act of committing adultery without the slightest shame with their lovers, many of whom, by way of recompense, received offices and rewards. This was the reason why most husbands afterwards put up with unholy outrages on the part of their wives, and gladly endured them in silence in order to escape the lash. They even afforded them every opportunity to avoid being surprised.

Theodora claimed complete control of the State at her sole discretion. She appointed magistrates and ecclesiastical dignitaries. Her only care and anxiety was--and as to this she made the most careful investigation--to prevent any office being given to a good and honourable man, who might be prevented by his conscience from assisting her in her nefarious designs.

She ordered all marriages as it were by a kind of divine authority; men never made a voluntary agreement before marriage. A wife was found for each without any previous notice, not because she pleased him (as is generally the case even amongst the barbarians) but because Theodora so desired it. Brides also had to put up with the same treatment, and were obliged to marry husbands whom they did not desire. She often turned the bride out of



bed herself, and, without any reason, dismissed the bridegroom before the marriage had been consummated, merely saying, in great anger, that she disapproved of her. Amongst others whom she treated in this manner was Leontius the "referendary," and Saturninus, the son of Hermogenes the late Master of Offices, whom she deprived of their wives. This Saturninus had a young maiden cousin of an age to marry, free-born and modest, whom Cyrillus, her father, had betrothed to him after the death of Hermogenes. After the bridal chamber had been made ready and everything prepared, Theodora imprisoned the youthful bridegroom, who was afterwards conducted to another chamber, and forced, in spite of his violent lamentations and tears, to wed the daughter of Chrysomallo. This Chrysomallo had formerly been a dancer and a common prostitute, and at that time lived with another woman like her, and with Indaro, in the palace, where, instead of devoting themselves to phallic worship and theatrical amusements, they occupied themselves with affairs of State together with Theodora.

Saturninus, having lain with his new wife and discovered that she had already lost her maidenhead, informed one of his friends that his wife was no virgin. When this reached the ears of Theodora, she ordered the servants to hoist him up, like a boy at school, upbraiding him with having behaved too saucily and having taken an unbecoming oath. She then had him severely flogged on the bare back, and advised him to restrain his talkative tongue for the future.

In my former writings I have already related her treatment of John of Cappadocia, which was due to a desire to avenge personal injuries, not to punish him for offences against the State, as is proved by the fact that she did nothing of the kind in the case of those who committed far greater cruelties against their subjects. The real cause of her hatred was, that he ventured to oppose her designs and accused her to the Emperor, so that they nearly came to open hostilities. I mention this here because, as I have already stated, in this work I am bound to state the real causes of events. When, after having inflicted upon him the sufferings I have related, she had confined him in Egypt, she was not even then satisfied with his punishment, but was incessantly on the look out to find false witnesses against him. Four years afterwards, she succeeded in finding two of the Green faction who had taken part in the sedition at Cyzicus, and were accused of having been accessory to the assault upon the Bishop. These she attacked with flattery, promises, and threats. One of them, alarmed and inveigled by her promises, accused John of the foul crime of murder, but the other refused to utter falsehoods, although he was so cruelly tortured that he seemed likely to die on the spot. She was, therefore, unable to compass the death of John on this pretext, but she caused the young men's right hands to be chopped off--that of the one because he refused to bear false witness; that of the other, to prevent her intrigue becoming universally known, for she endeavoured to keep secret from others those things which were done in the open market-place.

## CHAPTER XVIII

That Justinian was not a man, but a demon in human shape, as I have already said, may be abundantly proved by considering the enormity of the evils which he inflicted upon mankind, for the power of the acting cause is manifested in the excessive atrocity of his actions. I think that God alone could accurately reckon the number of those who were

destroyed by him, and it would be easier for a man to count the grains of sand on the sea-shore than the number of his victims. Considering generally the extent of country which was depopulated by him, I assert that more than two millions of people perished. He so devastated the vast tract of Libya that a traveller, during a long journey, considered it a remarkable thing to meet a single man; and yet there were eighty thousand Vandals who bore arms, besides women, children and servants without number. In addition to these, who amongst men could enumerate the ancient inhabitants who dwelt in the cities, tilled the land, and traded on the coast, of whom I myself have seen vast numbers with my own eyes? The natives of Mauretania were even still more numerous, and they were all exterminated, together with their wives and children. This country also proved the tomb of numbers of Roman soldiers and of their auxiliaries from Byzantium. Therefore, if one were to assert that five millions perished in that country, I do not feel sure that he would not under-estimate the number. The reason of this was that Justinian, immediately after the defeat of the Vandals, did not take measures to strengthen his hold upon the country, and showed no anxiety to protect his interests by securing the goodwill of his subjects, but immediately recalled Belisarius on a charge of aspiring to royal power (which would by no means have suited him) in order that he might manage the affairs of the country at his own discretion, and ravage and plunder the whole of Libya. He sent commissioners to value the province, and imposed new and most harsh taxes upon the inhabitants. He seized the best and most fertile estates, and prohibited the Arians from exercising the rites of their religion. He was dilatory in keeping his army well supplied and in an effective condition, while in other respects he was a severe martinet, so that disturbances arose which ended in great loss. He was unable to abide by what was established, but was by nature prone to throw everything into a state of confusion and disturbance.

Italy, which was three times larger than Libya, was depopulated far more than the latter throughout its whole extent, whence a computation may be made of the number of those who perished there, for I have already spoken of the origin of the events that took place in Italy. All his crimes in Africa were repeated in Italy; having despatched Logothetae to this country also, he immediately overthrew and ruined everything.

Before the Italian war, the Empire of the Goths extended from the territory of the Gauls to the boundaries of Dacia, and the city of Sirmium; but, when the Roman army arrived in Italy, the greater part of Cisalpine Gaul and of the territory of the Venetians was in the occupation of the Germans. Sirmium and the adjacent country was in the hands of the Gepidae. The entire tract of country, however, was utterly depopulated; war and its attendant evils, disease and famine, had exterminated the inhabitants. Illyria and the whole of Thrace, that is to say, the countries between the Ionian Gulf and the suburbs of Byzantium, including Hellas and the Chersonese, were overrun nearly every year after the accession of Justinian by the Huns, Slavs and Antes, who inflicted intolerable sufferings upon the inhabitants. I believe that, on the occasion of each of these inroads, more than two hundred thousand Romans were either slain or carried away into slavery, so that the solitude of Scythia overspread these provinces.

Such were the results of the wars in Libya and Europe. During all this time, the Saracens also made perpetual inroads upon the Eastern Romans, from Egypt to the Persian frontiers, and harassed them so persistently, that those districts gradually became depopulated. I believe it would be impossible for anyone to estimate correctly the number of men who perished there.

The Persians under Chosroes thrice invaded the rest of the Roman territory, destroyed the cities, slew or carried off those whom they found in the captured towns in each district, and depopulated the country wherever they attacked it. From the time they entered Colchis,

the losses were divided between themselves, the Lazes, and the Romans, as up to the present day.

However, neither Persians, Saracens, Huns, Slavs, nor any other barbarians were themselves able to evacuate Roman territory without considerable loss, for, in their inroads, and still more in their sieges and engagements, they often met with numerous reverses which inflicted equal disasters upon them. Thus not only the Romans, but almost all the barbarians, felt the bloodthirstiness of Justinian. Chosroes (as I have stated in the proper place) was certainly a man of depraved character, but it was Justinian who always took the initiative in bringing about war with this prince, for he took no care to adapt his policy to circumstances, but did everything at the wrong moment. In time of peace or truce, his thoughts were ever craftily engaged in endeavouring to find pretexts for war against his neighbours. In war, he lost heart without reason, and, owing to his meanness, he never made his preparations in good time; and, instead of devoting his earnest attention to such matters, he busied himself with the investigation of heavenly phenomena and with curious researches into the nature of God. Nevertheless, he would not abandon war, being by nature tyrannical and bloodthirsty, although he was unable to overcome his enemies, since his meanness prevented him from making the necessary preparations. Thus, during the reign of this prince, the whole world was deluged with the blood of nearly all the Romans and barbarians.

Such were the events that took place, during the wars abroad, throughout the whole of the Roman Empire; but the disturbances in Byzantium and every other city caused equal bloodshed; for, since no regard was had to justice or impartiality in meting out punishment for offences, each faction being eager to gain the favour of the Emperor, neither party was able to keep quiet. They alternately abandoned themselves to the madness of despair or presumptuous vanity, according as they failed or succeeded in ingratiating themselves with him. Sometimes they attacked one another *en masse*, sometimes in small bands, sometimes in single combat, or set ambushes for each other at every opportunity. For thirty-two years without intermission they inflicted horrible cruelties upon one another. They were frequently put to death by the Praefect of the city, although punishment for offences fell most heavily upon the Green faction. The punishment of the Samaritans also, and other so-called heretics, deluged the Roman Empire with blood. Let it suffice, on the present occasion, to recall briefly what I have already narrated in greater detail. These calamities, which afflicted the whole world, took place during the reign of this demon in the form of a man, for which he himself, when Emperor, was responsible. I will now proceed to relate the evils he wrought by some hidden force and demoniacal power.

During his control of the Empire, numerous disasters of various kinds occurred, which some attributed to the presence and artifices of his evil genius, while others declared that the Divinity, in detestation of his works, having turned away in disgust from the Roman Empire, had given permission to the avenging deities to inflict these misfortunes. The river Scirtus overflowed Edessa, and brought the most grievous calamities upon the inhabitants of the district, as I have already related. The Nile, having overflowed its banks as usual, did not subside at the ordinary time, and caused great suffering among the people. The Cydnus was swollen, and nearly the whole of Tarsus lay for several days under water; and it did not subside until it had wrought irreparable damage to the city.

Several cities were destroyed by earth-quake--Antioch, the chief city of the East, Seleucia, and Anazarbus, the most famous town in Cilicia. Who could calculate the numbers of those who were thereby destroyed? To these cities we may add Ibora, Amasea (the chief city of Pontus), Polybotus in Phrygia (called Polymede by the Pisidians), Lychnidus in Epirus, and Corinth, cities which from ancient times had been thickly populated. All these cities were

overthrown at that time by an earthquake, during which nearly all their inhabitants perished. Afterwards the plague (which I have spoken of before) began to rage, and swept away nearly half the survivors. Such were the disasters that afflicted mankind, from the day when Justinian first commenced to manage the affairs of the kingdom to the time, and after he had ascended the Imperial throne.

## CHAPTER XIX

I will now relate the manner in which he got possession of the wealth of the world, after I have first mentioned a vision which was seen in a dream by a person of distinction at the commencement of his reign. He thought he was standing on the coast at Byzantium, opposite Chalcedon, and saw Justinian standing in the midst of the channel. The latter drank up all the water of the sea, so that it seemed as if he were standing on dry land, since the water no longer filled the strait. After this, other streams of water, full of filth and rubbish, flowing in from the underground sewers on either side, covered the dry land. Justinian again swallowed these, and the bed of the channel again became dry. Such was the vision this person beheld in his dream.

This Justinian, when his uncle Justin succeeded to the throne, found the treasury well filled, for Anastasius, the most provident and economical of all the Emperors, fearing (what actually happened) that his successor, if he found himself in want of money, would probably plunder his subjects, filled the treasure-houses with vast stores of gold before his death. Justinian exhausted all this wealth in a very short time, partly by senseless buildings on the coast, partly by presents to the barbarians, although one would have imagined that a successor, however profligate and extravagant, would have been unable to have spent it in a hundred years; for the superintendents of the treasures and other royal possessions asserted that Anastasius, during his reign of more than twenty-seven years, had without any difficulty accumulated 320,000 centenars, of which absolutely nothing remained, it having all been spent by this man during the lifetime of his uncle, as I have related above. It is impossible to describe or estimate the vast sums which he appropriated to himself during his lifetime by illegal means and wasted in extravagance; for he swallowed up the fortunes of his subjects like an ever-flowing river, daily absorbing them in order to disgorge them amongst the barbarians. Having thus squandered the wealth of the State, he cast his eyes upon his private subjects.

Most of them he immediately deprived of their possessions with unbounded rapacity and violence, at the same time bringing against the wealthy inhabitants of Byzantium, and those of other cities who were reputed to be so, charges utterly without foundation. Some were accused of polytheism, others of heresy; some of sodomy, others of amours with holy women; some of unlawful intercourse, others of attempts at sedition; some of favouring the Green faction, others of high treason, or any other charge that could be brought against them. On his own responsibility he made himself heir not only of the dead, but also of the living, as opportunity offered. In such matters he showed himself an accomplished diplomatist. I have already mentioned above how he profited by the sedition named Nika which was directed against him, and immediately made himself heir of all the members of the Senate, and how, shortly before the sedition broke out, he obtained possession of the fortunes of private individuals. On every occasion he bestowed handsome presents upon all

the barbarians alike, those of East and West, and North and South, as far as the inhabitants of the British Islands and of the whole world, nations of whom we had not even heard before, and whose names we did not know, until we became acquainted with them through their ambassadors. When these nations found out Justinian's disposition, they flocked to Byzantium from all parts of the world to present themselves to him. He, without any hesitation, overjoyed at the occurrence, and regarding it as a great piece of good luck to be able to drain the Roman treasury and fling its wealth to barbarians or the waves of the sea, dismissed them every day loaded with handsome presents. In this manner the barbarians became absolute masters of the wealth of the Romans, either by the donations which they received from the Emperor, their pillaging of the Empire, the ransom of their prisoners, or their trafficking in truces. This was the signification of the dream which I have mentioned above.

## CHAPTER XX

Besides this, Justinian found other means of contriving to plunder his subjects, not *en masse* and at once, but by degrees and individually. These methods I will now proceed to describe as well as I am able. First of all he appointed a new magistrate, who had the right of conferring upon all those who kept shops the privilege of selling their wares at whatever price they pleased, on payment of a yearly rent to the Emperor. The citizens were compelled to make their purchases in the market, where they paid three times as much as elsewhere; nor, although he suffered severe loss, was the purchaser allowed to claim damages from anyone, for part of the profit went to the Emperor, and part to increase the salary of these officials. Purchasers were equally cheated by the magistrates' servants, who took part in these disgraceful transactions, while the shopkeepers, who were allowed to put themselves beyond reach of the law, inflicted great hardships upon their customers--not merely by raising their prices many times over, but by being guilty of unheard-of frauds in regard to their wares. Afterwards, Justinian instituted several "monopolies," as they were called, and sold the liberty of the subject to any who were willing to undertake this disgraceful traffic, after having settled with them the price that was to be paid. This done, he allowed those with whom he had made the bargain to carry out the management of the affair in whatever way they thought fit. He made these disgraceful arrangements, without any attempt at concealment, with all the other magistrates, who plundered their subjects with less apprehension, either themselves or through their agents, since some part of the profits of the plunder always fell to the share of the Emperor. Under the pretence that the former magistrates were insufficient to carry out these arrangements (although the city prefect had previously been able to deal with all criminal charges) he created two new ones. His object in this was, that he might have at his disposal a larger number of informers, and that he might the more easily inflict punishment and torture upon the innocent. One of these was called Praetor of the People, whose nominal duty it was to deal with thieves; the second was called the Commissioner, whose function it was to punish all cases of paederasty, buggery, superstition and heresy. If the Praetor found any articles of value amongst stolen goods, he handed them over to the Emperor, declaring that no owner could be found for them, and in this manner Justinian every day got possession of something of very great value. The Commissioner, after he had condemned offenders, confiscated what he pleased out of their estates and bestowed it upon the Emperor, who thus, in defiance of the law, enriched



himself out of the fortunes of others; for the servants of these magistrates did not even take the trouble at the commencement of the trial to bring forward accusers or to produce any witnesses to the offences, but, during the whole of this period, without intermission, unexamined and unconvicted, the accused were secretly punished by death and the confiscation of their property by the Emperor.

Afterwards, this accursed wretch ordered both these magistrates and the city prefect to deal with all criminal affairs indifferently, bidding them enter into rivalry to see which of them could destroy the greatest number of citizens in the shortest time. It is said that, when one of them asked him which of them should have the decision if anyone was accused before all three, he replied, "Whichever of you has anticipated the others."

He debased the office of Quaestor, which almost all the preceding Emperors had held in especial regard, so that it was only filled by men of wisdom and experience, who above all were learned in the law and free from all suspicion of corruptibility, for it was felt that it would unavoidably be disastrous to the State if it were to be filled by men without experience or who were the slaves of avarice. This Emperor first bestowed it upon Tribonianus, whose character and misdeeds I have sufficiently described elsewhere. After his death, Justinian seized part of his estate, although he had left a son and several relatives who survived him. He then appointed Junilus (a Libyan by birth), a man who had not so much as a hearsay knowledge of law, for he had not even studied it in the public schools. Although he had a knowledge of Latin, he had never had any tuition in Greek, and was unable to speak the language. Frequently, when he attempted to say a few words in Greek, he was laughed at by his own servants. He was so mad after filthy lucre, that he had not the least scruple in publicly selling letters of office signed by the Emperor, and was never ashamed to stretch out his hand to those who had to do with him for a stater of gold. For no less than seven years the State dured the shame and ridicule brought upon it by this officer.

On the death of Junilus, Justinian elevated to this office Constantine, who was not unacquainted with law, but was very young and had never yet taken part in a trial; besides which, he was the most abandoned thief and braggart in the world. Justinian entertained the highest regard for him and showed him very great favour, condescending to make him the chief instrument of his extortion and sole arbiter in legal decisions. By this means Constantine in a short time amassed great wealth, but his insolence was outrageous, and his pride led him to treat everyone with contempt. Even those who were desirous of making him considerable presents were obliged to intrust them to those who seemed to be most in his confidence, for no one was permitted to approach or converse with him, except when he was hurrying to or returning from the Emperor. Even then he did not slacken his pace, but walked on hastily, for fear that those who approached him might waste his time without paying for it. Such was the manner in which Justinian dealt with the Quaestorship.

## CHAPTER XXI

The Praefect of the supreme tribunals, besides the public tax, annually paid to the Emperor more than thirty centenars of gold. This sum was called the "aerial tribute," doubtless because it was no regular or usual one, but seemed to have fallen as it were by chance from Heaven, whereas it ought rather to have been called "the impost of his wickedness," for it served as a pretext to those functionaries, who were invested with high

power, to plunder their subjects incessantly without fear of punishment. They pretended that they had to hand over the tribute to the Emperor, and they themselves, without any difficulty, acquired sufficient sums to secure regal affluence for themselves. Justinian allowed them to go on unchecked and unheeded, waiting until they had amassed great wealth, when it was his practice to bring against them some charge from which they could not readily clear themselves, and to confiscate the whole of their property, as he had treated John of Cappadocia. All those who held this office during his reign became wealthy to an extraordinary degree, and suddenly, with two exceptions. One of these was Phocas, of whom I have spoken in my previous writings--a man in the highest degree observant of integrity and honesty; who, during his tenure of office, was free from all suspicion of illegal gain. The other was Bassus, who was appointed later. Neither of them enjoyed their dignity for a year. At the end of a few months they were deprived of it as being incapable and unsuited to the times. But, not to go into details in every case, which would be endless, I will merely say that it was the same with all the other magistrates of Byzantium.

In all the cities throughout the Empire, Justinian selected for the highest offices the most abandoned persons he could find, and sold to them for vast sums the positions which they degraded. In fact, no honest man, possessed of the least common sense, would ever have thought of risking his own fortune in order to plunder those who had committed no offence. When Justinian had received the money from those with whom he made the bargain, he gave them full authority to deal with their subjects as they pleased, so that, by the destruction of provinces and populations, they might enrich themselves in the future; for, since they had borrowed large sums from the bankers at heavy rates of interest to purchase their magistracies, and had paid the sum due to him who sold them, when they arrived in the cities, they treated their subjects with every kind of tyranny, paying heed to nothing save how they might fulfil their engagements with their creditors and lay up great wealth for themselves. They had no apprehension that their conduct would bring upon them the risk of punishment; on the contrary, they expected that the greater number of those whom they plundered put to death without cause, the greater the reputation they would attain, for the name of murderer and robber was regarded as a proof of activity. But when Justinian learned that they had amassed considerable wealth during office, he entangled them in his net, and on some pretence or other deprived them of all their riches in a moment.

He had published an edict that candidates for offices should swear that they would keep themselves free from extortion, that they would neither give nor receive anything for their offices, and uttered against those who transgressed the law the most violent curses of ancient times. The law had not been in force a year when, forgetting its terms and the malediction which had been pronounced, he shamelessly put up these offices for sale, not secretly, but publicly in the market-place, and those who purchased them, in spite of their oaths to the contrary plundered and ravaged with greater audacity than before.

He afterwards thought of another contrivance, which may seem incredible. He resolved no longer to put up for sale, as before, the offices which he believed to be of greatest repute in Byzantium and other cities, but sought out a number of hired persons, whom he appointed at a fixed salary, and ordered to bring all the revenues to himself. These men, having received their salary, shamelessly got together from every country and carried off everything that they could. The stipendiary commission went from one place to another, plundering the subjects of the Empire in the name of their office.

Thus the Emperor exercised in every case the greatest care in the selection of these agents of his, who were truly the greatest scoundrels in the world; nor were his efforts and industry in this detestable business unsuccessful. When he advanced the first of his wicked agents to high offices, and the licence of authority revealed their corruption, we were

astounded to think how the nature of man could be capable of such enormity. But when those who succeeded them far outdid them, men were at a loss to understand how their predecessors could have appeared the most wicked of mankind, since, in comparison with their successors, who had surpassed them in evil-doing, they might be considered good and honest men. But the third set and their successors so far outstripped the second in every kind of villainy, and in their cleverness in inventing new accusations, that they secured for their predecessors a certain reputation and a good name. As the misfortunes of the State increased, all learned by experience that there is no limit to the innate wickedness of man, and that, when it is supported by the knowledge of precedents, and encouraged by the power in its hands to torment its victims, no man can tell how far it will extend, but only the thoughts of the oppressed are capable of estimating it. Such was the state of affairs in regard to the magistrates.

The hostile armies of the Huns had often reduced to slavery and plundered the inhabitants of the Empire. The Thracian and Illyrian generals resolved to attack them on their retreat, but turned back when they were shown letters from the Emperor forbidding them to attack the barbarians, on pretence that their help was necessary to the Romans against the Goths and other enemies of the Empire.

Making use of this opportunity, these barbarians plundered the country like enemies, and carried away the inhabitants into slavery; and in this manner these pretended friends and allies of the Romans returned home with their plunder and a number of prisoners. Frequently, some of the peasants in those parts, urged on by a longing for their wives and children who had been carried away into slavery, formed themselves into bands, marched against the barbarians, slew a number of them, and succeeded in capturing their horses together with their plunder. This success, however, proved very unfortunate for them; for agents were sent from Byzantium, who had no hesitation in beating and wounding them and seizing their property, until they had restored all the horses that they had taken from the barbarians.

## CHAPTER XXII

After the Emperor and Empress had destroyed John of Cappadocia, they were desirous of appointing someone else to his office, and agreed to search for a man even more vicious than he. They looked around to find this instrument of tyranny, and examined the dispositions of all, in order that they might the more speedily be able to ruin their subjects. They temporarily conferred the office upon Theodotus, who, though certainly not an honourable man, was not sufficiently wicked to satisfy them. They continued their search in all directions, and at last by accident found a banker named Peter, a Syrian by birth, surnamed Barsyames. He had long sat at the copper money-changer's counter, and had amassed large sums by his disgraceful malpractices. He was exceedingly cunning at thieving obols, ever deceiving his customers by the quickness of his fingers. He was very clever at filching without ado what fell into his hands, and, when detected, he swore that it was the fault of his hands, and made use of most impudent language in order to conceal his guilt.

This Barsyames, having been enrolled in the praetorian guard, behaved so outrageously that he approved himself beyond all others to Theodora, and was selected by her to assist in carrying out those of her nefarious schemes which required the most inventive genius. For

this reason Justinian and Theodora immediately deprived Theodotus of the dignity bestowed upon him as the successor of the Cappadocian, and appointed Peter in his stead, who in every respect acted in accordance with their wishes.

He not only, without the least fear or shame, cheated the soldiers of their pay, but offered commands and offices for sale to a greater extent than before. Having thus degraded them, he sold them to persons who were not ashamed to engage in this unholy traffic, giving express permission to the purchasers to deal as they pleased with the lives and properties of those who were subject to their authority; for Barsyames claimed for himself and granted to anyone who had paid down the price of a province the right of plundering and ravaging it at pleasure. It was from the chief of the State that this traffic in lives proceeded, and agreements were entered into for the ruin of the cities. In the chief courts and in the public market-place the legalised brigand went round about, who was called "collector" from his duty of collecting the money paid for the purchase of dignities, which they exacted from the oppressed, who had no hope of redress. Of all those who were promoted to his service, although several were men of repute, Barsyames always preferred such as were of depraved character.

He was not the only offender in this respect; all his predecessors and successors were equally guilty. The "Master of Offices" did the same, likewise the officials of the imperial treasury, and those who had the duty of superintending the Emperor's private and personal estate--in a word, all who held public appointments in Byzantium and other cities. In fact, from the time that this tyrant had the management of affairs, either he or his minister claimed the subsidies suitable to each office, and those who served their superiors, suffering extreme poverty, were compelled to submit to be treated as if they were the most worthless slaves.

The greater part of the corn that had been imported to Byzantium was kept until it rotted; but, although it was not fit for human consumption, he forced the cities of the East to purchase it in proportion to their importance, and he demanded payment, not at the price paid even for the best corn, but at a far higher rate; and the poor people, who had been forced to purchase it at an outrageously heavy price, were compelled to throw it into the sea or the drains.

That which was sound and not yet spoilt, of which there was great abundance in the capital, the Emperor determined to sell to those cities which were scantily supplied. In this manner he realised twice the amount that had formerly been obtained by the receivers of the public tribute in the provinces. The next year the supply of corn was not so abundant, and the transports did not bring a sufficient quantity to supply the needs of the capital. Peter, disconcerted at the state of affairs, conceived the idea of buying up a great quantity of corn from Bithynia, Phrygia and Thrace. The inhabitants of those provinces were forced to bring it down to the coasts themselves (a work of great labour), and to convey it at considerable risk to Byzantium, where they had to be satisfied with an absurdly low price. Their losses were so considerable, that they would have preferred to have given the corn gratuitously to the public granaries, and even to have paid twice as much. This burdensome duty was called *Synonē*, or provisioning the capital with corn from the provinces. But, as even then the supply of corn was not sufficient for the needs of the city, many complaints were made to the Emperor. At the same time the soldiers, hardly any of whom had as yet received their pay, assembled and created a great disturbance in the city. The Emperor appeared greatly irritated against Peter, and resolved to deprive him of his office, both for the reasons stated and also because it was reported to him that he had amassed extraordinary wealth, which he kept hidden away, by robbing the public treasury; and this in fact was the case. But Theodora opposed her husband's intention, being exceedingly

enamoured of Barsyames, apparently on account of his evil character and the remarkable cruelty with which he treated his subjects; for, being herself exceedingly cruel and utterly inhuman, she was anxious that the character of her agents should be in conformity with her own. It is also said that Theodora, against her will, had been forced by the enchantments of Barsyames to become his friend; for this man had devoted great attention to sorcerers and supernatural beings, admired the Manichaeans, and was not ashamed openly to profess himself their supporter. Although the Empress was not ignorant of this, she did not withdraw her favour, but resolved on this account to show even greater interest and regard for him than before, for she herself also, from her earliest years, had associated with sorcerers and magicians, since her character and pursuits inclined her towards them. She had great faith in their arts, and placed the greatest confidence in them. It is even said that she did not render Justinian susceptible to her influence so much by her flatteries as by the irresistible power of evil spirits; for Justinian was not sufficiently kindly, or just, or persistent in well-doing to be superior to such secret influence, but was manifestly dominated by a thirst for blood and riches, and fell an easy prey to those who deceived and flattered him. In undertakings which needed the greatest attention, he changed his plans without any reason and showed himself as light as the dust swept before the wind. Thus none of his kinsmen or friends had the least confidence in his stability, but, in the execution of his purpose, his opinion perpetually changed with the greatest rapidity. Being, as I have said, an easy object of attack for the sorcerers, he in like manner readily fell a victim to Theodora, who, for this reason, entertained the highest affection for Peter as one devoted to the study of these arts.

The Emperor only succeeded with great difficulty in depriving him of his office, and, at the pressing entreaty of Theodora, soon afterwards appointed him chief of the treasury, and deprived John of these functions, although he had only been invested with them a few months previously. This John was a native of Palestine, a good and gentle man, who did not even know how to find out the means of increasing his private fortune, and had never done injury to a single individual. The more decided the affection of the people for him, the less he met with the approval of Justinian and his partner, who, as soon as they found amongst their agents, contrary to expectation, a good and honourable man, were quite dumbfounded, showed their indignation, and endeavoured by every possible means to get rid of him with the least delay. Thus Peter succeeded John as chief of the royal treasury, and was one of the chief causes of great misery to all the inhabitants of the Empire. He embezzled the greater part of the fund, which, in accordance with an ancient custom, was annually distributed by the Emperor to a number of families by way of assisting them. Part of this public money he sent to the Emperor, and kept part for himself, whereby he acquired ill-gotten wealth. Those who were thus deprived of this money lived in a pitiable state. He did not even coin the same amount of gold as before, but less--a thing which had never been done before. Such was the manner in which Justinian dealt with the magistracies.

## CHAPTER XXIII

I will now relate how he everywhere ruined the possessors of estates, although, to show their misery, it would really be sufficient to refer to what has been said, just before this, concerning the governors dispatched to all the provinces and cities, for it was they who plundered those who possessed landed estates, as before related.



It had long been an established custom that the Roman Emperor should, not only once, but on several occasions, remit to his subjects all the arrears that were owing to the treasury, so that those who were in difficulties and had no means of settling these arrears might not be continually pressed, and that the tax collectors might not have an excuse for vexatiously attempting to exact money from those liable to tribute, where in many cases it was not due. Justinian, however, for thirty-two years made no concession of the kind to his subjects, the result of which was that the poor people were forced to quit the country without any hope of return. The more honest were perpetually harassed by these false accusers, who threatened to charge them with having paid less than the amount at which they were rated. These unhappy individuals were less afraid of the imposition of new taxes than of the insupportable weight of the unjust exactions which for many years they had been compelled to pay, whereupon many of them abandoned their property to their accusers or to the rise.

The Medes and Saracens had ravaged the greater part of Asia, and the Huns and Slavs had plundered the whole of Europe. Cities had been razed to the ground or subjected to severe exactions; the inhabitants had been carried away into slavery with all they possessed, and every district had been deserted by its inhabitants in consequence of the daily inroads. Justinian, however, remitted no tax or impost to any one of them, except in the case of cities that had been taken by the enemy, and then only for a year, although, had he granted them exemption for seven years, as the Emperor Anastasius had done, I do not think that even then he would have done enough: for Cabades retired after having inflicted but little damage upon the buildings, but Chosroes, by ravaging the country with fire and sword and razing all its dwellings to the ground, brought greater calamities upon the inhabitants. Justinian only granted this absurd remission of tribute to these people and to others who had several times submitted to an invasion of the Medes and the continuous depredations of the Huns and Saracen barbarians in the East, while the Romans, settled in the different parts of Europe, who had equally suffered by the attacks of the barbarians, found Justinian more cruel than any of their foreign foes; for, immediately after the enemy withdrew, the proprietors of estates found themselves overwhelmed with requisitions for provisions, impositions, and edicts of various kinds, the meaning of which I will now explain. Those who possessed landed property were obliged to furnish provisions for the soldiers in proportion to the amount imposed upon each, and these dues were fixed, not in consideration of the necessities of the moment, but according to an authorised imperial assessment; and, if at any time they had not a sufficient supply upon their lands for the needs of the horses and soldiers, these unhappy persons were forced to purchase them even at a price far above their proper value, and to convey them in many cases from a considerable distance to the place where the troops were encamped, and to distribute them to the adjutants in what quantity and at what rate the latter pleased, not at a fair and reasonable price. This import was called "the import of victualling," which, as it were, cut the sinews of all the landed proprietors; for they had to pay an annual tribute ten times greater than before, and were obliged not only to furnish supplies the soldiers, but on several occasions to convey corn to Byzantium. Barsyames was not the only man who had the audacity to introduce this cursed exaction, John of Cappadocia had set the example, and the successors of Barsyames in his office followed it. Such was the nature of the *Synōnē*, as it was called.

The "*Epibolē*" was a kind of unforeseen ruin, which suddenly attacked the landed proprietors and utterly deprived them of the hope of subsistence; for, in the case of estates that were deserted and unproductive, the owners or tenants of which had either died or abandoned their country and hidden themselves after the misfortunes they had undergone,

Justinian did not hesitate to impose a tax. Such were these "impositions," which were of frequent occurrence during that time.

A few words will suffice for the impost called "Diagraphē." At this time especially, the cities were afflicted with heavy losses, the causes and extent of which I will say nothing about, for it would be an endless tale. These losses had to be repaired by the landed proprietors in proportion to the rate at which they were assessed. Their misery, however, did not stop there, but, although pestilence had attacked the whole world, and, especially, the Roman Empire; although most of the farmers had fallen victims, and their properties had become deserted, Justinian did not show the least clemency towards the owners. He continued to exact the yearly tribute from them, not only their own proportion, but that of their neighbours who had died of the plague. Further, they were obliged to treat the soldiers with the greatest civility, and to allow them to take up their quarters in their finest and richest apartments, while they themselves all the time had to content themselves with the poorest and meanest rooms. Such were the calamities that without intermission befell mankind during the reign of Justinian and Theodora, for there was no cessation of war or any other most terrible calamities. Since I have mentioned the word "quarters," I must not forget to say that at one time there were 70,000 barbarians at Constantinople, whom house owners were obliged to quarter, being thus shut out from all enjoyment of their own, and in many other ways inconvenienced.

#### CHAPTER XXIV

I must not, however, omit to mention the manner in which Justinian treated the soldiers. He appointed commissioners, called Logothetae, with directions to squeeze as much money as they could out of them, a twelfth part of the sum thus obtained being assured to them. The following was their mode of operation every year. It was an established custom that the soldiers should not all have the same pay. Those who were young, and had just joined, received less than those who had undergone hardships in the field and were already half-way up the list; while the veterans, whose term of service was all but over, received a more considerable sum, that they might have sufficient to live upon as private individuals, and, after their death, might be able to leave a small inheritance by way of consolation to their families. Thus, in course of time, the soldiers gradually rose in rank, according as their comrades died or retired from the service, and their pay from the public funds was regulated in accordance with their seniority. But these commissioners would not allow the names of those who had died or fallen in battle to be struck out, or the vacancies to be filled, until a long interval had elapsed. The result was, that the army was short of men, and the survivors, after the death of the veterans, were kept in a position far inferior to their merits, and received less pay than they ought to have done, while in the meantime the commissioners handed over to Justinian the money they thus purloined from the soldiers. In addition, they harassed the soldiers with several other kinds of injustices, by way of recompense for the dangers they had undergone in the field; they were taunted with the name of Greeks, as if Greece could never produce a brave soldier; others were cashiered, as not having been ordered by the Emperor to serve, although they showed their commissions, the genuineness of which the Logothetae did not hesitate to call in question; others, again, were disbanded for having absented themselves a short time from their quarters. Afterwards, some of the Palace Guards were sent into every part of the Empire to take an

exact inventory of the soldiers who were or were not fit for service. Some were deprived of their belts, as being useless and too old, and for the future were obliged to solicit alms from the charitable in the open market-place--a sad and melancholy spectacle to all beholders. The rest were reduced to such a state of terror that, in order to avoid similar treatment, they offered large sums of money to buy themselves out, so that the soldiers, being thus rendered destitute and in many ways enfeebled, conceived an utter aversion to the service.

This endangered the authority of the Romans, especially in Italy. Alexander, who was sent thither as commissioner, unhesitatingly reproached the soldiers for this. He also exacted large sums of money from the Italians, under the pretence of punishing them for their negotiations with Theoderic and the Goths. The soldiers were not the only persons who were reduced to poverty and privation by the commissioners; but those who had accompanied the generals in different capacities and had formerly enjoyed a high reputation, found themselves in great distress, as they had no means of procuring the ordinary necessaries. Since I am speaking of the soldiers, I will give a few additional details. Preceding Emperors had, for a very long time past, carefully posted upon all the frontiers of the Empire a large military force to protect its boundaries, and particularly, in the Eastern provinces, in order to repel the inroads of the Persians and Saracens, they had established garrisons called "frontier troops." Justinian at first treated these troops with such shameful neglect that their pay was four, or even five years in arrear; and, when peace was concluded between Rome and Persia, these unhappy individuals, who expected to enjoy the advantages of peace, were obliged to make a present to the treasury of the money due to them; and the Emperor finally disbanded them most unjustly. Thus the frontiers of the Roman Empire remained ungarrisoned, and the troops had nothing to subsist upon except the benevolence of the charitable.

There was a certain body of soldiers, about 3,500 in number, called "Scholares," who had been originally appointed as an imperial palace-guard, and received a larger pay from the imperial treasury than the rest of the army. They were first chosen according to merit from the Armenians; but, from the reign of Zeno, anyone, however cowardly and unwarlike, was allowed to enter this body. In course of time, even slaves, on payment of a sum of money, were admitted to their ranks. When Justin succeeded to the throne, Justinian enrolled a large number on payment of considerable sums of money. When the list was filled up, he added about 2,000 more who were called "Supernumeraries," but disbanded them, when he himself came to the throne, without any reimbursement. In regard to these "Scholares," he invented the following plan: Whenever it was probable that an expedition would be despatched to Italy, Libya, or Persia, he ordered them to make ready to take part in the campaign, although he knew that they were utterly unfit for war; and they, being afraid of this, surrendered their salaries to the Emperor. This was a frequent occurrence. When Peter was "Master of Offices," he daily harassed them with monstrous thefts. This man, although he was of a mild and by no means overbearing disposition, was the greatest thief in the world and an absolute slave to sordid avarice. He it was who (as I have related) contrived the murder of Amalasunta, the daughter of Theodoric.

There are in the imperial household other officers of much higher rank, who, having purchased their positions for a larger sum, receive better pay in proportion. These are called "Domestics" and "Protectors." They have always been exempt from military service, and are only reckoned members of the palace on account of their dignity and rank. Some of them are constantly in Byzantium, while others have long been established in Galatia or other provinces. Justinian frightened these in the same manner into abandoning their salaries to him. In conclusion, it was the custom that, every five years, the Emperor should present each of the soldiers with a fixed sum in gold. Accordingly, every five years, commissioners

were despatched to all parts of the Empire, to bestow five staters of gold upon every soldier as a gift from the Emperor. This had long been an established and inviolable practice. But, from the day that Justinian assumed the management of affairs, he did nothing of the kind, and showed no intention of doing so during the thirty-two years of his reign, so that the custom was almost completely forgotten.

## CHAPTER XXV

I will now proceed to mention another mode in which he plundered his subjects. Those who, at Byzantium, serve the Emperor or magistrates, either as secretaries, or in a military or any other capacity, are placed last upon the list of officials. As time goes on, they are gradually promoted to the place of those who have died or retired, until they reach the highest rank and supreme dignity. Those who had attained to this honour, in accordance with an ancient institution, had the right to the enjoyment of a fund of not less than 100 centenars of gold yearly, so that they might have a comfortable means of subsistence for their old age, and might be able to assist others as much as possible; and this was of great influence in bringing about a successful administration of the affairs of state. But Justinian deprived them of all their privileges, and did great harm, not only to them, but to many others besides, for the poverty which attacked them extended to all those who formerly shared their prosperity. If anyone were to calculate the sums of which they were thus deprived during these thirty-two years, he would find that the amount was very considerable. Such was the shameful manner in which the tyrant treated his soldiers.

I will now relate how he behaved towards merchants, mariners, artisans, shopkeepers and others. There are two narrow straits on either side of Byzantium, the one in the Hellespont, between Sestos and Abydos, the other at the mouth of the Euxine Sea, close to the chapel of the Holy Mother. In the strait upon the Hellespont, there was no public custom-house, but an officer was sent by the Emperor to Abydos, to see that no ship loaded with arms should pass on the way to Byzantium without the Emperor's leave, and also that no person should put out to sea from Byzantium without letters of licence signed by the proper official, no ship being allowed to leave the city without the permission of the secretaries of the Master of Offices. The amount which the praetor exacted from the shipmasters under the name of toll was so insignificant that it was disregarded. A praetor was also sent to the other strait, who received his salary regularly from the Emperor, and whose duties were the same--to take care that no one transported to the barbarians on the Euxine any wares, the export of which to hostile countries was forbidden; but he was not allowed to exact any duties from these navigators. But, from the day that Justinian succeeded to the government of affairs, he established a custom-house on both straits, and sent thither two officials to collect the dues at a fixed salary, who were ordered to get in as much money as they could. These officials, who desired nothing better than to show their devotion to him, extorted duty upon all kinds of merchandise. In regard to the port of Byzantium, he made the following arrangement:--He put it in charge of one of his confidants, a Syrian by birth, named Addeus, whom he ordered to exact duty from all vessels which put in there. This Addeus would not allow those ships which had been any length of time in the harbour to leave it, until the masters had paid a sum of money to free them, or else he compelled them to take on board a freight for Libya or Italy. Some, resolved not to take in a return cargo or to remain at sea any longer, burned their ships and thus

escaped all anxiety, to their great rejoicing. But all those who were obliged to continue their profession in order to live, for the future demanded three times the usual amount from merchants for the hire of the ships, and thus the merchants had no means of covering their losses except by requiring a higher price from purchasers; and thus, by every possible contrivance, the Romans were reduced to the danger of starvation. Such was the general state of affairs. I must not, however, omit to state the manner in which the rulers dealt with the small coinage. The money-changers had formerly been accustomed to give 210 obols (called Pholes) for a single gold stater. Justinian and Theodora, for their own private gain, ordered that only 180 obols should be given for the stater, and by this means deprived the public of a sixth part of each piece of gold. Having established "monopolies" upon most wares, they incessantly harassed would-be purchasers. The only thing left free from duty was clothes, but, in regard to these also, the imperial pair contrived to extort money. Silken garments had for a long time been made in Berytus and Tyre, cities of Phoenicia. The merchants and workmen connected with the trade had been settled there from very early times, and from thence the business had spread throughout the world. During the reign of Justinian, those who lived in Byzantium and other cities raised the price of their silks, on the plea that at the present time they were dearer in Persia, and that the import tithes were higher. The Emperor pretended to be exceedingly indignant at this, and subsequently published an edict forbidding a pound of silk to be sold for more than eight gold pieces; anyone who disobeyed the edict was to be punished by the confiscation of his property. This measure appeared altogether impracticable and absurd. For it was not possible for the merchants, who had bought their wares at a much higher price, to sell it to customers at a lower rate. They accordingly resolved to give up this business, and secretly and without delay disposed of their remaining wares to certain well-known persons, who took delight in wasting their money upon such adornments, and to whom it had become in a manner an absolute necessity. Theodora heard of this from certain persons who whispered it confidentially, and, without taking the trouble to verify the report, she immediately deprived these persons of their wares, and, in addition, inflicted upon them a fine of a centenar of gold. At the present time, the imperial treasurer is charged with the superintendence of this trade. When Peter Barsyames held the office, they soon allowed him all manner of licence in carrying out his nefarious practices. He demanded that all the rest should carefully observe the law, and compelled those who were engaged in the silk factories to work for himself alone. Without taking any trouble to conceal it, he sold an ounce of any ordinary coloured silk in the public market-place for six pieces of gold, but if it was of the royal dye, called Holovere, he asked more than four-and-twenty for it. In this manner he procured vast sums of money for the Emperor, and even larger sums, which he kept privately for himself; and this practice, begun by him, continued. The grand treasurer is at this moment avowedly the only silk merchant and sole controller of the market. All those who formerly carried on this business, either in Byzantium or any other city, workers on sea or land, felt the loss severely. Nearly the whole population of the cities which existed by such manufactories were reduced to begging. Artisans and mechanics were forced to struggle against hunger, and many of them, quitting their country, fled to Persia. None but the chief treasurer was allowed to have anything to do with that branch of industry, and, while he handed over part of his gains to the Emperor, he kept the greater part for himself, and thus grew wealthy at the expense of the unfortunate public.



## CHAPTER XXVI

I must now relate how he robbed Byzantium and other cities of their ornaments. In the first place he resolved to humiliate the lawyers. He deprived them of all the fees, which, after they had finished their case, were considerable, and enriched them and increased their distinction. He ordered that litigants should come to an agreement upon oath, which brought the lawyers into contempt and insignificance. After he had seized the estates of the Senators and other families reputed wealthy, in Byzantium and throughout the Empire, the profession had little to do, for the citizens no longer possessed property worth disputing about. Thus, of the numerous and famous orators who once composed this order there remained only a few, who were everywhere despised and lived in the greatest poverty, finding that their profession brought them nothing but insult. He also caused physicians and professors of the liberal arts to be deprived of the necessaries of life. He cut off from them all the supplies which former emperors had attached to these professions, and which were paid out of the State funds. Further, he had no scruple about transferring to the public funds all the revenues which the inhabitants of the cities had devoted either to public purposes or for providing entertainments. From that time no attention was paid to physicians or professors; no one ventured to trouble himself about the public buildings; there were no public lights in the cities, or any enjoyments for the inhabitants; the performances in the theatres and hippodromes and the combats of wild beasts, in which Theodora had been bred and brought up, were entirely discontinued. He afterwards suppressed public exhibitions in Byzantium, to save the usual State contribution, to the ruin of an almost countless multitude who found their means of support in these entertainments. Their life, both in public and private, became sad and dejected and utterly joyless, as if some misfortune had fallen upon them from Heaven. Nothing was spoken of in conversation at home, in the streets, or in the churches, except misfortune and suffering. Such was the state of the cities.

I have still something important to mention. Every year two consuls were appointed--one at Rome, the other at Byzantium. Whoever was advanced to that dignity was expected to expend more than twenty centenars of gold upon the public. This sum was to a small extent furnished by the consuls themselves, while the greater part was due to the liberality of the Emperor. This money was distributed amongst those whom I have mentioned, above all to the most necessitous, and principally to those employed upon the stage, which materially increased the comfort of the citizens. But, since the accession of Justinian, the elections never took place at the proper time; sometimes one consul remained in office for several years, and at last people never even dreamed of a fresh appointment. This reduced all to the greatest distress; since the Emperor no longer granted the usual assistance to his subjects, and at the same time deprived them of what they had by every means in his power.

I think I have given a sufficient account of the manner in which this destroyer swallowed up the property of the members of the Senate and deprived them all of their substance, whether publicly or privately. I also think that I have said enough concerning the fraudulent accusations which he made use of, in order to get possession of the property of other families which were reputed to be wealthy. Lastly, I have described the wrongs he inflicted upon the soldiers and servants of those in authority and the militia in the palace; upon countrymen, the possessors and proprietors of estates, and professors of the arts and sciences; upon merchants, shipmasters and sailors; mechanics, artisans, and retail dealers; those who gained their livelihood by performing upon the stage; in a word, upon all who were affected by the misery of these. I must now speak of his treatment of the poor, the

lower classes, the indigent, and the sick and infirm. I will then go on to speak of his treatment of the priests.

At first, as has been said, he got all the shops into his own hands, and having established monopolies of all the most necessary articles of life, exacted from his subjects more than three times their value. But if I were to enter into the details of all these monopolies, I should never finish my narrative, for they are innumerable.

He imposed a perpetual and most severe tax upon bread, which the artisans, the poor, and infirm were compelled to purchase. He demanded from this commodity a revenue of three centenars of gold every year, and those poor wretches were obliged to support themselves upon bread full of dust, for the Emperor did not blush to carry his avarice to this extent. Seizing upon this as an excuse, the superintendents of the markets, eager to fill their own pockets, in a short time acquired great wealth, and, in spite of the cheapness of food, reduced the poor to a state of artificial and unexpected famine; for they were not allowed to import corn from any other parts, but were obliged to eat bread purchased in the city.

One of the city aqueducts had broken, and a considerable portion of the water destined for the use of the inhabitants was lost. Justinian, however, took no notice of it, being unwilling to incur any expense for repairs, although a great crowd continually thronged round the fountains, and all the baths had been shut. Nevertheless, he expended vast sums without any reason or sense upon buildings on the seashore, and also built everywhere throughout the suburbs, as if the palaces, in which their predecessors had always been content to live, were no longer suitable for himself and Theodora; so that it was not merely parsimony, but a desire for the destruction of human life, that prevented him from repairing the aqueduct, for no one, from most ancient times, had ever shown himself more eager than Justinian to amass wealth, and at the same time to spend it in a most wasteful and extravagant manner. Thus this Emperor struck at the poorest and most miserable of his subjects through two most necessary articles of food--bread and water, by making the one difficult to procure, and the other too dear for them to buy.

It was not only the poor of Byzantium, however, that he harassed in this manner, but, as I will presently mention, the inhabitants of several other cities. When Theodoric had made himself master of Italy, in order to preserve some trace of the old constitution, he permitted the praetorian guards to remain in the palace and continued their daily allowance. These soldiers were very numerous. There were the *Silentiarii*, the *Domestici*, and the *Scholares*, about whom there was nothing military except the name, and their salary was hardly sufficient to live upon. Theodoric also ordered that their children and descendants should have the reversion of this. To the poor, who lived near the church of Peter the Apostle, he distributed every year 3,000 bushels of corn out of the public stores. All continued to receive these donations until the arrival of Alexander Forficula in Italy. He resolved to deprive them of it immediately; and, when the Emperor was informed of this, he approved of his conduct, and treated Alexander with still greater honour. During his journey, Alexander treated the Greeks in the following manner:--The peasants of the district near the pass of Thermopylae had long manned the fortress, and, each in turn, mounted guard over the wall which blocks the pass, whenever there seemed any likelihood of an invasion of the barbarians. But Alexander, on his arrival, pretended that it was to the interest of the Peloponnesians not to leave the protection of the pass to the peasants. He established a garrison of about 2,000 soldiers, who were not paid out of the public funds, but by each of the cities in Greece. On this pretext, he transferred to the public treasury all the revenues of these towns which were intended for public purposes or to cover the expenses of shows and entertainments. He pretended that it was to be employed for the support of the soldiers, and in consequence, from that time, no public buildings or other objects of utility were erected

or promoted either in Athens or throughout Greece. Justinian, however, hastened to give his sanction to all the acts of Forficula.

We must now speak of the poor of Alexandria. Amongst the lawyers of that city was one Hephaestus, who, having been appointed governor, suppressed popular disturbances by the terror he inspired, but at the same time reduced the citizens to the greatest distress. He immediately established a monopoly of all wares, which he forbade other merchants to sell. He reserved everything for himself alone, sold everything himself, and fixed the price by the capricious exercise of his authority. Consequently, the city was in the greatest distress from want of provisions; the poor no longer had a sufficient supply of what was formerly sold at a low rate, and especially felt the difficulty of obtaining bread; for the governor alone bought up all the corn that came from Egypt, and did not allow anyone else to purchase even so much as a bushel; and in this manner, he taxed the loaves and put upon them what price he pleased. By this means he amassed an enormous fortune, and was likewise careful to satisfy the greed of the Emperor. So great was the terror inspired by Hephaestus, that the people of Alexandria endured their ill-treatment in silence; and the Emperor, out of gratitude for the money which flowed into his exchequer from that quarter, conceived a great affection for Hephaestus. The latter, in order to secure in a still greater degree the favour of the Emperor, carried out the following plan. When Diocletian became Emperor of the Romans, he ordered a yearly distribution of corn to be made to the necessitous poor of Alexandria; and the people, settling its distribution amongst themselves, transmitted the right to their descendants. Hephaestus deprived the necessitous of 2,000,000 bushels yearly, and deposited it in the imperial granaries, declaring, in his despatch to the Emperor, that this grant of corn had previously been made in a manner that was neither just nor in conformity with the interests of the state. The Emperor approved of his conduct and became more attached to him than ever. The Alexandrians, whose hopes of existence depended upon this distribution, felt the cruelty bitterly, especially at the time of their distress.

## CHAPTER XXVII

The evil deeds of Justinian were so numerous, that time would fail me if I were to attempt to relate them all. It will therefore be sufficient, if I select some of those which will exhibit his whole character to posterity, and which clearly show his dissimulation, his neglect of God, the priesthood, the laws, and the people which showed itself devoted to him. He was utterly without shame; he had no care for the interests or advantage of the state, and did not trouble himself about excusing his misdeeds, or, in fact, about anything else but how he might plunder and appropriate the wealth of the whole world.

To begin with, he appointed Paul bishop of Alexandria, at the time when Rhodon, a Phoenician by birth, was governor of the city. He ordered him to show the greatest deference to the bishop, and to execute all his instructions; for by this means he hoped to prevail upon the chief persons of the city to support the council of Chalcedon. There was also a certain Arsenius, a native of Palestine, who had made himself most necessary to the Empress, and, in consequence of her favour and the great wealth he had amassed, had attained the rank of a senator, although he was a man of most abandoned character. He belonged to the Samaritan sect, but, in order to preserve his authority, he assumed the name of Christian. His father and brother, who lived in Scythopolis, relying upon his authority and following his advice, bitterly persecuted the Christians in that city. Whereupon the citizens rose up against them, and put them to death most cruelly, which afterwards proved the cause of much misery to the inhabitants of Palestine. On that occasion neither Justinian nor the Empress inflicted any punishment upon Arsenius, although he was the principal cause of all those troubles. They contented themselves with

forbidding him to appear at court, in order to satisfy the continued complaints that were preferred against him by the Christians.

This Arsenius, thinking to gratify the Emperor, set out with Paul to Alexandria to assist him generally, and, above all, to do his utmost to aid him in securing the favour of the inhabitants; for, during the time of his exclusion from the palace, he affirmed that he had made himself thoroughly acquainted with all the doctrines of Christianity. This displeased Theodora, who pretended to hold a different opinion to the Emperor in religious matters, as I have already stated.

When they arrived at Alexandria, Paul delivered over the deacon Psoes to the governor to be put to death, asserting that he was the only obstacle in the way of the realisation of the Emperor's desires. The governor, urged on by despatches from the Emperor, which frequently arrived and were couched in pressing terms, ordered Psoes to be flogged, and he died under the torture. When the news of this reached the Emperor, at the earnest entreaty of Theodora, he expressed great indignation against Paul, Rhodon, and Arsenius, as if he had forgotten the orders he himself had given them. He appointed Liberius, a Roman patrician, governor of Alexandria, and sent some priests of high repute to investigate the matter. Amongst them was Pelagius, archdeacon of Rome, who was commissioned by Pope Vigilius to act as his agent. Paul, being convicted of murder, was deprived of his bishopric; Rhodon, who had fled to Byzantium, was executed by order of Justinian, and his estate confiscated, although he produced thirteen despatches, in which the Emperor expressly ordered and insisted that he should in everything act in accordance with Paul's orders, and never oppose him, that he might have liberty to act as he pleased in matters of religion. Arsenius was crucified by Liberius, in accordance with instructions from Theodora; his estate was confiscated by the Emperor, although he had no cause of complaint against him except his intimacy with Paul. Whether in this he acted justly or not, I cannot say; but I will afterwards state the reason why I have mentioned this affair.

Some time afterwards Paul went to Byzantium, and, by the offer of seven centenars of gold, endeavoured to persuade the Emperor to reinstate him in his office, of which he said he had been unjustly deprived. Justinian received the money affably, treated him with respect, and promised to reinstate him as soon as possible, although another at present held the office, as if he did not know that he himself had put to death two of his best friends and supporters, and confiscated their estates. The Emperor exerted all his efforts in this direction, and there did not appear to be the least doubt that Paul would be reinstated. But Vigilius, who at the time was in Byzantium, resolved not to submit to the Emperor's orders in this matter, and declared that it was impossible for him to annul by his own decision a sentence which Pelagius had given in his name. So that, in everything, Justinian's only object was to get money by any means whatsoever.

The following is a similar case. There was a Samaritan by birth, a native of Palestine, who, having been compelled by the law to change his religion, had become a Christian and taken the name of Faustinus. This Faustinus became a member of the senate and governor of Palestine; and when his time of office had expired, on his return to Byzantium he was accused by certain priests of favouring the religion and customs of the Samaritans and of having been guilty of great cruelties towards the Christians in Palestine. Justinian appeared to be very angry and expressed his indignation that, during his reign, anyone should have the audacity to insult the name of Christian. The members of the senate met to examine into the matter, and, at the instance of the Emperor, Faustinus was banished. But Justinian, having received large presents of money from him, immediately annulled the sentence. Faustinus, restored to his former authority and the confidence of the Emperor, was appointed steward of the imperial domains in Palestine and Phoenicia, and was allowed to

act in every respect exactly as he pleased. These few instances are sufficient to show how Justinian protected the Christian ordinances.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

I must now briefly relate how he unhesitatingly abolished the laws when money was in question. There was in Emesa a man named Priscus, who was an expert forger and very clever in his art. The church of Emesa, many years before, had been instituted sole heir to the property of one of the most distinguished inhabitants named Mammianus, a patrician of noble birth and of great wealth. During the reign of Justinian, Priscus made a list of all the families of the town, taking care to notice which were wealthy and able to disburse large sums. He carefully hunted up the names of their ancestors, and, having found some old documents in their handwriting, forged a number of acknowledgments, in which they confessed that they were largely indebted to Mammianus in sums of money which had been left with them by him as a deposit. The amount of these forged acknowledgments was no less than a hundred centenars of gold. He also imitated in a marvellous manner the handwriting of a public notary, a man of conspicuous honesty and virtue, who during the lifetime of Mammianus used to draw up all their documents for the citizens, sealing them with his own hand, and delivered these forged documents to those who managed the ecclesiastical affairs of Emesa, on condition that he should receive part of the money which might be obtained in this manner.

But, since there was a law which limited all legal processes to a period of thirty years, except in cases of mortgage and certain others, in which the prescription extended to forty years, they resolved to go to Byzantium and, offering a large sum of money to the Emperor, to beg him to assist them in their project of ruining their fellow-citizens.

The Emperor accepted the money, and immediately published a decree which ordained that affairs relating to the Church should not be restricted to the ordinary prescription, but that anything might be recovered, if claimed within a hundred years: which regulation was to be observed not only in Emesa, but throughout the whole of the Roman Empire. In order to see that the new rule was put into execution, he sent Longinus to Emesa, a man of great vigour and bodily strength, who was afterwards made praefect of Byzantium. Those who had the management of the affairs of the church of Emesa, acting upon the forged documents, sued some of the citizens for two centenars of gold, which they were condemned to pay, being unable to raise any objection, by reason of the length of time elapsed and their ignorance of the facts. All the inhabitants, and especially the principal citizens, were in great distress and highly incensed against their accusers. When ruin already threatened the majority of the citizens, Providence came to their assistance in a most unexpected manner. Longinus ordered Priscus, the contriver of this detestable invention, to bring him all the acknowledgments; and, when he showed himself unwilling to do so, he dealt him a violent blow in the face. Priscus, unable to resist the blow dealt by a man of such bodily strength, fell backwards upon the ground, trembling and affrighted. Believing that Longinus had discovered the whole affair, he confessed; and, the whole trick being thus brought to light, the suits were stopped.

Justinian, not content with subverting the laws of the Roman Empire every day, exerted himself in like manner to do away with those of the Jews; for, if Easter came sooner in their



calendar than in that of the Christians, he did not allow them to celebrate the Passover on their own proper day or to make their offerings to God, or to perform any of their usual solemnities. The magistrates even inflicted heavy fines upon several of them, upon information that they had eaten the paschal lamb during that time, as if it were an infraction of the laws of the state. Although I could mention countless acts of this nature committed by Justinian, I will not do so, for I must draw my narrative to a close. What I have said will be sufficient to indicate the character of the man.

## CHAPTER XXIX

I will, however, mention two instances of his falsehood and hypocrisy.

After having deprived Liberius (of whom I have spoken above) of his office, he put in his place John, an Egyptian by birth, surnamed Laxarion. When Pelagius, who was a particular friend of Liberius, heard of this, he inquired of Justinian whether what he had heard was true. The Emperor immediately denied it, and protested that he had done nothing of the kind. He then gave Pelagius a letter in which Liberius was ordered to hold fast to his government and by no means to give it up, and added that he had no present intention of removing Liberius. At that time there resided in Byzantium an uncle of John named Eudaemon, a man of consular rank and great wealth, who had the management of the imperial estates. Having been informed of what had taken place, he also inquired of the Emperor whether his nephew was assured in his government. Justinian, saying nothing about his letter to Liberius, sent John positive orders to hold fast to his government, since his views were still the same concerning it. Trusting to this, John ordered Liberius to quit the governor's palace, as having been deprived of his office. Liberius refused, placing equal reliance in the Emperor's despatch. John, having armed his followers, marched against Liberius, who defended himself with his guards. An engagement took place, in which several were slain, and amongst them John, the new governor.

At the earnest entreaty of Eudaemon, Liberius was immediately summoned to Byzantium. The matter was investigated before the senate, and Liberius was acquitted, as being only guilty of justifiable homicide in self-defence. Justinian, however, did not let him escape, until he had forced him to give him a considerable sum of money privately. Such was the great respect Justinian showed for the truth, and such was the faithfulness with which he kept his promises. I will here permit myself a brief digression, which may not be irrelevant. This Eudaemon died shortly afterwards, leaving behind him a large number of relatives, but no will, either written or verbal. About the same time, the chief eunuch of the court, named Euphratas, also died intestate; he left behind him a nephew, who would naturally have succeeded to his property, which was considerable. The Emperor took possession of both fortunes, appointing himself sole heir, not even leaving so much as a three-obol piece to the legal inheritors. Such was the respect Justinian showed for the laws and the kinsmen of his intimate friends. In the same manner, without having the least claim to it, he seized the fortune of Irenaeus, who had died some time before.

Another event which took place about this time I cannot omit. There lived at Ascalon a man named Anatolius, the most distinguished member of the senate. His daughter, his only child and heiress, was married to a citizen of Caesarea, named Mamilianus, a man of distinguished family. There was an ancient statute which provided that, whenever a senator

died without male issue, the fourth part of his estate should go to the senate of the town, and the rest to the heirs-at-law. On this occasion Justinian gave a striking proof of his character. He had recently made a law which reversed this,—that, when a senator died without male issue, the fourth part only should go to the heirs, the three other parts being divided between the senate and the public treasury, although it had never happened before that the estate of any senator had been shared between the public treasury and the Emperor.

Anatolius died while this law was in force. His daughter was preparing to divide her inheritance with the public treasury and the senate of the town in accordance with the law, when she received letters from the senate of Ascalon and from the Emperor himself, in which they resigned all claim to the money, as if they had received their due. Afterwards Mamilianus (the son-in-law of Anatolius) died, leaving one daughter, the legal heiress to his estate. The daughter soon afterwards died, during her mother's lifetime, after having been married to a person of distinction, by whom, however, she had no issue, either male or female. Justinian then immediately seized the whole estate, giving utterance to the strange opinion, that it would be a monstrous thing that the daughter of Anatolius, in her old age, should be enriched by the property of both her husband and father. However, to keep her from want, he ordered that she should receive a stater of gold a day, as long as she lived; and, in the decree whereby he deprived her of all her property, he declared that he bestowed this stater upon her for the sake of religion, seeing that he was always in the habit of acting with piety and virtue.

I will now show that he cared nothing even for the Blue faction, which showed itself devoted to him, when it was a question of money. There was amongst the Cilicians a certain Malthanes, the son-in-law of that Leo who had held the office of "Referendary," whom Justinian commissioned to put down seditious movements in the country. On this pretext, Malthanes treated most of the inhabitants with great cruelty. He robbed them of their wealth, sent part to the Emperor, and claimed the rest for himself. Some endured their grievances in silence; but the inhabitants of Tarsus who belonged to the Blue faction, confident of the protection of the Empress, assembled in the market-place and abused Malthanes, who at the time was not present. When he heard of it, he immediately set out with a body of soldiers, reached Tarsus by night, sent his soldiers into the houses at daybreak, and ordered them to put the inhabitants to death. The Blues, imagining that it was an attack from a foreign foe, defended themselves as best they could. During the dark, amongst other misfortunes, Damianus, a member of the senate and president of the Blues in Tarsus, was slain by an arrow.

When the news reached Byzantium, the Blues assembled in the streets with loud murmurs of indignation, and bitterly complained to the Emperor of the affair, uttering the most violent threats against Leo and Malthanes. The Emperor pretended to be as enraged as they were, and immediately ordered an inquiry to be made into the conduct of the latter. But Leo, by the present of a considerable sum of money, appeased him, so that the process was stopped, and the Emperor ceased to show favour to the Blues. Although the affair remained uninvestigated, the Emperor received Malthanes, who came to Byzantium to pay his respects, with great kindness and treated him with honour. But, as he was leaving the Emperor's presence, the Blues, who had been on the watch, attacked him in the palace, and would certainly have slain him, had not some of their own party, bribed by Leo, prevented them. Who would not consider that state to be in a most pitiable condition, in which the sovereign allows himself to be bribed to leave charges uninvestigated, and in which malcontents venture without hesitation to attack one of the magistrates within the precincts of the palace, and to lay violent hands upon him? However, no punishment was inflicted

either upon Malthanes or his assailants, which is a sufficient proof of the character of Justinian.

## CHAPTER XXX

His regulations as to the public "posts" and "spies" will show how much he cared for the interests of the state. The earlier Emperors, in order to gain the most speedy information concerning the movements of the enemy in each territory, seditions or unforeseen accidents in individual towns, and the actions of the governors and other officials in all parts of the Empire, and also in order that those who conveyed the yearly tribute might do so without danger or delay, had established a rapid service of public couriers according to the following system:--As a day's journey for an active man, they settled eight stages, sometimes fewer, but never less than five. There were forty horses in each stage and a number of grooms in proportion. The couriers who were intrusted with this duty, by making use of relays of excellent horses, frequently covered as much ground in one day by this means as they would otherwise have covered in ten, when carrying out the above commissions. In addition, the landed proprietors in each country, especially those whose estates were in the interior, reaped great benefit from these posts; for, by selling their surplus corn and fruit every year to the state for the support of the horses and grooms, they gained considerable revenue. By this means the state received, without interruption, the tribute due from each, and, in turn, reimbursed those who furnished it, and thus everything was to the advantage of the state. Such was the old system. But Justinian, having commenced by suppressing the post between Chalcedon and Dakibiza, compelled the couriers to carry all despatches from Byzantium to Helenopolis by sea. They unwillingly obeyed; for, being obliged to embark upon small skiffs, such as were generally used for crossing the strait, they ran great risk of being shipwrecked, if they met with stormy weather. For, since great speed was enjoined upon them, they were unable to wait for a favourable opportunity for putting out to sea, when the weather was calm. It is true that he maintained the primitive system on the road to Persia, but for the rest of the East, as far as Egypt, he reduced the number of posts to one, for a day's journey, and substituted a few asses for the horses, so that the report of what was taking place in each district only reached Byzantium with difficulty and long after the events had occurred, when it was too late to apply any remedy; and, on the other hand, the owners of estates found no benefit from their products, which were either spoilt or lay idle.

The spies were organized in the following manner:--A number of men used to be supported at the state's expense, whose business it was to visit hostile countries, especially the court of Persia, on pretence of business or some other excuse, and to observe accurately what was going on; and by this means, on their return, they were able to report to the Emperors all the secret plans of their enemies, and the former, being warned in advance, took precautions and were never surprised. This system had long been in vogue amongst the Medes. Chosroes, by giving larger salaries to his spies, none of whom were born Romans, reaped great benefit from this precaution. Justinian, having discontinued this practice, lost considerable territory, especially the country of the Lazes, which was taken by the enemy, since the Romans had no information where the King and his army were. The state also formerly kept a large number of camels, which carried the baggage on the occasion of an expedition into an hostile country. By this means the peasants were relieved from the necessity of carrying burdens, and the soldiers were well supplied with necessaries.

Justinian, however, did away with nearly all the camels, so that, when the army is marching against an enemy, everything is in an unsatisfactory condition. Such was the care he took of the most important state institutions. It will not be out of place to mention one of his ridiculous acts. There was at Caesarea a lawyer named Evangelius, a person of distinction, who, by the favour of fortune, had amassed great riches and considerable landed estates. He afterwards purchased, for three centenars of gold, a village on the coast named Porphyreon. When Justinian heard of this, he immediately took it from him, only returning him a small portion of the price he had paid for it, at the same time declaring that it was unseemly that such a village should belong to Evangelius the lawyer. But enough of this. It remains to speak of certain innovations introduced by Justinian and Theodora. Formerly, when the senate had audience of the Emperor, it paid him homage in the following manner:--Every patrician kissed him on the right breast, and the Emperor, having kissed him on the head, dismissed him; all the rest bent the right knee before the Emperor and retired. As for the Empress, it was not customary to do homage to her. But those who were admitted to the presence of this royal pair, even those of patrician rank, were obliged to prostrate themselves upon their face, with hands and feet stretched out; and, after having kissed both his feet, they rose up and withdrew. Nor did Theodora refuse this honour. She received the ambassadors of the Persians and other barbarian nations and (a thing which had never been done before) bestowed magnificent presents upon them, as if she had been absolute mistress of the Empire. Formerly, those who associated with the Emperor called him Imperator and the Empress Imperatrix, and the other officials according to their rank. But if anyone addressed either Justinian or Theodora without the addition of the title Sovereign Lord or Sovereign Lady, or without calling himself their slave, he was looked upon as ignorant and insolent in his language, and, as if he had committed a very grave offence and insulted those whom it least became him, he was dismissed. Formerly, only a few were granted admission to the palace, and that with difficulty; but, from the time of the accession of Justinian and Theodora, the magistrates and all other persons were continually in the palace. The reason was, that formerly the magistrates freely administered justice and laws independently, and executed the customary sentences at their own residences, and the subjects, seeing and hearing that no injustice would be done to them, had little reason to trouble the Emperor. But this pair, taking control of all business to themselves in order that they might ruin their subjects, forced them to humiliate themselves before them in a most servile manner. Thus the courts of justice were empty nearly every day, and hardly a person was to be seen in them, while in the palace there were crowds of men pushing and abusing one another, all endeavouring to be foremost in showing their servility. Those who were on the most intimate terms with the Imperial pair remained the whole day and a great part of the night, without food or sleep, until they were worn out, and this apparent good fortune was their only reward. Others, who were free from all these cares and anxieties, were puzzled to think what had become of the wealth and treasures of the Empire. Some declared that it had all fallen into the hands of the barbarians, while others asserted that the Emperor kept it locked up in secret hiding-places of his own. When Justinian--whether he be man or devil--shall have departed this life, those who are then living will be able to learn the truth.

THE END