

Chapter LXI: Partition Of The Empire By The French And Venetians.--Part I.

Partition Of The Empire By The French And Venetians,--Five
Latin Emperors Of The Houses Of Flanders And Courtenay.--
Their Wars Against The Bulgarians And Greeks.--Weakness And
Poverty Of The Latin Empire.--Recovery Of Constantinople By
The Greeks.--General Consequences Of The Crusades.

After the death of the lawful princes, the French and Venetians, confident of justice and victory, agreed to divide and regulate their future possessions. [1] It was stipulated by treaty, that twelve electors, six of either nation, should be nominated; that a majority should choose the emperor of the East; and that, if the votes were equal, the decision of chance should ascertain the successful candidate. To him, with all the titles and prerogatives of the Byzantine throne, they assigned the two palaces of Boucoleon and Blachernæ, with a fourth part of the Greek monarchy. It was defined that the three remaining portions should be equally shared between the republic of Venice and the barons of France; that each feudatory, with an honorable exception for the doge, should acknowledge and perform the duties of homage and military service to the supreme head of the empire; that the nation which gave an emperor, should resign to their brethren the choice of a patriarch; and that the pilgrims, whatever might be their impatience to visit the Holy Land, should devote another year to the conquest and defence of the Greek provinces. After the conquest of Constantinople by the Latins, the treaty was confirmed and executed; and the first and

most important step was the creation of an emperor. The six electors of the French nation were all ecclesiastics, the abbot of Loces, the archbishop elect of Acre in Palestine, and the bishops of Troyes, Soissons, Halberstadt, and Bethlehem, the last of whom exercised in the camp the office of pope's legate: their profession and knowledge were respectable; and as they could not be the objects, they were best qualified to be the authors of the choice. The six Venetians were the principal servants of the state, and in this list the noble families of Querini and Contarini are still proud to discover their ancestors. The twelve assembled in the chapel of the palace; and after the solemn invocation of the Holy Ghost, they proceeded to deliberate and vote. A just impulse of respect and gratitude prompted them to crown the virtues of the doge; his wisdom had inspired their enterprise; and the most youthful knights might envy and applaud the exploits of blind age. But the patriot Dandolo was devoid of all personal ambition, and fully satisfied that he had been judged worthy to reign. His nomination was overruled by the Venetians themselves: his countrymen, and perhaps his friends, [2] represented, with the eloquence of truth, the mischiefs that might arise to national freedom and the common cause, from the union of two incompatible characters, of the first magistrate of a republic and the emperor of the East. The exclusion of the doge left room for the more equal merits of Boniface and Baldwin; and at their names all meaner candidates respectfully withdrew. The marquis of Montferrat was recommended by his mature age and fair reputation, by the choice of the adventurers, and the wishes of the Greeks; nor can I believe that Venice, the mistress of the sea, could be seriously

apprehensive of a petty lord at the foot of the Alps. [3] But the count of Flanders was the chief of a wealthy and warlike people: he was valiant, pious, and chaste; in the prime of life, since he was only thirty-two years of age; a descendant of Charlemagne, a cousin of the king of France, and a compeer of the prelates and barons who had yielded with reluctance to the command of a foreigner. Without the chapel, these barons, with the doge and marquis at their head, expected the decision of the twelve electors. It was announced by the bishop of Soissons, in the name of his colleagues: "Ye have sworn to obey the prince whom we should choose: by our unanimous suffrage, Baldwin count of Flanders and Hainault is now your sovereign, and the emperor of the East." He was saluted with loud applause, and the proclamation was reechoed through the city by the joy of the Latins, and the trembling adulation of the Greeks. Boniface was the first to kiss the hand of his rival, and to raise him on the buckler: and Baldwin was transported to the cathedral, and solemnly invested with the purple buskins. At the end of three weeks he was crowned by the legate, in the vacancy of the patriarch; but the Venetian clergy soon filled the chapter of St. Sophia, seated Thomas Morosini on the ecclesiastical throne, and employed every art to perpetuate in their own nation the honors and benefices of the Greek church. [4] Without delay the successor of Constantine instructed Palestine, France, and Rome, of this memorable revolution. To Palestine he sent, as a trophy, the gates of Constantinople, and the chain of the harbor; [5] and adopted, from the Assise of Jerusalem, the laws or customs best adapted to a French colony and conquest in the East. In his epistles, the natives of France are encouraged to swell that colony,

and to secure that conquest, to people a magnificent city and a fertile land, which will reward the labors both of the priest and the soldier. He congratulates the Roman pontiff on the restoration of his authority in the East; invites him to extinguish the Greek schism by his presence in a general council; and implores his blessing and forgiveness for the disobedient pilgrims. Prudence and dignity are blended in the answer of Innocent. [6] In the subversion of the Byzantine empire, he arraigns the vices of man, and adores the providence of God; the conquerors will be absolved or condemned by their future conduct; the validity of their treaty depends on the judgment of St. Peter; but he inculcates their most sacred duty of establishing a just subordination of obedience and tribute, from the Greeks to the Latins, from the magistrate to the clergy, and from the clergy to the pope.

[Footnote 1: See the original treaty of partition, in the Venetian Chronicle of Andrew Dandolo, p. 326--330, and the subsequent election in Villehardouin, No. 136--140, with Ducange in his Observations, and the book of his Histoire de Constantinople sous l'Empire des François.]

[Footnote 2: After mentioning the nomination of the doge by a French elector his kinsman Andrew Dandolo approves his exclusion, *quidam Venetorum fidelis et nobilis senex, usus oratione satis probabili, &c.*, which has been embroidered by modern writers from Blondus to Le Beau.]

[Footnote 3: Nicetas, (p. 384,) with the vain ignorance of a Greek, describes the marquis of Montferrat as a maritime power. Dampardian de

oikeisqai paralion. Was he deceived by the Byzantine theme of Lombardy which extended along the coast of Calabria?]

[Footnote 4: They exacted an oath from Thomas Morosini to appoint no canons of St. Sophia the lawful electors, except Venetians who had lived ten years at Venice, &c. But the foreign clergy was envious, the pope disapproved this national monopoly, and of the six Latin patriarchs of Constantinople, only the first and the last were Venetians.]

[Footnote 5: Nicetas, p. 383.]

[Footnote 6: The Epistles of Innocent III. are a rich fund for the ecclesiastical and civil institution of the Latin empire of Constantinople; and the most important of these epistles (of which the collection in 2 vols. in folio is published by Stephen Baluze) are inserted in his Gesta, in Muratori, Script. Rerum Italicarum, tom. iii. p. 1. c. 94--105.]

In the division of the Greek provinces, [7] the share of the Venetians was more ample than that of the Latin emperor. No more than one fourth was appropriated to his domain; a clear moiety of the remainder was reserved for Venice; and the other moiety was distributed among the adventures of France and Lombardy. The venerable Dandolo was proclaimed despot of Romania, and invested after the Greek fashion with the purple buskins. He ended at Constantinople his long and glorious life; and if the prerogative was personal, the title was used by his successors till

the middle of the fourteenth century, with the singular, though true, addition of lords of one fourth and a half of the Roman empire. [8] The doge, a slave of state, was seldom permitted to depart from the helm of the republic; but his place was supplied by the bail, or regent, who exercised a supreme jurisdiction over the colony of Venetians: they possessed three of the eight quarters of the city; and his independent tribunal was composed of six judges, four counsellors, two chamberlains two fiscal advocates, and a constable. Their long experience of the Eastern trade enabled them to select their portion with discernment: they had rashly accepted the dominion and defence of Adrianople; but it was the more reasonable aim of their policy to form a chain of factories, and cities, and islands, along the maritime coast, from the neighborhood of Ragusa to the Hellespont and the Bosphorus. The labor and cost of such extensive conquests exhausted their treasury: they abandoned their maxims of government, adopted a feudal system, and contented themselves with the homage of their nobles, [9] for the possessions which these private vassals undertook to reduce and maintain. And thus it was that the family of Sanut acquired the duchy of Naxos, which involved the greatest part of the archipelago. For the price of ten thousand marks, the republic purchased of the marquis of Montferrat the fertile Island of Crete or Candia, with the ruins of a hundred cities; [10] but its improvement was stunted by the proud and narrow spirit of an aristocracy; [11] and the wisest senators would confess that the sea, not the land, was the treasury of St. Mark. In the moiety of the adventurers the marquis Boniface might claim the most liberal reward; and, besides the Isle of Crete, his exclusion from the

throne was compensated by the royal title and the provinces beyond the Hellespont. But he prudently exchanged that distant and difficult conquest for the kingdom of Thessalonica Macedonia, twelve days' journey from the capital, where he might be supported by the neighboring powers of his brother-in-law the king of Hungary. His progress was hailed by the voluntary or reluctant acclamations of the natives; and Greece, the proper and ancient Greece, again received a Latin conqueror, [12] who trod with indifference that classic ground. He viewed with a careless eye the beauties of the valley of Tempe; traversed with a cautious step the straits of Thermopylæ; occupied the unknown cities of Thebes, Athens, and Argos; and assaulted the fortifications of Corinth and Napoli, [13] which resisted his arms. The lots of the Latin pilgrims were regulated by chance, or choice, or subsequent exchange; and they abused, with intemperate joy, their triumph over the lives and fortunes of a great people. After a minute survey of the provinces, they weighed in the scales of avarice the revenue of each district, the advantage of the situation, and the ample or scanty supplies for the maintenance of soldiers and horses. Their presumption claimed and divided the long-lost dependencies of the Roman sceptre: the Nile and Euphrates rolled through their imaginary realms; and happy was the warrior who drew for his prize the palace of the Turkish sultan of Iconium. [14] I shall not descend to the pedigree of families and the rent-roll of estates, but I wish to specify that the counts of Blois and St. Pol were invested with the duchy of Nice and the lordship of Demotica: [15] the principal fiefs were held by the service of constable, chamberlain, cup-bearer, butler, and chief cook; and our historian, Jeffrey of Villehardouin, obtained a fair

establishment on the banks of the Hebrus, and united the double office of marshal of Champagne and Romania. At the head of his knights and archers, each baron mounted on horseback to secure the possession of his share, and their first efforts were generally successful. But the public force was weakened by their dispersion; and a thousand quarrels must arise under a law, and among men, whose sole umpire was the sword. Within three months after the conquest of Constantinople, the emperor and the king of Thessalonica drew their hostile followers into the field; they were reconciled by the authority of the doge, the advice of the marshal, and the firm freedom of their peers. [16]

[Footnote 7: In the treaty of partition, most of the names are corrupted by the scribes: they might be restored, and a good map, suited to the last age of the Byzantine empire, would be an improvement of geography. But, alas D'Anville is no more!]

[Footnote 8: Their style was *dominus quartæ partis et dimidiæ imperii Romani*, till Giovanni Dolfino, who was elected doge in the year of 1356, (Sanuto, p. 530, 641.) For the government of Constantinople, see Ducange, *Histoire de C. P.* i. 37.]

[Footnote 9: Ducange (*Hist. de C. P.* ii. 6) has marked the conquests made by the state or nobles of Venice of the Islands of Candia, Corfu, Cephalonia, Zante, Naxos, Paros, Melos, Andros, Mycone, Syro, Cea, and Lemnos.]

[Footnote 10: Boniface sold the Isle of Candia, August 12, A.D. 1204. See the act in Sanuto, p. 533: but I cannot understand how it could be his mother's portion, or how she could be the daughter of an emperor Alexius.]

[Footnote 11: In the year 1212, the doge Peter Zani sent a colony to Candia, drawn from every quarter of Venice. But in their savage manners and frequent rebellions, the Candiots may be compared to the Corsicans under the yoke of Genoa; and when I compare the accounts of Belon and Tournefort, I cannot discern much difference between the Venetian and the Turkish island.]

[Footnote 12: Villehardouin (No. 159, 160, 173--177) and Nicetas (p. 387--394) describe the expedition into Greece of the marquis Boniface. The Choniate might derive his information from his brother Michael, archbishop of Athens, whom he paints as an orator, a statesman, and a saint. His encomium of Athens, and the description of Tempe, should be published from the Bodleian MS. of Nicetas, (Fabric. Bibliot. Græc. tom. vi. p. 405,) and would have deserved Mr. Harris's inquiries.]

[Footnote 13: Napoli de Romania, or Nauplia, the ancient seaport of Argos, is still a place of strength and consideration, situate on a rocky peninsula, with a good harbor, (Chandler's Travels into Greece, p. 227.)]

[Footnote 14: I have softened the expression of Nicetas, who strives

to expose the presumption of the Franks. See the Rebus post C. P. expugnatam, p. 375--384.]

[Footnote 15: A city surrounded by the River Hebrus, and six leagues to the south of Adrianople, received from its double wall the Greek name of Didymoteichos, insensibly corrupted into Demotica and Dimot. I have preferred the more convenient and modern appellation of Demotica. This place was the last Turkish residence of Charles XII.]

[Footnote 16: Their quarrel is told by Villehardouin (No. 146--158) with the spirit of freedom. The merit and reputation of the marshal are so acknowledged by the Greek historian (p. 387) mega para touV tvn Dauinwn dunamenou strateumasi: unlike some modern heroes, whose exploits are only visible in their own memoirs. * Note: William de Champlite, brother of the count of Dijon, assumed the title of Prince of Achaia: on the death of his brother, he returned, with regret, to France, to assume his paternal inheritance, and left Villehardouin his "bailli," on condition that if he did not return within a year Villehardouin was to retain an investiture. Brosset's Add. to Le Beau, vol. xvii. p. 200. M. Brosset adds, from the Greek chronicler edited by M. Buchon, the somewhat unknighly trick by which Villehardouin disembarassed himself from the troublesome claim of Robert, the cousin of the count of Dijon. to the succession. He contrived that Robert should arrive just fifteen days too late; and with the general concurrence of the assembled knights was himself invested with the principality. Ibid. p. 283. M.]

Two fugitives, who had reigned at Constantinople, still asserted the title of emperor; and the subjects of their fallen throne might be moved to pity by the misfortunes of the elder Alexius, or excited to revenge by the spirit of Mourzoufle. A domestic alliance, a common interest, a similar guilt, and the merit of extinguishing his enemies, a brother and a nephew, induced the more recent usurper to unite with the former the relics of his power. Mourzoufle was received with smiles and honors in the camp of his father Alexius; but the wicked can never love, and should rarely trust, their fellow-criminals; he was seized in the bath, deprived of his eyes, stripped of his troops and treasures, and turned out to wander an object of horror and contempt to those who with more propriety could hate, and with more justice could punish, the assassin of the emperor Isaac and his son. As the tyrant, pursued by fear or remorse, was stealing over to Asia, he was seized by the Latins of Constantinople, and condemned, after an open trial, to an ignominious death. His judges debated the mode of his execution, the axe, the wheel, or the stake; and it was resolved that Mourzoufle [17] should ascend the Theodosian column, a pillar of white marble of one hundred and forty-seven feet in height. [18] From the summit he was cast down headlong, and dashed in pieces on the pavement, in the presence of innumerable spectators, who filled the forum of Taurus, and admired the accomplishment of an old prediction, which was explained by this singular event. [19] The fate of Alexius is less tragical: he was sent by the marquis a captive to Italy, and a gift to the king of the Romans; but he had not much to applaud his fortune, if the sentence of imprisonment and exile were changed from a fortress in the Alps to a

monastery in Asia. But his daughter, before the national calamity, had been given in marriage to a young hero who continued the succession, and restored the throne, of the Greek princes. [20] The valor of Theodore Lascaris was signalized in the two sieges of Constantinople. After the flight of Mourzoufle, when the Latins were already in the city, he offered himself as their emperor to the soldiers and people; and his ambition, which might be virtuous, was undoubtedly brave. Could he have infused a soul into the multitude, they might have crushed the strangers under their feet: their abject despair refused his aid; and Theodore retired to breathe the air of freedom in Anatolia, beyond the immediate view and pursuit of the conquerors. Under the title, at first of despot, and afterwards of emperor, he drew to his standard the bolder spirits, who were fortified against slavery by the contempt of life; and as every means was lawful for the public safety implored without scruple the alliance of the Turkish sultan Nice, where Theodore established his residence, Prusa and Philadelphia, Smyrna and Ephesus, opened their gates to their deliverer: he derived strength and reputation from his victories, and even from his defeats; and the successor of Constantine preserved a fragment of the empire from the banks of the Mæander to the suburbs of Nicomedia, and at length of Constantinople. Another portion, distant and obscure, was possessed by the lineal heir of the Comneni, a son of the virtuous Manuel, a grandson of the tyrant Andronicus. His name was Alexius; and the epithet of great [201] was applied perhaps to his stature, rather than to his exploits. By the indulgence of the Angeli, he was appointed governor or duke of Trebizond: [21] [211] his birth gave him ambition, the revolution independence; and, without changing his

title, he reigned in peace from Sinope to the Phasis, along the coast of the Black Sea. His nameless son and successor [212] is described as the vassal of the sultan, whom he served with two hundred lances: that Comnenian prince was no more than duke of Trebizond, and the title of emperor was first assumed by the pride and envy of the grandson of Alexius. In the West, a third fragment was saved from the common shipwreck by Michael, a bastard of the house of Angeli, who, before the revolution, had been known as a hostage, a soldier, and a rebel. His flight from the camp of the marquis Boniface secured his freedom; by his marriage with the governor's daughter, he commanded the important place of Durazzo, assumed the title of despot, and founded a strong and conspicuous principality in Epirus, Ætolia, and Thessaly, which have ever been peopled by a warlike race. The Greeks, who had offered their service to their new sovereigns, were excluded by the haughty Latins [22] from all civil and military honors, as a nation born to tremble and obey. Their resentment prompted them to show that they might have been useful friends, since they could be dangerous enemies: their nerves were braced by adversity: whatever was learned or holy, whatever was noble or valiant, rolled away into the independent states of Trebizond, Epirus, and Nice; and a single patrician is marked by the ambiguous praise of attachment and loyalty to the Franks. The vulgar herd of the cities and the country would have gladly submitted to a mild and regular servitude; and the transient disorders of war would have been obliterated by some years of industry and peace. But peace was banished, and industry was crushed, in the disorders of the feudal system. The Roman emperors of Constantinople, if they were endowed with abilities, were armed with

power for the protection of their subjects: their laws were wise, and their administration was simple. The Latin throne was filled by a titular prince, the chief, and often the servant, of his licentious confederates; the fiefs of the empire, from a kingdom to a castle, were held and ruled by the sword of the barons; and their discord, poverty, and ignorance, extended the ramifications of tyranny to the most sequestered villages. The Greeks were oppressed by the double weight of the priest, who were invested with temporal power, and of the soldier, who was inflamed by fanatic hatred; and the insuperable bar of religion and language forever separated the stranger and the native. As long as the crusaders were united at Constantinople, the memory of their conquest, and the terror of their arms, imposed silence on the captive land: their dispersion betrayed the smallness of their numbers and the defects of their discipline; and some failures and mischances revealed the secret, that they were not invincible. As the fears of the Greeks abated, their hatred increased. They murdered; they conspired; and before a year of slavery had elapsed, they implored, or accepted, the succor of a Barbarian, whose power they had felt, and whose gratitude they trusted. [23]

[Footnote 17: See the fate of Mourzoufle in Nicetas, (p. 393,) Villehardouin, (No. 141--145, 163,) and Guntherus, (c. 20, 21.) Neither the marshal nor the monk afford a grain of pity for a tyrant or rebel, whose punishment, however, was more unexampled than his crime.]

[Footnote 18: The column of Arcadius, which represents in basso relievo

his victories, or those of his father Theodosius, is still extant at Constantinople. It is described and measured, Gyllius, (Topograph. iv. 7,) Banduri, (ad l. i. Antiquit. C. P. p. 507, &c.) and Tournefort, (Voyage du Levant, tom. ii. lettre xii. p. 231.) (Compare Wilken, note, vol. v p. 388.--M.)]

[Footnote 19: The nonsense of Gunther and the modern Greeks concerning this columna fatidica, is unworthy of notice; but it is singular enough, that fifty years before the Latin conquest, the poet Tzetzes, (Chiliad, ix. 277) relates the dream of a matron, who saw an army in the forum, and a man sitting on the column, clapping his hands, and uttering a loud exclamation. * Note: We read in the "Chronicle of the Conquest of Constantinople, and of the Establishment of the French in the Morea," translated by J A Buchon, Paris, 1825, p. 64 that Leo VI., called the Philosopher, had prophesied that a perfidious emperor should be precipitated from the top of this column. The crusaders considered themselves under an obligation to fulfil this prophecy. Brosset, note on Le Beau, vol. xvii. p. 180. M Brosset announces that a complete edition of this work, of which the original Greek of the first book only has been published by M. Buchon in preparation, to form part of the new series of the Byzantine historian.--M.]

[Footnote 20: The dynasties of Nice, Trebizond, and Epirus (of which Nicetas saw the origin without much pleasure or hope) are learnedly explored, and clearly represented, in the Familiæ Byzantinæ of Ducange.]

[Footnote 201: This was a title, not a personal appellation. Joinville speaks of the "Grant Comnenie, et sire de Traffezontes." Fallmerayer, p. 82.--M.]

[Footnote 21: Except some facts in Pachymer and Nicephorus Gregoras, which will hereafter be used, the Byzantine writers disdain to speak of the empire of Trebizond, or principality of the Lazi; and among the Latins, it is conspicuous only in the romancers of the xivth or xvth centuries. Yet the indefatigable Ducange has dug out (Fam. Byz. p. 192) two authentic passages in Vincent of Beauvais (l. xxxi. c. 144) and the prothonotary Ogerius, (apud Wading, A.D. 1279, No. 4.)]

[Footnote 211: On the revolutions of Trebizond under the later empire down to this period, see Fallmerayer, Geschichte des Kaiserthums von Trapezunt, ch. iii. The wife of Manuel fled with her infant sons and her treasure from the relentless enmity of Isaac Angelus. Fallmerayer conjectures that her arrival enabled the Greeks of that region to make head against the formidable Thamar, the Georgian queen of Teflis, p. 42. They gradually formed a dominion on the banks of the Phasis, which the distracted government of the Angeli neglected or were unable to suppress. On the capture of Constantinople by the Latins, Alexius was joined by many noble fugitives from Constantinople. He had always retained the names of Cæsar and BasileuV. He now fixed the seat of his empire at Trebizond; but he had never abandoned his pretensions to the Byzantine throne, ch. iii. Fallmerayer appears to make out a triumphant case as to the assumption of the royal title by Alexius the First. Since

the publication of M. Fallmerayer's work, (München, 1827,) M. Tafel has published, at the end of the opuscula of Eustathius, a curious chronicle of Trebizond by Michael Panaretas, (Frankfort, 1832.) It gives the succession of the emperors, and some other curious circumstances of their wars with the several Mahometan powers.--M.]

[Footnote 212: The successor of Alexius was his son-in-law Andronicus I., of the Comnenian family, surnamed Gidon. There were five successions between Alexius and John, according to Fallmerayer, p. 103. The troops of Trebizond fought in the army of Dschelaeddin, the Karismian, against Alaeddin, the Seljukian sultan of Roum, but as allies rather than vassals, p. 107. It was after the defeat of Dschelaeddin that they furnished their contingent to Alai-eddin. Fallmerayer struggles in vain to mitigate this mark of the subjection of the Comneni to the sultan. p. 116.--M.]

[Footnote 22: The portrait of the French Latins is drawn in Nicetas by the hand of prejudice and resentment: ouden tvn allwn eqnvn eiV "Areov?rga parasumbelhsqai sjisin hneicono all' oude tiV tvn caritwn h tvn?mousvn para toiV barbaroiV toutoiV epexenizeto, kai para touto oimai thn jusin hsan anhmeroi, kai ton xolon eixon tou logou prstreconta. [P. 791 Ed. Bek.]

[Footnote 23: I here begin to use, with freedom and confidence, the eight books of the Histoire de C. P. sous l'Empire des François, which Ducange has given as a supplement to Villehardouin; and which, in a

barbarous style, deserves the praise of an original and classic work.]

The Latin conquerors had been saluted with a solemn and early embassy from John, or Joannice, or Calo-John, the revolted chief of the Bulgarians and Walachians. He deemed himself their brother, as the votary of the Roman pontiff, from whom he had received the regal title and a holy banner; and in the subversion of the Greek monarchy, he might aspire to the name of their friend and accomplice. But Calo-John was astonished to find, that the Count of Flanders had assumed the pomp and pride of the successors of Constantine; and his ambassadors were dismissed with a haughty message, that the rebel must deserve a pardon, by touching with his forehead the footstool of the Imperial throne. His resentment [24] would have exhaled in acts of violence and blood: his cooler policy watched the rising discontent of the Greeks; affected a tender concern for their sufferings; and promised, that their first struggles for freedom should be supported by his person and kingdom. The conspiracy was propagated by national hatred, the firmest band of association and secrecy: the Greeks were impatient to sheathe their daggers in the breasts of the victorious strangers; but the execution was prudently delayed, till Henry, the emperor's brother, had transported the flower of his troops beyond the Hellespont. Most of the towns and villages of Thrace were true to the moment and the signal; and the Latins, without arms or suspicion, were slaughtered by the vile and merciless revenge of their slaves. From Demotica, the first scene of the massacre, the surviving vassals of the count of St. Pol escaped to Adrianople; but the French and Venetians, who occupied that city, were

slain or expelled by the furious multitude: the garrisons that could effect their retreat fell back on each other towards the metropolis; and the fortresses, that separately stood against the rebels, were ignorant of each other's and of their sovereign's fate. The voice of fame and fear announced the revolt of the Greeks and the rapid approach of their Bulgarian ally; and Calo-John, not depending on the forces of his own kingdom, had drawn from the Scythian wilderness a body of fourteen thousand Comans, who drank, as it was said, the blood of their captives, and sacrificed the Christians on the altars of their gods. [25]

[Footnote 24: In Calo-John's answer to the pope we may find his claims and complaints, (Gesta Innocent III. c. 108, 109:) he was cherished at Rome as the prodigal son.]

[Footnote 25: The Comans were a Tartar or Turkman horde, which encamped in the xiith and xiiiith centuries on the verge of Moldavia. The greater part were pagans, but some were Mahometans, and the whole horde was converted to Christianity (A.D. 1370) by Lewis, king of Hungary.]

Alarmed by this sudden and growing danger, the emperor despatched a swift messenger to recall Count Henry and his troops; and had Baldwin expected the return of his gallant brother, with a supply of twenty thousand Armenians, he might have encountered the invader with equal numbers and a decisive superiority of arms and discipline. But the spirit of chivalry could seldom discriminate caution from cowardice; and the emperor took the field with a hundred and forty knights, and their

train of archers and sergeants. The marshal, who dissuaded and obeyed, led the vanguard in their march to Adrianople; the main body was commanded by the count of Blois; the aged doge of Venice followed with the rear; and their scanty numbers were increased from all sides by the fugitive Latins. They undertook to besiege the rebels of Adrianople; and such was the pious tendency of the crusades that they employed the holy week in pillaging the country for their subsistence, and in framing engines for the destruction of their fellow-Christians. But the Latins were soon interrupted and alarmed by the light cavalry of the Comans, who boldly skirmished to the edge of their imperfect lines: and a proclamation was issued by the marshal of Romania, that, on the trumpet's sound, the cavalry should mount and form; but that none, under pain of death, should abandon themselves to a desultory and dangerous pursuit. This wise injunction was first disobeyed by the count of Blois, who involved the emperor in his rashness and ruin. The Comans, of the Parthian or Tartar school, fled before their first charge; but after a career of two leagues, when the knights and their horses were almost breathless, they suddenly turned, rallied, and encompassed the heavy squadrons of the Franks. The count was slain on the field; the emperor was made prisoner; and if the one disdained to fly, if the other refused to yield, their personal bravery made a poor atonement for their ignorance, or neglect, of the duties of a general. [26]

[Footnote 26: Nicetas, from ignorance or malice, imputes the defeat to the cowardice of Dandolo, (p. 383;) but Villehardouin shares his own glory with his venerable friend, *qui viels home ére et gote ne veoit,*

mais mult être sages et preus et vigueros, (No. 193.) * Note: Gibbon appears to me to have misapprehended the passage of Nicetas. He says, "that principal and subtlest mischief. that primary cause of all the horrible miseries suffered by the Romans," i. e. the Byzantines. It is an effusion of malicious triumph against the Venetians, to whom he always ascribes the capture of Constantinople.--M.]