

Chapter XLI: Conquests Of Justinian, Charact Of Balisarius.--Part III.

Although Theodatus descended from a race of heroes, he was ignorant of the art, and averse to the dangers, of war. Although he had studied the writings of Plato and Tully, philosophy was incapable of purifying his mind from the basest passions, avarice and fear. He had purchased a sceptre by ingratitude and murder: at the first menace of an enemy, he degraded his own majesty and that of a nation, which already disdained their unworthy sovereign. Astonished by the recent example of Gelimer, he saw himself dragged in chains through the streets of Constantinople: the terrors which Belisarius inspired were heightened by the eloquence of Peter, the Byzantine ambassador; and that bold and subtle advocate persuaded him to sign a treaty, too ignominious to become the foundation of a lasting peace. It was stipulated, that in the acclamations of the Roman people, the name of the emperor should be always proclaimed before that of the Gothic king; and that as often as the statue of Theodatus was erected in brass on marble, the divine image of Justinian should be placed on its right hand. Instead of conferring, the king of Italy was reduced to solicit, the honors of the senate; and the consent of the emperor was made indispensable before he could execute, against a priest or senator, the sentence either of death or confiscation. The feeble monarch resigned the possession of Sicily; offered, as the annual mark of his dependence, a crown of gold of the weight of three hundred pounds; and promised to supply, at the requisition of his sovereign, three thousand Gothic auxiliaries, for the service of the empire. Satisfied with these extraordinary concessions, the successful agent of

Justinian hastened his journey to Constantinople; but no sooner had he reached the Alban villa, [60] than he was recalled by the anxiety of Theodatus; and the dialogue which passed between the king and the ambassador deserves to be represented in its original simplicity. "Are you of opinion that the emperor will ratify this treaty? Perhaps. If he refuses, what consequence will ensue? War. Will such a war, be just or reasonable? Most assuredly: every to his character. What is your meaning? You are a philosopher--Justinian is emperor of the Romans: it would all become the disciple of Plato to shed the blood of thousands in his private quarrel: the successor of Augustus should vindicate his rights, and recover by arms the ancient provinces of his empire." This reasoning might not convince, but it was sufficient to alarm and subdue the weakness of Theodatus; and he soon descended to his last offer, that for the poor equivalent of a pension of forty-eight thousand pounds sterling, he would resign the kingdom of the Goths and Italians, and spend the remainder of his days in the innocent pleasures of philosophy and agriculture.

Both treaties were intrusted to the hands of the ambassador, on the frail security of an oath not to produce the second till the first had been positively rejected. The event may be easily foreseen: Justinian required and accepted the abdication of the Gothic king. His indefatigable agent returned from Constantinople to Ravenna, with ample instructions; and a fair epistle, which praised the wisdom and generosity of the royal philosopher, granted his pension, with the assurance of such honors as a subject and a Catholic might enjoy; and

wisely referred the final execution of the treaty to the presence and authority of Belisarius. But in the interval of suspense, two Roman generals, who had entered the province of Dalmatia, were defeated and slain by the Gothic troops. From blind and abject despair, Theodatus capriciously rose to groundless and fatal presumption, [61] and dared to receive, with menace and contempt, the ambassador of Justinian; who claimed his promise, solicited the allegiance of his subjects, and boldly asserted the inviolable privilege of his own character. The march of Belisarius dispelled this visionary pride; and as the first campaign [62] was employed in the reduction of Sicily, the invasion of Italy is applied by Procopius to the second year of the Gothic war. [63]

[Footnote 60: The ancient Alba was ruined in the first age of Rome. On the same spot, or at least in the neighborhood, successively arose. 1. The villa of Pompey, &c.; 2. A camp of the Praetorian cohorts; 3. The modern episcopal city of Albanum or Albano. (Procop. Goth. 1. ii. c. 4 Oluver. Ital. Antiq tom. ii. p. 914.)]

[Footnote 61: A Sibylline oracle was ready to pronounce--Africa capta munitus cum nato peribit; a sentence of portentous ambiguity, (Gothic. 1. i. c. 7,) which has been published in unknown characters by Opsopaeus, an editor of the oracles. The Pere Maltret has promised a commentary; but all his promises have been vain and fruitless.]

[Footnote 62: In his chronology, imitated, in some degree, from Thucydides, Procopius begins each spring the years of Justinian and of

the Gothic war; and his first aera coincides with the first of April, 535, and not 536, according to the Annals of Baronius, (Pagi, Crit. tom. ii. p. 555, who is followed by Muratori and the editors of Sigonius.)

Yet, in some passages, we are at a loss to reconcile the dates of Procopius with himself, and with the Chronicle of Marcellinus.]

[Footnote 63: The series of the first Gothic war is represented by Procopius (l. i. c. 5--29, l. ii. c. 1--30, l. iii. c. 1) till the captivity of Vitigas. With the aid of Sigonius (Opp. tom. i. de Imp. Occident. l. xvii. xviii.) and Muratori, (Annali d'Itaia, tom. v.,) I have gleaned some few additional facts.]

After Belisarius had left sufficient garrisons in Palermo and Syracuse, he embarked his troops at Messina, and landed them, without resistance, on the opposite shores of Rhegium. A Gothic prince, who had married the daughter of Theodatus, was stationed with an army to guard the entrance of Italy; but he imitated, without scruple, the example of a sovereign faithless to his public and private duties. The perfidious Ebermor deserted with his followers to the Roman camp, and was dismissed to enjoy the servile honors of the Byzantine court. [64] From Rhegium to Naples, the fleet and army of Belisarius, almost always in view of each other, advanced near three hundred miles along the sea-coast. The people of Bruttium, Lucania, and Campania, who abhorred the name and religion of the Goths, embraced the specious excuse, that their ruined walls were incapable of defence: the soldiers paid a just equivalent for a plentiful market; and curiosity alone interrupted the peaceful

occupations of the husbandman or artificer. Naples, which has swelled to a great and populous capital, long cherished the language and manners of a Grecian colony; [65] and the choice of Virgil had ennobled this elegant retreat, which attracted the lovers of repose and study, elegant retreat, which attracted the lovers of repose and study, from the noise, the smoke, and the laborious opulence of Rome. [66] As soon as the place was invested by sea and land, Belisarius gave audience to the deputies of the people, who exhorted him to disregard a conquest unworthy of his arms, to seek the Gothic king in a field of battle, and, after his victory, to claim, as the sovereign of Rome, the allegiance of the dependent cities. "When I treat with my enemies," replied the Roman chief, with a haughty smile, "I am more accustomed to give than to receive counsel; but I hold in one hand inevitable ruin, and in the other peace and freedom, such as Sicily now enjoys." The impatience of delay urged him to grant the most liberal terms; his honor secured their performance: but Naples was divided into two factions; and the Greek democracy was inflamed by their orators, who, with much spirit and some truth, represented to the multitude that the Goths would punish their defection, and that Belisarius himself must esteem their loyalty and valor. Their deliberations, however, were not perfectly free: the city was commanded by eight hundred Barbarians, whose wives and children were detained at Ravenna as the pledge of their fidelity; and even the Jews, who were rich and numerous, resisted, with desperate enthusiasm, the intolerant laws of Justinian. In a much later period, the circumference of Naples [67] measured only two thousand three hundred and sixty three paces: [68] the fortifications were defended by precipices or the sea;

when the aqueducts were intercepted, a supply of water might be drawn from wells and fountains; and the stock of provisions was sufficient to consume the patience of the besiegers. At the end of twenty days, that of Belisarius was almost exhausted, and he had reconciled himself to the disgrace of abandoning the siege, that he might march, before the winter season, against Rome and the Gothic king. But his anxiety was relieved by the bold curiosity of an Isaurian, who explored the dry channel of an aqueduct, and secretly reported, that a passage might be perforated to introduce a file of armed soldiers into the heart of the city. When the work had been silently executed, the humane general risked the discovery of his secret by a last and fruitless admonition of the impending danger. In the darkness of the night, four hundred Romans entered the aqueduct, raised themselves by a rope, which they fastened to an olive-tree, into the house or garden of a solitary matron, sounded their trumpets, surprised the sentinels, and gave admittance to their companions, who on all sides scaled the walls, and burst open the gates of the city. Every crime which is punished by social justice was practised as the rights of war; the Huns were distinguished by cruelty and sacrilege, and Belisarius alone appeared in the streets and churches of Naples to moderate the calamities which he predicted. "The gold and silver," he repeatedly exclaimed, "are the just rewards of your valor. But spare the inhabitants; they are Christians, they are suppliants, they are now your fellow-subjects. Restore the children to their parents, the wives to their husbands; and show them by you, generosity of what friends they have obstinately deprived themselves." The city was saved by the virtue and authority of its conqueror; [69] and when the

Neapolitans returned to their houses, they found some consolation in the secret enjoyment of their hidden treasures. The Barbarian garrison enlisted in the service of the emperor; Apulia and Calabria, delivered from the odious presence of the Goths, acknowledged his dominion; and the tusks of the Calydonian boar, which were still shown at Beneventum, are curiously described by the historian of Belisarius. [70]

[Footnote 64: Jornandes, de Rebus Geticis, c. 60, p. 702, edit. Grot., and tom. i. p. 221. Muratori, de Success, Regn. p. 241.]

[Footnote 65: Nero (says Tacitus, Annal. xv. 35) Neapolim quasi Graecam urbem delegit. One hundred and fifty years afterwards, in the time of Septimius Severus, the Hellenism of the Neapolitans is praised by Philostratus. (Icon. 1. i. p. 763, edit. Olear.)]

[Footnote 66: The otium of Naples is praised by the Roman poets, by Virgil, Horace, Silius Italicus, and Statius, (Cluver. Ital. Ant. 1. iv. p. 1149, 1150.) In an elegant epistles, (Sylv. 1. iii. 5, p. 94--98, edit. Markland,) Statius undertakes the difficult task of drawing his wife from the pleasures of Rome to that calm retreat.]

[Footnote 67: This measure was taken by Roger 1., after the conquest of Naples, (A.D. 1139,) which he made the capital of his new kingdom, (Giannone, Istoria Civile, tom. ii. p. 169.) That city, the third in Christian Europe, is now at least twelve miles in circumference, (Jul. Caesar. Capaccii Hist. Neapol. 1. i. p. 47,) and contains more

inhabitants (350,000) in a given space, than any other spot in the known world.]

[Footnote 68: Not geometrical, but common, paces or steps, of 22 French inches, (D' Anville, Mesures Itineraires, p. 7, 8.) The 2363 do not take an English mile.]

[Footnote 69: Belisarius was reproved by Pope Silverius for the massacre. He reseeded Naples, and imported colonies of African captives into Sicily, Calabria, and Apulia, (Hist. Miscell. l. xvi. in Muratori, tom. i. p. 106, 107.)]

[Footnote 70: Beneventum was built by Diomede, the nephew of Meleager (Cluver. tom. ii. p. 1195, 1196.) The Calydonian hunt is a picture of savage life, (Ovid, Metamorph. l. viii.) Thirty or forty heroes were leagued against a hog: the brutes (not the hog) quarrelled with lady for the head.]

The faithful soldiers and citizens of Naples had expected their deliverance from a prince, who remained the inactive and almost indifferent spectator of their ruin. Theodatus secured his person within the walls of Rome, whilst his cavalry advanced forty miles on the Appian way, and encamped in the Pomptine marshes; which, by a canal of nineteen miles in length, had been recently drained and converted into excellent pastures. [71] But the principal forces of the Goths were dispersed in Dalmatia, Venetia, and Gaul; and the feeble mind of their king was

confounded by the unsuccessful event of a divination, which seemed to presage the downfall of his empire. [72] The most abject slaves have arraigned the guilt or weakness of an unfortunate master. The character of Theodatus was rigorously scrutinized by a free and idle camp of Barbarians, conscious of their privilege and power: he was declared unworthy of his race, his nation, and his throne; and their general Vitiges, whose valor had been signalized in the Illyrian war, was raised with unanimous applause on the bucklers of his companions. On the first rumor, the abdicated monarch fled from the justice of his country; but he was pursued by private revenge. A Goth, whom he had injured in his love, overtook Theodatus on the Flaminian way, and, regardless of his unmanly cries, slaughtered him, as he lay, prostrate on the ground, like a victim (says the historian) at the foot of the altar. The choice of the people is the best and purest title to reign over them; yet such is the prejudice of every age, that Vitiges impatiently wished to return to Ravenna, where he might seize, with the reluctant hand of the daughter of Amalasontha, some faint shadow of hereditary right. A national council was immediately held, and the new monarch reconciled the impatient spirit of the Barbarians to a measure of disgrace, which the misconduct of his predecessor rendered wise and indispensable. The Goths consented to retreat in the presence of a victorious enemy; to delay till the next spring the operations of offensive war; to summon their scattered forces; to relinquish their distant possessions, and to trust even Rome itself to the faith of its inhabitants. Leuderis, an ancient warrior, was left in the capital with four thousand soldiers; a feeble garrison, which might have seconded the zeal, though it was incapable

of opposing the wishes, of the Romans. But a momentary enthusiasm of religion and patriotism was kindled in their minds. They furiously exclaimed, that the apostolic throne should no longer be profaned by the triumph or toleration of Arianism; that the tombs of the Caesars should no longer be trampled by the savages of the North; and, without reflecting, that Italy must sink into a province of Constantinople, they fondly hailed the restoration of a Roman emperor as a new aera of freedom and prosperity. The deputies of the pope and clergy, of the senate and people, invited the lieutenant of Justinian to accept their voluntary allegiance, and to enter the city, whose gates would be thrown open for his reception. As soon as Belisarius had fortified his new conquests, Naples and Cumae, he advanced about twenty miles to the banks of the Volturnus, contemplated the decayed grandeur of Capua, and halted at the separation of the Latin and Appian ways. The work of the censor, after the incessant use of nine centuries, still preserved its primaeval beauty, and not a flaw could be discovered in the large polished stones, of which that solid, though narrow road, was so firmly compacted. [73] Belisarius, however, preferred the Latin way, which, at a distance from the sea and the marshes, skirted in a space of one hundred and twenty miles along the foot of the mountains. His enemies had disappeared: when he made his entrance through the Asinarian gate, the garrison departed without molestation along the Flaminian way; and the city, after sixty years' servitude, was delivered from the yoke of the Barbarians. Leuderis alone, from a motive of pride or discontent, refused to accompany the fugitives; and the Gothic chief, himself a trophy of the victory, was sent with the keys of Rome to the throne of the emperor

Justinian. [74]

[Footnote 71: The Decennovium is strangely confounded by Cluverius (tom. ii. p. 1007) with the River Ufens. It was in truth a canal of nineteen miles, from Forum Appii to Terracina, on which Horace embarked in the night. The Decennovium, which is mentioned by Lucan, Dion Cassius, and Cassiodorus, has been sufficiently ruined, restored, and obliterated, (D'Anville, *Anayse de l'Italie*, p. 185, &c.)]

[Footnote 72: A Jew, gratified his contempt and hatred for all the Christians, by enclosing three bands, each of ten hogs, and discriminated by the names of Goths, Greeks, and Romans. Of the first, almost all were found dead; almost all the second were alive: of the third, half died, and the rest lost their bristles. No unsuitable emblem of the event]

[Footnote 73: Bergier (*Hist. des Grands Chemins des Romains*, tom. i. p. 221-228, 440-444) examines the structure and materials, while D'Anville (*Analyse d'Italie*, p. 200--123) defines the geographical line.]

[Footnote 74: Of the first recovery of Rome, the year (536) is certain, from the series of events, rather than from the corrupt, or interpolated, text of Procopius. The month (December) is ascertained by Evagrius, (l. iv. v. 19;) and the day (the tenth) may be admitted on the slight evidence of Nicephorus Callistus, (l. xvii. c. 13.) For this accurate chronology, we are indebted to the diligence and judgment

of Pagi, (tom, ii. p. 659, 560.) Note: Compare Maltret's note, in the edition of Dindorf the ninth is the day, according to his reading,--M.]

The first days, which coincided with the old Saturnalia, were devoted to mutual congratulation and the public joy; and the Catholics prepared to celebrate, without a rival, the approaching festival of the nativity of Christ. In the familiar conversation of a hero, the Romans acquired some notion of the virtues which history ascribed to their ancestors; they were edified by the apparent respect of Belisarius for the successor of St. Peter, and his rigid discipline secured in the midst of war the blessings of tranquillity and justice. They applauded the rapid success of his arms, which overran the adjacent country, as far as Narni, Perugia, and Spoleto; but they trembled, the senate, the clergy, and the unwarlike people, as soon as they understood that he had resolved, and would speedily be reduced, to sustain a siege against the powers of the Gothic monarchy. The designs of Vitiges were executed, during the winter season, with diligence and effect. From their rustic habitations, from their distant garrisons, the Goths assembled at Ravenna for the defence of their country; and such were their numbers, that, after an army had been detached for the relief of Dalmatia, one hundred and fifty thousand fighting men marched under the royal standard. According to the degrees of rank or merit, the Gothic king distributed arms and horses, rich gifts, and liberal promises; he moved along the Flaminian way, declined the useless sieges of Perugia and Spoleto, respected the impregnable rock of Narni, and arrived within two miles of Rome at the foot of the Milvian bridge. The narrow passage was fortified with a tower, and

Belisarius had computed the value of the twenty days which must be lost in the construction of another bridge. But the consternation of the soldiers of the tower, who either fled or deserted, disappointed his hopes, and betrayed his person into the most imminent danger. At the head of one thousand horse, the Roman general sallied from the Flaminian gate to mark the ground of an advantageous position, and to survey the camp of the Barbarians; but while he still believed them on the other side of the Tyber, he was suddenly encompassed and assaulted by their numerous squadrons. The fate of Italy depended on his life; and the deserters pointed to the conspicuous horse a bay, [75] with a white face, which he rode on that memorable day. "Aim at the bay horse," was the universal cry. Every bow was bent, every javelin was directed, against that fatal object, and the command was repeated and obeyed by thousands who were ignorant of its real motive. The bolder Barbarians advanced to the more honorable combat of swords and spears; and the praise of an enemy has graced the fall of Visandus, the standard-bearer, [76] who maintained his foremost station, till he was pierced with thirteen wounds, perhaps by the hand of Belisarius himself. The Roman general was strong, active, and dexterous; on every side he discharged his weighty and mortal strokes: his faithful guards imitated his valor, and defended his person; and the Goths, after the loss of a thousand men, fled before the arms of a hero. They were rashly pursued to their camp; and the Romans, oppressed by multitudes, made a gradual, and at length a precipitate retreat to the gates of the city: the gates were shut against the fugitives; and the public terror was increased, by the report that Belisarius was slain. His countenance was indeed disfigured

by sweat, dust, and blood; his voice was hoarse, his strength was almost exhausted; but his unconquerable spirit still remained; he imparted that spirit to his desponding companions; and their last desperate charge was felt by the flying Barbarians, as if a new army, vigorous and entire, had been poured from the city. The Flaminian gate was thrown open to a real triumph; but it was not before Belisarius had visited every post, and provided for the public safety, that he could be persuaded, by his wife and friends, to taste the needful refreshments of food and sleep. In the more improved state of the art of war, a general is seldom required, or even permitted to display the personal prowess of a soldier; and the example of Belisarius may be added to the rare examples of Henry IV., of Pyrrhus, and of Alexander.

[Footnote 75: A horse of a bay or red color was styled by the Greeks, balan by the Barbarians, and spadix by the Romans. *Honesti spadices*, says Virgil, (*Georgic. 1. iii. 72*, with the Observations of Martin and Heyne.) It signifies a branch of the palm-tree, whose name is synonymous to red, (*Aulus Gellius, ii. 26.*)]

[Footnote 76: I interpret it, not as a proper name, but an office, standard-bearer, from *bandum*, (*vexillum*,) a Barbaric word adopted by the Greeks and Romans, (*Paul Diacon. 1. i. c. 20, p. 760. Grot. Nomina Hethica, p. 575. Ducange, Gloss. Latin. tom. i. p. 539, 540.*)]

After this first and unsuccessful trial of their enemies, the whole army of the Goths passed the Tyber, and formed the siege of the city, which

continued above a year, till their final departure. Whatever fancy may conceive, the severe compass of the geographer defines the circumference of Rome within a line of twelve miles and three hundred and forty-five paces; and that circumference, except in the Vatican, has invariably been the same from the triumph of Aurelian to the peaceful but obscure reign of the modern popes. [77] But in the day of her greatness, the space within her walls was crowded with habitations and inhabitants; and the populous suburbs, that stretched along the public roads, were darted like so many rays from one common centre. Adversity swept away these extraneous ornaments, and left naked and desolate a considerable part even of the seven hills. Yet Rome in its present state could send into the field about thirty thousand males of a military age; [78] and, notwithstanding the want of discipline and exercise, the far greater part, inured to the hardships of poverty, might be capable of bearing arms for the defence of their country and religion. The prudence of Belisarius did not neglect this important resource. His soldiers were relieved by the zeal and diligence of the people, who watched while they slept, and labored while they reposed: he accepted the voluntary service of the bravest and most indigent of the Roman youth; and the companies of townsmen sometimes represented, in a vacant post, the presence of the troops which had been drawn away to more essential duties. But his just confidence was placed in the veterans who had fought under his banner in the Persian and African wars; and although that gallant band was reduced to five thousand men, he undertook, with such contemptible numbers, to defend a circle of twelve miles, against an army of one hundred and fifty thousand Barbarians. In the walls of Rome, which Belisarius

constructed or restored, the materials of ancient architecture may be discerned; [79] and the whole fortification was completed, except in a chasm still extant between the Pincian and Flaminian gates, which the prejudices of the Goths and Romans left under the effectual guard of St. Peter the apostle. [80]

[Footnote 77: M. D'Anville has given, in the Memoirs of the Academy for the year 1756, (tom. xxx. p. 198--236,) a plan of Rome on a smaller scale, but far more accurate than that which he had delineated in 1738 for Rollin's history. Experience had improved his knowledge and instead of Rossi's topography, he used the new and excellent map of Nolli. Pliny's old measure of thirteen must be reduced to eight miles. It is easier to alter a text, than to remove hills or buildings. * Note: Compare Gibbon, ch. xi. note 43, and xxxi. 67, and ch. lxxi. "It is quite clear," observes Sir J. Hobhouse, "that all these measurements differ, (in the first and second it is 21, in the text 12 and 345 paces, in the last 10,) yet it is equally clear that the historian avers that they are all the same." The present extent, $12 \frac{3}{4}$ nearly agrees with the second statement of Gibbon. Sir. J. Hobhouse also observes that the walls were enlarged by Constantine; but there can be no doubt that the circuit has been much changed. Illust. of Ch. Harold, p. 180.--M.]

[Footnote 78: In the year 1709, Labat (*Voyages en Italie*, tom. iii. p. 218) reckoned 138,568 Christian souls, besides 8000 or 10,000 Jews--without souls? In the year 1763, the numbers exceeded 160,000.]

[Footnote 79: The accurate eye of Nardini (Roma Antica, l. i. c. viii. p. 31) could distinguish the tumultuarie opere di Belisario.]

[Footnote 80: The fissure and leaning in the upper part of the wall, which Procopius observed, (Goth. l. i. c. 13,) is visible to the present hour, (Douat. Roma Vetus, l. i. c. 17, p. 53, 54.)]

The battlements or bastions were shaped in sharp angles a ditch, broad and deep, protected the foot of the rampart; and the archers on the rampart were assisted by military engines; the balistri, a powerful cross-bow, which darted short but massy arrows; the onagri, or wild asses, which, on the principle of a sling, threw stones and bullets of an enormous size. [81] A chain was drawn across the Tyber; the arches of the aqueducts were made impervious, and the mole or sepulchre of Hadrian [82] was converted, for the first time, to the uses of a citadel. That venerable structure, which contained the ashes of the Antonines, was a circular turret rising from a quadrangular basis; it was covered with the white marble of Paros, and decorated by the statues of gods and heroes; and the lover of the arts must read with a sigh, that the works of Praxiteles or Lysippus were torn from their lofty pedestals, and hurled into the ditch on the heads of the besiegers. [83] To each of his lieutenants Belisarius assigned the defence of a gate, with the wise and peremptory instruction, that, whatever might be the alarm, they should steadily adhere to their respective posts, and trust their general for the safety of Rome. The formidable host of the Goths was insufficient to embrace the ample measure of the city, of the fourteen gates, seven only

were invested from the Proenestine to the Flaminian way; and Vitiges divided his troops into six camps, each of which was fortified with a ditch and rampart. On the Tuscan side of the river, a seventh encampment was formed in the field or circus of the Vatican, for the important purpose of commanding the Milvian bridge and the course of the Tyber; but they approached with devotion the adjacent church of St. Peter; and the threshold of the holy apostles was respected during the siege by a Christian enemy. In the ages of victory, as often as the senate decreed some distant conquest, the consul denounced hostilities, by unbarring, in solemn pomp, the gates of the temple of Janus. [84] Domestic war now rendered the admonition superfluous, and the ceremony was superseded by the establishment of a new religion. But the brazen temple of Janus was left standing in the forum; of a size sufficient only to contain the statue of the god, five cubits in height, of a human form, but with two faces directed to the east and west. The double gates were likewise of brass; and a fruitless effort to turn them on their rusty hinges revealed the scandalous secret that some Romans were still attached to the superstition of their ancestors.

[Footnote 81: Lipsius (Opp. tom. iii. Poliorcet, l. iii.) was ignorant of this clear and conspicuous passage of Procopius, (Goth. l. i. c. 21.) The engine was named the wild ass, a calcitrando, (Hen. Steph. Thesaur. Linguae Graec. tom. ii. p. 1340, 1341, tom. iii. p. 877.) I have seen an ingenious model, contrived and executed by General Melville, which imitates or surpasses the art of antiquity.]

[Footnote 82: The description of this mausoleum, or mole, in Procopius, (l. i. c. 25.) is the first and best. The height above the walls. On Nolli's great plan, the sides measure 260 English feet. * Note: Donatus and Nardini suppose that Hadrian's tomb was fortified by Honorius; it was united to the wall by men of old, (Procop in loc.) Gibbon has mistaken the breadth for the height above the walls Hobhouse, *Illust. of Childe Harold*, p. 302.--M.]

[Footnote 83: Praxiteles excelled in Fauns, and that of Athens was his own masterpiece. Rome now contains about thirty of the same character. When the ditch of St. Angelo was cleansed under Urban VIII., the workmen found the sleeping Faun of the Barberini palace; but a leg, a thigh, and the right arm, had been broken from that beautiful statue, (Winkelman, *Hist. de l'Art*, tom. ii. p. 52, 53, tom iii. p. 265.)]

[Footnote 84: Procopius has given the best description of the temple of Janus a national deity of Latium, (Heyne, *Excurs. v. ad l. vii. Aeneid.*) It was once a gate in the primitive city of Romulus and Numa, (Nardini, p. 13, 256, 329.) Virgil has described the ancient rite like a poet and an antiquarian.] Eighteen days were employed by the besiegers, to provide all the instruments of attack which antiquity had invented. Fascines were prepared to fill the ditches, scaling-ladders to ascend the walls. The largest trees of the forest supplied the timbers of four battering-rams: their heads were armed with iron; they were suspended by ropes, and each of them was worked by the labor of fifty men. The lofty wooden turrets moved on wheels or rollers, and formed a spacious

platform of the level of the rampart. On the morning of the nineteenth day, a general attack was made from the Praenestine gate to the Vatican: seven Gothic columns, with their military engines, advanced to the assault; and the Romans, who lined the ramparts, listened with doubt and anxiety to the cheerful assurances of their commander. As soon as the enemy approached the ditch, Belisarius himself drew the first arrow; and such was his strength and dexterity, that he transfixed the foremost of the Barbarian leaders.

As shout of applause and victory was reechoed along the wall. He drew a second arrow, and the stroke was followed with the same success and the same acclamation. The Roman general then gave the word, that the archers should aim at the teams of oxen; they were instantly covered with mortal wounds; the towers which they drew remained useless and immovable, and a single moment disconcerted the laborious projects of the king of the Goths. After this disappointment, Vitiges still continued, or feigned to continue, the assault of the Salarian gate, that he might divert the attention of his adversary, while his principal forces more strenuously attacked the Praenestine gate and the sepulchre of Hadrian, at the distance of three miles from each other. Near the former, the double walls of the Vivarium [85] were low or broken; the fortifications of the latter were feebly guarded: the vigor of the Goths was excited by the hope of victory and spoil; and if a single post had given way, the Romans, and Rome itself, were irrecoverably lost. This perilous day was the most glorious in the life of Belisarius. Amidst tumult and dismay, the whole plan of the attack and defence was distinctly present to his

mind; he observed the changes of each instant, weighed every possible advantage, transported his person to the scenes of danger, and communicated his spirit in calm and decisive orders. The contest was fiercely maintained from the morning to the evening; the Goths were repulsed on all sides; and each Roman might boast that he had vanquished thirty Barbarians, if the strange disproportion of numbers were not counterbalanced by the merit of one man. Thirty thousand Goths, according to the confession of their own chiefs, perished in this bloody action; and the multitude of the wounded was equal to that of the slain. When they advanced to the assault, their close disorder suffered not a javelin to fall without effect; and as they retired, the populace of the city joined the pursuit, and slaughtered, with impunity, the backs of their flying enemies. Belisarius instantly sallied from the gates; and while the soldiers chanted his name and victory, the hostile engines of war were reduced to ashes. Such was the loss and consternation of the Goths, that, from this day, the siege of Rome degenerated into a tedious and indolent blockade; and they were incessantly harassed by the Roman general, who, in frequent skirmishes, destroyed above five thousand of their bravest troops. Their cavalry was unpractised in the use of the bow; their archers served on foot; and this divided force was incapable of contending with their adversaries, whose lances and arrows, at a distance, or at hand, were alike formidable. The consummate skill of Belisarius embraced the favorable opportunities; and as he chose the ground and the moment, as he pressed the charge or sounded the retreat, [86] the squadrons which he detached were seldom unsuccessful. These partial advantages diffused an impatient ardor among the soldiers and

people, who began to feel the hardships of a siege, and to disregard the dangers of a general engagement. Each plebeian conceived himself to be a hero, and the infantry, who, since the decay of discipline, were rejected from the line of battle, aspired to the ancient honors of the Roman legion. Belisarius praised the spirit of his troops, condemned their presumption, yielded to their clamors, and prepared the remedies of a defeat, the possibility of which he alone had courage to suspect. In the quarter of the Vatican, the Romans prevailed; and if the irreparable moments had not been wasted in the pillage of the camp, they might have occupied the Milvian bridge, and charged in the rear of the Gothic host. On the other side of the Tyber, Belisarius advanced from the Pincian and Salarian gates. But his army, four thousand soldiers perhaps, was lost in a spacious plain; they were encompassed and oppressed by fresh multitudes, who continually relieved the broken ranks of the Barbarians. The valiant leaders of the infantry were unskilled to conquer; they died: the retreat (a hasty retreat) was covered by the prudence of the general, and the victors started back with affright from the formidable aspect of an armed rampart. The reputation of Belisarius was unsullied by a defeat; and the vain confidence of the Goths was not less serviceable to his designs than the repentance and modesty of the Roman troops.

[Footnote 85: Vivarium was an angle in the new wall enclosed for wild beasts, (Procopius, Goth. 1. i. c. 23.) The spot is still visible in Nardini (1 iv. c. 2, p. 159, 160,) and Nolli's great plan of Rome.]

[Footnote 86: For the Roman trumpet, and its various notes, consult Lipsius de Militia Romana, (Opp. tom. iii. l. iv. Dialog. x. p. 125-129.) A mode of distinguishing the charge by the horse-trumpet of solid brass, and the retreat by the foot-trumpet of leather and light wood, was recommended by Procopius, and adopted by Belisarius.]