Preface

HISTORICAL narratives, indeed, have been invented for the common benefit of mankind, since those who will are able to gather from many of these the most advantageous insights. In recording ancient events and customs, the narratives elucidate human nature and expose men of noble sentiments, those who nourish a natural love for the good, to varied experiences. In abasing evil and exalting the noble deed, they introduce us, for the most part, to the temperate and the intemperate who incline to one or the other of these two scales. Men who value the attribute of virtue and eschew shameless conduct and corrupt habitude, although born mortal and subject to death, are immortalized and brought back to life by the writing of history. The same is true for those who, on the contrary, have led depraved lives. It is most fitting that the actions of the virtuous and the shameless be known to posterity. The soul moves on to Hades while the body returns to those elements from which it was constituted.[1] [1] [2]

Whether the actions of a man during his lifetime were holy and righteous or lawless and contemptible, and whether he lived a happy life or gave up the ghost in evildoing, are proclaimed loudly by history. Wherefore, history can be called the book of the living[2] and the written word a clarion trumpet, like a signal from heaven, raising up those long dead[3] and setting them before the eyes of those who desire to see them.

Since such is the value of history, if I may say so in passing, is it not just as pleasing to posterity? Let no one be so mad as to believe that there is anything more pleasurable than history. Decrepit old men, more ancient than Tithonos[4] and thrice a crow's age,[5] familiar with the record of the past, related these things to willing audiences, kindling the fires of their memories and ploughing the furrows of the past. He who loves learning, even though he be but an adolescent, proposes to do the same thing. [3]

For these reasons, therefore, the events which occurred in my times and shortly before, deserving of narration and remembrance, and being of such a multitude and magnitude, I could not allow to pass in silence.[6] It is, then, by way of this history that I make these events known to future generations.

Since others are of the opinion—and I wholly agree—that in the narration of history they should eschew that which is obscure and distorted by discordant and prolix circumlocutions, and should cherish clarity as not only being in accord with the words of the sage[7] but also as being appropriate to them, one shall not find that the events recorded herein fall short of that ideal. Nor have I in any way embraced an affected, recon-

dite, and vulgar vocabulary, even though many are gaping in eager expectation for this; or perhaps it would be more truthful to say that they pass over ancient and contemporary events and bedeck lavishly whatever business suits their interests best. For the most part, however, when it is a matter of setting down in writing those things that are fitting, they choose not to overstep or overleap history's proper limits.

Above all else, as I have said, the phrase which is not straightforward and easy to comprehend has been rejected, and that which is unadorned, natural, and absolutely unambiguous has been preferred and embraced. This history, having truth as its sole objective, shuns rhetorical artifice and poetic storytelling as being diametrically opposed and disavows, moreover, their characteristics. Furthermore, even when History is composed with solemnity and reverence, she passionately desires to be the reward of diggers and of smiths covered with soot; she is also familiar with the armed company of Ares and is not captious with women who cultivate her; she rejoices at the most elegant of phrases and prefers to adorn herself, not with the pretentious and ostentatious, but with the cloth of plain and simple words.

This history, as far as is possible, will be treated with clarity and succinctness. If it lacks distinction and grace, I humbly request the forebearance of those into whose hands it may fall. Since this is the first time
[4] I have undertaken such an endeavor, it is like attempting to traverse a desolate and untrodden road, a much more difficult task than following the footsteps of others who have gone before or than holding to the straight and smooth royal highway without straying.

My history begins with those events which immediately followed the reign and death of Emperor Alexios, the founder of the Komnenian dynasty, since those historians who directly preceded us concluded with his reign.[8] My work, then, is a continuation of their written record and is interwoven to resemble a channel whose waters flow from a single source or connecting links which are added to a chain that reaches into infinity. This history will touch briefly upon the reign of John, who succeeded Alexios to the throne, but will not long dwell thereon as it will on succeeding events.[9] Since I was not an eyewitness of that which I have recorded, I could not describe these events extensively but have set down what I heard from those contemporaries who personally knew the emperor and who escorted him on his campaigns against the enemy and accompanied him into battle. It is best that I begin here.

I. *The Reign of John Komnenos*

EMPEROR Alexios Komnenos begat three sons and four daughters.[10] John was the oldest of the sons; the firstborn from the loins of Alexios was Anna, who was wedded to Nikephoros Bryennios[11] and honored with [5] the dignity of *kaisarissa*. Of all his children, Emperor Alexios favored John. Determined that John should succeed him to the throne, he gave him the red buskins and allowed him to be proclaimed emperor. The mother, Empress Irene, in opposition, threw her full influence on the side of her daughter Anna and lost no opportunity to calumniate their son John before her husband Alexios, mocking him as rash, pleasure loving, and weak in character. She continuously attempted to persuade the emperor to change his mind. Whenever the occasion allowed, she would heap extravagant praise on Bryennios, lauding him profusely as the most eloquent and no less capable of getting things done, as learned in the liberal arts which develop moral character and greatly assist those who are about to assume the reins of government in preserving the empire intact. Alexios, hearing these things and aware of Irene's maternal affection for Anna, often pretended that his mind was preoccupied with matters of great urgency and would give the impression that he had not even heard the words. At other times, after deliberating on her exhortations, he would contend that he had not overlooked her petition. When he could stand no more, he would say,

> O woman, sharer of my bed and empire, will you not desist from admonishing me on behalf of your daughter, attempting thereby to dissolve praiseworthy harmony and good order as though you had been stricken by some God-sent madness? Put your trust in good fortune. Or rather come, let us take counsel together and see which of the former Roman emperors who had a son suited to take over the reins of government set him aside and chose instead his son-in-law? And even should this have happened at sometime in the past, we still ought not to recognize rare precedent as binding law. All the [6] Romans would laugh aloud at me and conclude that I had lost my senses should I, who gained the throne in an unpraiseworthy manner by denying the rights of consanguinity and the principles of Christian laws, when it came time to leave a succession, replace the child of my loins with the Macedonian—calling Bryennios by that name as he came from Orestias [Adrianople], one of the great and prosperous cities of Macedonia.

Having presented these cogent arguments to Empress Irene, he would once again behave as though he had no objections and divert the woman

by pretending to be deliberating. He was, beyond all others, a dissembler, deeming secretiveness a clever thing and never saying much about what he intended to do.

When Alexios approached the end of his life and lay in the splendid complex of the Monastery of Mangana,[12] John, seeing his father at death's door and his mother's heart hardened against him, and his sister courting the empire,[13] consulted with his relatives, chief among whom was his brother Isaakios, who supported his cause, as to the course of action to be taken. Undetected by his mother, he entered his father's bedchamber and, while embracing him as though in mourning, secretly removed the signet ring from his finger. Some say that he did so at his father's behest, which seems to be borne out by what shall be described shortly. Imediately thereafter, John gathered together his counselors and, announcing the action taken, took up arms, mounted his charger, and hastened toward the Great Palace. Both the Monastery of Mangana and the streets of the City were crowded with his supporters, and the assembled citizenry, having heard rumors of the events taking place, acclaimed him emperor.

John's mother, Empress Irene,[14] was taken by surprise by the turn of events. She summoned her son and exhorted him to desist from his actions. As John was in complete charge of events and paid no attention
[7] whatsoever to his mother, she incited Bryennios to seize the throne with her support. But when she saw that Bryennios did nothing, she approached her husband who lay prostrate on his bed and whose only sign of life was his gasping for breath. She threw herself over his body and cried aloud against their son, shedding tears even as a fountain of dark water,[15] that while Alexios was still among the living, John was stealing the throne with acts of rebellion. Alexios, however, did not respond to her accusation, in all likelihood giving his thoughts to more serious matters, such as his imminent departure from this life, and directing his gaze upon the angels who would lead his soul to the next world. While the empress was pleading with Alexios, vehemently protesting their son's actions, Alexios briefly forced a smile and raised his hands to heaven, perhaps rejoicing over the news and offering thanks to God, saying that it was but to mock and laugh at him that his wife should rant about his successor at a time his soul was taking leave of the body and when he should be atoning before God for whatever sins he may have committed. The woman, convinced that her husband was gloating over her protestations, with all her hope denied, the victim of false promises, sighed deeply and spoke: "O husband, in life you excelled in all kinds of deceits, gilding your tongue with contradictory meaning, and even now as you are departing this life you remain unchanged from your former ways."[16]

When John reached the palace, he found the entrance barred to him by the guards, who were not satisfied with the display of the ring but demanded further evidence of his father's wish that he should be allowed inside. John's escort lifted the palace gates off their hinges with heavy bronze poles and threw them to the ground; then John entered with ease,
[8] together with his armed cohorts and relatives. Not a few of the promiscuous crowd who had followed along poured inside and began to seize everything in sight. When the gates were shut once again, those outside

were barred from entering and those who had come through were forced to remain inside with the emperor for several days. And so passed the fifteenth day of the month of August [1181].

The following night, Emperor Alexios departed this life, having reigned thirty-seven years, four and one-half months.[17] Promptly at dawn, the mother summoned John to join the funeral procession bearing his father's body to the Monastery of Christ Philanthropos,[18] built by the deceased. John refused to heed her bidding, not because he wished to spurn his mother's authority or to show any disrespect for his father, but because he had not had sufficient time to secure the throne. He feared his rivals' inordinate passion to seize power. Like an octopus clinging to the rocks,[19] John hugged the palace, but he allowed most of his kinsmen with him to join in his father's funeral procession.

A few days later, he permitted anyone who wished to do so to enter or leave the palace, since he was now in firm control of the government and administered the affairs of state according to his wishes. Conducting himself with fair-mindedness before his relatives and close friends who approached him, he bestowed on each suitable honors. He showed himself to be one in body and mind with his brother Isaakios, to whom he was devoted. Isaakios had proved his love beyond all others, having contributed the most to John's accession to power. Once the empire had been set in order, John received him as an equal partner of his throne and table and allowed him to share in the public proclamation befitting the rank of *sebastokrator,* with which Isaakios had been honored by his father [9] Alexios. John appointed the administrators of public affairs from among his blood relatives; John Komnenos he honored with the office of *parakoimomenos,* and Gregory Taronitēs as *protovestiarios.* John Komnenos, who administered his office without restraint, behaving pompously and with singular presumptuousness, was quickly relieved of his responsibility as administrator. Gregory, on the other hand, did not exceed or overstep the limits of his authority[20] and thus remained in power much longer. Later, another Gregory, by the name of Kamateros, was associated in office with him. Kamateros was a learned man, and although he was not descended from a very distinguished or noble family, his services were enlisted by Emperor Alexios. Enrolled among the under secretaries, he made the rounds of the provinces, where he amassed a great wealth derived from the taxes he assessed. He longed to be connected to the emperor by marriage, and when he wedded one of his kinswomen, he was promoted logothete of the *sekreta.*

However, John Axuch was one who prevailed above all others in gaining the favor of the emperor and received the highest honors. He was a Turk[21] by race, taken captive and offered as a gift to Emperor Alexios when Nicaea, the capital of Bithynia, was taken by the Western armies on their way to Palestine.[22] Of the same age as Emperor John, he served as his playmate and became his dearest friend from among the domestics and chamberlains. When John ascended the throne, Axuch was awarded the office of grand domestic, and his influence was greatly increased; [10] consequently, many of the emperor's distinguished relatives, on meeting him by chance, would dismount from their horses and make obeisance. Not only were his hands skilled in war[23] but they were also quick and

agile in performing needed good works. Furthermore, the nobility and liberality of his mind quite overshadowed his humble origins and made Axuch beloved by all.

The first year of the emperor's reign[24] had not yet run its course when his relatives—how, one cannot say—stitched up a plot against him, ranting and raving and casting the evil eye. A band of evil-working men, pledging good faith, rallied around Bryennios; because he had been educated in the liberal arts, displayed royal bearing, and was the most outstanding of those connected to the imperial family by marriage, they handed over the royal power to him. (As we have said elsewhere, he was married to the emperor's sister, Kaisarissa Anna, who was ardently devoted to philosophy, the queen of all the sciences, and was educated in every field of learning.) They probably would have struck quickly at night with murderous weapons while the emperor was encamped at Philopation, a place well suited for running horses and situated a little distance from the gates of the land walls,[25] since they had previously plied the keeper of the gates with lavish bribes, had not Bryennios's customary sluggishness and languor forestalled any attempt to gain the throne and compelled him to remain immobilized, ignoring his compacts, and thus extinguishing the zeal of his partisans. It is said that Kaisarissa Anna, disgusted with her husband's frivolous behavior and distraught in her anger, and being a shrew by nature, felt justified in strongly contracting her vagina when Bryennios's penis entered deep inside her, thus causing him great pain.[26]

[11] When the conspirators were found out the next day, they were not maimed or flagellated, but they were deprived of their possessions, which, after some time, were returned to most of them. The emperor took pity first of all on the chief instigator of the plot, the *kaisarissa* Anna, for the following reason. The *kaisarissa*'s gold and silver, her wealth of all kinds, and her diverse garments, had been collected in one room. Emperor John, standing there and gazing upon them, said, above all else, "How the natural order of things has been inverted for me! Kinsmen have become the enemy, and strangers friends; it is only proper for this reason to turn these treasures over to friends." He commanded them all to be taken by the grand domestic, who thanked the emperor for his great generosity and asked for permission to speak freely. His request granted, he said, "Even though your sister has resorted to violent and wholly unjust means, O Emperor, and has renounced by these deeds her family ties, she did not thereby cast off her name and kinship. She remains, after all, the sister of a virtuous emperor and by repentance will recover, thanks to the ties of blood, your affection, which she has now lost through madness. O Master, spare your sister who has offended your majesty and chastise her with your loving-kindness, for she has already confessed to having been utterly defeated by your virtue. Give her also these things which lie before our eyes, not as payment of a just debt, but as a voluntary gift. They are more rightly hers than mine, being a paternal inheritance bequeathed to offspring." Persuaded by these words, or, more truthfully, shamed by them, the emperor eagerly granted the request, admitting, "I should be unworthy to rule should you be deemed more merciful than I towards my family and more above the temptation

of excessive and easy gain." He restored everything to the *kaisarissa* and was reconciled with her.

Empress Irene, John's mother, was not implicated in the plot against her son. It is said rather that when she learned of the conspiracy, she phrased an aphorism: In the absence of a successor it is necessary to seek an emperor, but a reigning monarch must not be removed. "The anguish I would have suffered, thanks to what these butchers were planning for my son, would surely have been sharper than the pains I experienced in giving birth, for they thrust the infant into the light of day, while the former, penetrating my womb from the bowels of hell, would have caused me unending sorrow." [12]

The emperor, seeing that the Turks were violating their treaties with his father, in great numbers overrunning the cities throughout Phrygia and along the Maeander, with the coming of spring marched against them.[27] He emerged victorious from many battles. He built a wall around Laodikeia, after taking the city, and routed Alp-qara,[28] who had been entrusted with her defense. Putting everything else in good order, he thought to return home.[29]

After a brief stay in Byzantion,[30] he set out from the palace and once again became a tent dweller [spring 1120]. He guarded against incursions by the barbarians, well aware how devastating these could be if the Romans were caught unprepared. Consequently, he chose to remain on campaign for two compelling reasons: the defense of his own provinces, which is best achieved by being in the field, and the opportunity to train and drill the troops far removed from the cares of housekeeping. For an army, like a red-hot iron dipped into water, is tempered by the sweat of blazing battle.[31]

Accordingly, he set out to subdue Sozopolis in Pamphylia.[32] The city's capture, he knew, would be difficult because of its armed garrison and the inaccessible and precipitious terrain by which it is surrounded. Thanks to Divine Providence, he conceived the following scheme. Giving a certain Paktarios the command of a cavalry force, he instructed him to launch frequent attacks against Sozopolis, firing missiles against the walls; should the enemy sally forth, Paktarios was to flee, without turning to take a stand, along the paths a short distance from the city which were overgrown with clumps of thick bushes. Paktarios carried out the imperial command. Since the Turks repeatedly poured out of Sozopolis in large numbers, Paktarios outwitted the enemy by laying an ambush in the narrow pathways. On one of their pursuits, the Turks, without giving thought to a possible ambush, impetuously chased after the Romans for a greater distance than usual and rode heedlessly over the rough terrain. When the Romans, who were lying in ambush, observed the Turks chasing at full gallop after one of their divisions, giving heed to nothing but the overtaking of the fleeing enemy, they rose up and eagerly assaulted Sozopolis. Then the Romans who were in flight wheeled about, and the Turks caught in the middle were unable to reach the city or to escape their pursuers; some were taken captive, others were slain by the sword, and a few escaped thanks to the speed of their horses. Thus, Sozopolis was taken by the Romans as a result of the emperor's cunning stratagem.[33] Next, the fortress called Hierakokoryphitis capitulated and many [13]

other fortified towns and strongholds which in the past were tributaries of the Romans but had made peace with the Turks.[34]

In the fifth year[35] of John's reign, the Patzinaks[36] crossed the Istros [Danube] and plundered Thrace, destroying everything under foot more
[14] absolutely than a host of locusts. John gathered the Roman forces, equipping them with the best arms possible, and marched against them, not only because of their great numbers, but also because of the arrogant behavior and grating boastfulness of these barbarians, who, it appears, recalled their former accomplishments when during the reign of Alexios Komnenos they had occupied Thrace and laid waste most of Macedonia.[37]

The emperor, first resorting to a stratagem, dispatched Patzinak-speaking envoys to attempt to persuade the enemy to agree to withdraw, if not all of them, then at least some, since they were divided into many tribes set up in separate field headquarters. Those chiefs he won over were greeted with every kindness. He set sumptuous feasts before them and charmed them with gifts of silk garments and silver cups and basins. While diverting the attention of the Patzinaks with such bait, he knew he must not delay in bringing his forces into battle array before the chiefs could make up their minds as to what course of action they should follow. They contemplated making peace with the Romans because of the promises made them, and, at the same time, they were confident that they would be victorious in battle, as they had always been in the past.

Setting out from the regions of Beroē (where they were encamped), John engaged the Patzinaks in combat in the morning twilight, and there ensued one of the most frightful and terrifying battles ever fought. The Patzinaks met our troops bravely, making resistance difficult with their cavalry charges, discharge of missiles, and war cries. Once the Romans
[15] had joined in battle, they were committed to fighting to the death or to victory. The emperor, escorted by his companions and bodyguards, provided assistance all the while to his beleaguered troops.

In the thick of battle the Patzinaks, inspired by necessity, resorted to the following base stratagem. After collecting all of their wagons and deploying them in a circle, they positioned a goodly number of their troops on them and fashioned a palisade. They cut many oblique passageways through the wagons, enabling them to take refuge behind them as though they were walls whenever hard pressed by the Romans and forced to turn their backs. When rested, they sallied out as though through gates thrown open and wrought brave deeds with their hands. This tactic devised by the Patzinaks, which, in effect, was the same as that of fighting from walls, frustrated the Roman assault.

Then John devised a cunning plan for his troops; not only was he valiant and a cunning tactician by nature but he was also the first to execute the instructions he gave his generals and soldiers. His behavior on the battlefield gave witness to his great piety: whenever the Roman phalanxes were hard pressed by the enemy falling furiously upon them, he would look upon the icon of the Mother of God and, wailing loudly and gesturing pitifully, shed tears hotter than the sweat of battle. It was not in vain that he acted thus; donning the breastplate of the power from on high,[38] he routed the Patzinak battalions just as Moses had turned back the troops of Amalek by raising his hands.[39]

Taking with him his bodyguards, who were armed with long shields and single-edged axes,[40] John went forth like an unbreakable wall to meet the Patzinaks. When the rampart of wagons had been demolished and the fighting had turned into hand-to-hand combat, the enemy was put to [16] inglorious flight, and the Romans pursued them boldly. The wagon folk[41] fell by the thousands, and their palisaded camps were seized as plunder. The captives were beyond number. Eager to defect to our side, many were sent to settle in the villages along the western borders of the Roman empire, some of which still survive; not a few were enrolled as allied forces, and many captured divisions were assigned to the army.

John, having achieved such a glorious victory over the Patzinaks, raised a huge trophy and offered prayers to God and, as a remembrance and thanksgiving for these deeds, established what we today call the festival of the Patzinaks.

Shortly afterwards [1123], he delcared war against the nation of Triballoi (also called Serbs), who were guilty of many crimes and violations of treaties. He engaged them in battle and inflicted a crushing defeat, compelling these barbarians to sue for peace; they had never shown themselves to be a good match in battle but always bowed to the yoke of neighboring princes. And carrying away from there plunder beyond measure and heaping countless spoils upon the army, he transferred the captive part of the population to the East. Settling them in the province of Nikomedia and parceling out rich and fertile land among them, he enrolled some in the army and the rest he made tributaries.

Having begotten male offspring, the emperor gave his firstborn (Alexios) the purple robe and granted him the privilege of wearing the red buskins on his feet and of being mentioned with him in the acclamations whenever John was proclaimed *autokrator* of the Romans by the assembled populace. He honored the second son, Andronikos, the third, Isaakios, and the fourth, Manuel, with the rank of *sebastokrator*.

They say that Emperor John saw his newly crowned son Alexios in a [17] dream, mounted on a lion and holding onto his ears as reins but unable to train the beast to do anything useful. The meaning of the vision was that the boy would be emperor in name only and that he would be denied real power, which is what happened shortly thereafter: death took him from among the living [2 August 1142].

In the summer [1127], the Hungarians crossed the Istros and sacked Braničevo, where they tore down the walls, whose stones they transported to Zevgminon.[42] They also plundered Sardica, again repudiating and tearing into shreds their treaties of friendship. The hidden cause of this dispute was the fact that Álmos, the brother of Stephan,[43] ruler of the Hungarians, had fled to the emperor and had been warmly received. The specious and ostensible cause was the charge that the inhabitants of Braničevo had attacked and plundered the Hungarians who had come to these parts to trade, perpetrating the worst crimes against them.

With the unexpected eruption of this evil, the emperor who happened to be sojourning in the vicinity of Philippopolis, gave careful consideration to the problem and decided to remove the Hungarians from this area. After preparing his troops to ward off the enemy [spring 1128], he sailed the swift-moving ships he had outfitted into the Istros by way of the

Pontos and there suddenly came upon the enemy on both land and water. He then crossed the river in his imperial trireme and transported the army to the opposite shore, where the cavalry, with couched lances, scattered the assembled Hungarian forces.

[18] John stayed on in enemy territory. Showing himself to be more persevering than ever before, he capture Frangochorion, the richest land in Hungary, which lies among plains suited to the driving of horses, between the Sava and Istros rivers. He also took Zevgiminon and rode out against Chramon,[44] from which he carried away much booty. After several other engagements with this nation, he made peace with it [winter 1128–29]. Those remaining barbarian nations along the western borders of the Roman empire against whom he had often prospered in battle he compelled to enter into friendly relations.[45] He felt it his duty to use every possible means to win over the nations beyond the borders, especially those who sailed down to Constantinople to trade and petition favors. He also conciliated the Italian seaboard, whence ships spread their sail for the queen of cities.

Having pacified the nations in the West, John transported the army to the East to attack the Persarmenians, who were in possession of Kastamon [1130 or 1132].[46] He marched through the provinces of Bithynia and Paphlagonia and appeared before the city. Throwing up many scaling ladders and surrounding it with siege engines, he took Kastamon. The Persarmenian satrap despaired of the situation and fled. After taking captive no small number of Turks, John returned to Byzantion.

John proclaimed a triumph in celebration of the enemy's defeat [1133] and gave instructions that a silverplated chariot be constructed; and the chariot, adorned with semi-precious jewels, was a wonder to behold.[47] When the day designated for the procession had arrived, all manner of gold-embroidered purple cloths decorated the streets. Nor were there missing the framed images of Christ and the saints, fashioned by the weaver's hand, and which one would have said were not woven figures

[19] but living beings. Worthy too of admiration were the wooden platforms and scaffoldings set up along both sides of the parade route to hold the spectators. The part of the city that was thus bedecked was that which extended from the eastern gates to the Great Palace. The splendid quadriga was pulled by four horses, whiter than snow, with magnificent manes. The emperor did not himself mount the chariot but instead mounted upon it the icon of the Mother of God, in whom he exulted and entrusted his soul. To her as the unconquerable fellow general[48] he attributed his victories, and ordering his chief ministers to take hold of the reins and his closest relations to attend to the chariot, he led the way on foot with the cross held in his hand. In the Church of the Wisdom of God [Hagia Sophia], he ascribed his accomplishments to the Lord God and gave thanks before all the people before he entered the palace.

Not too long afterwards,[49] once his subjects had been given the opportunity to see him and he had been entertained by the public spectacles, and the soldiers, moreover, had spent some time at home, and his horse was rested and his lance mended, John once again marched against Kastamon [c. September 1134]. Danishmend the Persarmenian,[50] who at that time occupied Cappadocia, had marched out with a very large force,

taken the city after storming the walls, and cut down with the sword the Roman garrison. When the emperor arrived there, he found that Danishmend had departed from the world of men and that a certain Muhammad, an enemy of Masᶜūd,[51] the ruler of Ikonion, was now in control of Kastamon. Taking advantage of the opportunity to promote his own cause, the emperor made peace with Masᶜūd [end of 1134]; he entered into an alliance with him and marched against Muhammad. The latter, realizing that he was unable to combat a double-edged attack by both armies, secretly contacted his fellow countryman Masᶜūd and proposed in [20] his letters, among other things, that they should set aside their enmity, contending that if they should not be reconciled and Masᶜūd defect to the emperor of the Romans, the cause of the Turks would be seriously damaged. He convinced the Ikonian Masᶜūd to break with the emperor, to join forces with him and dissolve the alliance. Not long after this event, the Turkish troops, dispatched by the sultan to fight as allies of the emperor, departed by night, and henceforth the Romans met with little success in this campaign. John drew back and took up quarters at the fortress which he himself had built along the Rhyndakos River [winter 1134–35] and engaged Muhammad once again in battle, but now even more vigorously [1135].[52] Recovering Kastamon for the Romans, he proceeded on to Gangra.[53] This is one of the largest and most illustrious of the cities of the Pontos that had not been subject to the Turks in former times.

First taking the surrounding area, he established his camp next to the city. The Turkish defenders, undaunted, refused to negotiate treaties with the emperor that would allow him to enter the city, whereupon the imperial troops surrounded the walls. Resorting to siege tactics because the wall appeared vulnerable, they kept up a constant barrage of missiles. But John was unable to make any progress because the ramparts were sturdy and the defenders put up such fierce resistance, so he ordered that the stone missiles be directed away from the walls and hurled instead against the houses which could be seen from the hilltops on which the Romans were camped. Since the target was visible but at some distance away, the Romans in charge of the siege engines, discharging round and light stones which seemed to be flying rather than being shot from engines of war, shattered the houses; the inhabitants within fell to their knees and were killed by the caving-in of the roofs. As a result it was no [21] longer safe to walk the streets nor to remain indoors.

For these reasons, because the emperor had so persevered, and especially because the ruler of Gangra had earlier disappeared from among the men of Danishmend, dying a gentle death, they surrendered themselves and the city to the emperor. After entering Gangra, John expelled the Turkish hordes and posted a garrison of two thousand troops; then he returned to the imperial city.[54]

But Constantinople was not to see this city allotted to her and listed among her subject cities for very long. The Turks returned in even greater numbers and much stronger than before, and, throwing up an entrenched camp, they starved the city into submission while the emperor's attention was diverted with other grave issues [1136?].

After these events, John declared an expedition [1136–39] against Cili-

cia because Leon, who ruled Armenia,[55] wanted to march against and subdue other fortresses subject to the Romans; above all he was attempting to subjugate Seleukeia.[56] Assembling his forces augmented with newly levied troops and providing sufficient provisions for a long campaign, he came to the Cilician Gates; he passed through without meeting any resistance and then occupied Adana and captured Tarsus. But he was not satisfied with his successes up to this point and contested for the whole of Armenia. Consequently, when the most important fortresses either surrendered to him or were taken by force, he became master of the entire
[22] country. On one occasion, he came upon a certain fortress situated on a precipice called Baka, and since the inhabitants did not stretch forth their hands to him, or were they willing to negotiate peace terms, he threw up an entrenched camp and deployed all his forces around it, maintaining stoutly that nothing whatever was to be removed until he became master of the fortress, even should his head turn grey during the siege and snow fall upon him often [summer 1138].[57] He informed the besieged of the benefits to be derived should they surrender and deliver the fortress over to him, as well as the evils to which they would be subjected should they continue the battle and be taken captive when his troops poured inside. But he sang these charms to asps which had voluntarily stopped their ears to the incantations of the wise charmer,[58] and it was obvious that he was attempting to wash a blackamoor white.[59]

Those entrusted with the defense of the fortress of Baka were dauntless in their determination to give battle; this was especially true of a certain Constantine, an Armenian of the highest nobility who excelled all in brave deeds. Not only did he band the populace together and rouse them to fight the Romans but he often appeared above the fortress with weapons in hand and stood on the hilltop, which nature had made of rock and human skill had strengthened by surrounding it with walls, heaping
[23] contumely upon the emperor in the Hellenic tongue and vilifying his wife and daughters with obscenities. The emperor longed to seize the foul-mouthed barbarian and exact his just revenge. Moreover, Constantine, confident in his prowess and boasting loudly of his brute force, ridiculed the imperial troops and defiantly challenged any one of them to single combat. The emperor ordered his taxiarchs forthwith to set against the Armenian one of their stoutest soldiers as a worthy opponent. A certain Eustratios was chosen from among the Macedonian legion. He was given a shield the height of a man and handed a sword newly honed. Armed in this fashion, he stepped out from the Roman ranks and, standing at the foot of the hill, challenged the Armenian to descend quickly so that they might fight on even ground, if indeed he was serious, if he truly preferred single combat and was not merely being capricious before the others to no purpose. Constantine took the words of the Macedonian as a personal affront. The huge and courageous warrior hurled himself at Eustratios like a tornado whirling in thunder and lightning or a mountain-bred gazelle leaping over the brush, thrusting in front of him a white shield, equal on all sides, with a cross incised in the center. Bracing his sword-wielding right hand, and forthwith striking the shield obliquely and raining blows on the Macedonian in raging madness, he expected at any
[24] moment to inflict grave injury on the man. The emperor despaired, for he

was certain that the Macedonian would die a violent death. Against the roaring onrush of Constantine's attack, the Romans shouted out their encouragement and urged Eustratios to strike back, but although he raised his arm often as if to deliver a blow against his opponent, to everyone's suprise he would then hold back; it was as if some spiteful sorcerer[60] restrained his right hand from delivery of the blow, rendering him incapable of any action. Finally, after much vacillation, the Macedonian brought down his sword mightily and split Constantine's great and veritable Hectorian shield in two.[61] The Romans shouted out in great amazement. The Armenian, thus unexpectedly losing his defense and unable to remain in the field, fled and, with his life at stake, ran back to the hilltop at full speed. Henceforth, he remained within, no longer behaving insolently against the Romans nor impudently mouthing foul words against the emperor and his family, shouting these obscenities forth as though they were arrows, with his lips serving as bowstrings and his teeth as bows.

When asked by the emperor the reason for his actions and what he had in mind by frequently raising his arm to strike his opponent but bringing it down only once, the Macedonian answered that his purpose was to sever both shield and the Armenian who held it with one blow of the sword. But he was unable to carry out his plan because Constantine was not holding his shield close to his body, instead extending it a great distance away, and he finally realized that he could not just stand there doing nothing. Thus, he waited for the most opportune moment to bring [25]
down his weapon; then, bereft of shield, the enemy fled. Marveling at these words, the emperor rewarded Eustratios with bountiful gifts.

Not many days elapsed before this fortress was taken by force and surrendered to the emperor. Constantine was seized and taken captive, his legs bound in chains. He was taken aboard a trireme which shortly thereafter was scheduled to slip its moorings and set sail to carry the bound captive to Byzantion. But the audacious and reckless Armenian attacked his guards at night, killing many, and, released from his bonds by his attendants, he escaped. He had no sooner begun his rebellion when he was seized once again and given over to the emperor.

Not only did the emperor tax his energies during the capture of Baka but earlier he had also labored mightily against Anazarba.[62] This densely populated city, embraced by strong walls situated above precipitous rocks and defended by ramparts and diverse engines of war stationed at intervals, was made even more secure by the fully armed and stalwart men who took refuge within. The emperor sent ahead a portion of his troops who were enrolled among his Turkish divisions and who had ably assisted him earlier in his capture of Gangra to test the sentiments of the Armenians and ascertain exactly with whom they sided. When the Armenians laid eyes on them they seethed with anger and decided on their immediate destruction. Without even waiting for them to make their initial assault, they threw open the gates and charged out against the Turks. Joining battle, they defeated them, and when the latter turned their backs, the Armenians pursued them over a great distance. Shortly afterwards the fleeing Turks, seeing the Roman legions ready to come to their [26]
aid, wheeled about. The battle was turned around, and the Armenians were forced to shut themselves in behind the walls.

The siege engines were soon brought to the walls, and the round stones were discharged, hitting the towers. The barbarians did not stand idly by, but positioning in their turn war engines on the battlements, they shot heavy stones against the troops and hurled fiery iron pellets, thus wholly prevailing over the Romans. Consequently, from the first, large numbers of Romans were injured. Then the Armenians roused themselves into charging forth unexpectedly like a pack of wild boars, and they burnt down the siege engines, finding it an easy matter to set fire to the reed-covered scaffoldings set up to protect them. Following this, the enemy laughed loud and their bodies shook with merriment, and they repeatedly jeered and ranted against the emperor with much nonsense.

Hostilities were briefly suspended, during which time the stone-throwing engines were repaired and mantelets and platforms were constructed out of clay bricks; on the following day, the assault against the walls was resumed. Because the flaming iron pellets could no longer damage the siege engines, the desires of the Armenians were foiled, and their earlier derision was now turned into loud lamentation. The mass of red-hot iron which was propelled from within made direct and repeated hits, but, dashing against the loose earthen barricade, it had no effect. The shot dropped to the ground and was extinguished without achieving its purpose. The walls of the city were subsequently shattered in many places,
[27] and the way was open into the city. Thus, the formerly impudent and loud-boasting enemy bent the knee to the emperor and surrendered the city to him by necessity, rather than by intention. This took place not immediately, but after a second offensive in which the enemy repeatedly attacked and then withdrew to the other wall nearby, their retreat from this position, as from the first, after a bloody beating.

After similarly attacking the fortresses in the vicinity of this city, John departed for Coele Syria,[63] and on making his entrance into the beautiful city of Antioch through which the Orontes River flows and the west wind blows, he was welcomed by Prince Raymond[64] and the entire city populace [29 August 1137]. He sojourned in the city for some days [29 August–10 September 1137]; then, as he regarded both the prince and the count of Tripoli[65] as his liegemen, he decided to attack the Syro-Phoenician cities around Antioch which were occupied by the Agarenes.[66]

He approached the Euphrates and came to a fortress called Piza by the local inhabitants. When battle was joined, the Roman forces retreated before the great courage of the enemy and a portion of the vanguard was pursued for some distance, unable to resist the maniacal passion and savage onrush of the barbarians. Not long afterwards, the emperor made his appearance and many from among his personal phalanx engaged the enemy in battle; unable to withstand the Roman attack, they shut themselves in behind the walls and were no longer disposed to sally forth. A double wall protected the town, girded in part by a deep fosse, while rocks scattered in their natural state added further reinforcement. But as many of the towers gave way, demolished by a hail of stones, Agar's
[28] offspring lost heart. When the fortifications were breached, the bold and blustering foe turned cowards, raised their hands in submission to the emperor, and pleaded for their lives in exchange for the city's wealth [13–18 April 1138].

After a while, the emperor sent a portion of the army against the cities and fortresses on the far side of the Euphrates, where he amassed a multitude of spoils, granting Piza to the count of Edessa.[67] Vembetz,[68] lying in the open plain where it could be easily taken, could be bypassed in favor of an advance against Halep and Ferep at the request of the prince of Antioch, who had joined forces with him [19 April 1138]. Halep (called Verroia in ancient times) he found to be a populous city with a large armed force. Its soldiery charged forth from the walls upon sighting the Romans and engaged the troops around the emperor [20 April 1138].[69] Getting the worst of it, they retreated behind the walls, only to sally forth time and time again, but they were unable to gain the victory. Sometimes, when the emperor approached to compass the city and survey the walls, they treacherously contrived to strike him down with missiles but failed in their purpose. Unable to avoid a protracted stalemate because of the city's fortifications and its troops, well equipped with both arms and horses, and no less because the Roman supplies were running short and there was a dearth of firewood and water, the emperor departed [21 April 1138]. Ferep was taken by assault [22 April 1138] and the fortress given to a certain count from the city of Antioch. John advanced then against another city, called Kafartāb in the local language, which presided over a very large province and boasted of mastery over no small [29]
number of fortresses around her, where she stood proudly confident in the stoutness of her walls. Quickly subduing the city [end of April 1138], he advanced into the interior along the road to Shaizar.[70] He encamped near Nistrion (also a city of Mesopotamia), situated a little distance from Shaizar and most excellently fortified. Since Nistrion happened to be on the way, he subdued the city, gave her over to be looted by the soldiers, especially the recruited Patzinak troops who had taken her and, departing thence, came to Shaizar.

From the assemblage of neighboring satraps, the officials of Shaizar collected large numbers of armed troops to form a single fighting force. Further strengthening their position with a defensive alliance, they then crossed the winding river in those parts, and, brandishing reed spears and riding swift-footed horses, they engaged the emperor's phalanxes. After many clashes, the emperor carried off the victory. Some of the enemy were hurled into the water and others were impaled by spears, since their own flexible reed spears were not at all adequate, being fragile reeds with which to defend themselves, so to speak. Thereupon, withdrawing behind the walls, they attempted no further sorties. Appearing from under their earthen shelters which had protected them, they withstood the Romans, allowing their province to be sacked and despoiled with impunity and their fortresses to be taken.

When these things had been accomplished, the emperor, arranging the phalanxes and grouping them according to nation and clans that tribe may bear aid to tribe,[71] constituted a Macedonian, a Keltic, and a Patzinak [30]
division; the latter, originally from Persia, defected to the Romans in earlier campaigns.[72] Confronted by these several homogenous divisions, each with its special arms, the enemy was seized with great fear and stopped resisting fiercely, retreating then from the outer to the inner wall.

For many days there were hand-to-hand combat, clashes and battles,

duels between the best, flight and retreat, and pursuit on both sides. The Roman troops always prevailed: the enemy was cut down by the sword in large numbers, and many, pierced by arrows, succumbed to the sleep of death. But although the walls, breeched by the stone missiles discharged from the siege engines, came smashing to the ground, together with the parapet, the enemy, still countless in numbers, remained unshaken, for they were fighting for their own lives and the lives of their children and wives and for their copious treasures of every kind.

The city would have soon fallen and submitted to the emperor and been emptied of all her wealth, and by her capture the Romans would have won renown more glorious than ever before, had not ill-omened dispatches dragged the emperor unwillingly from there. These reported that Edessa had been surrounded by the Turks and was in danger of suffering the worst should the emperor delay coming to her aid. The emperor lifted the siege and set off for Antioch [23 May 1138], carrying away magnificent gifts. There were highly bred horses with arched necks and objects fashioned from the most precious materials: silk garments interwoven with gold and a table well worth looking at, as well as an inscribed cross carved of Parian marble,[73] a most beautiful and unusual work of art rivaling in beauty the sacred image, a feast for the eyes; this the emperor received with his own hands and preferred to all the others. The Saracens of Shaizar related that the cross of glistening marble and the costly and dazzling table from among
[31] the gifts offered to the emperor had been taken by their ancestors long ago as spoils when they had captured Emperor Romanos Diogenēs, the ruler of the Romans. At that time they had plundered the imperial pavilion, and, taking possession of the entrenched camp, they had divided among themselves everything within.[74]

As the emperor was departing from Shaizar, his rear guard was attacked by the forces of Zengi[75] and the Turkish troops of certain other eminent chiefs, who were very conceited because of their horses, almost as swift as the wind, and extremely contemptuous of the Romans in their stupid barbarian arrogance. When they performed no brave deeds, their hopes were dashed. In retribution for their boasting and vaunting, they were punished by Divine Justice, and two of their chiefs taken alive: these were the sons of the atabeg and the brother of Amir Samuch.

As the emperor made his entry into the celebrated city of Antioch, the entire populace poured out to greet him and to prepare a splendid reception for him by holding sacred images and magnificently adorning the streets. He departed Antioch amidst propitious acclamations and laudatory farewells and arrived at the borders of Cilicia; setting out from there, he took the road to Byzantion. Proceeding in battle array and mindful of his responsibilities as commander-in-chief, he dispatched a division of the army against the Turks of Ikonion; previously, when the emperor and his army were in Syria, Ikonion had taken advantage of the opportunity to launch attacks against the Romans. John prevailed against this hostile horde and despoiled the enemy's land, taking captive both men and animals of all kind, draft animals as well as those suited for riding.

[32] Such then were the battles of John in the lands toward the rising sun, involving peoples of every tongue and opinion, a single expedition of three years' duration [spring 1137 to spring 1139].

The *sebastokrator* Isaakios, who, as was reported above, had assisted in putting down the abortive conspiracy to seize the throne, returned to the emperor at this time. Vexed at some trifle, Isaakios parted company with his brother and departed as a fugitive from the land of the Romans, taking with him as companion and fellow wanderer his eldest son John, a warrior mighty and formidable in raising the cry of war, of noble stature, and most fair to look upon. He came into contact with many and diverse nations, among whom was the satrap of the metropolis of the Ikonians [Masʿūd I]. This Isaakios, in need of money, was ever eager to attack Roman territories and to become a Satan to John; seeing Emperor John so widely known for his continual successes in war, he found that none of his own plans was realized. Everyone, in fact, withdrew from him, and at the first mention of rebellion, they had misgivings and dissuaded him from this course as being both disadvantageous to him and impossible for them to effect. Consequently, when he visited the toparchs, he was respectfully received by them as their guest, as he was most imperial in bearing and a member of a most distinguished family. Finally, he realized that it was for nought that he was separated from his family and that he was suffering an evil existence, and so he returned to his brother. The emperor was happy to see his brother and his son, and, granting them an audience, he embraced them affectionately. For the love of kin is a strong emotion, and should it ever be slightly injured, it quickly heals itself. Indeed, preserving his former affection undiminished, he did not harbor any burning resentment in his heart, as those in authority are wont to do in concealing their wrath and then taking revenge at an opportune moment. Entering Constantinople with his [33] brother, John did not rejoice any more as a returning conqueror than he did in the return of his brother. His subjects commingled their praises out of respect for the emperor, not only extolling his trophies and offering thanks to God who marched along with him and preserved him as victor but rejoicing also for his brother's homecoming.

Because the Turks were mounting attacks against the defenseless regions along the Sangarios River,[76] John was able to remain in Byzantion only a short time. Despite his physical debilitation, he set out without delay [spring 1139] and succeeded in terrifying the enemy by his very presence, at the same time driving out animal herds of all kinds. This finished, he returned to Lopadion.[77] Not long afterwards, when the ladies of the court had departed from the city, he built Ochyrai, taking advantage of the cessation of hostilities. He planned to remain for some time in these parts and ordered the troops to assemble. When, in compliance with the imperial decrees, the army was brought together, John for the first time appeared to be unremitting and imperious; recognizing no limits to his expeditions, it was as though he had forgotten or that he was unaware[78] that the Romans had spent three years in the Eastern wars. What was particularly maddening, driving the troops to unspeakable hatred, was the fact that many who had gone up with him into Syria had not been allowed to look in on their domestic affairs but, suffering from sickness of body, inadequate provisions, and the loss of mounts on their long march, were compelled by those who kept diligent watch over the roads and points of embarkation to forego returning to their homelands and to continue on to the imperial encampment.

The emperor was well aware of the reasons behind their complaints, and did not pretend that he knew nothing or that he did not care, but still he allowed them to air their grievances to no avail while he carried out his purpose, contending that he did not want to exhaust and wear out his troops from continuous expeditions but to make them his zealous assistants.

[34] John now proposed to march against the barbarians, who had intruded into the Armeniakon theme,[79] as well as to seize Constantine Gabras,[80] who for some time [since 1126] had held Trebizond subject, governing that city as a tryant. Thus he made his way through the valleys of Paphlagonia, keeping to the coastland of the Pontos for two reasons: to provision the army from his own provinces and to be exposed on one side only, so as not to be easily surrounded should it be necessary to engage in hostilities. The ruler of Kaisareia was the aforementioned Muhammad, who was invested with great power, having subjugated both a portion of Iberia and parts of Mesopotamia, and who traced his distant roots to the Arsacids and was directly descended from the Danishmendids. These were brave and stouthearted warriors, the strongest and most ruthless of those who had subdued the cities of the Romans.

Towards the end of spring [end of May 1139] the emperor rose up and departed from Lopadion. He spent the summer season and the temperate period of autumn on campaign and at the time of the winter solstice [21 December 1139] took up quarters in the Pontic city of Kintē.[81] Thereafter, when he assaulted enemy territory, he fared very badly. The land of the Cappadocians is frost-bound and the climate bitter cold, and as the winter that year was uncommon, he contended with diverse evils. Supplies were practically depleted, and all the pack animals and war chargers perished. Consequently, the foreign invaders were greatly heartened, and whereas they are infamous by reputation, leaving nothing unexplored and unexamined, and resort to frequent surprise attacks, engaging in plundering raids and sometimes fiercely joining in open combat, they always

[35] decimated the Roman phalanxes. It was as though a mass of clouds had suddenly appeared; trusting in the swiftness of their horses, the Romans broke rank and retreated as though they had been picked up and blown away by the wind. To make up for the failure of the cavalry, the emperor went about the camps collecting highly bred chargers which he gave to those Romans who were skilled lancers, as well as to those Latins specially adept at tilting; these he set against the enemy and instructed to fight bravely. The enemy, unable to withstand their charge at full tilt, were turned to flight. He also ordered huge numbers of infantry standards to be raised to give the appearance of more cavalry. Thanks to these stratagems, the Turkish assaults were checked, and John hastened on to Neokaisareia.[82]

Many were the battles fought between Turks and Romans around this city. And the emperor's youngest son Manuel, couching his lance and advancing a good distance, completely unbeknownst to his father charged the enemy. The youth's action inspired almost the entire army to fight beyond their strength. Some rose up in equal zeal, while all the others, alarmed for the boy's safety, reasoned that the emperor would be greatly pleased should he suffer no harm thanks to their assistance. Then, the

father publicly rewarded the youth with praise, but later, on entering the imperial pavilion, John made Manuel stretch himself out face downwards and flogged him with a whip of willow twigs for being rash, rather than courageous, and forbade him to engage the enemy in close combat.[83]

Perhaps the emperor would have prevailed over Neokaisareia had he not been stopped by an unforeseen circumstance, the irrational and self-willed arrogance and the wholly uncontrollable wrath of his nephew John, the son of the *sebastokrator* Isaakios. In the midst of a battle with the Turks, the emperor, seeing a distinguished knight from Italy without a horse, commanded his nephew, who was nearby, to dismount from the Arabian stallion he was riding and offer him to the Italian, knowing that his nephew had no lack of horses. Being high spirited and more haughty [36] than was proper, he resisted the emperor's command, demonstrating his opposition with great indignation and impudence. Contemptuously, he challenged the Latin to a duel; should he prevail, then the horse would justly be his. But John, who observed that the emperor was bristling with anger, could not defy his uncle for long and grudgingly surrendered the horse. Mounting another charger despondently and taking up his lance, he rode off in the direction of the enemy's ranks. Then, after advancing a short distance, he turned his lance to the rear, placing it on his shoulder, and, removing the helmet from his head, he defected to the Turks.

The barbarians were glad to see John and welcomed him warmly, regarding him as the friend they had known in the past in the company of his father, and who would now, as he had then, strengthen their cause by his presence. A short time later, he renounced the Christian rites and married the daughter of the Turkish ruler of Ikonion. The emperor, taken by surprise by these events, feared that his nephew would hold nothing back concerning the Roman army's predicament but, with unbridled tongue, would promptly inform the enemy of the lack of horses and supplies and every other plight in the camp. He furtively retraced his steps, and departed hastily [summer 1140]. However, he could not entirely escape the notice of the enemy; pressing upon the last of the troops to withdraw, they followed over a long distance, continually harassing the rear guard. When the emperor reached the protection of the coast, the barbarians, no longer able to attack, beat a hasty retreat.

The ides of January [15 January 1141] saw Emperor John entering the [37] City on his return from his Turkish labors, and the spring equinox witnessed him once again girding on the sword and arriving in the vicinity of the town on the Rhyndakos River [Lopadion]. As the summer season came to a close and winter petulantly intruded into clear skies, causing terror with the howling of winds and weakening the body's resistance to the cold, John returned to Byzantion, retreating before the freezing weather that rained down snowflakes as large as boulders and sleet like javelins. When Spring slowly began to smile, he rose up and departed from the palace [1142]. When he took leave of his daughters, like the Heliades[84] they covered him with amber tears. After crossing Phrygia, he arrived at the most splendid city of Attaleia,[85] where he intended to remain for some time, so as to establish greater order in the surrounding provinces.

Some of these, among them Lake Pousgousē,[86] had already submitted

to the Turks. Stretching out into an immense sea-like expanse, Lake Pousgousē contained islets scattered throughout which were protected by stout walls. These islands were inhabited by colonies of Christians who crossed Ikonion in their barks and light boats and, by mingling with the Turks, not only stengthened their mutual bonds of friendship but also maintained strong commercial ties. Allied with their neighbors, they looked upon the Romans as their enemies. Thus custom, reinforced by time, is stronger than race and religion. These people, secure in the protection of the watery girdle of the lake, wickedly accused the emperor of being an enemy and arrogantly refused to submit to his ordinance;
[38] those things which they could not judge sanely they conceived in madness. John exhorted them to remove themselves from the lake, as it was an ancient Roman possession, and to go over to the Turks, should that be their wish. Should they not comply, however, he threatened that he would not put up with them and their keeping the lake from the Romans for long. Since his words had no effect, he began military operations. Lashing fishing boats and light transports together and forming a platform on which he placed siege engines, he assaulted the fortifications along the lake. Although he succeeded in destroying them, the Romans did not sail away from that campaign without sustaining losses; at times a strong wind would churn the waters of the lake, swelling them into roaring billows, and the transports would be swept away; capsizing, they lost their cargo to the wavy deep.[87]

At this time the emperor's firstborn son Alexios, to whom he had awarded the red buskins and the imperial purple, departed this life [2 August 1142]. His illness, of the severest kind and of short duration, took the form of a rushing fever attacking the head as though it were an acropolis. The second son, Andronikos, did not long survive; no sooner had he lamented his brother's departure from this world when he, too, discharged his allotted portion of life.[88]

Although The emperor was brought to his knees by such calamities and the tragic loss of his noble sons, regarding, without saying, the deaths of the beloved youths as evil omens of his onward march, he neither became fainthearted nor was he at all diverted from his purpose, nor did he retrace his steps and return to Byzantion, even though a whole year had elapsed since he had undertaken these labors. After arriving in Isau-
[39] ria and putting affairs there in order, he marched back into Syria, accompanied by his last-born son, Manuel.

The ostensible purpose of this expedition was to establish a better disposition of Armenia and to reaffirm the loyalty of the cities and fortresses of which he had taken possession in his earlier campaign up from the coast, but the real purpose behind this well-planned troop movement was kept concealed.[89] He had always had a burning desire to unite Antioch to Constantinople and then to visit the holy lands trodden by God and adorn the life-giving tomb of the Lord with precious gifts, and, in addition, to clear away the barbarians round about. He resorted, therefore, to every ruse in the hope that the Latins would willingly surrender to his dominion over venerable Antioch; should they not be persuaded to do this (for he had no faith in the driveling of the Latins and in their arrogance), then the Cilicians and the Syrians would go over to him.

During his ascent he dispatched missives announcing his arrival to the Antiochenes, and he did not slacken his pace so that, although he had not yet crossed the borders of Syria, he might attract thence an embassy which would produce very good hopes for him for the future. However, as he approached Antioch, he found that the Italians had different ideas because rumor had reached them of the emperor's secret and unspoken intentions. Contrary to his expectations, it appeared that his entry into Antioch would be difficult. Although he had the right to do so according to treaty, in his soul John deliberated on how divisive the issue was and that should he proceed into the city he must spend days being properly venerated and honored, only to leave without having achieved anything innovative in the public affairs of the city or having altered anything in the established customs; annoyed that he had been deceived, he deemed it unwise to force his entry. Warfare against Christians he forbade, but the troops were allowed to pillage the suburbs of the city in which they were quartered and to carry off everything they could get their hands on. His excuse for this command was that there was a lack of supplies; not [40] even the fruit-bearing trees were left unharmed, but were given over to the flames for cooking. Imperceptibly taking his revenge in this manner, he diverted his course towards the border of Cilicia [after 25 September 1142].

From the camp that he set up in an extremely wide ravine along which run soaring twin-peaked mountains called Crows' Nest, John went hunting [1 April 1143].[90] Coming upon a solitary boar, he plunged the head of his javelin into the beast's breast. As the beast thrust forward, the entire iron shaft penetrating into its entrails, the hand holding the javelin became numb and gave way before the beast's terrific counter-thrust, and as the hand was thrown back it straightway struck the quiver carrying poisoned arrows which hung at the emperor's side. As the quiver overturned, one of the falling arrows pierced the emperor's skin along the middle of his last two fingers. The poison, ever-spreading and increasing, coursed through the body and penetrated its vital parts, which became chilled and numb; after some time he departed this life. When the accident had occurred, the emperor had made light of the skin's abrasion and had applied as a remedy a piece of leather from his shoes called the *ekdora*,[91] mistakenly attempting thereby to staunch the wound's bloody and purulent discharge.

He returned towards evening and took dinner and then passed the night restfully; the next day when the wound began to swell and throb violently and he was harrowed by excruciating pains, he disclosed to the physicians what had happened. They saw the swollen hand, and, after examining the application laid on it for healing and concluding that it was contrary to the canons of medicine, they removed it and resorted to other medications that could relieve the festering wound. When the drugs proved ineffective the Asklepiadai[92] considered surgery. The swelling was [41] lanced, but this brought no reduction or relief to the injured hand; instead the swelling increased in size, and the evil spread from finger to finger, and from palm to wrist, then to the forearm, and thence to the arm, and the emperor lost all hope. Since all the physicians were perplexed, they agreed to amputate the emperor's arm, which had swollen to

the size of a man's thigh, although they were still in doubt as to the healing of the injured limb; the emperor, deeming the earlier lancing to be the cause of all subsequent complications, adamantly refused to consent to their proposals, but lay in pain ignoring the disputation over the treatment.[93]

When the most glorious day of the resurrection of Christ [4 April 1143] arrived, he partook of the Holy Mysteries [Holy Communion] and, reclining to take his dinner, drew back the curtain to all who wished to enter and make a petition. At the suggestion of John [Axuch], the grand domestic, he did the same the next day, and distributing the viands that were laid out to those present, he henceforth kept to himself to give thought to the successor to the throne. As there was a torrential downpour and the valley in which he was encamped was flooded, the imperial couch was moved to a dry place, and he recited the following oracular response, "Into watery places, past hope, thou shalt fall."[94] Those who specialize in the study of succession and removal of emperors said that the following prediction had been fulfilled, "O, food shalt thou become for the fearsome crows,"[95] contending that this ancient saying either referred to the black and sizzling irons used to cauterize the emperor's hand or to the name of the mountains on which he was encamped.

Assembling afterwards his kinsmen, friends, and all the dignitaries and officials, and presenting his last-born son Manuel, he said the following:

[42] O Roman men, I have not, according to my great expectations, taken Syria; I had hoped to perform deeds more glorious than heretofore; to bathe without fear in the Euphrates and drink its flowing waters to satiety; to see the Tigris River and terrify the adversary with men under arms, both those who have gone over to the Cilicians and those who have defected to the Agarenes; to soar like the kings of the birds,[96] even though this be an excessive thing to say, towards Palestine where Christ did raise our fallen nature, extending his hands on the cross and uniting the whole world in his droplets [of blood];[97] to go up to the mountain of the Lord, according to the psalmist, and to stand in his holy place;[98] to attack the enemy round about who, like the Philistines of old who had seized the ark,[99] had many times taken the Lord's tomb by military might. Since my expectations are not to be fulfilled, for reasons which God only knows, it is altogether impossible to resist, nor must we raise our voices against what has been ordained. For who is wiser than God? Or who shall search into the mind of God and alter his judgments by being able to subtract or to add to these? The designs of men are frustrated, but the Lord's will cannot be nullified and is immutable. In gratitude to God, who has dispensed countless kindnesses for my benefit, and in thanksgiving for the excessive mercy he has shown us,[100] I declare the following to you as audience and witnesses.

I was begotten of a father who was emperor, and as his successor to the throne I have cast aside nothing of which he gave over into my hands.[101] As to whether I have worked the talent of sovereignty[102] granted me by God, I leave to others to examine and comment upon; and I myself could narrate, without offensiveness and pride, the wondrous works of God around me.[103] East and West saw me warring,

and I attacked the nations of both continents. I remained but little in the palace; nearly my whole life was lived out of a tent, and I have always diligently sought the open air. The land in which we are now encamped has twice looked upon me, and it has been a long time since Turks and Arabs have not laid eyes on a Roman army; this army, with God as its leader and me as his subordinate commander, they have come to dread; many cities submitted to us, and forthwith we are installed as masters and they are now governed by our decrees. May the Lord our God grant me, the supreme commander of the Christian commonwealth, an inheritance in his kingdom and an eternal portion which the meek and well pleasing shall receive from him. May you continue to strengthen your hands[104] and to prevail against those nations that wish for wars[105] and have never called upon the holy name of our God which is above every name.[106] These things shall come to pass if you entrust the sure success to the right hand and mighty arm of the most high God. He should then grant you a sovereign who is not a devourer of the people,[107] giving the lie to his name, capricious by nature, bent forward over the table with his hands ever on the wine ladle, and never tearing himself away from the palace like those portraits on walls in colored mosaics; who enjoys arranging the affairs of state according to his own inclinations and seeing them carried through; from the very beginning whatever transpires depends on him: if he proves a coward, the course of events will be altered, and if again virtuous, they shall take the opposite direction, in the manner that God, according to David,[108] does good to them that are good and upright and leads away them that turn aside to crooked ways with the workers of wickedness. [43]

As I am about to say something concerning my successor to the throne following my imminent and certain demise, it is necessary that you hearken to my words. That I inherited the imperial throne as my patrimony, I need not say, just as it is not necessary for someone to produce evidence that the sun is the lamp of day. Perceiving in my own case that the proper order of succession was observed, and that you are eager that the same should hold true for the offspring of my loins, and that you long to be ruled by one of my surviving sons (these are Isaakios and Manuel); and that you do not want to make the selection yourselves but entrust the election to me, I must admit that it has been the custom, by the very nature of things, to award the highest office to the firstborn son; however, in the matter of highest promotions it does not always please God that this should be the case. Recall Isaac who was second in birth to Ismael,[109] Jacob coming forth from the maternal womb after Esau,[110] Moses born after Aaron,[111] David who was small among his brothers and the youngest in his father's house,[112] and many others. For God does not look at the outward appearance[113] as man does, nor does he award public offices because of advanced years, as one devoted to grey hair and old age, but, rejoicing in the nobility of soul, he looks upon the meek and the gentle[114] and upon him who keeps his commandments. Accordingly, therefore, conceding little to Nature, the arbiter, and shunning her ordinances like the counsels of a narrow-minded woman in matters of vital concern, I prefer instead to emulate God, who is above every respect of persons.[115] [44]

Were the rule to be transferred indisputably to my son Isaakios, who is the older, there would be no need for me to speak of the

character of both my sons, but since the sovereignty has inclined towards my last-born Manuel, to turn aside the suspicions of many and the conviction of some that I have preferred to honor the youngest son above the elder on the basis of affection instead of virtue, I must explain the reasons.

The road of aspirations is not singular but branches off into numerous paths, as is the case with the human form, even though we humans have inherited the same nature. We differ in our appetites, and we do not all, with one accord, enjoy the same ones. Were this not the case, we could not be blamed by God and one another for
[45] greedily desiring the same pleasures and having by necessity the same inclinations.

Even though my two sons were begotten of the same father, each differs in temperament. They are both virtuous, excelling in robustness of body, nobility of form, and profundity of intellect; it is perfectly obvious to me that my last-born son Manuel would be the better administrator of the empire. Isaakios has often appeared to me as being irascible; provoked by some cause he flies into a towering rage, a fault which ruins the wise and because of which the majority of men act thoughtlessly. Manuel, on the other hand, together with the cluster of virtues shared by Isaakios, is not a stranger to meekness, readily yielding to what is useful and willing to listen to reason. Since, like David the king and prophet, he, too, is adorned with innocence of heart,[116] and we humans, furthermore, prefer to be led by a hand clasping the sword and by a temperament which subtly searches out the trespasses of subjects, I have chosen Manuel to be emperor.

Receive, therefore, the youth as God-annointed sovereign and as emperor by election. Proof that God has destined and chosen him to be emperor are the many predictions and prophecies of men beloved of God, all of which foretold that Manuel should be emperor of the Romans.[117] Since my sons, whom I had earlier designated to rule, have died, and Isaakios, who was next in line of birth to ascend the throne, was found wanting, what else was there to do? Assuredly, we can pronounce these signs to be palpable evidence that God wishes that none other than Manuel be awarded the scepter of the Romans.[118] Should one wish to explore the matter, he will not behold me, the father, awarding the throne to the boy altogether as a gift and as one wholly concerned to keep the succession in the family, but he shall observe me bestowing his elevation as a prize of virtue. For you know, you know full well, what deeds of prowess he, a mere stripling, performed in Neokaisareia and of
[46] that brave charge against the Turks which, though it caused me great anguish as a father and made me exceedingly fearful for my beloved son, strengthened the Roman position.

Thus spoke Emperor John. The assembly, lamenting at his words, gladly received Manuel as emperor as though he were appointed by lot or election.[119] Afterwards, the father, after addressing his son and giving him sound advice, crowned him with the imperial fillet and put on him the purple-bordered paludamentum.[120] Then the troops were assembled, and they proclaimed Manuel emperor of the Romans, and each of the nobles, with his retinue standing apart, loudly acclaimed the new sovereign. Thereupon, when the Holy Scriptures had been brought forth, everyone

confirmed on them his goodwill and loyalty to Manuel. The initiator and celebrant of these ceremonies was the grand domestic, whose intention was to dissolve and dissipate the attempts at disturbance and rebellion by the ambitious and to blunt the assistance given by a good many to several of the emperor's kin, who, putting forth seniority of birth as a great and venerable tradition and magnifying their connection to the imperial family through marriage, deemed themselves more worthy to rule the empire.

Several days after these events, Emperor John departed this life, having reigned twenty-four years and eight months [15 August 1118–8 April 1143]. He had governed the empire most excellently, and his life was well pleasing to God; in moral character he was neither dissolute nor incontinent; by way of gifts and expenditures he pursued magnificence, as is evidenced by his frequent distributions of gold coins to the City's inhabitants and by the many beautiful and large churches he built from their foundations. More than all others, he was a lover of glory, and, bequeathing to posterity a most illustrious name, he was highly honored. He was so fastidious as to the decorum and deportment of the members of his family that he would inspect the cut of their hair and carefully scrutinize the shoes on their feet to see if the leather had been sewn to the exact shape of the foot. He swept the palace clean of idle and filthy conversation during public audiences, of profligacy in food and dress, and of all else that was ruinous and destructive of life; playing the role of grave chastiser and desiring that his attendants should emulate him, he never stopped in the pursuit of every virtue. I do not mean that by behaving in this fashion he was lacking in the graces, inscrutable, inaccessible, sullen in appearance, knitted-browed, or even wrathful. He presented himself to public view as a model of every noble action, and when enjoying a respite from public matters, he would avoid the commotion of large crowds, turning a deaf ear to their babbling and jabbering; his speech was dignified and elegant, but he did not spurn repartee or in any way hold back and stifle laughter. He only just failed to reach the very summit of self-control and steadfastness and barely escaped the charge of parsimony; depriving no one of life nor inflicting bodily injury of any kind throughout his entire reign, he has been deemed praiseworthy by all, even to our own times, the crowning glory, so to speak, of the Komnenian dynasty to sit on the Roman throne, and one might well say that he equaled some of the best emperors of the past and surpassed the others.

[47]

II. *The Reign of Manuel Komnenos*

BOOK ONE

AS soon as he was proclaimed emperor [5 April 1143], Manuel dis- [48]
patched forthwith to the queen of cities the grand domestic John Axuch, together with the *chartoularios* Basil Tzintziloukēs, to make arrangements for the smooth transfer of power to the new regime and to pave the way for his entry with appropriate festivities. Moreover, they were to constrain his brother, the *sebastokrator* Isaakios. The emperor was apprehensive lest Isaakios, on being informed that his father was dead and that the scepter had been given to his younger brother, should form a party of opposition and hotly contend to make himself master of all, inasmuch as he was in line to succeed the throne and happened, at that moment, to be present in the queen of cities and lodged in the palace, where piles of money were stored and the imperial vestments were kept.

John, therefore, entered the City in great haste, and since Isaakios had not yet been apprised of events, seized him and incarcerated him in the Pantokrator monastery built by Emperor John.[121] Learning of his father's [49]
death and his brother's accession after his arrest, Isaakios, powerless to do anything, complained that he had been made to suffer beyond all measure and extolled the order by which the whole universe is sustained. "Alexios," he said, "the firstborn of my brothers and heir to the paternal throne, quitted this world, having succumbed to Death; he was followed by Andronikos, the second-born, who departed this life shortly after returning with his brother's corpse from across the sea." Isaakios coveted the throne for himself, insisting that he was the rightful sovereign.

But in vain did he tragically declaim such sentiments, and for naught did he flutter his wings like a little snared bird. The grand domestic took charge of the palace guard and attended to the acclamation of Emperor Manuel on the part of the citizens and delivered to the clergy of the Great Church a letter written with red letters and secured by a gold seal and silk thread, steeped in the blood of the mussel, conferring on them the annual sum of two hundred pounds in silver coins.[122] It is said that Axuch carried a second royal letter written in red awarding the same amount in gold coins; since the not unreasonable notion had occurred to the emperor that Isaakios, on learning of his father's death and his young brother's acclamation as sovereign, might incite rebellion in the City on the grounds that he had a better right by birth to the crown, or that the turbulent and revolutionary desire, which forever incites the populace whenever emperors are chosen or removed, would create difficulties for the new ruler and imperil the reign because of the uncertainty of the situation of the moment, he entrusted to John the two munificent imperial diplomas. Since his mission had succeeded in its purpose and the

newly arrived emissary could conceive or wish for nothing better, he held back the diploma awarding the gold coins and produced that which bestowed the silver coins.

In such wise they prepared for the imperial arrival. The emperor com-
[50] pleted the obsequies of his father and placed the body aboard ship among the fleet anchored in the Pyramos River which fattens Mopsuestia[123] and flows into the sea. Putting in order the affairs of Antioch[124] in the brief time allowed him and setting out from Cilicia, he marched through upper Phrygia. It was at this time [c. 8 May 1143] that Andronikos Komnenos, Manuel's cousin on his father's side (he later reigned as tyrant over the Romans), and Theodore Dasiotēs,[125] who was married to Maria, the daughter of Manuel's brother, the *sebastokrator* Andronikos, were captured by the Turks and taken to Masʿūd, who was then ruler of Ikonion. While hunting wild game, they turned off the road taken by the army and unawares fell into the hands of the enemy; stalking game, they themselves fell prey to the hunters of men. The emperor, who was unable at the time to fix his mind on any other course of action but was wholly absorbed by the enterprise at hand, deemed it inexpedient to delay even a little, nor did he take thought of these men, which would have been the proper thing to do, and come to their aid as befitted the royal dignity. He freed them afterwards without paying ransom, and he recovered for the Romans the town of Prakana, situated near Seleukeia and besieged by the Turks.[126]

When Manuel arrived in the queen of cities [c. July 1143], he was warmly welcomed by her inhabitants both as heir to the paternal throne and because, even though he was a mere lad, he had the deep understanding of those grown old in affairs of state; he had shown himself to be skilled in war, venturesome and undaunted in the face of danger, high-minded and eager to give battle. The youth had a handsome face which
[51] was graced by a gentle smile; he was tall but slightly stooped. In complexion he was neither snow-white like those reared in the shade nor the color of deep black smoke like those exposed to the burning rays of the sun; he was, consequently, not fair-complexioned but swarthy in appearance.

The citizenry crowded round with arms outstretched, shouting out acclamations, when Manuel jubilantly entered the palace. As he reached the palace, and was about to enter through the gate past which only the emperors were allowed to dismount, the horse carrying the emperor, an Arabian stallion with a high, arched neck, neighing loudly and frequently striking the pavement with his hooves, and advancing without restraint and proudly wheeling about, finally crossed over the threshold. To those who were skilled in such techniques, this episode appeared to be propitious, and of these, those who gaze at the sky while barely seeing what is at their feet foretold, on the basis of the equine configurations and frequent whirlings around, a long life for the emperor.

Offering thanks to God on the occasion of his entrance and acclamation as emperor, Manuel turned his attention to who should succeed to the patriarchal throne and take the helm of the Church and place the imperial crown on his head in the Lord's temple, for Leon Stypēs had departed the world of men in death.[127] Manuel communicated his views to his kin, the members of the senate, and the clergy; although many were

nominated to the supreme high priesthood, the deciding and nearly unanimous vote went to the monk Michael from the Monastery of Oxeia, who was both renowned for his virtue and erudite in our learning.[128]

As soon as Michael was promoted as patriarch, he forthwith anointed [52] his anointer upon his entrance into the sacred palace [probably August 1143]. The brother Isaakios was reconciled with the emperor, and, to the surprise of many, they pledged fraternal goodwill to one another.[129] Isaakios was irascible and for the slightest cause would inexplicably be impelled to inflict inordinate punishments on many. He nurtured, furthermore, an ignoble timidity, so much so that he was unmanly. His father John, the best of emperors, was deemed happy by all and of glorious and blessed memory for the added reason that he had rightly chosen Manuel to reign as emperor above Isaakios.

Because Mas^{c}ūd was plundering and laying waste the eastern provinces, Manuel set out against him [1144 or 1145].[130] When he came to Melangeia, he attacked the Turks in those parts; after he had directed the campaign for the recovery of Melangeia and stationed a garrison for her defense, he returned to the queen of cities stricken with pleuritis.

To wreak his vengeance against Raymond, prince of Antioch, for harassing the cities of Cilicia subject to the Romans, Manuel dispatched an army and designated as commanders his nephews, the brothers John and Andronikos Kontostephanos,[131] and a certain Prosuch,[132] who was not ignorant of military matters. He also dispatched long ships under the command of Demetrios Branas.[133]

Once the beleaguered cities and fortresses in those parts were furnished with assistance, Manuel proposed forthwith to march against the Turks; they were already pressing on to take possession of the fortifications around Pithekas,[134] and, invading the Thrakesian theme, they carried off everything in their path. Manuel then crossed Lydia and appeared before the cities of Phrygia and before those along the Maeander River, where he freed them of the impending dangers; striking terror into [53] the Turks, he put them to flight. At Philomilion[135] he engaged the Turks in battle. There he was struck in the flat of the foot by an arrow shot by a certain Turk overthrown by the emperor's lance; as he fell backwards, the discharged arrow pierced the sole of Manuel's foot.[136] Manuel, who appeared awesome and daring to the enemy and more venturesome than his father John, did not choose to turn back, nor would he be persuaded by those who counseled him to consider returning home lest the Turks, in desperation, regroup and batter his forces.

Indeed, he rode on to Ikonion with heightened enthusiasm. Mas^{c}ūd, who had departed, had set up camp at Taxara, the ancient Koloneia; one of his daughters, reportedly married to the emperor's cousin, John Komnenos, the son of the *sebastokrator* Isaakios who, because of some trifling vexation against his uncle, Emperor John Komnenos, had fled and defected to Mas^{c}ūd, peered out from above the walls and delivered a persuasive defense on behalf of her father, the sultan. The emperor reached the outskirts of Ikonion and surrounded the walls with his troops, but after he had allowed the youth to aim their arrows at the battlements and to violate the marked graves,[137] he turned back without further ado. As he withdrew, the enemy, which had set up ambuscades and occupied the

heavily wooded terrain, engaged him in greater battles than had heretofore erupted. Fighting his way through with difficulty, Manuel returned to the queen of cities [1146].[138]

The emperor took a wife from a distinguished and most illustrious German family.[139] She was not so much concerned with physical beauty as with her inner beauty and the condition of her soul. Disdaining face
[54] powder, eye liner, and eyeshadow underneath the eye, and rouge instead of nature's flush, and ascribing such aids to silly women, she was adorned by the virtues to which she was devoted. She had the natural trait of being unbending and opinionated. Consequently, the emperor was not very attentive to her, but she shared in the honors, bodyguard, and remaining imperial splendors; in matters of the bed, however, she was wronged.[140] For Manuel, being young and passionate, was wholly devoted to a dissolute and voluptuous life and given over to banqueting and reveling; whatever the flower of youth suggested and his vulgar passions prompted, that he did. Indulging in sexual intercourse without restraint and copulating undetected with many female partners, he unlawfully penetrated his kinswoman.[141] And he was blemished by this disfiguring and unseemly action as warts or pustules of dull white leprosy sprout on the face mar a lovely countenance.

The emperor attended, nonetheless, to public affairs. He appointed John of Poutzē procurator of the public taxes and grand commissioner and inspector of accounts,[142] as his father and emperor had done before him when he was serving as *protonotarios* of the *dromos,* and he installed John Hagiotheodoritēs as chancellor, whose responsibility it was to carry out the imperial edicts.[143] The latter was seen ever in the presence of the emperor and received his commandments and directives as though they were oracular pronouncements; as ministers of the written and spoken word he made use of many of the learned men who abounded at the imperial court, especially Theodore Styppeiotēs, about whom we shall speak in the following.

John of Poutzē was extremely clever in the matter of public affairs, a sly and oppressive tax collector, most exacting in the payment of existing taxes and without peer in inventing new ones. He was by nature more inexorable and relentless than any man. It would have been easier to
[55] make a stone smile or laugh than to change his mind against his wishes. Even more remarkable than this, not only was he unmoved by tears, unbending before the pleas of suppliants, impervious to the lure of silver and unaffected by the enchantments of gold, but he was also inhumanly unapproachable. That which was distressing and insufferable to the men of those days was the fact that there was no clear response forthcoming from him to a petitioner's request, but he took great satisfaction in remaining silent; sometimes he would dismiss a supplicant without ever speaking to him. He was invested with so much power and authority from the emperor that he rejected and tore up whatever imperial edicts were not to his liking, while including others in the public registers.

Thanks to this man's counsel, a measure for the common welfare and salutary for all the islands perpetuated by the former emperors was abolished by Emperor John with great harm. Whatever contributions were collected by ship-money levies and designated in the past for the fleet, he

diverted into the treasury by the use of convincing arguments and very nearly scuttled the manned triremes provided on demand by the islands. Arguing that the state and public did not always have need of the triremes and that the expenditures made on their behalf were a heavy annual burden, and that these funds, therefore, should be deposited in the treasury and that supplies and pay should be provided the navy by the imperial treasury only when needed, he appeared to be the best of men and an expert in the nature of public affairs—he who resorted to the pirate's plot of throwing his captive overboard. By proposing such measures, he diverted the emperor from excessive expenditures and, in turn, the chancellor was pleased by the moderation of expenses. Now, as a result of this ill-advised policy or pennypinching, pirates rule the seas and the Roman maritime provinces are harassed by pirate ships, and the enemy gloats.

For even though we know the sower's ear of corn, it is the reaper whom we blame; and he who ignited the fire and was able to extinguish it, did not desire to do so. [56]

Up to this time John had proved himself to be a public-spirited minister of finance, a shrewd and niggardly steward, and an exacting collector of taxes from usurers, and his power was absolute; he could do whatever he wished without question, and whatever he wished was possible. Realizing that his rank and influence might be transferred to another, his freedom of speech rescinded, and his power undermined in no time, and that others, raised to power by the emperor, might violently attack and subvert his position, he pulled down all proper limitations to his authority, and taking advantage of both time and circumstances clung to both and embraced them. Addressing one of his confidants with the words, "Come, let us enrich ourselves," he became a completely different man; reversing forthwith his tactics, he devoted himself to unjust gain as no other man of that time. He looked cheerfully upon those who appeared before him and addressed them courteously as he inspected them most carefully to ascertain whether they carried any gold on their person. Married to a woman from among the rejected and withered nobility, he lavished great wealth on his children, sufficient to indulge their pleasures. But otherwise he was parsimonious, a niggard and a miser who never raised his eyelids to gaze upon the poor; he was attached to Wealth, which held him permanently fettered in unbreakable and indissoluble bonds, a virtual prisoner, just as Akrisios kept Danaë long ago.[144] Mean and stingy, he would often send comestibles that had been given to him to a shop to be sold: for example, he would return the huge and fat flat fish[145] and bass which he had received as many as three different times, to be purchased as many times and in turn by others who had need of his services. And the fish straightway became fishers, exchanging roles, as though they were letting down the large fishhook, placing soft fat on it as bait, and thus pulling into their habitat the passers-by. [57]

At another time, he had passed the day at the palace in Blachernai and on his return towards evening had seen a food set out on the wayside by female taverners which in common speech is called brine.[146] At this, he felt a craving to drink his fill of the sauce and munch on the stems of the greens.[147] When one of his attendants by the name of Anzas remarked

that he should curb his appetite, since he would find food to his liking prepared and set out for him at home, John, looking at him with a fierce and titanic gaze, insisted on satisfying his craving. Greedily grabbing the bowl containing the meal he coveted from the hands of the female vendor, he lowered his head with his mouth wide open, gulped down the juice in one draught, and gluttonously devoured the greens. He then took a bronze coin from his pocket, handed it to one of his attendants, and instructed him to exchange it for four obols; with this he was told to pay the vendor two obols and to bring back the remaining two immediately.

Another time, as he made his way through the agora and, as usual, in most royal fashion, with a crowd of people trailing behind him, he spied an iron horseshoe which had been cast aside at the crossroad. Causing the procession to halt while he was being applauded and glorified by many as though he were equal with God, he directed one of his attendants to retrieve the horseshoe. The latter had not fallen off the horse's hoof, nor
[58] had it been thrown away by chance, but it had been heated by fire and placed on the ground by children playing in the agora, inciting the passers-by to laughter. At the command of this man, the attendant dismounted and took hold of the iron horseshoe, only to give a loud, piercing cry, having badly burnt his hands. At this, the children were convulsed in laughter, and his companions ridiculed him and marveled that the skinflint should behave so niggardly even over such flimsy trifles. It was not surprising, therefore, that when this inordinate lover of money died, he was found to have storehouses teeming with money, even having secretarial pen cases engraved in colors.

The counsels of John Hagiotheodoritēs were crowned with success, yet the mercurial and capricious flow of events permitted the clever Theodore Styppeiotēs to trip him up, as he was free to work with or against John. He was second in rank after John but could neither abide nor be content with this status and sought the highest office of state; aspiring to reach the summit, he ever concentrated his efforts on the upward climb.

Taking advantage of the opportunity to which no small part was contributed by the differences between a man of law and one of noble birth (I speak of Michael Palaiologos and Joseph Balsamon, Hagiotheodoritēs' brother-in-law, married to his sister), he attacked Hagiotheodoritēs vehemently and, exerting himself mightily, ostracized him from the palace as from the heavenly heights, throwing him as though from a sling into the farthermost region, the praetorship of Hellas and the Peloponnesos, there to restore order and resolve the contentions between the aforementioned
[59] men. John, therefore, prepared his baggage for his departure. Fortune, without even waiting for his leave-taking, removed herself to Styppeiotēs, attaching herself to him, and, in a manner of speaking, gladly and most gracefully sang his praises as she promoted him from one office to another and exalted him from one glory to the next. Finally, she advanced Styppeiotēs to the lofty dignity of keeper of the inkstand,[148] where he enjoyed the devoted friendship of the emperor. While she lavishly bestowed many other preferments on him, she regarded Hagiotheodoritēs unfeelingly, so that he must even want for a morsel of bread. Nor did fickle Fortune alter or in any way change her decrees, but remained unusually constant and stood at Styppeiotēs' side. Henceforth, he admin-

istered public affairs as he wished, profoundly wise, prudent, pleasant in manner, and soaring in political judgment. He agreed to whatever the emperor commanded and commanded whatever the emperor wished.

At that time the emperor was free of unjust and base gain; he was a sea of munificence, an abyss of mercy, affable to the genial and unrivaled in imperial virtue, still possessing a guileless soul and an ingenuous disposition. As those who are advanced in years have reported to us, alluding to those celebrated golden years, they were like a swarm of buzzing bees flying out of a hollow rock[149] and no different from the crowds who thronged about the agora as they would enter the imperial treasuries to receive the benefit of some largess; they pressed about the gates as the benefactions were distributed in turn, some pushing their way inside as others were prodded to leave. We, however, hear but a rumor.[150]

The public treasuries, moreover, at that time were overflowing. They spilled over like converging waters, pouring forth a portion of their contents to the needy standing outside; they were like a womb, heavy with the weight of a full term fetus, about to deliver. From the tax collections of Emperor John, Emperor Manuel's father, a portion was given to God and a portion to the just man; and since he himself was neither wastrel [60] nor spendthrift, he piled up mounds of money as though they were pebbles. The Deity, it seemed, had blessed and multiplied these according to the infallible word of the Gospel which promises both a heavenly reward and manifold compensation.[151]

These excellent intentions of Emperor Manuel, however, proved to be of short duration, impermanent and evanescent. A hard driver of men, he governed the affairs of state imperiously, treating his ministers not as free men but as allotted slaves. He suspended the flow of munificence, not to say that he forced the flow backwards, and he justified its redistribution from time to time, not so much, I think, because he voluntarily chose to do so (for in things unknown it is necessary to give one the benefit of the doubt) as from the need not to pour out gold dust by the cupful, since his outlays were as expansive as the Tyrrhenian Sea, as I shall demonstrate in the course of my history.

But while the emperor governed the empire in this fashion, a cloud of enemies, a dreadful and death-dealing pestilence, fell upon the Roman borders: I speak of the campaign of the Germans, joined by other kindred nations.[152] Females were numbered among them, riding horseback in the manner of men, not on coverlets sidesaddle but unashamedly astride, and bearing lances and weapons as men do; dressed in masculine garb, they conveyed a wholly martial appearance, more mannish than the Amazons. One stood out from the rest as another Penthesilea[153] and from the embroidered gold which ran around the hem and fringes of her garment was called Goldfoot.

The pretext for this expedition was provided by the Lord's empty [61] tomb, and those Germans who wished to hasten to Jerusalem prepared to take the straight and level road instead of the crooked and treacherous byways. They affirmed, moreover, that on this expedition they would drag along nothing superfluous but only that which was absolutely necessary for smoothing the roads. By this they did not mean shovels, picks, and spades but shields and swords and coats of mail and whatever else is

suited to warfare. They declared and affirmed by oath that Jerusalem was motive for their expedition. Later events proved their declarations were not false.

They dispatched envoys [before September 1146], who, in a show of friendship, asked permission of the emperor to pass through the Roman empire and requested that roadside markets be set up so that they might purchase provisions for the nourishment of both men and horses.[154] The emperor, although taken by surprise and naturally thrown into a state of confusion, did not fail to take expedient measures. He discussed the issue of food supplies with the envoys in an affable manner and with little sincerity lavished high praise on their action and pretended to admire them for their pious intention. He immediately gave instructions that preparations be made for their passage and assured the envoys that abundant and ready market wares would be provided them should they pass through his lands and not through foreign territory. All they need do was to swear solemn oaths that their passage would truly be God-loving, and that they would cross the Roman frontiers without battle.

As was fitting, the emperor attended to these arrangements; he sent imperial decrees everywhere [summer 1147] directing that the necessaries of life be set out in advance on the roads to be traversed by the Western troops, and the deed followed the word. Distrustful and suspicious lest they be wolves coming in sheep's clothing or lions concealed in the disguise of an ass, to reverse the fable,[155] or the lion's skin to be patched with the fox's,[156] he assembled the Roman forces, deliberated openly on
[62] the state of public affairs, expounded in detail on the mighty army that would be passing through, reckoned the large number of cavalry, depicted the multitude of heavy-armed soldiery, portrayed the myriads of foot soldiers, and described the all-brazen arms and deeds of murder of these men with fire in their eyes who exulted more in the spilling of blood than others do in the sprinkling of water. He announced these things to the senate, the ministers, and the troops and also told of everything that the tyrant of Sicily, a veritable sea monster, had perpetrated against the maritime provinces, when, smiting the sea with oars,[157] he had entered the harbors of Roman towns, laying waste everything before him while meeting little resistance. Furthermore, Manuel repaired the City's battlements and secured the circumference of the walls.[158] He issued coats of mail to the troops, armed them with brazen lances, stiffened their resolution with swift horses, and plucked up their courage with the distribution of monies, which someone in antiquity most excellently named the sinews of things.[159]

And thus with the assistance of God and the Guardian of the City, the Virgin Mother, Manuel stationed his troops in impregnable positions as far as was possible, designating some to defend the fair City and deploying them along the walls, and instructed the remaining troops to follow close behind the Germans in order to prevent the German troops from turning aside to plunder and forage. All was to be done, however, in a pacific manner and not by engaging in combat.

For the greater part of the march, nothing noteworthy ensued between the two armies.[160] Even when the Germans encamped at Philippopolis the regiments anticipated no quarrel there; the bishop of the province (this

was Michael Italikos, eloquent in speech, the darling of wisdom, so to speak, and, like a magnet, most beguiling in his manner of conversation) lured the king into his power, enfeebling him with the charms of his words, bewitching him with the honey of his tongue.[161] He said one thing but meant another and disguised his true feelings to benefit the Romans. Energetically changing his form like Proteus of Pharos,[162] he held the haughty [monarch] spellbound as the wine jugs were emptied; he made him his table companion and drank to his health. While the king himself was freely feted, he treated most cruelly those who brought in grain, from whatever source, without making payment in silver.[163] [63]

When the king departed and advanced with the vanguard, a cause for controversy between Germans and Romans appeared for the first time, ostensibly as the result of the mistreatment suffered by some. Afterwards, the tumultuous interference by many others exacerbated the situation, which was further worsened by the clamor. To these were added license of tongue and contentiousness, and eventually this led to the taking up of arms. Enyo attended and, aided by Phylopis, the conflict waxed hotly.[164] Delighting in growth and ever longing after the world above, Enyo would have planted her head in heaven,[165] being originally an earthbound and infernal deity, had the aforementioned bishop not overtaken the king, placated him with his charms, and persuaded him, beyond expectation, to calm down although he had already turned back breathing war, the king of beasts who had freshly feasted but who, stung in the tail, rushed forward by leaps and bounds.

When the troops had assembled at the well-walled city of Adrianople, the king marched on the prescribed route through the city, where he was forced to encamp because one of his kinsman fell ill. Certain ruthless Romans whose hands were better instructed in stealing than in taking up arms[166] attacked the lodging at night, set it ablaze, and burned the man together with his companions. When Conrad (for this was the king's name) learned of this he commanded his nephew, Frederick, to avenge the death.[167] A high-spirited man, he was overcome by passion and returned to the holy monastery in which the German had been lodged, burned it to the ground, and condemned to death those who had been apprehended, having first made an investigation into the stolen monies. [64] And this became a part of the cause for conflict. But once again, the nurse Peace smiled, and various Roman officials quelled the strife, thanks especially to the efforts of Prosuch, who left the horse he was riding at the stone bridge beneath which flows the three rivers, approached the enraged Frederick, and placated him, deflecting him from his course.[168]

Once more, the stopping places were peaceful, the march[169] untroubled, and the route easy to traverse.

Some days later, the Germans spread their camps throughout the prairie of the Choirobacchoi,[170] but they did not lay a trench because they were confident that the Romans would honor their oaths and agreements. There is a narrow and shallow river by the name of Melas[171] which flows by these plains. In the summer, a lack of water reduces it to a muddy ravine, and it moves not through sandy soil but through the very fertile black earth and cuts a channel like a deep furrow made by plows pulled by oxen. With the arrival of winter or with a downpour of torrential rains,

it expands in size enormously from a trickle, and from a useless pond of water it swells into a deep-eddying river. Jealous of the seas and no longer content to be only a river, its waters are churned into soaring waves; it becomes so broad that ships are able to navigate upon it. Lashed by winds, it is whipped into high waves and spits out foam as it violently dashes against the neighboring dry land to carry away the fruits of the farmers' labors and sweep the travelers from the road. The river now contrived a wholly execrable deed.

[65] The Melas was swollen by torrential rains that had created a veritable deluge; as though the floodgates of heaven had opened into it,[172] that night it raced through the German camp sweeping away weapons and horse trappings, whatever goods the packasses were carrying, horses and mules, as well as the mounted knights.[173] So piteous a spectacle called forth tears as men fell without fighting and were cut down without being pursued.[174] Neither their huge stature, measured almost in stades, nor their right hand, insatiate of battle,[175] sufficed to repel the evil, for they were cut down like grass and carried away like sun-warmed chaff and airy woolen fleece. In the words of the psalmist, this river lifted up the voices[176] of those shouting in a barbarian fashion, sending out a melody to the peaks and hills which reverberated with a wild and savage tune unlike those honey-sweet songs the shepherds played on their pipes. Those who witnessed this chance event concluded that the wrath of God had fallen upon the German camp, bringing the sudden rush of floodwaters which swallowed them up so that they were unable to save themselves. They fell asleep that night [7/8 September 1147], some to die,[177] the rest to suffer the loss and destruction of all their belongings.[178] The king, deeply aggrieved over this misfortune, set aside his petty arrogance, for he marveled that the very elements should obey the Romans. Thus, he yielded to their wishes, seeing that even nature served their needs, and departed thence to continue on his way.

As Conrad approached the queen of cities [c. 10 September 1147], he was forthwith compelled to ferry his troops across the straits, although at first he was overbearing and stupidly refused to cross over, saying that it was against his judgment to do so and that he did not wish to encamp in Peraia at the place called Ta Pikridiou.[179] Every rowboat, ferryboat, fishing boat, and horse transport was commandeered for the crossing of the Germans. Emperor Manuel appointed recorders to register every man
[66] ferried across, but the hosts were so numerous that the officials appointed to the task gave up and returned unsuccessful.[180]

The passage of the king, who shortly was to be joined by his fellow Franks, was viewed with satisfaction by the Romans, like the passing of some dire portent from heaven.[181] Once again, the emperor had the same care for his own provinces which he had formerly exercised. He did not neglect to provide them with supplies of food, and market wares were once again set out on the roadside. The Romans, following Manuel's instructions, set up ambushes in strategic places and along the defiles of mountain passes, where they slew no small number of the enemy. When the Germans approached the gates of cities, the citizens did not display their wares but rather let ropes down from the wall so that they could first pull up the money in payment for whatever they were hawking and then

let down only as much as suited them, whether it was bread or any other salable foodstuff. By knowingly committing these unlawful acts, they incensed the All-Seeing Eye, for cheating at the scales and for taking no pity on them as strangers, and for not even setting before them, as coreligionists, any of their own household stores, instead seizing from their throats that which was necessary to sustain the body. The worst of the inhabitants, especially those motivated by inhumanity, did not let down even the tiniest morsel but, drawing up the gold or silver, deposited the coins in their bosoms and disappeared, not to be seen again on the walls between the towers. Some, mixing lime with the barley groats, concocted a fatal mixture.

Whether all this, in truth, was commanded by the emperor, as was rumored, I do not know with certainty; it was, nonetheless, an iniquitous and unholy deed. The emperor's purpose was neither in doubt nor was it [67] cast in the shadow of the curtain of falsehood; he minted debased silver coinage which he offered to the Italian troops to pay for their needs. In short, every ill the emperor himself had contrived was present, and he commanded others to inflict such harm so that these things should be indelible memorials for posterity, deterents against attacking the Romans.

It also occurred to the Turks to act similarly against the Germans once Manuel had stirred them up with letters and incited them to make war. The Turkish troops, under the command of a certain Mamplanēs, defeated the Germans near Bathys,[182] where they slew large numbers [26 October 1147]. But when they attacked the contigent traversing Phrygia, their purpose was foiled and they willingly brought destruction down on their own heads, summoning it from afar, and they fell into the very pit they had dug with their own hands.[183] They should never have killed, never have aroused, vexed, and provoked the sleeping beast to anger and human slaughter.[184] Massing in phalanxes on the banks of the river (the Maeander), they blocked the Latin troops from crossing over.[185] At any other time and place, this river was difficult to ford, but at this time its rushing waters formed whirlpools, making it completely impassable. When the conduct of the Western forces had demonstrated their forbearance to the extent that the Roman phalanxes were not subjected to forays and their cities were bypassed without being ravaged and their inhabitants were not slain for their flocks, the crusaders were sorely distressed. When the king reached the riverside there were neither river boats at hand nor a bridge for crossing over, and a combined Turkish force of infantry and [68] cavalry, appearing in the open on the opposite shore, discharged arrows that pierced those standing on the bank and fell upon the front line of the phalanx. Then, withdrawing a short distance from the riverside, he[186] pitched camp out of arrow's reach and commanded the knights[187] to sup and attend to their horses, for they would be making war against the Turks early next morning [31 December 1147–1 January 1148].

Arising in the dark, before the sun had yet yoked his chariot, he made ready for battle and his troops donned their arms. The barbarians were likewise drawn up in battle-order; they deployed the archers along the bank and the cavalry made suitable preparations for the discharging of missiles should the Italians [French] advance towards the river. The king reviewed the entire army and exhorted the troops in the following words:

O comrades-in-arms, that our expedition was undertaken for Christ and that we chose this present course seeking the glory not of men but of God,[188] each and everyone of you clearly knows. How should it be otherwise? Because of this, we have renounced the comforts of home and have willingly separated ourselves from our families; traversing foreign lands, we walk hand in hand with afflictions, are exposed to dangers, waste away from famine, freeze from the cold, and faint from the heat; we have the earth for our couch, the sky for our roof; we, the wellborn, the grandees, the renowned in glory and in wealth, the lords of many nations are ever-wrapped in military attire as though it were unwanted bonds, and we tolerate it in our suffering as did Peter, the greatest of Christ's disciples, who was maltreated of old by being bound in double chains and guarded by four quaternions of soldiers.[189] That the barbarians, separated from us by the space of the river's waters, are the enemies of the cross of Christ,[190] are those whom long ago we sought to engage in battle and in whose blood, in the words of David,[191] we have promised to wash ourselves, no one would wish to dispute, except that one had been manifestly driven mad and, looking about wide-eyed,
[69] saw not, and listening, heard nothing.[192]

Even though we be concerned about our going straight to the eternal mansions[193] (for God is not so unjust that he does not see the cause which had led us on this course and therefore not admit us into the virgin meadows and shady resting places in Eden, for we have abandoned our country and have chosen to die for him rather than to live), should we remember the abuse which these men, uncircumcised in heart,[194] daily heap on our countrymen, and should we recall the blows on the head they have struck and the blood they have shed without cause, then pity will move us: now stand bravely and fight stoutly. Let not panicking fear prevent you from dutifully defending yourselves. Let the foreigners truly know that by as much as Christ our guide and preceptor surpasses the prophet, the misleader of the people and teacher of impiety, by so much do we excel them in everything.

As we are a sacred host and a God-chosen army, let us not ignobly love our lives more than a Christ-loving and everlastingly remembered death. If Christ died for us,[195] how much more justified are we to die for him? Let a noble end attend such a noble venture. We shall fight with confidence in Christ and in the full knowledge that we shall crush the enemy; the victory will not be difficult, for none will be able to sustain our onslaught, but rather they shall all give way before our first charge. Should we fall in battle, God forbid!, to die for Christ is a fair winding sheet.[196] Let a Turkish archer strike me down for Christ's sake; one must fall asleep with fairer hopes in such a death and ride the arrow like a chariot to the resting place in the beyond. May we be spared an inglorious and sinful death.

[70] We shall now avenge ourselves on them whose kinsmen and coreligionists, with defiling feet, have entered, as though it were a common site, the holy place in which Christ, who was coeval and coruler with the Father, became a companion of the dead. We are the mighty, and with swords unsheathed we shall pay tribute to the life-giving and God-containing tomb as though it were Solomon's

marriage bed.[197] We who are free shall eject the slave Agar's descendants[198] and remove them as stumbling stones[199] from Christ's path. The Romans, I know not how, have served them as though they were a wolf's cubs[200] in the role of sacrificial victims, nourished them with Roman flesh and ingloriously fattened them on Roman blood. The Romans should have recovered their vigor and the reasoning of prudent men and expelled them from their own lands and cities like wild beasts from flocks.

Since this river, as you can see, is impassable except one were to open up a fresh passage, I myself will be the first to propose this and the first to undertake what I have proposed. Massed in full battle array and couching our lances, let us zealously rush in and charge on horseback through the river's current; and I am fully confident that the waters shall be stayed, draw back, and the direction of their course reversed as happened of old when the Jordan River was crossed by Israel on foot.[201] May this deed and tactic be eternally commemorated by our descendants and never expunged by time or erased by oblivion's flow, making a laughingstock of the Turks whose limbs shall fall about this river, rising up into a mound as a trophy proclaiming our immortal glory.

Following these exhortations, he gave the signal for battle, mounted his horse and, with constant prodding, spurred it to cross the river in a rush; the rest, chanting paeans and raising the war cry as is their custom, advanced like a wall in close array to join battle. When they came to the river's edge, they paused to shake clean their horses' hooves on the dry bank and to check and stay the rushing current so that it should reverse [71] itself in defiance of nature, or by piling up it should fall backwards while they, advancing through the water as though on dry land, would take the Turks by surprise. The barbarians, having no avenue of escape by which to save themselves (for they were pursued and caught; not even their swift-footed horses coursing over the topmost ears of ripened corn could save them[202]) and unable to engage the Germans [i.e., the French] in hand-to-hand combat, were cut to pieces in diverse ways and fell on one another like ears of corn; and then, like grapes pressed in wine vats, their lifeblood was squeezed out by the lance-bearing knights. Some, especially the light and unarmed troops, were run through by lances, while others were cut down, cleft in two by the long swords; still others arrayed nearby were wounded with dagger thrusts and were plunged into ruin as the bronze spilled out their bowels. The bodies of the fallen Turks completely covered the plains, the ravines overflowed with their blood. Although arrows were shot at many of the Italians [French], only a few were struck down and slept the sleep of death.

To this day the mounds of bones are so many and so high that they stand like lofty hillocks bearing witness to the hosts who fell there. All those who come this way are amazed by what they see, as was I, the recorder of these events. The vastness of the circuit of the fences enclosing the vineyards of the Massilians, fashioned from the bones of the Cimbri when the Roman Marius had crushed the barbarians,[203] would clearly be comprehended by all those who had viewed this unusual deed

and reported it to others. Indeed, what happened here would have surpassed the earlier battle were it not for the grandiloquent account recording the fate of the Cimbri that exaggerated nature, sinking all into myth. Henceforth, they [the French] were unopposed in their march and none of the barbarians made a show of resistance.

Through the exercise of such war games, the Italian [French] youths [72]
seized Coele Syria. While they were crossing the Roman border on the road to Jerusalem and traversing upper Phrygia, Lykaonia, and Pisidia (once subject to the Romans and now ruled by the barbarians, who have taken them by the force of arms and exploit them, thanks to the slothfulness and unmanly housekeeping cares of the Roman rulers who have been unwilling to labor and brave danger for the lands entrusted to their safekeeping), Emperor Manuel was pondering how to take his revenge upon the Sicilians, how to punish them for the inhuman crimes they perpetrated against the Romans and how to deliver the citadel of Kerkyra, now called Korypho,[204] from its garrison.

Roger [II Guiscard],[205] who then ruled Sicily, either in compact with the king of Germany, as it was said, or on his own accord initiated an attack coincident with the German expedition by sending swift-sailing ships against the Roman seacoast [April 1147].[206] The fleet sailed from Brindisi and put in at Kerkyra. Meeting no resistance, it took the citadel by assault. The inhabitants were to blame and of these, especially Gymnos by name, whose cunning was smoother than a pestle.

The citizens contended that because they were unable to abide the [73]
overbearing and insufferable tax collector and could no longer endure his drunken fits and insolent behavior, they conceived an evil scheme whose purpose was outright rebellion. Unable to consummate the plan on their own, they seized the opportunity at hand as a godsend and went to the captain of the fleet, whose wily tongue convinced them to follow steathily the fox's tracks and negotiate a treaty admitting a Sicilian garrison of a thousand knights in armor. Witlessly fleeing the smoke of taxation, they fell into the fire, bringing down upon the Romans warfare both chronic and most grievous. Taking possession of the fortress, the fleet's captain strengthened its defenses to render it impregnable to assault as best he could and then sailed on to Monemvasia,[207] confident that he would occupy this citadel without bloodshed, as he had taken Kerkyra three days earlier. However, here he encountered men governed by the intellect who, not ignorant of the Paphian goddess of freedom,[208] repulsed him. As though he had dashed himself against an immovable jutting rock, he backed water and sailed thence without having accomplished anything.

When the Sicilian captain sailed around Malea, a contrary wind blew up in full force, recalling the proverb: "When rounding Malea, forget your troubles back home."[209] He was carried off to the Isthmus, where he attacked both shores, not only raiding the defenseless positions, carrying off plunder, but also those fortifications admirably situated and difficult to assault, some of which he took by compact and the rest by storm. Wreaking devastation against the Akarnanians and the Aitolians and all along the shoreline, he sailed into the Gulf of Corinth and dropped anchor in the Krissaios harbor, and finding no worthy adversary, he ventured to attack the inhabitants inland. He drew up his heavy and light

[74] troops in battle array, the erstwhile seaman appearing as a landsman. Like those sea monsters who seek food on both land and sea, his army encamped in the land of Kadmos, and, plundering the towns along the way, he came to Thebes of the Seven Gates, which he took by storm, treating her inhabitants savagely. An ancient report that the city spawned wealthy inhabitants sparked an insatiable desire for money within him, and his thirst for riches was unquenchable and his appetite for treasure beyond satisfaction. A measure of his cupidity was his order that all or most of his ships should sink to the third stripe from the weight of the monies; he squeezed the artisans dry, and, still inquisitive after filthy lucre, he then subjected the powerful and the illustrious of birth, those of venerable age and distinguished in rank, to diverse ill-treatment, indiscriminately and without mercy; neither was he moved by entreaty, nor was he deferential to the reigning principle of Adrasteia,[210] nor did he cast a wary glance at his Kadmean victory.[211] Finally, setting out the Sacred Scriptures, he compelled everyone to stand before them and to declare on oath his personal worth and, after forswearing his rights thereto, to depart. In this fashion he carried off all the gold and silver on the ships also ladened with gold-laced textiles. He did not refrain from keeping his hands off the bodies of those whom he had gleaned, but took captive and sailed off with the most eminent according to birth and merit and chose those women who were comely and deep-girded in form, and who had often bathed in the running waters of Dirce's[212] beautiful spring, and who had styled their tresses and had mastered the weaver's art.

Since his enterprise was proceeding expeditiously, and he met no resistance whatsoever either on land or on sea, he sailed the fleet for Corinth, a rich city situated on the Isthmus and thus favored with two harbors: one afforded safe anchorage for ships putting in from Asia and the other for ships sailing in from Italy, providing easy access on both sides for the loading or unloading of cargoes and resulting in a prosperous reciprocal

[75] trade. The Sicilian arrived to find the marketplace,[213] a term by which the lower city was designated, desolate and the entire population withdrawn to Akrocorinth, taking with them all the foodstuffs and riches, both that which belonged to private individuals and that which was consecrated to God. He realized that he would have to attempt an assault against Akrocorinth and to take it, if possible, by force.

Akrocorinth was the acropolis of the ancient city of Corinth, a mighty fortress on a high, sharp-peaked mountain which rests on a trapezium-shaped site securely fortified by walls.[214] Within were several small wells of potable and limpid water, as well as the Pirenē spring made famous by Homer in his epic poetry.[215] While Akrocorinth was thus secure and seemed unassailable (for nature, site, and unbroken walls combined to make it all but impregnable), the Sicilians entered with little effort and wasted no time in taking the citadel. The event, however, was neither extraordinary nor astonishing, for the fortress was not sufficient unto itself. Although its fortifications were so formidable, it could not repulse the attacking enemy without a garrison and watch that were combat-worthy. In numbers they were many, but there was not a single valiant man among them to stand sentinel over the city; the troops dispatched by the emperor, together with their commander, one Nikephoros Chalou-

phēs,[216] sat idle within, and the prominent Corinthians, along with various divisions from the surrounding towns, entered Akrocorinth as a timely shelter from war.

When the captain of the fleet entered the citadel and saw for himself how its natural site made it unassailable from all sides, he declared that he had fought with God's help, for only God could have enabled him to occupy such a position. At the same time he reproved and heaped abuse on the defenders for being ignoble in warfare, especially on Chalouphēs, whom he called more effeminate than a woman whose only skill was to spin wool in the women's apartments. [76]

As soon as the captain had loaded the riches he had found there onto the triremes, had enslaved the Corinthians of illustrious birth, and had taken captive the most comely and deep-bosomed women, he took into his hands the icon of Theodore the Stratelatēs,[217] the greatest among martyrs, renowned for his miracles, and removed this icon which had been set up in the church of his name. Then he put out to sea, taking advantage of a fair and favorable wind, and sailed across to the citadel of Kerkyra [end of 1147 or beginning of 1148] for greater security. One might have said, with good reason, that the Sicilian triremes were not pirate ships but merchantmen of large tonnage, so overladen were they with fine merchandise that they were submerged very nearly to the level of the upper rower's bench.[218]

These events, reverberating in his ears, distressed Emperor Manuel and, much like Homer's Zeus,[219] or like Themistoklēs, son of Neoklēs, who was always observed in deep thought and watchful through sleepless nights,[220] he pondered in his heart what must be done [before October 1147]; and to those who made inquiries he answered that Miltiadēs did not win the trophy by sleeping.[221] He sought the counsel of every expert in military tactics and every popular orator whose words fell thicker than snowflakes.[222] Many proposals were made, but one plan appeared the best and was approved by the emperor: to wage war on the Sicilians on both land and sea, for the contest did not hold out high hopes or suggest brief encounters, but rather promised to be a mighty conflict like those which had exhausted the Roman emperors of old.

The eastern and western legions, therefore, were assembled. The fleet [77] was put in repair and new triremes were built and made ready to put out to sea. Fire-bearing ships were fitted out with liquid fire[223] which had not hitherto been employed and projected. Fifty-oared ships rallied, and small pirate galleys mobilized. Cavalry transports were caulked, merchantmen were laden with provisions, and light pirate skiffs were outfitted. A fleet of nearly one thousand ships was collected and the infantry forces were mustered in the tens of thousands.[224] With unfurled sails, all the vessels put out from the shore where they had been tossing and rolling at anchor. The Giants would have shuddered had they arrived before such an armed camp because the entire Roman empire at that time, nurturing mortals of heroic prowess, abounded in men good and true, and the soldiery were not ignoble but leonine and irresistible in their charge. Manuel's father, John, of emperors the most royal and best versed in generalship, concerned himself with nothing but the common welfare and particularly charged the military registers to enrich the troops

with frequent largesses while preparing them through constant military exercises to perform martial deeds. When Manuel was satisfied that he had made adequate preparations for the Sicilian campaign, he ordered the rowers to take the fleet out to sea [spring 1148][225] and the boatswains to undo the sail yards, appointing as grand duke his sister's husband, Stephanos Kontostephanos; he also gave instructions for the infantry to march under the command of various officers, in particular the grand domestic, John Axuch, about whom much has already been said.[226]

The triremes were anchored along the roadstead of the Phaiacian [Kerkyra or Corfu] shoreline, divided into Venetian allied ships and Roman vessels in order to keep the two squadrons separate from one another to
[78] avoid squabbles between the two nations [autumn 1148]. Shortly afterwards, the emperor himself set out with his troops. The Cumans, who had crossed the Istros and were laying waste the lands around Mount Haimos,[227] were terrified at the first assault. Setting out from Philippopolis, Manuel took the road leading directly to Kephallenia [Kerkyra or Corfu].[228]

The citadel of Kerkyra, too sheer even for the foot of the goat, reaches into the clouds, winds with lofty peaks and drops into the deepest waters. Its cliffs are precipitous and abrupt, and it is more towering than the proverbial Aornis.[229] Impregnable walls enclose the city whose capture is made even more improbable by the height of her towers.[230]

The naval forces, encircling the cape, concentrated there their all-brazen weapons. Before the first onslaught of battle, the emperor wished to try the defenders with Greek-speaking envoys who asked if they would surrender the fortress without resistance. But they would not yield even a little and rejected the offers outright and closed the gates, securing them with bolts. They strengthened the walls as best they could with archers, and, having deployed war engines of all kinds around the walls, they were seen discharging their missiles. Then the emperor ordered his legions to do likewise and to defend themselves from the enemy in diverse ways.

The Romans shot their darts into the heavens while the enemy rained down their missiles like snowflakes. The Romans repelled the stones fired from the mangonels, or rather they shot them back. The defenders discharged them as though they were hailstones, and because the machines stood high above, the missiles they let fly were most effective, while the besiegers, fighting from ground level with the enemy ensconced on such a great height, inflicted little or no damage. The repeated and concerted
[79] hard-fought actions of the Romans accomplished nothing except to risk death. While the defenders remained unscathed, the battered Romans ever contrived something new as they strove earnestly before the emperor, displaying mighty feats of arms and perseverance in danger, a profound acquaintance with stratagems, and experience in military tactics in the face of extremity. But they were to blame for pursuing the unattainable and for vainly undertaking the wholly impossible; thus their efforts resulted only in that which was favorable and advantageous to the enemy. For the Romans felt as if they were disputing with the sky itself, or as if they were in contention with airborne birds whose nests were perched on some peak in the clouds. Finally, the grand duke himself [Stephanos Kontostephanos] was slain, struck in the loin by a stone

fragment discharged from above by a stone-throwing war engine. He lay powerless with his head to one side and shortly afterwards departed the world of mortals.

Thus was fulfilled the prophecy concerning him uttered by Patriarch Kosmas Attikos,[231] successor to Michael Oxeitēs at the helm of the church. The latter, withdrawing from the coveted supreme see, departed for the island of Oxeia where in childhood he had taken up the simple and plain life [March 1140]; and there at the entrance into the monastery narthex he presented his neck, bent aslant, to be tread upon by every monk entering inside, saying that it had not been to his advantage to thrust aside his companion, beloved quietude, nor had he benefited in any way in ascending the supereminent throne.

Kosmas, whose homeland was Aigina, had been numbered among the deacons. Profoundly learned, he was, in addition, distinguished by an array of virtues. He was especially adorned by charity, which, embedded in a variety of virtues, shone like a jewel on a precious necklace. He was [80] so eager to demonstrate his pity for mankind that he gave the indigent his cloak, sometimes the tunic that covered his body, and his linen-covered headdress, as well as providing beggars and those who collected alms for the needy with goods from his own dwelling.

For these reasons the man was highly esteemed by all. Sebastokrator Isaakios, Manuel's blood brother, regarded him almost as a god, deeming whatever the patriarch enjoined as pleasing to God and desirable, and whatever he forbade as despised by God and to be abjured. The cabal of bishops at that time, who were adversaries of virtue and opponents of virtue's champion, slandered him to the emperor as one who conspired to give the empire to his brother Isaakios, describing the *sebastokrator*'s overt visits to the patriarchal palace as clandestine and the conversations which took place, not in the dark recesses of the earth but with the sun as witness, as secret plots.

These men who were detractors of the patriarch accused him of seeking to depose Manuel from the throne by urging Isaakios to become emperor, and the strong-willed young Manuel became suspicious of his brother. Since as we know, Calumny defiles the sacred,[232] and every man is inclined to do evil, the patriarch was deposed on the charge of conspiring with the monk Niphon. Niphon had been a frequent companion of the father and often ate at his table and slept under his roof; he was accused of not being orthodox in his faith, and consequently his long beard was shaved off and he was cast into prison by Patriarch Michael.[233] Kosmas [81] was accused of being of the same mind and of holding the same views, and on the basis of this specious charge, his opponents persecuted and attacked Kosmas fiercely, pressing urgently to have him removed by unanimous vote. Placed on trial, or rather standing condemned, he was asked about those things of which he knew not[234] and ostracized [26 February 1147]. Kosmas was filled with indignation, and, looking about the assembly, he cursed the empress's womb so that it should not bear a son; he excommunicated certain officials around the emperor and also the synod that had gathered to depose him, saying that they licked the imperial boots and were toadies to important persons, and hence had ousted him from his throne and flock uncanonically and illegally.

Then Kontostephanos, one of those who surrounded the imperial throne and was in close touch with the emperor and could speak freely with him, was of the opinion that the latter would suffer grievously because the empress's womb had been cursed. Alone of all those present, he responded immoderately to the zealot; seething with anger he approached the patriarch, intent on striking him down with his fist, but he managed to check his impulse. Nor did the emperor deem this to be a prudent act, but revealed in his complaints that he was sorely distressed by the incident. The emperor's blood relations and the attending senate rebuked Kontostephanos for his impious conduct and for not shuddering at the earth which swallows up[235] those who are guilty of such crimes. The patriarch replied in a gentle voice, "Let him be, inasmuch as he has not yet received his own stony fate," speaking thus of his doom in riddles and enigmas.

Whether it was because of the father's curse that the empress never heard herself called mother of a male child, made by God in honor of his servant, but bore only female children throughout her life,[236] I am not
[82] certain; the emperor, showing a conciliatory spirit and conscience-smitten, was content merely to dismiss from office this just, pious, and blameless man who had done nothing to deserve his deposition, citing no other cause but the deprivation of male issue.

With the fall of Kontostephanos, as I have related, John [Axuch], the grand domestic, assumed control of the naval forces, but not the rank of grand duke, and took command of the fleet in order to supervise operations. He excelled in generalship, was brave in hand-to-hand combat, and endowed with qualities of great leadership. The emperor, in idle occupation without purpose, became restless and did not wish to waste his days to no benefit, as happened in former times with Odysseus, the king of the Kephallenians,[237] in the matter of the oxen belonging to Helios,[238] so he boarded the flagship and reconnoitered the entire island of Kerkyra. He carefully considered whether he should attack (for the siege had lingered on for three months [from February to April 1149]), since he did not have Mount Ossa to pull down, nor Mount Athos to roll down, nor was he able to pile the mountains on top of one another in order to take the lofty citadel. But these things pertain to an incredible and great deed of mythical origin.[239]

Perplexed as to what to do in a ravine whose interior was both accessible and approachable, he proposed to set up a wooden scaling ladder fashioned in the shape of a tower on all sides. Planks used in shipbuilding were fitted together, and masts from large ships were joined with those which fell short of the necessary height that were braced by bands. When it came time to move this tower-like ladder into position alongside the citadel, its summit touched the beetling cliff and jagged crag at the point where the city wall began, providing a stepping place for those leaping
[83] from the ladder to give battle to the defenders on the wall; the base of the ladder rested against the ships, securely fastened and firmly planted, steadfast and unshaken.

The mightiest and bravest of all the warriors were chosen to ascend the ladder, for the emperor himself proclaimed, "He who loves the emperor and is eager to distinguish himself in the face of danger, let him ascend."

But this appeal brought forth no one; all refused to make the ascent, wary of the danger's magnitude, until the four Petraliphai brothers, who were descended from the Frankish nation [Normans] and resided in Didymoteichon, first mounted the ladder in obedience to the emperor. Although they were the first to have the courage to climb up, it was Poupakēs [Abu-Bakr],[240] the bodyguard of the grand domestic, who actually preceded them, wholly inspired by this task as he sprang forward, and not a few others zealously followed this example. The emperor was delighted with the eagerness demonstrated by all and their sudden rush, and setting apart those whom he had often seen toiling in battle and fighting stoutly, some four hundred in number, he ordered the rest to ascend after first delivering a long harangue and exhorting them on to brave deeds, with promises of rich rewards for them and their children.

"Should you survive," said he,

> escaping this present danger, and give an excellent account of yourselves in the contest at hand, you will find me a provident father beyond expectation instead of master and emperor; should you lose your lives, winning honor for your fatherland and glory for yourselves, I shall not neglect your affairs, but I will so dispose of those things pertaining to your homes, children, and wives that they who survive must deem these fortunate and worthy of emulation, and this great solace will follow you down to Hades. If, in the meantime, there is a certain perception among the dead, neither the pouring out of the waters of oblivion will wash away the memory of those things which have gone before, nor will those things which have come to pass in one's lifetime be allowed to be lost in the flow to Hades, so that these things will be well known to the dead.

As I have said, Poupakēs made the sign of the cross over himself and [84]
first began the ascent; after him came the Petraliphai brothers, and they were followed by others, one after another, until the ladder could hold no more. There was none among the spectators who did not cry out at this action, heartstricken by this novel sight, and who did not invoke the Deity with tear-filled eyes while striking his breast. And truly the spectacle astounded the viewing eye. Raising their oblong shields above their heads for protection and unsheathing their swords, the attackers drew near the fortress's defenders and contended hotly with them. The enemy employed all kinds of missiles and cast down upon them stones as large as could be held in the hand, but they accomplished nothing. The attackers, struck by all kinds of missiles like anvils beaten upon by hammers, were untiring; unyielding in strength and undaunted by the immediate dangers, they could not be turned back. The outcome of this battle would have been most favorable, and all the honors would have gone to the Romans, had not a sordid incident intruded itself into these great feats. After promoting an excellent beginning for the task and nurturing little by little the end proposed, it begrudged the Romans the sweetness of ultimate victory. No sooner had Poupakēs climbed down from the ladder and set his feet on the rocky ledge to engage the enemy defending the walls then the ladder collapsed. All came tumbling down, falling on their heads and shoulders,[241] a pitiful sight and an incredible spectacle for compassionate

eyes as the warriors perished wretchedly. Carried along by the rising and falling of the waves, they were dashed against the rocks and the ships' decks and buried beneath the stones thrown down from above so that only a few from among the many escaped the peril. Poupakēs frightened the defenders away from the walls and found an open postern through which he leaped into the fortress. Not only were the Romans and the emperor astounded by this feat but it was also a wonderment to those of
[85] the enemy who had not stoned the fallen Romans and had reproached the others with the charge of inhumanity and savagery, as they admired these men for their bravery.[242]

But the Romans had not yet completed their mourning for this misfortune, and Time, which wastes and plunders all things, had not yet softened the emperor's sorrow over it when another lamentable misadventure, worse than the first, compounded the evil. The Romans and the Venetians quarreled in the center of the agora, and the discord was not merely a matter of light banter exchanged by both nations, nor of vulgarities wherein whatsoever was spoken was also heard,[243] nor did they indulge in mutual ribaldry, nor did the disputants engage in clever taunts, nor did they hurl insults and heap scorn on one another, but they took up arms and doubtful battle reared its head. As word of the quarrel spread, many on both sides came pouring in with their arms to assist their compatriots, and many of the emperor's distinguished kinsmen, illustrious in rank, interposed themselves, although they were unarmed. The most illustrious Venetian officals also arrived to stamp out the evil and to serve as mediators, but there was no taking back what was said, nor were the soldiery moved to shame by the presence of these eminent men. Ares raged furiously, and, lusting after bloodshed, incited the armed warriors, especially Venetians, and neither restrained any from the fight nor coerced any to turn back. The more the grand domestic checked their onrush and blocked their tumultuous massing together, so much more enraged the Venetians became, and they poured out of the triremes in a frenzy. When the grand domestic saw that he could prevail nothing by[244] attempting conciliation and that the nations were bound to clash, he summoned his special guards, those valiant, heavy-armed warriors who
[86] served him well in times of battle, and sent them against the Venetians. He also led out a portion of the army. After a brief resistance, the Venetians turned their backs and fled headlong. They were forced back onto their ships against their will, pursued by the deadly Roman shot.

But their barbarous nature could not be confined; they did not lay down their weapons after their defeat, but, like those beasts which are difficult to kill and when endangered jump up and spring forth, they could not accept the fact that they had not overpowered the Romans. No longer able to fight on land, they weighed anchor and sailed to a certain sea-girt island (I believe it was Asteris, which the ancients say lies between Ithaka and the tetrapolis of the Kephallenians.)[245] Behaving as enemies, they attacked the Roman ships from Euboia lying at anchor and inflicted damage on the squadron, manned especially by the Euboians. At last, they set them on fire and laid waste the ships.

This evil they compounded by inflicting an even more monstrous one: they stole the imperial ship, adorned the imperial cabins with curtains

interwoven with gold thread and with rugs of purple, and placed on board an accursed manikin, a certain black-skinned Ethiopian. They acclaimed him emperor of the Romans and led him about in procession with a splendid crown on his head, ridiculing the sacred imperial ceremonies and mocking Emperor Manuel as not having yellow hair, the color of summer, but instead being blackish in complexion like the bride of the song who says, "I am black and beautiful, because the sun has looked askance at me."[246]

The emperor immediately wanted to punish the barbarians properly, but he feared these vulgar displays might lead to internecine war and so dispatched certain of his kinsmen to offer the Venetians amnesty for their lawless acts against him and for their crimes against the Romans, for he perceived that requiting vengeance had its dangers and that other, more [87] pressing, needs required his immediate attention.[247] Though he swallowed his anger for the one day, yet he nursed rancor in his heart like an ember buried in ashes[248] until the opportunity came for him to kindle it, as shall be related at the proper time.

Then, when both armies had become friends once again, he led out the phalanxes to besiege the city, even by sea, as best as he could, sparing no effort to surround it, as though he were competing with himself to prove in which way he would be most effective: by compelling surrender or by destroying it. Heavy stone balls were continuously discharged from the stone-throwing engines, and the archers, ever bringing the strings of sinew to their breasts and drawing the arrows by their notched ends,[249] let fly their darts at the defenders on the walls like snowflakes on a winter's day.[250] Those who climbed onto many sections of the wall by way of the ravines bounded over the precipices like wild goats, but nothing was accomplished except that the troops were not idle. The defenders within resisted bravely without attempting to descend and engage the Romans in close combat, but rather made their defense on the walls, from where they inflicted injury on the adversary with arrows and stones.

When the emperor realized that he was attempting the impossible, he suspected he would be considered contemptible if he lifted the siege after having labored so hard and having lost so many companies of soldiers, without destroying one fortress, especially this one, which so recently had been tributary to the Romans. And, moreover, he should not maintain a thousand pirates on his own land, allowing Kerkyra to become a naval station and shipyard for the Sicilian triremes sailing against the Romans. He was compelled, therefore, to persevere, for there remained no other hope, as he saw it, than to persuade the unwilling garrison by his prolonged siege to surrender the fortress and deliver themselves over to him. He was not disappointed in the fulfillment of his expectations, nor did he [88] fail in his purpose.

After an interval of some days the Sicilians dispatched envoys and requested that they be given time to withdraw together with their weapons and other belongings. When they saw that the emperor would not allow them to remain in the land, and that they were feeding themselves on empty hopes expecting that relief was forthcoming from the king at any moment, and since famine was slowly ravaging them, they decided to come to terms. They were urged on to do so by the castellan Theodore,[251]

commander of the garrison, a man not of blood[252] but rather a member of Christ's flock who preferred peace to conflict, and who was also a friend of the Romans, as he later demonstrated.

The emperor listened to the message attentively, eager to attain his objective immediately. But before responding favorably, he feigned a hard countenance and uttered ominous threats in the event all the promises made by the embassy were not kept. When at length they had assembled, not all together but a few at a time, those who came out informed those who remained within of their experience of the emperor as a man who was not haughty and who would foreswear desperate measures; rather, he graciously allowed them, after a grand display of kindly friendliness, to elect what should be done, and commanded that what they deemed beneficial be carried out. It was not his custom to distinguish between the imperial official and the free man, and he did not dismiss those who wished to linger or restrain those who wished to leave. Many, therefore, stayed on with the emperor, especially Theodore the castellan; the rest returned to their homeland of Sicily.

The emperor, arriving inside the city [after 29 July 1149], was amazed
[89] to find how invulnerable was the citadel to the force of arms and installed a stalwart garrison of German troops. He sailed thence with his entire army and moved his camps to Avlona,[253] where he took up quarters for a goodly number of days before he authorized the crossing over to Sicily, deeming that the enemy had been pacified, that peace reigned over warfare, and that those cities were fortunate which were fortified with weapons rather than by walls. He contended that those who shun warfare for the sake of peace utterly forget that, as a consequence, a multidude of enemies burgeon as though planted in a fertile piece of farmland, destroying their dominion and making it impossible for them to enjoy any stable peace. But David says, "Miserable are the thoughts of men and uncertain their devices,[254] and the counsel of the Lord is enduring and unchanging, nor is there any man who can alter it."[255]

At that time [summer 1149], when Manuel had confirmed the passage to Sicily and was about to put into the island which is called Aeironesion, the undertaking miscarried as the sea was whipped by fierce storms and lashed by pounding winds accompanied by the roar of violent thunderclaps, prodigious lightning bolts, and most terrifying flashes. Even as Manuel attempted to make a hasty crossing, the sea gave no support to the ships but churned and seethed from below. The force of the adverse winds broke up the ships, sending them down into the darkness of the deep, a few barely managed to gain the shore, and while the emperor himself belatedly sailed through the danger, the remaining vessels were scattered here and there as casualties of the storm.[256]

Observing that the passage to Sicily would not be to his best interest, the emperor pulled out of Avlona with his forces and arrived at Pelagonia, where he set public affairs in good order and then shifted his attack to the Serbs. The latter, as long as the empire was at peace, had put
[90] forward a friendly countenance and were affable in speech while concealing the truth in the innermost recesses of the heart. Because of the mishaps on both land and sea as summarized in this narrative, they were unduly emboldened, and, taking advantage of the opportunity, they took

up arms against the Romans and ravaged the provinces of their Roman neighbors. Detaching and taking with him the well-armed but unencumbered portion of his troops, the emperor marched into Serbia. The imperial advance did not escape the notice of the satrap of Serbia,[257] despite the fact that the emperor was eager to avoid detection. The satrap could offer no resistance, well aware that he was not invincible against the Roman forces, and so he withdrew from the plains and lifted his eyes to the mountains whence he expected help to come.[258] He abandoned his own people as though they were large herds of cattle that browsed the green of the woodland, to be scattered and slaughtered by the invaders; each could find deliverance through flight as he himself did. Thus did the ruler of the Serbs propose, and do, and counsel his subjects to do the same. The emperor, like a lion trusting in its prowess, cut down the barbarian regiments as if they were herds of cattle or flocks of goats;[259] putting to the torch many common holdings and taking not a few captives, he returned thence [winter 1149–50].

And he wrote a letter of good tidings to the inhabitants of the City indicating the recent achievements; the bearer of the message was the grand domestic [John Axuch]. Shortly afterwards, when the father of these heroic deeds arrived, a magnificent triumph was awarded him because of these accomplishments, and he was acclaimed by the people and the entire senate; the recipient of applause and lofty praise, he reviewed the horse races and spectacles. [91]

With the first appearance of spring [1155] he once again occupied Pelagonia. Since he could not make the voyage to Sicily, he provided a certain forceful man, a member of the illustrious nobility (I speak of Michael Palaiologos) with large sums of money; entrusting to his care an adequate force and frequently extending a helping hand, he dispatched him thither.[260] Following the emperor's instructions, Palaiologos first went to Venice, where he brought together mercenary troops and recruited a stout battalion of lancers. Now exceedingly powerful, he sailed down to Longibardia [Apulia] and engaged the king's forces; he triumphed against them and was crowned with brilliant victories [August and September 1155].[261] The Romans were aided in all things by a certain Count Alexander, who had recently gone over to the Romans because of the injuries he had suffered at the hands of his blood relative, the king. Palaiologos ever expanded his military might, and by scattering money like seed, rather than distributing it, he deeply grieved the king, and so he continued to deal with him in this manner which he was confident would effect the king's utter ruin. Thereby he subdued most of the cities in those parts, if not by their capitulation, then by force [expedition ended in April 1156].[262] He sent some captives to the emperor and transported stones thence for a wall to be built around the city which is situated in the province of the Aigaiopelagitēs and is still called Bari and Avlonia.

The emperor, apprised that the ruler of Serbia was once again working wickedness in the mountains and committing ever greater crimes, even conspiring with the neighboring Hungarians against the Romans, marched against them with little preparation, as he deemed them unworthy opponents in battle [autumn 1151]. But the Serbs, emboldened by the support of a large body of Hungarian allied forces, put up a much stiffer resistance [92]

than expected. Ever steadfast, John Kantakouzenos[263] engaged the barbarians in close combat, giving and taking blows until he lost the fingers of his hands. The emperor himself fought a duel with the grand *župan* Bakchinos [Bagin],[264] a man of heroic stature and brawny arms who struck a blow that shattered the iron screen dependent from the helmet that protected the emperor's face and eyes. The emperor, in turn, severed Bakchinos's arm with his sword, rendering him helpless, and took him captive.

Thus, victory shone brightly on the Romans, and the barbarians were dispersed like clouds. Since the battle, badly begun, ended most auspiciously [autumn 1151], the emperor hastened to attack the Hungarians while still dripping with hot sweat and before he had wiped the dust from his face. He resented the assistance they had given the Serbs, and he decided to take advantage of the absence of him who could come to their aid,[265] for the Hungarian king [Géza II] was not in his own land but was warring against the neighboring Rhōs.[266]

Crossing the Sava River, he burst in upon Frangochorion (this is not the least part of Hungary but a sufficiently populated one, situated between the Istros and Sava rivers, in which a mighty fortress called Zevgminon had been built) and ravaged the land. Then a certain Hungarian,[267]
[93] a giant in size, with a manly and desperate courage, broke out of the crowd and charged the emperor full force. The latter, standing his ground, plunged his sword into the giant's eye and killed him. Taking many captives as well as much material wealth, the emperor returned to the queen of cities [spring 1152]

Celebrating, as was mete, a greatly extended triumph, he led a most splendid procession through the streets of the City. Decked out in magnificent garments far beyond the fortune of captives, the newly captive Hungarians and captured Serbs enhanced the procession's grandeur. The emperor provided these adornments so that the victory might appear most glorious and wondrous to citizens and foreigners alike, for these conquered men were of noble birth and worthy of admiration. He turned this triumphal festival into a marvel and presented the prisoners of war not in a single throng but in groups presented at intervals to deceive the spectators into imagining that the captives parading by were more numerous than they really were.

Meanwhile, because the Cumans had crossed the Istros and plundered the Roman fortresses round about this river, a certain Kalamanos was sent against them.[268] But he conducted the campaign ineptly and suffered such a crushing defeat that the regiments were broken and brave men perished, while he himself received a fatal wound and quit this life. The Cumans, according to their custom, collected the available booty, loaded the horses with their spoils, and turned homeward.[269]

[94] They easily crossed the Istros with their booty unmolested and moved out without toil or effort. Their weapons consisted of a quiver slung athwart the waist, curved bows, and arrows; in battle, they wheel about with spears. The same horse bears the Cuman, carries him through tumultuous battle, provides him nourishment by having its veins opened, and, as men say, is used by him for copulation to relieve the barbarian's brutish lust.[270] The Cumans crossed the river by the following device: they filled a skin with straw and stitched it together so tightly that not a drop

of water could penetrate within.[271] It was then tied to the horse's tail and straddled by the Cuman, along with his saddle and engines of war, and navigated, as if it were a boat and the horse a sail, safely over the broad, open Istros.

In the manner now to be recounted did these events take place. Palaiologos, accused of being meddlesome and wasteful of monies to no purpose from the time he landed in Calabria, was relieved of his command,[272] and in his stead was sent Alexios Komnenos, the son of the *kaisar* Bryennios, the emperor's cousin on his mother's side who but recently had been promoted to the rank of grand duke. Komnenos was accompanied by John Doukas,[273] a man both mercurial and martial, skilled in military tactics, who had tasted the liberal arts, but not with the tip of his forefinger, and was descended from a noble family.

The two leaders sailed for Sicily [1152] and engaged the king's [William I] forces in several great sea battles, destroying his ships and very nearly taking Brindisi by siege [c. 15 April to 28 May 1156].[274] But For- [95]
tune did not smile genuinely upon their brave deeds in battle, and the emperor was not to rejoice at the good news, as was fitting, for the king gathered an even greater force, collecting a number of mercenary troops, and renewed the fight. Engaging the Romans in battle, he retrieved the defeat, prevailed against them and took them captive. Komnenos and Doukas were encarcerated; in one brief moment, all that the Romans had achieved by way of toil and huge expenditures was overturned.[275]

When these events were reported to Manuel, he cast off his earlier gladness of heart, his soul embittered as though he had drunken deep of wormwood. He could not, of course, endure what had happened and was deeply distressed. He was neither a fearful man nor one who falls back from dangerous encounters; neither was he complacent when circumstances made the sailing smooth nor did he ignobly founder when they turned turbulent. And, now, when Fortune treated him unfairly, he hotly contended with her and struck back.[276] Fitting out another naval force [after February 1154], he appointed as commander Constantine Angelos, who hailed from Philadelphia but was not descended from a very eminent and noble family. Robust in stature and graced with a handsome bloom on his face, Angelos took to wife Theodora (begotten of Emperor Alexios, Manuel's grandfather), fortunate in having his comeliness serve as matchmaker.[277]

Manuel held the reprehensibe belief that the retrograde and progres- [96]
sive motion of stars and their positions, as well as the configurations of the planets, their proximity and distances, influence the fortunes and circumstances of human life; and he believed in all those other things that astrologers falsely attribute to Divine Providence while deceptively introducing such phrases as "it was decreed" and "the decrees of Necessity are unchangeable and irreversible." In such fashion he determined that Angelos's expedition would be propitious.

Having made the necessary arrangements, he sent Constantine Angelos on his way. But what happened? The sun had not set before Constantine returned at the emperor's command, for the departure had been ill-timed, and Angelos had set out when there were no favorable configurations of the stars to decree such an action, or rather there was an

inaccurate reading of the tables of the astronomical sphere. As the babblers conceded, they were guilty of making indiscriminate projections, and consequently they erred in finding the propitious time for undertaking the expedition. The horoscope was cast once again and the astrological tables carefully scrutinized. And thus, after a searching investigation, close inquiry, and careful observation of the stars, Angelos moved out, urged on by the beneficent influences of the stars.

So advantageous was the determination of the exact moment to the success of Roman affairs, or in redressing the failures of the preceding commanders, and in redeeming every adversity, that forthwith Constantine Angelos was delivered into the hands of the enemy! Remiss in his duty during the voyage to Sicily, he was taken prisoner by the Sicilian triremes that patrolled the waters and led captive to the king. The latter praised the captors for their catch, and calling Constantine Angelos the best of all preys, had him bound in chains and shut up in prison.[278]

The emperor, now that he had sustained this second injury, searched for an adequate defense. He concluded that warfare was both difficult to effect and disadvantageous, and perceiving that the continuous huge expenditures would be like some gangrenous disease that quickly exhausts
[97] the wealth of the treasury (he had spent close to three hundred hundredweight of gold [30,000 pounds]), he resolved that it was necessary to make peace with the king. Not with displeasure did he receive the embassy of the bishop of elder Rome who sought to impose such a solution, and he embraced its members as envoys of good counsel and dispatched to Ancona the *protostrator* Alexios [Axuch],[279] the grand domestic's oldest son, to realize both his designs, that is, to procure arms and to raise mercenary troops from Italian provinces should they be required and to pursue the king's friendship should he perceive that negotiations for a peace treaty were promising.

Alexios, an energetic man expert in military science, with a tongue as sharp as his mind and dignified in appearance, put his hands to the task of realizing the emperor's stratagems upon his arrival. He immediately set about to enlist troops so as to shake the king's resolve with such news; he collected a large cavalry force to give the impression that he was preparing to invade Calabria. Meanwhile, he proceeded in his duty to initiate a truce that would end the conflict between the emperor and the king by exchanging letters with Maios, then the commander of the Sicilian fleet.[280]

Obtaining an embassy from Sicily, he sent it on to the emperor, whom he expressly urged to pay heed to what they had to say (he had learned that they demanded nothing outlandish or excessive). He also asked that
[98] he be informed should they negotiate a rapprochement before the news was widely disseminated so that he might avoid committing unawares an odious act, for he was in the midst of men from the allied provinces of the king of Germany whom he had won over with hopes of grand expectations and whose animosity, formerly turned against the Romans, he now meant to turn against the king of Sicily. As soon as the emperor's messenger arrived with the news of the peace treaty [spring 1158],[281] unbeknownst to all in that place, Alexios secretly removed the monies and sent them forth together with his most trusted men; he fastened their now empty strongboxes with seals and entrusted them to the care of the

mighty of the province, directing that they were to be handled with absolute inviolability, that no one was to break the seals or search their contents before he returned from his visit to the emperor.

Thus Alexios returned from Ancona with the emperor and the Sicilian king agreeing to a peace treaty. To tell the truth, it was not a compact harmoniously conceived, but a contrived wolf's pact; those who benefited from this so-called union were the captives who were released without ransom, those who were wellborn and esteemed by virtue of their royal blood, as well as those who were listed in the military registers. Excepted were those who came from Corinth and Thebes, and of these all who were lowborn, those whose lot it was to weave the finely woven linen cloths, and the beautiful and low-girdled women[282] who had practised this craft, together with the men. It is now possible to see the children of Thebans and Corinthians sailing to Sicily and plying the loom, weaving gold-embroidered robes of six strands, just as the Eretrians of old were forced to serve the Persians because they were the first to attack Darius when he led his armies against Greece.[283]

But before long, both sides were seething again and roused to combat like cresting waves thrown up by the destructive ebb and flow of the vast tides. With promises of money, the emperor incited the powerful rulers of [99] the adjacent lands against the king. The king, in turn, commanded Maios, the count of the fleet, to launch forty swift-sailing ships from the shipyards and, in battle array, to arrive before Constantinople, where in hearing distance of the citizens he was to proclaim his master lord and emperor of Sicily, Apulia, Capua, and Calabria, and of all the provinces and islands between them; after pouring contempt and scorn on the emperor of the Romans he was to return.

Carrying out his instructions, Maios rounded Malea and sailed through the Aegean Sea and the Hellespont to ride at anchor before the queen of cities. First he sailed through the straits and put in before the palace complex of Blachernai, against which he discharged arrows with silver shafts gilded from end to end; then, retracing his path and ordering the rowers to stop before the Great Palace, he loudly acclaimed his own king while the crew joined in a tumultuous proclamation. Beating home in great haste, faster than the soaring speed of the legendary Argo, he dashed by Sestos and Abydos[284] as though they were another Symplegades, leaving the City in great agitation since the emperor was absent. This adventure became a great boast of the king of Sicily which he recorded as a great triumph. But this incident by which the king bestowed upon himself such honors was as child's play to Manuel (or it would be closer to the truth to say that he had stolen the honors), and thus he allowed the king to roar and puff in vain.

[100] Such was the outcome of Emperor Manuel's struggles in Sicily and Calabria that the lavish and huge sums of money poured into them served no useful purpose to the Romans, nor did they bring lasting benefits to succeeding emperors. But what can one say about a man who has struggled and contended so zealously to subdue the barbarians?

But this emperor once again declared war against the Paiones, who are also called Huns [Hungarians], and he commanded the armed troops in the West to bring wagons to the camp to furnish food for themselves, and in this way to help the rest of the army, who would be lacking such food transports. While the armies assembled in one place, the emperor was in the city of Sardica, now called Triaditza.[285] He did not remain there long as an embassy arrived from the Hungarians with peace proposals, and so, altering his course, he marched against the satrap of the Serbs, causing great consternation, and convinced that but to see the emperor was to know fear and consequently that he should renounce his treaty with the Hungarians. The emperor now came to the province of Thessaly and allowed the greater part of the army to return home while he remained in Thessaly until he deemed it expedient to enter the queen of cities [1153].[286]

[101] As the sun was driving past the winter solstice [1154–55], he again marched out to Pelagonia,[287] deeming it an appropriate base of operations, with its flat plains suited for both an encampment and cavalry maneuvers; moreover, it was well-suited for acquiring information and for observing the actions of the nations with whom he was contending. The events in Sicily continued to distract and trouble the emperor, as they had not yet been completely put to rest, and the actions of the ruler of the Hungarians made it clear that he was looking to wield the sword. Andronikos Komnenos, who later was to rule as tyrant over the Romans, was relieved of his command as duke of Branicĕvo and Belgrade for secretly conspiring with the Hungarians to depose Manuel and for consulting with their ruler about his rebellion against the emperor in order to gain the throne. Manuel had summoned him to Pelagonia and as soon as he arrived had transferred him thence in chains and incarcerated him in one of the prisons of the Great Palace. In response to these actions, the ruler of the Hungarians forthwith made war against the Romans. He besieged Branicĕvo and overran the land, pillaging and carrying off booty as he liked.[288]

[102] Therefore, the emperor sent as general against the Hungarians the *chartoularios* Basil Tzintziloukēs, who took command of the assembled forces, arraying them in companies and phalanxes.[289] Convinced that he had an army worthy of victory, he engaged the Hungarians in battle and prevailed against them, slaying more than half their troops, who had turned their backs to their adversaries only to be pursued a great distance and overrun.[290] Apprised of these events, the emperor quickened the pace of his march thither on the chance that the Hungarians, thrown into

confusion by his arrival, would depart; and this they did. Having set in order the affairs of Braničevo and Belgrade, Manuel returned to the queen of cities.[291]

Since the Western enemies had been pacified for the time being, thanks to a treaty of peace and reconciliation, and with no worthy opponent in the West to resist him, Manuel sanctioned an expedition from the coast up into Armenia. Setting out for Tarsus [c. September 1158], he arrived at Adana[292] and the borderlands of lower Armenia which were being harried by Thoros[293] and restored hope to these territories, deeming that they had the right to expect adequate security. His presence so terrified the devious, dissembling, and crafty Armenian that he advanced no farther; he did not emulate his own father in contesting for control of all of Armenia, nor did he attack those fortresses which he had subdued, [103] since to demand their surrender from the ruler of the Armenians would have been like a shepherd putting his hand down a wolf's throat to remove a lobe of liver. Tricked by the duplicity of Thoros's words and taken in by wheedling treaties,[294] he turned his reins and made for Antioch, the first and fairest city of all of Syria.

While in Tarsus Emperor Manuel had been informed of his cousin Andronikos's escape from prison [autumn 1158]. The reason for his incarceration has been cited above, but no less a cause was his constant outspokenness and the fact that he excelled most men in bodily strength; his perfect physique was worthy of empire,[295] and his pride was not to be humbled. All these things generate suspicion and provocation deep in the hearts of rulers because of the fear that surrounds the throne. For these attributes, as well as for his cleverness in battle and the nobility of his birth (Manuel's father, Emperor John, and Andronikos's father, the *sebastokrator* Isaakios, were both the sons of the same father, Alexios, Manuel's grandfather), Andronikos was viewed with a jaundiced eye and was greatly distrusted.

Something else had happened which caused Manuel to have Andronikos confined in prison. Emperor Manuel had three brothers, Alexios, Andronikos, and the oft-mentioned Isaakios. Of these, two departed this life while their father, Emperor John, was still numbered among the living. The one brother Alexios contributed a daughter to the family's lineage whom Alexios, the son of the grand domestic John (about whose activities we have spoken) took to wife. Andronikos had three daughters, [104] Maria, Theodora,[296] and Evdokia, and two sons, John and Alexios. Of these females, Evdokia, cheated by death of the husband of her maidenhood,[297] openly engaged in unholy sexual intercourse with Andronikos. Against those who reproached Andronikos for his brazen incestuous relations he defended himself with ready wit and quipped that he felt that the subject should emulate his ruler, and that he, Andronikos, came out of the very same mold as Manuel. In playful repartee with his cousin Emperor Manuel, he accused him of being subject to the same passions and, moreover, that Manuel's behavior was even more reprehensible, since he engaged in intercourse with his brother's daughter, while Andronikos bedded his cousin's child.

Such conduct not only displeased Manuel but so incensed the kinsmen of Andronikos's wife that they were cut to the quick, especially Evdokia's

brother John, who exulted in his high offices of *protosebastos* and *protovestiarios,*[298] and her sister Maria's husband, John Kantakouzenos. As was to be expected, insidious plots and clandestine intrigues were hatched against Andronikos while others were contrived in the open, but Andronikos swept these away like so many spider webs[299] and scattered them about like children's playthings[300] made of sand, relying on his manliness and the fact that he surpassed his enemies in mother-wit to the degree that irrational creatures are inferior to rational ones. In his many contentions with his adversaries, he always turned them to flight and carried off Evdokia's love as a reward.

Once when he was lying in the woman's embraces in his tent at Pelagonia [winter 1154–55],[301] Evdokia's blood relations, on being so informed, surrounded the tent with a large number of armed troops and stood guard
[105] over the exit, intending to cut him down on the spot. Evdokia was well aware of this plot, even though her mind was occupied with other matters, for she had either been alerted by one of her kinsmen or warned in some other way of the ambush planned against her corrupter. Contrary to the nature of women, she was quick-witted and gifted with sagacity. While in the embraces of Andronikos, she informed him of the plot. Shaken by what he heard, he leaped out of bed and, girding on his long sword, deliberated on what he should do. Evdokia proposed to her lover that he don female attire and that she should command aloud and by name one of her chambermaids and maidservants to fetch a lantern to the tent, and that as soon as the ambushers heard her voice he should exit and make his escape. However, he was not convinced by her persuasive argument, afraid that he might lose his way, be taken captive, and be led before the emperor, ignobly dragged by the hair, and, worse, made to suffer a womanish and inglorious death. Hence, unsheathing his sword and taking it in his right hand, he cut slantwise through the tent, leaped forth, and in one mighty bound, like a Thessalian, hurdled over the barrier which chanced to be standing in front of the tent and the space occupied by the stakes and ropes; the ambushers were left agape; by escaping both obstacles, the prey transformed defeat into a marvel.

When Manuel heard of these events, he was distressed. The accusations were like never-ending drops that carved a channel in the emperor's soul to hold the outpourings against the slandered man and soon these carried off the glowing affection he had for the man and convinced him to
[106] accept as true the charges brought against Andronikos.[302] It was utterly impossible to crush the rumors circulating against Andronikos or to dissipate the pungent smoke of suspicion surrounding him, for no evil worse than a slanderous tongue has been planted in men, and with good reason, therefore, did David, the lover of songs and psalms, in most of his divine and sweetly phrased idylls disparage and ridicule this vice, simply describing its solitary power and praying to be delivered from its coils.[303] And Manuel, caught in the net of repeated denunciations cast by Andronikos's kinsmen, with soul unwilling, yielded and threw him in prison,[304] where he was firmly bound in unbreakable and indissoluble iron stocks.

Andronikos remained in prison a long time [beginning of 1155 to fall 1158], maltreated all the while. Being the most reckless and cunning of men, methodical in his ways and capable of extricating himself from dire

straits, upon discovering an ancient underground passage beneath his cell (this was a tower built entirely of baked bricks), he secretly let himself down and cleared the entrance and exit, using his hands as a hoe or shovel, in such a way that the openings remained concealed. At dinner time, when the guards opened the cell doors and the prepared meal was brought inside, their guest was nowhere to be found. The guards searched the cell to see where the man of many wiles might have broken through or pierced the walls to make his escape. But nothing whatsoever had been damaged: neither door pivot nor jambs nor even the gate's threshold, neither the ceiling nor the inner cell, neither the ironbound skylight nor anything else! The guards uttered a piercing wail and tore their faces with [107] their fingernails because they no longer held their prisoner and knew not the means or the place of his escape.

These events were reported to the empress, attendants, and troops stationed at the imperial court. Some were dispatched to guard the gates along the seawalls, some to keep watch over the land walls, some to search out the harbors, and yet others to hunt out the fugitive Andronikos in other sections of the City. The streets were also searched and the crossroads guarded. Imperial decrees flew one after another in all directions and to every province announcing the disappearance of Andronikos and commanding that an all-out search be conducted for his apprehension and return [autumn 1158].

The wife of Andronikos was taken into custody as privy to his escape and thrown in the same prison in which Andronikos had been held so that she should pay the penalty for her wifely affection in that place where her husband had been confined and from which he had escaped. They had forgotten that they had held Andronikos in fetters; in vain they poured their anger on his wretched wife, punishing her because of her husband. Emerging from beneath the earth from the underground passage, he chanced upon his wife and, imagining her to be a demon from Tartaros below or a fleeting shade from among the dead, was taken aback by her unexpected appearance. He embraced her and wept, but not to the extent warranted by the misfortunes and most grievous circumstances of the moment, lest his lamentations reach the ears of his jailers. He engaged at length with her in sexual intercourse beside the prison and left her pregnant with a son, to become John, with whom Andronikos later shared the empire, as will be related at the proper time. Because he departed thence after this act, the guards had no need to keep watch over the woman with the same vigilance with which they had guarded him.

Andronikos was taken by the soldier named Nikaias when he arrived [108] at Melangeia [Malagina]; he was placed in the custody of a heavier and more ruthless guard than formerly, and the iron fetters were doubled.

As soon as Manuel received the news of these escapades, the logothete of the *dromos,* John Kamateros, was dispatched to undertake a diligent investigation into the circumstances and to submit a full comprehensive report to the emperor immediately upon his return [beginning of 1159].

The Antiochenes were not at first pleased by the emperor's arrival but were deeply indignant and deliberated as how to send him packing [Easter, 12 April 1159]. As they could neither stop him nor change his mind, they streamed forth from the gates to meet him with a show of

servile submission and prepared a triumphal procession adorning the boulevards and streets with furnishings, rugs, and decorations of fresh-cut sprays, and in the center of the city they planted a garden of delights filled with flowers, thus improvising a magnificent parade for him. Not just a few came, but rather every single inhabitant was in attendance: the Syrian epicure, the Isaurian brigand, the Cilician pirate, and the Italian lance-bearing knight, as well as the stately horse of proud bearing moving along in the triumph with marching step.

When Manuel beheld the Latin troops bragging, boasting of their prowess in tilting with the lance, he agreed that a tournament with blunted lances should take place on a given day. When the appointed time arrived, Manuel called out from the Roman lists those who were skillful in tilting with the lance, including as many as were his own kinsmen. Grinning a little and then breaking out into his usual smile, he rode out to a flat plain large enough to accommodate two teams of opposing horsemen. He carried his lance upright and wore a mantle fastened elegantly over his right shoulder which left the arm free on the side of the brooch. He was borne by a war-horse with a magnificent mane and trappings of gold which gently raised its neck and reared up on its hind legs as though eager to run a race, rivaling its rider in splendor. Manuel commanded each of his kinsmen and all those chosen to compete with the Italians to wear the most splendid armor possible.

[109]

Prince Reginald[305] came forth mounted on a horse whiter than snow, wearing a cloak slit down the middle and reaching to his feet and a cap like a sloping tiara, embroidered in gold. He was escorted by knights, all of whom were mighty warriors tall in stature.

Since the battle that bristles with long spears[306] had tasted no blood, a goodly number of both sides eagerly engaged one another, tilting lances and avoiding the thrusts aimed at them. It was something to behold during this mock battle in one place a knight thrown on his head and shoulders,[307] and in another place one knocked off his saddle, and one lying on his face, and another on his back, and still another who turned tail in headlong flight. One knight, pale with fear, was frightened of his adversary with couched lance and wholly buried himself behind his shield, while the other, observing his cowering foe, was exuberant. The rush of the wind whipped up by the horses' charges caused the pennons to wave and produced a shrill whistle. Viewing this embroilment one could have described it, and not inelegantly, by saying that it was like watching Aphrodite in union with Ares, or the Graces embracing Enyo.[308] Thus, the games that day were a mixture of diverse noble deeds. Manuel roused the Romans to strive mightily, and, even more incredible, he wanted them to excel the Latins in tilting with the lance. His eyes were the judge of the games played on the field for the ever high-spirited and insolent Italians could in no way tolerate the Romans prevailing in the tournament. The emperor dashed two knights to the ground at the same time; brandishing his lance, he charged the one, and the force of the thrust threw both opponents down.

[110]

Now that he had filled the Antiochenes with admiration for his manly courage, and they had verified with their eyes what they had previously only heard with their ears, he changed his mind and decided to return to

Constantinople [20 April 1159]. Since he was to travel through friendly territory, he dismissed the troops, allowing them to go wherever each desired. This proved to be an imprudent decision on his part, as he lost the greater part of the army and the rear guard was badly mauled; his hasty determination to pull out and the disorderly and mindless departure of the troops for their homes resulted in the destruction of several of the disbanded divisions when the Turks suddenly fell upon them. From this experience, many learned how great a virtue is forethought, and that afterthought is unprofitable and detrimental: it is better to put off an action for another day, when to do so brings salvation and glory, than to rush headlong to one's death, even though this course may at first appear expedient. Indeed, their end would have been most pitiable had not the emperor returned and repulsed the onrush of the Turks and sent forth the troops in their former battle array. They say that when he came upon the fallen bodies and perceived how great was the number of the slain, he smote his thigh in grief, gnashed his teeth in sore distress, wailed aloud, and wept (this also was the reaction of those who witnessed the poignant spectacle, as well as of those who heard the reports), and having no other course open to him, he rushed into the fray to wipe away the disgrace by performing some brave deed on the spot.[309]

Envy, which ever looks askance, not only at the great rulers of nations and cities, but also at those of more modest rank, and which is forever [111] near at hand nurturing traitors, did not deign to allow Theodore Styppeiotēs to remain in his position of trust with the emperor; this elusive enemy inflicted many blows and removed him from his stable post and, in the end, overthrew him and caused him to suffer a most piteous fall.

I insert these events into my history to show my readers how unreasonable a thing wickedness is and how difficult it is to guard against it. It is necessary, as far as it is possible, to suspect all rivals in power who are not open in their manner but are instead insidious in their ways, and say one thing with their lips and mean the opposite in their heart, and, above all, to set a watch over one's mouth[310] and not to allow the tongue, which nature has enclosed, as it were, behind a double wall, to bound rashly over the barrier of the teeth and bulwark of the lips.

The logothete of the *dromos* at that time, John Kamateros, was unable to endure Styppeiotēs' good fortune. He envied him his decisive influence on the emperor, and his freedom to approach the emperor at all times and to speak openly, his ability to move all things by merely pointing his finger and nodding, the fact that at certain prescribed hours the gates were opened to him, and that all Styppeiotēs had to do to accomplish anything was merely to wish it. Subject even in his dreams to the envy which gnawed at the very cockles of his heart, Kamateros devised the greatest mischief against the man. Skillful in hatching plots and possessed of a forked tongue like the slanderous serpent,[311] the originator of evil, he [112] feigned friendship with Styppeiotēs, thus concealing his evil deliberations with the appearance of good intentions and anointing the lip of the cup of poison with the honey of love. Saying one thing and meaning another, and honoring him with his lips while his heart was far from him,[312] he took in the simple and naïve Styppeiotēs.

The logothete accused Styppeiotēs of being a fraud and a cheat and

indicted him for treason, saying that he was fomenting trouble in the affairs of Sicily. When the emperor, who was still in Cilicia, required proof of the allegations, Kameratos positioned him behind a curtain and, taking Styppeiotēs aside on the pretext that he had a private matter to discuss with him, led him to where the emperor was standing. After bringing up other topics, he introduced the subject of Sicily and guilefully cited reasons why Styppeiotēs should bear a grudge and denounce the emperor's actions regarding Sicily. Then he terminated the meeting. Thus igniting such a spark in the emperor's soul and leaving it to smolder against Styppeiotēs, he considered what other calumnies he might use as fuel to feed the spark.

Kamateros received another wound in his heart when Styppeiotēs was presented with an inkwell adorned with gems and gold to hold the red ink made of madder[313] and was given instructions to preside over the oath-taking ceremony in the great church of Blachernai which secured the succession of Alexios of Hungary[314] and Maria, the emperor's daughter, an honor appropriate to the office of logothete. It is said that Kamateros
[113] composed a letter full of nonsense addressed to the king of Sicily and allegedly written by Styppeiotēs. After concealing the letter among Styppeiotēs' documents and letters, he convinced the emperor to send agents to search Styppeiotēs' tent for the letter. When the charge was confirmed, the emperor's rage against the man flashed like lightning in the sky. Styppeiotēs' pupils were forthwith destroyed, and he was unjustly blinded, never again to see the sun.[315]

O unerring eye of Justice that sees all things, how is it that thou dost often overlook such transgressions and even other more wicked deeds of men? Neither dost thou hurl forthwith the lightning and the thunderbolt, but, by delaying, thou dost defer divine retribution. Inscrutable is thy judgment[316] and beyond human comprehension! But thou art wise, yea, and thou dost know perfectly what is good for us, even though thou dost overlook our narrow-mindedness.

As soon as the prey spies and hears a tawny serpent or shaggy-maned lion in the mountains, it turns aside, but the evildoer can be pardoned if he is reduced to tears and prayers of repentance. With great wisdom man must eschew devising evil in the depth of his heart[317] against his neighbor, hiding one thing in his mind and saying another,[318] and he must seek to be touched by the Almighty.

Kamateros, if I may digress a bit from the sequence of my history, having tasted of higher learning with only the tip of his finger, neither an ardent admirer nor a quick-learning disciple of Holy Philosophy, excelled rather in natural ability and attained the greatest glory from extemporaneous speaking, his speech flowing freely like the waters of a spring running downhill. The greatest epicure and the mightiest tippler of men, he sang to the sounds of the small lyre, moved in rhythm to the cithara, and danced the licentious dance of the cordax, kicking his legs to and fro. Drinking down wine in great gulps and soaking up oceans of the potation like a sponge time and again, Kamateros did not sodden his mind, nor was he confused as drunkards are, nor did his head totter from side to
[114] side, top-heavy from too much strong drink, but instead he would utter some clever remark, the drink illumining and watering his mind, which

then sprouted pithy sayings. By frequenting drinking parties, he not only greatly pleased the emperor but was also befriended by those rulers of nations who delighted in carousals. Appearing before them as the emperor's envoy, he would outdrink some who took much longer to recover from their drunken stupors. As for the others, he was able to keep up with them; they were the ones who gulped down whole casks and held the amphorae in their fingers as though they were wine cups, and their after-dinner drinking cup was as huge as that used by Herakles.

Whereas our present discussion concerns this man, let the following events which are worthy of narration and remembrance be recorded in this history. Kamateros once wagered with Emperor Manuel that he could drink dry the purple wine bowl once positioned at the outer door of Emperor Nikephoros's[319] bedchamber, which opened out towards Boukoleon from above; it is now located in the enormous gold-spangled gallery built by the emperor of this history [Manuel]. The emperor, taken aback by what he heard, commented, "Most excellent, O Logothete," and wagered fine linen cloths with floral patterns and a goodly number of gold pounds should he make good his boast, but, should he fail, he was to make the same payment. Kamateros happily accepted the wager. The wine bowl, which held one and one-half gallons, was filled to the brim; stooping over like an ox, he emptied the vessel, coming up for air but once, and received forthwith from the emperor the items stipulated in the wager.

Unable to resist eating green beans, Kamateros tore, rather than plucked, them off the young shoot. He consumed whole fields or, to be more exact, he swooped down on them like a bird. Once, when encamped at a riverside, he observed a field of beans on the other side. He removed his tunic, swam across, and gulped down the greater part of the crop. But he did not stop there. Stacking in bundles what he had not devoured and lifting these onto his shoulders, he quickly crossed the river and then sat himself down on the floor of his tent and contentedly gobbled up the beans as if he had gone without eating or drinking for a long time. [115]

Of heroic stature and exceptional height, he was not unwarlike, but rather courageous and worthy of his maternal bloodline.

At the close of his life he suffered pangs of conscience for the wrongs he had done Styppeiotēs. He sent for him and tearfully begged his forgiveness. Styppeiotēs granted him forgiveness without any show of malice and prayed for the salvation of his soul. The narration of these events as they happened is not, I trust, without profit, charm, and grace for most.

When Manuel's German wife died [end of 1159 or beginning of 1160], he grieved bitterly, looking upon her demise as if a limb had been torn from his body, and his lamentation was like the roar of a lion.[320] He honored her remains with a magnificent burial, celebrating the funeral rites in the paternal Monastery of the Pantokrator. But after concluding the prescribed period of mourning as if half-dead and sundered in twain, he contemplated a second marriage because he desired to hear himself called the father of a son.

Letters from emperors, kings and princes throughout the world, as well as matchmakers, came to him. From all the candidates, Manuel

chose a daughter of Raymond, prince of Antioch,[321] the chief city of Coele Syria, which is watered by the Orontes and refreshed by a west
[116] wind. This Raymond was an Italian by birth, surpassing Priam with his goodly spear of ash.[322] Members of the senate and the nobility were dispatched to escort the maiden back [summer 1161], and the nuptials were celebrated [Christmas 1161]. The woman was fair in form and exceedingly beautiful; her beauty was incomparable. In a word, she was like unto the laughter-loving, golden Aphrodite, the white-armed and ox-eyed Hera, the long-necked and beautiful-ankled Laconian [Helen], whom the ancients deified for their beauty, and all the rest of the beauties whose good looks have been preserved in distinguished books and histories.[323]

We shall now proceed to relate in detail those events pertaining to the Turks mentioned earlier and to clarify certain developments cited above. Many were the sons and daughters born to Masᶜūd, the ruler of the Turks. As he was about to depart this life and go on to the tortures of the next because of his impiety, he distributed among some of his sons the cities and provinces which had once been included within the boundaries of the Roman empire and now were under his rule, and to some he bequeathed other provinces as their paternal inheritance; the metropolis of Ikonion and all that was subject to it he assigned to his son Kilij Arslan.[324] To his son-in-law Yaghi-Basan,[325] he allotted Amaseia, Ankara, the fertile province of Cappodocia, and all the adjacent lands of these cities; and to his son-in-law Dhū'l Nūn,[326] he portioned out the great and prosperous cities of Kaisareia and Sebasteia.

How long, O Lord, wilt thou overlook thine inheritance which lies exposed to abduction and incessant looting and change of rule by a foolish and unwise people[327] far removed from pious belief and faith in thee?
[117] How long, O lover of mankind, wilt thou turn away thy face from us[328] and ignore our beggary? How long wilt thou, who art quick to hearken to the afflicted, take no heed of our groanings, and delay, O Lord of vengeance,[329] thy taking revenge? How long shall these calamities follow one another and the descendants of the bondwoman Agar continue to subjugate those of us who are free[330] and destroy and kill thy holy nation which above every name has called upon thine?[331] How long shall we endure this long-continued servitude and suffer the reproaches and buffetings of these accursed foreigners? Let the affliction of those in fetters, O Master, lover of goodness, come before thee at last. Let the blood shed by your servants cry out to you, O merciful God, as did Abel's[332] blood in the beginning. Take hold of shield and buckler and rise to our aid[333] and make strong the man thou hast chosen and in whom thou art well pleased.[334] Repay our wicked neighbors sevenfold the evils they have inflicted on thine inheritance;[335] restore to us, through brave deeds, the cities and provinces which the foreigners have taken from us and let the boundaries of those who call upon thy name be marked by the dawn and dusk of the rising and setting sun.[336]

Perhaps these sentiments which we have poured out were not ill-timed or in vain, as we thus have briefly addressed God and emptied out a small amount of the sorrow which overflows from our souls. Masᶜūd's three sons, who divided the principality, or, to be more exact, the allotment of the Romans, bequeathed to them by their father into three major parts,

paid but little attention to peace and the bonds of kinship and occupied themselves mostly with differences and disagreements.

Presently, the sultan of Ikonion jealously eyed the toparch of Cappadocia and plotted a pernicious and violent deed against him, while the latter, in his turn, cast a deadly glance at the sultan. They did not keep secret and in the dark these wicked schemes against one another but revealed them to the emperor. Manuel, elated, desired that they should not merely reach a point of disaffection, alienation, and the parting of the [118] ways, but that they should suffer utter destruction by taking up arms in opposing camps, so that while he reposed in tranquility he might exult in the evil works of these impious foreigners. Secretly sending envoys to both sides, he led them into war. Manuel presented Yaghi-Basan with gifts, making it evident that he supported him in the hostility. He loathed the sultan as being underhanded, deceitful, duplicitous, and pernicious not only to his own kinsmen and blood relations but also to the Roman borderlands, which he continually plundered and devastated.

Trusting in the emperor, Yaghi-Basan made war on the sultan. The latter, in turn, marched out against him, and they clashed in battle frequently [1155–60]. After much blood was shed by both armies, victory smiled on Yaghi-Basan, and both adversaries laid down their arms for the time being [1161]. Yaghi-Basan remained in his province, but the sultan went directly to the imperial city when he returned from the western regions and appealed to the emperor for help [spring 1162]. Receiving him graciously, the emperor heaped honors upon him so that he was gladdened at the lavishness of the hospitality.[337] Manuel had high hopes of satisfactorily disposing of the issues in the East, thanks to the sultan's presence, and of charming the money-loving barbarian with gratifying entertainment, but he also believed that this circumstance would bring glory to the empire.

Together with the sultan, Manuel entered Constantinople. There he proclaimed a magnificent triumph resplendent with exquisite and precious robes and diverse adornment cunningly wrought. But as the emperor, with members of the bodyguard, the nobility, the imperial retinue, and [119] the sultan, was about to make his appearance before the citizens to receive their applause, God annulled the splendors of that day. The earth shook, and many splendid dwellings collapsed, the atmospheric conditions were violent and unstable, and other such terrors took place so that one could not pay heed to the triumph, and the mind swooned. The clergy of the holy church, contended (and the emperor himself received their words as evil omens) that God was wroth and that under no circumstances would he tolerate an impious man to show himself and participate in a triumph adorned by all-hallowed furnishings and embellished by the likenesses of the saints and sanctified by the image of Christ.[338] Thus, the triumph was thoughtlessly conceived, and neither did the emperor himself pay adequate attention to it, nor was proper regard paid to custom.

The sultan sojourned with the emperor for some time [80 days] and feasted his eyes on the horse races. Now, in the Hippodrome there was a tower which stood opposite the spectators; beneath it were the starting posts which opened into the racecourse through parallel arches and above were fixed four gilt-bronze horses, their necks somewhat curved as if they

eyed each other as they raced round the last lap.[339] At this time a certain descendant of Agar, who posed as a conjurer but who, as later events were to show, was the most wretched of men and no more than a suicide, ascended, announcing that he would fly through the stadium. He stood on the tower as though at a starting post, dressed in an extremely long, wide white robe, on which twisted withes, gathering the garment all around, made ample folds. It was the Agarene's intention to unfurl the upper garment like the sail of a ship, thus enveloping the wind in its folds. All eyes were turned on him. The spectators smiled and repeatedly
[120] shouted, "Fly," and "How long will you keep us in suspense, swaying from the tower to and fro in the wind?" The emperor sent word, attempting to dissuade him from attempting the flight. The sultan, an observer of the unfolding drama, was dubious as to the outcome, he both throbbed with emotion and grinned, elated and at the same time fearful for his compatriot. Snapping at the air frequently and testing the wind, the Agarene mocked the hopes of the spectators. Many times he raised his arms, forming them into wings and beating the air as he poised himself for flight. When a fair and favorable wind arose, he flapped his arms like a bird in the belief that he could walk the air. But he was an even more wretched sky-runner than Ikaros. Instead of taking wing, he plummeted groundward like a solid mass pulled down by gravity. In the end, he plunged to the earth, and his life was snuffed out, his arms and legs and all the bones of his body shattered.

This abortive flight was bruited about by the citizens in mockery and ridicule of the Turks in the sultan's retinue. They could not even pass through the agora without being laughed at as the silversmiths made loud noises by striking the iron tools of their benches. When the emperor was informed of these things, he was, in all probability, amused, knowing how the rabble was fond of gossip and play, but he humored the sultan (for as he gradually became aware of the coarse jests, his soul was sorely vexed) and pretended to restrict their freedom of speech.

After the display of admirable munificence, the sultan, who had skimmed off many splendid gifts from the imperial treasuries, before which he stood amazed, wondering if the emperor could possibly possess others of such number and magnitude, returned home laden and rejoicing.

Manuel, who knew that no barbarian is able to resist the temptation of gain, wished to magnify himself and to astound Kilij Arslan with the immense riches of the treasuries which overflowed on all sides of the Roman empire, and thus he displayed all the gifts which he proposed to
[121] offer the sultan in one of the palace's splendid men's apartments. These consisted of gold and silver coins, luxuriant raiment, silver beakers, golden Theriklean[340] vessels, linens of the finest weave, and other choice ornaments which were easily procured by the Romans but rare among the barbarians and hardly ever seen by them. On entering the men's apartments to which he had summoned the sultan, the emperor inquired if he wished to receive as gifts the contents of the treasury at hand. When the sultan replied that he would take whatever the emperor offered him, the emperor posed a second question, asking if any of the enemies of the Romans could possibly withstand their assault should he pour such treasures on mercenary and native troops. Seized with wonder, and answer-

ing that were he the master of such vast sums of money he would have subjugated his enemies long ago, the emperor said, "I present you with all these treasures so that you may know my generosity and munificence and that he who is lord over such wealth is he who grants so much to one man." The sultan was delighted and astonished at the outpouring of money and, blinded by the desire of gain, promised to hand over Sebasteia and its lands to the emperor. Manuel gladly welcomed this promise and agreed to give him more money should he confirm his words by deeds.[341]

But the emperor anticipated that the barbarian might not be constant, and, wishing to strike while the iron was hot, acted shortly afterwards according to his promise. He dispatched Constantine Gabras [1162][342] and sent along with him many other gifts and all manner of armaments, but the sultan, who was a cheat and incapable of speaking the truth, ignored the treaties; on his return to Ikonion, he lay siege to Sebasteia and conquered its subject lands and became master over all. [122]

The sultan had ejected Dhū'l-Nūn from his own dominion and made of him a runaway and vagabond while he occupied Kaisareia. Now, he went in pursuit of his remaining countryman; I speak of Yaghi-Basan, whose land he longed for with a passion and after whose life he thirsted. Yaghi-Basan assembled his troops and drew up his forces in battle order, but he was checked in his eagerness by death [1164]. Since Yaghi-Basan's throne was vacant, Dhū'l-Nūn secretly entered the satrapy of Amaseia. There he was repulsed and there he was the cause of the death of Yaghi-Basan's wife, who had secretly made Dhū'l-Nūn ruler by marrying him; after he had sent for her, the Amaseians rebelled and killed her. Dhū'l-Nūn, whom they held in contempt as a ruler, they expelled.

They were not, however, mightier than Kilij Arslan, who proved himself more powerful then they. Just as he had earlier laid claim to Cappadocia, so did he later seize Amaseia, taking advantage of conspicuous good fortune in these affairs. Kilij Arslan was not a physically well-proportioned man but maimed in several of the vital parts of his body. His hands were dislocated at the joints, and he had a slight limp and traveled mostly in a litter. This was the origin of the gibes against him, as a result of which Andronikos later contrived to call him Koutz-Arslan [Halt-Arslan]. Andronikos was fonder of reviling than all other men and devastating in his reproaches, and he was also extremely competent in using the soft words of cunning men[343] to inflict humiliation on those who had committed foul deeds or who had suffered a repulsive physical deformity.

Regardless of his misshapen body (for thus, I deem, nature had molded him), Kilij Arslan had obtained a mighty dominion and was in command of large forces. He did not choose to lead a quiet life, but being by nature an agitator and as turbulent as the gulf of a sea, he harassed the Romans [123] incessantly without a declaration of war and frequently initiated warfare without giving cause, disregarding accords and violating truces, weighing the action he was about to take according to his personal desire. Nor did he hold back from Melitenē. Determined to depose its emir, he disregarded the fact that he was his coreligionist, and having no charge of injury to bring against the man, he openly contrived an accusation after which the emir was indicted and expelled. Afterwards, he stole upon his

own brother and made a fugitive of him. Both refugees came to the emperor.[344]

These events took place later. Kilij Arslan had become very powerful. He showed no deference to the emperor, and forgetting the court he had paid when he had been assailed by difficulties, he now required the emperor to pay court to him. Changing with the seasons in the fashion of barbarians, when in need he was inordinately humble but he was high-flying whenever Fortune tipped the scales in his favor. At times, he resorted to unctuous flattery to mollify the emperor and rendered him the esteem due a father; then the emperor, instead of treating him as if he were a wild beast in need of surveillance, honored him by adopting him as a son. In the letters which they exchanged, the emperor was addressed as father and the sultan as son.

But the friendship which they both sanctioned was not genuine, even though they did not dishonor their treaties. The sultan, like a swollen torrent or a serpent which had devoured herbs,[345] deluged and swept away everything before him and often swallowed up our fortresses, spitting out the venom of evil. The emperor, on the other hand, dammed up the main roads and stemmed the rising tide with an unbreakable wall of soldiers, or he lulled the serpent to sleep in peace with the enticement of seductive gold, and as it reared up to strike in pursuit of plunder and coiled its body to crush the army, he soothed and quieted it.

[124] Repulsing the Turks who poured over the Roman borders now and then like countless herds, the emperor would attack the lands around Pentapolis,[346] and taking large numbers of men and animals captive, for the Turks did not dare to engage him in combat, he returned bearing trophies of victory. At this time, Sulaymān, the highest ranking official in the sultan's court, in an audience with the emperor spoke vigorously in the sultan's defense, declaring that the Turks had acted against his wishes. Offering other such specious arguments but describing conditions that were not in accordance with the facts, he was caught in the offense of lying; notwithstanding, the emperor did Sulaymān no hurt. Paying insincere court to the emperor, as is the barbarian custom, and resorting to deceitful measures, Sulaymān sought his favor by presenting him with swift-footed horses from his own stables. The emperor, for his part, accepted this token of gratitude, even though, as was characteristic of the man's disposition, this act of kindness was only a gift of the times. He sent Sulaymān back to the sultan to set forth those things of which he was not ignorant and to taunt him for the untrustworthiness, faithlessness, and wickedness of his ways, and to warn him that should he not desist from these actions, he would suffer the vengeance of the Romans.

Nonetheless, the sultan continued his customary forays for plunder. With select troops he laid siege to Laodikeia in Phrygia,[347] which was not as thickly peopled at that time as it is now, nor was it fortified by secure walls, but spilled out to the villages along the slopes of the mountains. He carried off large numbers of men and countless animals; furthermore, he slew no small number of men, among whom was the bishop Solomon, a eunuch who otherwise was gracious and elegant in manner and godlike in virtue. The sultan remarked to his intimates sarcastically that the more injuries he inflicted on the Romans, the more treasures he received from

the emperor. "It is customary," he said, "for gifts to be gladly given to conquerors so that they should not desire to advance their conquests, just as festering diseases require numerous treatments so that they should not spread and increase further." [125]

Manuel did not remain inactive through all this. He first sent Basil Tzikandelēs,[348] and afterwards Michael Angelos, to attack the Turks, who had left their homes *en masse* and crossed into Roman territory to find grassy meadows for their wealth of cattle. The two commanders drew up their light troops into companies and led them forth. They decided that it would be better to attack the enemy by night and gave the troops the password "iron" [*sideron*] to cry out when they engaged the Turks in the dark. In this way, they would be able to recognize a fellow countryman by his speech and would then let him pass, but should the response be silence, they would slay the man as a foreigner. The password, shouted out throughout the entire battle differentiated the races, and in the words of David, the iron passed through bodies of the Turks.[349] After a good many Turks were slaughtered, they finally realized the meaning of the word uttered so often by the Romans and shouted back in unison until, with the passing of the night, the armies separated.

At this time, and under this emperor, many incursions took place against the Turks, and the latter, in turn, attacked the Romans [1162–77]. I have omitted those actions which are not worthy of the telling; these would only satiate those who are fond of listening, for they are largely repetitive and have nothing novel to add to the narration.

[126] I return once again to Hungarian affairs, and for the sake of historical clarification I will comment on the following. Géza [II], the ruler of the Hungarians, had two brothers, István [IV] and László [II], and his two sons were István [III] and Béla [III].[350] István [IV] was forced to flee from the murderous clutches of his brother and reached Constantinople [1154], where he was welcomed with open arms by Emperor Manuel. There he received a multitude of gifts, and, moreover, he was married to Manuel's niece Maria, the daughter of the *sebastokrator* Isaakios. Shortly afterwards [1158] László [II], the third brother, following in the footsteps of István [IV], defected to Manuel, not so much because Géza loved him less than he should or that he feared a plot on his brother's part, but more because he was fascinated by István's fame. Neither was he disappointed in his expectations nor was he received by the emperor in a manner unworthy of his station, but all his objectives were realized. Had he so desired to take a wife, he could have married a woman of royal blood, but he refrained from marriage so that he should not forget to return to his country and thus bring ruin to his domestic affairs, enchanted by the spell of a wife.[351]

But what happened? Géza, the king of the Hungarians, died [31 May 1162] and his death was a peaceful one; the taut strings of his mortal frame[352] were slackened by nature, dissolving into those elements of
[127] which it was composed. His son István [III] succeeded him to the throne. This event seemed to the emperor like a most beautiful flower sprung forth from an ugly root. He reflected that should the Hungarian satrapy pass over to his niece's husband [István IV], who obviously had a legitimate claim to the throne, glory would first redound upon him and afterwards the Roman empire and that as partial tribute he might receive undisputed and guaranteed possession of Frangochorion and Zevgminon. Eagerly, Manuel acted to attain his objectives.

The Byzantine envoys appointed to assist in Istvan's [III] coronation set out to Hungary without delay; shortly thereafter Manuel arrived in Sardica. When they first heard of these events, the Hungarians renounced István [IV]. They took grave offence at the sound of his name and cited several reasons for repudiating him, in particular, his having taken a Roman wife; they deemed it disadvantageous to join with a man who was related to the emperor by marriage and feared that as Hungarians they would be governed by him as king while he was ruled by the emperor of the Romans. For these reasons they did not side with him on his arrival and dismissed the imperial envoys who had escorted him without having accomplished their mission.

The emperor thereupon concluded that it was necessary to assist István [IV] by the use of greater force. He marched out of Sardica and when he arrived in the region of the Danube [Paristria] adjacent to Braničevo and Belgrade dispatched his nephew Alexios Kontostephanos[353] with an armed force to István. Once in control of Chramon, they

did everything possible to secure the throne, winning over the most powerful of the Hungarians with gifts, seducing them with flattery, and inciting them with the greatest of promises; however, the only thing they achieved was that the Hungarians accepted László as their ruler. But when the latter survived for only a brief period [31 May 1162 to 14 January 1163],[354] the Hungarians inclined once again to the rule of [128] Géza's son István [III]. But the emperor did not accept this turn of events meekly, and Géza's brother István [IV] was forever scheming to gain the throne.[355]

As a result, many battles were fought, and when the emperor chose Géza's son Béla [III] to be his daughter Maria's husband [autumn 1163], the Hungarians who opposed István [IV] uprooted and cut down the first shoots of his hopes, for they were intent on leaving behind the periodic and lengthy hostilities for which he was responsible. Having done with these matters, the Hungarians decided to get rid of the despicable Istvàn [IV] by resorting to treachery. Agreed that poison was the best way of putting him to death, they searched for the right person to place the death-bringing cup in his hands. A certain attendant of István named Thomas agreed to help them if they paid his price. This man who held out his hand for evil gain, was so sharp and quick in taking a man's life and severing the body from the soul found another method to send István more speedily on his way to Hades. In bleeding István's vein, he smeared with poison the bandage which covered the wound; from there it spread and diffused throughout the body and penetrated into the most vital parts and removed the man from life [13 April 1165], thereby clearly confirming the uncertain and cowardly devices[356] of men. In vain some strive after goals and labor in their pursuits if God above does not give his blessing, approve of their actions, and direct their deliberations and steps. Thus did István lie dead. His corpse was treated spitefully and denied funeral rites,[357] and Zevgminon was surrendered to the Hungarians. As soon as the emperor was informed of these events, he declared war on the Hungarians.

At this time, Andronikos, who had escaped once again [1164] and [129] come to Galitza,[358] returned from there [spring 1165]; Galitza is one of the districts of the Rhōs who are called Hyperborean Scythians. His manner of escape was as follows.[359] He pretended to be ill and was provided with a young boy to attend to his physical needs, a foreigner who largely mispronounced our speech. Andronikos knew that there was only one entrance into the prison. He instructed the boy to stealthily remove the keys to the tower gates when the guards, overcome with copious drink,[360] were taking their daily nap and to make a wax impression of them so that the impress should be in every way identical to the original in shape and form. The lackey did as he was commanded and brought the wax impressions to Andronikos. The latter directed the young attendant to present these to his son Manuel and to tell him that it was imperative that he forge keys from them as quickly as possible; moreover, he was to insert into the amphorae of wine which held his drink for his midday meals small ropes of twisted linen fibers and balls of thread, together with woolen yarn and slender cords. When these instructions were carried out, at a signal from Andronikos the boy lifted the bars of the prison gates during the night, and the gates were thrown wide open without any

trouble. Then Andronikos, holding the cords in his hands, let himself down into the thick weeds growing high in the impassable parts of the palace grounds. During the second and third days he continued to escape the detection of his pursuers by hiding in the tall grass. Once they were satisfied with their search of the palace environs, Andronikos made a ladder of wooden rungs and let himself down over the wall between the two towers. At a prearranged signal he boarded a boat pitching between the shore and the breakwaters found at intervals along the City's sea wall which dissipated the impact of the breaking waves. The name of the man who received Andronikos into the fishing boat was Chrysochoöpolos. But

[130] before they could put out to sea they were apprehended by the officers of the guard who stand on lookout along the Boukoleon[361] to protect the palace from attack by approaching ships. This lookout dated from the time when John Tzimiskēs attacked Nikephoros Phokas[362] after being drawn up in a basket at this spot. Andronikos very nearly ended up in prison once again, with his hands bound in chains or slain by the sword, and thus spared the many wanderings that followed. But now ready Wit saved the resourceful man, cutting and gathering from her own garden fitting medicinal herbs to cure the ills of the times, just as David was preserved from danger in Geth by altering his appearance and beating on the drum and crazily jerking his legs.[363] Pretending to be a household slave fleeing the bonds of many years, Andronikos pleaded with his captors to have compassion on him for the many tribulations he had suffered in the past at the hands of his master and for the punishment that would be inflicted on him now because of his escape. He named Chrysochoöpolos as his owner and spoke in barbarian speech instead of the Greek tongue, pretending he did not understand the latter very well. Chrysochoöpolos, for his part, deceived the sentinels with gifts and was able to free Andronikos, claiming him as his runaway slave. Thus Andronikos so unexpectedly arrived unnoticed at his own home, called the House of Vlangas,[364] and saluted his dearest family as he made his entrance. When the shackles were removed from his legs, he announced that he was going abroad. At Melivoton he mounted the horses which had been made ready for his escape and raced straight for Anchialos,[365] where he presented himself before Poupakēs, who, as I have stated above,[366] first scaled the ladder at Korypho [Corfu]. After receiving provisions and guides to show the way, he took the road to Galitza.

[131] But just when Andronikos began to feel safe because he had slipped through his pursuers' hands and reached the borders of Galitza, towards which he had hastened in search of a place of refuge, he fell into the hunters' snares. Apprehended by the Vlachs,[367] who had heard rumors of his escape, he was led back to the emperor.

With no one to rescue or redeem him[368] and no bodyguard, attendant, or friend along to console him, the ingenious fellow resorted to his own wiliness. To deceive his abductors, he pretended to suffer from gastroenteritis and day and night would frequently dismount and turn aside to defecate, withdrawing alone at a distance on the pretext that he did not wish to disturb the others. Rising up in the dark of the night, he planted in the ground the staff which he used to support himself when presumably he was indisposed and wrapped his cloak around it; he placed his hat on

top and, forming it into the shape of a man bending his knees and discharging excrement, outwitted his guards. While they watched the dummy, he took cover in the copse and saved himself by fleeing like a gazelle from the noose, like a bird from the snare.[369] When his abductors finally realized that they had been tricked, they charged ahead, supposing that Andronikos would go by the same road he had taken earlier, but he turned back and went by another route to Galitza.

The emperor arrested Poupakēs and had him publicly scourged until the many blows of the lash lacerated his back and shoulders. Afterwards, the herald, leading him about with a rope around his neck, shouted the following: "Whosoever harbors the emperor's enemy and sends him on his way with provisions will be flogged and paraded about in the same way." Poupakēs looked intently at the assembled populace with a joyous countenance and responded: "Let my shame be before every man who so wishes for not having betrayed my benefactor who came to me, for not [132] having dismissed him harshly, but instead attending rightly to his needs and sending him rejoicing on his way."

Andronikos was welcomed by the governor of Galitza with open arms and remained near him for a long time [1165–66]. He so endeared himself to the governor that he joined him in the hunt, was his partner in deliberations, and shared the same hearth and table with him.

Emperor Manuel judged his cousin's flight and alienation from his own homeland to be a reproach against himself. Moreover, he viewed his prolonged absense with suspicion because it was rumored that Andronikos was attracting a myriad of Cuman horse in order to overrrun the Roman borders and thus gave, they say, Andronikos's return highest priority over all other business. He summoned him thence, and they exchanged pledges of good faith, and he embraced the vagabond, this[370] at the same time the Hungarians, violating their treaties, were ravaging the Roman provinces along the Danube.

The Hungarians engaged the generals Michael Gabras[371] and Michael Branas in battle and inflicted a crushing defeat on them, carrying off enormous booty. Gabras had but recently celebrated his marriage with Evdokia Komnenē, Andronikos's paramour, as we have mentioned earlier.[372] Evdokia's kinsmen, wishing to advance Gabras's cause with the emperor, applauded and praised his feats before the emperor and contended that he had fought stoutly in the battle against the Hungarians. As witness to their words they ushered in Gabras's fellow general, Michael Branas. Branas was ordered to appear before the emperor and compelled to take an oath on the emperor's own head to speak truthfully as to whether he had witnessed Gabras's courageous action. When he hesitated to answer, Manuel, turning to Gabras, asked him whether he indeed had performed any bold and praiseworthy deed and whether as general he had accomplished even more valiant exploits when they fought the Hun- [133] garians under their general Dionysios[373] in hand-to-hand combat. When Gabras asserted that he had done these things, and no one else was brought forward to bear witness to his bravery in action at that time, Branas, unable to distort the truth before the emperor who had him swear on his own head, affirmed that in no wise did Gabras stand his ground against the enemy's assault, but that at the first charge he played

the coward and fled while Branas called out to him time and again to return, shouting, "Stand firm, O friend!" [1166].[374]

Nonetheless, the emperor hastened to recover Zevgminon for the Romans [summer 1165] and take his revenge on the Hungarians for having abusedIstvan, and he mounted an attack in these parts. The barbarians occupied the mouths of the Istros River and were drawn up in battle array along its banks. From there they hurled various missiles at the Romans, preventing them from crossing, but in the end they accomplished nothing, for the Roman archers and all of the remaining heavy-armed troops pressed forward and repulsed the enemy from their positions. The emperor then arrived at Zevgminon with his entire army and set up camp nearby.

Situated on a hill and walled off by the river's flow, Zevgminon was unapproachable from the south. Manuel thought that he would take the fortress without a blow and that the inhabitants, taken by complete surprise at the sight of him, would open the gates wide and admit him. Instead, they barred all the entrances and strengthened the walls with diverse weapons and stone-throwing engines. The barbarians appeared from above, and, sharpening their tongues like that of the serpent,[375] not only discharged deadly missiles by hand but also let fly through the barrier of their teeth[376] obscenities anointed with the poison of asps which is under their lips.[377] Nor did the Romans hold out their empty hands to
[134] them in supplication, but eschewing such foul language as a base and womanish weapon, they took up their arms in high dudgeon.

To encourage the troops under his command to emulate him, the emperor first rode his horse hard in the direction of the city gates and drove his lance midway between them. Next, filling the fosse with mud and rubbish, as there was a lack of stones, and positioning the stone-throwing engines round about, he gave the command to bring down the walls. When all were put into operation, discharged stones of a talent weight weakened the walls' joints. Andronikos[378] took charge of a stone-throwing engine and by using the sling, winch, and screwpress, shook the section of the wall between the two towers violently. Struck by the weighty stones and sapped by miners as well, the wall began to crumble and fall over. Then one night, certain Hungarian grandees entered one of the projecting galleries along the wall (called *arklai* in the common and vulgar speech), unsheathed their swords and, raising them up naked, threatened the Romans with great braggadocio. Unable to dye their swords in blood, they smote the air, and, filling the gallery with as many persons as possible, they rent the air with their shouts. But vengeance followed upon their heels. Andronikos took aim against the gallery that held them, and the missile scored a direct hit against the projecting wooden structure, tearing it from the wall. Those standing thereon were pitched headlong into the entranceway of Hades, and these wretched divers were seen woefully swimming across Acheron.

Not long afterwards, the wall itself collapsed, whereupon the Romans, scaling it with ladders, entered the city. Many were smitten and thrown to their death, and not a few saved themselves by surrendering to the conquerors or found deliverance by making their escape. One of the inhabitants of this city, not a man of the rabble and vulgar mob but a rich and

eminent nobleman, took pride in possessing a wife who was both graceful and very shapely. Seeing her being dragged away to be violated by one of the Roman soldiers and unable to protect her from being tyrannized, or [135] to repel force by force and turn aside this iniquitous carnal passion, he resolved on an action that was more noble than daring and unlawful, but suited to the present fateful circumstances: he thrust his sword, which he carried with him, through the entrails of his beloved. Thus the irrational desire of the lawless lover who lusted madly after the woman was extinguished, since the cause was no more; and this truly wretched woman, who had been so passionately desired, was deprived of the gladdening light of life. Alas! How fateful the complexity of events and how vengeful and treacherous the Telchine who has produced such tragedies for the crowded theater. O, two contrary loves contesting for the same prize! The one, reprehensible and the other, prudent; the one, desiring the beloved for illicit intercourse and the other, confronted by shame, resolved in a unprecedented manner to kill her, and thereby to combat passion with passion!

There were not a few in the city who made common cause with the Romans and constituted a pro-Roman faction. These men cooperated with the Romans in the siege of Zevgminon: they attached documents to arrow shafts without their iron heads and shot them at night towards the Roman camp, divulging the plans of the barbarians and their full strength.

At that time, a Hungarian, still wearing his native hat and dress, was being led away captive. A certain Roman fell upon him, struck a blow with his knife, and killed him; he put the Hungarian's hat on his own head and without futher ado proceeded on his way. But Justice followed with silent tread and visited upon him the very evil he had inflicted on his victim. From among the troops in the rear, another even more violent Roman came upon the scene with sword in hand and, believing him to be a Hungarian captive, smote him a mortal blow upon the neck and dispatched him forthwith.

In this manner did Zevgminon fall, as I have hastened to relate without dwelling overlong on the narration. The emperor, returned thence and made his way towards the Roman borders [1166].[379] He left behind his uncle, Constantine Angelos, who came from Philadelphia, together with Basil Tripsychos,[380] to rebuild the walls of Zevgminon. Carrying out [136] their orders, they restored the fallen towers and attended to the repair of the remaining fortress. They also showed the greatest concern for the fortifications of Belgrade, built walls around Niš, and colonized Braničevo. Putting in good order all else, they rejoined the emperor.[381]

In pursuit of Desa,[382] who had become an even greater villain than before, Manuel led his army into Serbia [summer 1165] without delay. But Desa, who observed these operations from afar and was sorely afraid lest some unpleasant and unhoped for misfortune befall him because of the emperor's invasion of his land, dispatched envoys to plead that he be granted safe-conduct. His request granted, he arrived escorted by a bodyguard worthy of a satrap and appeared before the emperor, where he was rebuked for his craftiness and dismissed without gaining a truce. Barely escaping being taken prisoner, he was allowed to return home after being

bound by frightful oaths to mend his ways and never to act against the emperor's wishes. But if the chameleon was unable to change his color to the whiteness of truth, he could easily take on every other color. On leaving the emperor, his soul was torn by many emotions. He felt ashamed for submitting to the emperor; he was angered by what he was made to suffer; he was distressed because he had fenced himself in by oaths which were contrary to his intentions. Finally, despite what he had sworn and agreed to before the emperor, the shifty barbarian wrapped the leopard skin[383] he was wont to carry on his shoulder around himself and, undisguisedly approving of the tragedian's words, said, "My tongue an oath did take but not my heart."[384]

[137] Thus did these events unfold. Since Manuel had not yet begotten a son [end of 1165 or beginning of 1166], he fixed the succession on his daughter Maria, whom his German wife had borne him, and bound everyone by sworn oaths to recognize Maria and her husband Alexios, who, as we have said,[385] came from Hungary, as heirs of his throne and to submit and make obeisance to them as emperor and empress of the Romans after his death. While all others acknowledged the designated heirs and gave their sworn oaths as commanded by the emperor, Andronikos was reluctant, saying, "The emperor may be inclined to enter into a second marriage from which, presumably, he may beget a son, and by binding ourselves afterwards on oath to secure the throne for the emperor's younger offspring, we will be compelled to violate the oaths just taken on behalf of the emperor's daughter." He continued, "What madness is this of the emperor to deem every Roman male unworthy of his daughter's nuptial bed, to choose before all others this foreigner and interloper to be emperor of the Romans and to sit above all as master?" The emperor was not persuaded by this sound advice, taking Andronikos's words as idle prattle spoken by a man who was both contrary and obstinate. There were those who, after the oath-taking ceremony, made common cause with Andronikos; some declared on the spot their support of his views, while others argued that it was not to the advantage of either the emperor's daughter or the Roman citizenry to graft onto the fruitful and good olive tree the branch from an orchard of another species[386] with the intention of girding others with power.

The following memorable event ought not to be omitted from this history. This emperor was very concerned about the cities and fortresses of Cilicia, over which the shining and renowned Tarsus presides as metropolis. Consequently, after many illustrious governors of noble blood

[138] had been assigned there,[387] the lot finally fell to Andronikos Komnenos, who was both of the highest nobility and the handsomest of men [1166]. There he collected the tribute from Cyprus, which provided his operating expenses. He conceived a hatred for Thoros [II], who, in turn, thoroughly despised him, and declared war on Thoros, often opposing him in battle. Andronikos accomplished no noble action whatsoever, nor did he perform any noteworthy deed, despite his versatile experience in warfare and cunning ways. Finally, after Thoros had inflicted a shameful defeat on him and had set up a trophy, he decided on a most reckless action which I shall now relate.

As each was marshaling his forces, Andronikos deployed his troops as

though they were an animal with a head, body, and limbs proportionate to the whole. Thoros, on the other hand, divided his own troops into many tactical units and scattered these about in bands and companies. In battle, Thoros once again won a splendid victory: confronted by fresh troops who continuously poured in to give assistance, and by Armenians unexpectedly leaping out from their ambuscades, Andronikos's phalanxes fell back and fled in disarray. Grief-stricken, Andronikos felt that he could retrieve the defeat only by performing some noble action; on the spur of the moment and against the enemy already celebrating their victory, he attempted the nigh impossible. At a distance he saw Thoros at rest on horseback together with his bodyguards, awaiting his divisions to reassemble following their pursuit. Andronikos, giving free rein to his horse, hurled his lance, striking Thoros flush on his shield and unhorsing him. Then, breaking through the picked troops like a winged knight or a slippery eel, Andronikos escaped all hands. This was the extent of Andronikos's noble accomplishment: thanks to the iron coats of mail which Thoros wore and the oblong shield hanging down along his horse's flanks, he was spared serious injury.

Not many days elapsed before Andronikos reckoned the slaughter of men, battles and warfare, the war trumpet, and Terror, Rout,[388] and [139] Ares, who is the bane of mortals,[389] as secondary and incidental. Setting aside the deeds of war, he gave himself over to the orgiastic rites of Aphrodite. The goddess did not put forward a Helen, nor did she present any such who exercised dominion throughout Hellas and mid-Argos,[390] suffuse her with beauty, drive her mad with passionate love, and build ships and install Phereklos as captain.[391] She described instead, from among his neighbors, the comeliness of Philippa[392] and seduced Andronikos. Andronikos, notorious for being love-smitten, laid down his shield, removed his helmet, completely doffed his military attire, and deserted to his inamorata in Antioch [1166]. Making his way thither, he preferred the joys of the Erotes to the armaments of Ares, although he did not card wool or devote himself to the loom and twist the distaff for Philippa as did Herakles when he served Omphale as her slave.[393] His beloved was the daughter of Raymond of Poitiers and sister to his cousin Manuel's wife whom the emperor had married not long before [25 December 1161].

In Antioch, Andronikos gave himself over to wanton pleasures, adorned himself like a fop, and paraded in the streets escorted by bodyguards bearing silver bows; these men were tall in stature and sported their first growth of beard and blond hair tinged with red. Henceforth Andronikos pursued his quarry, bewitching her with his love charms. He was lavish in the display of his emotions, and he was endowed, moreover, with a wondrous comeliness; he was like a young shoot climbing up a fir tree. The acknowledged king of dandies, he was titillated by fine long robes, and especially those that fall down over the buttocks and thighs, are slit, and appear to be woven on the body. But his manliness was diminished, and he was constantly anxious; he lost his sobriety and faculty of reason, and the beast of prey shed his gravity of deportment. Philippa, utterly conquered, consented to the marriage bed, forsook both home and family,[394] and followed after her lover.[395]

[140] Thunderstruck and almost speechless on learning of Andronikos's doings, Manuel decided to deal with both parties. He detested Andronikos for his indecent love affair and unlawful marriage, and because he had dashed his hopes against the Armenians, he wanted him seized and punished. He dispatched the *sebastos,* Constantine Kalamanos,[396] a man of reason, daring, and steadfast nobility of mind to attend to the affairs of Armenia and also to make an attempt to wed Philippa [1166]. Kalamanos, bedecked in splendid attire as befits a groom and confident that he would win over the inamorata, entered Antioch. So devoted was Philippa to Andronikos, and so successful was he in wooing her away from her first love, that she did not give Kalamanos a second look or deign to address him by name. Instead she berated him for being short, and derided Manuel in front of him for being so stupid and simple-minded as to think that she would forsake the hero Andronikos, whose fame was widespread and who was descended from a great and noble family, and cleave to a man who, as was well known, came from an obscure family line which had made its appearance but only yesterday.

When Constantine saw that he was held in low esteem by Philippa's Erotes, who fluttered their wings towards another, pelting Andronikos with apples and carrying torches, he departed and went to Tarsus, where he engaged the Armenian enemy in battle with his Romans. As they had done in the past, the adversary pressed him closely, then took him captive, and bound him in chains. The emperor gained his release by paying a large ransom.

Andronikos, fearing Manuel's threats and anxious lest he be taken prisoner, thus to exchange Philippa's embraces for his former prison and endure long-lasting suffering, departed and took the road to Jerusalem
[141] [beginning of 1167], exposed like the proverbial weasel accused of chasing after the suet.[397] He returned to his former life as a renegade and relied on the wiles he had used in the past.

Like a horse in heat covering mare after mare beyond reason, his behavior was promiscuous, and he engaged in sexual intercourse with Theodora, comporting himself with unbridled lewdness. Theodora was the daughter of his first cousin (I speak of Isaakios the *sebastokrator,* Emperor Manuel's brother); the husband of her maidenhood, Baldwin, an Italian by race,[398] had reigned over Palestine earlier but had recently died [1163]. Manuel, suffering yet another affront as a result of his behavior, devised all manner of schemes in the hope of catching Andronikos in his nets and dispatched a letter written in red ink urging the authorities of Coele Syria to seize Andronikos as a rebel guilty of incest and put out his eyes.

If the imperial letter had been delivered, and Andronikos taken captive and bound in chains, surely his eyes would have been stained red with blood, and pallor would have laid hold of his cheeks,[399] or he would have succumbed to dark death.[400] But he was protected by God, who, it seems, was storing up against the day of wrath[401] the evils that Andronikos later visited intemperately upon his subjects when he reigned as tyrant over the Romans and the horrors which, without pity, were visited upon him. The dispatch fell into Theodora's hands. Reading it, she

grasped the mischief being concocted against Andronikos and handed the document over to him at once.

Now Andronikos realized that it was necessary to make a hasty departure and that there was no time to loiter.[402] A feeling of horror came over him, and he set about to make his escape. A dissembler and a cheat, he tricked Theodora into leaving the security of her household, just as Zeus [142] in days of yore led Europa astray from the chorus of virgins and carried her off on his back by changing into a bull with magnificent horns; he asked her to accompany him the distance of a sabbath day's journey[403] so as to bid him farewell and then dragged her willy-nilly after him to be his companion and fellow wanderer.

Andronikos roamed far and wide, from province to province, the guest of rulers and princes who held him in esteem and thought him worthy of their greatest benevolence. His wandering finally came to an end when he came to the realm of Saltuq,[404] whose principality then included the borderlands of Koloneia and who enjoyed the fruits of the lands adjacent to Chaldia and nearby. There Andronikos dallied away the time with Theodora and the two children she bore him, Alexios and Irene. John, the legitimate offspring of his former marriage, had come from Byzantion to keep him company[405] only to return to Emperor Manuel, as shall be recorded at the proper and fitting time in this history in connection with Andronikos's subsequent actions. Manuel tried repeatedly to ensnare Andronikos and take him captive, but he was attempting the impossible, for the ever-roving and stouthearted Andronikos could ward off attacks against him as though they were children's blows, and, leaping nimbly over the many traps set to ensnare him, he remained at liberty.

What happened next? Nothing must be omitted from these events. [143] Every man who holds power is fearful and suspicious; each rejoices in executing the works of Thanatos and Chaos and Erebos,[406] felling the nobility, overturning and casting forth as excrement the influential and capable counselor, and cutting down the courageous and ingenious general. The mighty of the earth can be likened to lofty and tapering pine trees; just as these rustle when the sharp winds shake the needles of their branches, so do these rulers mistrust the man of wealth and cower before him who surpasses most in manly spirit. And should there exist someone endowed with the beauty of a statue and the lyrical eloquence of a nightingale in song, gifted, moreover, with ready wit, then the wearer of the crown can neither sleep nor rest, but his sleep is interrupted, his voluptuousness suppressed, his appetite for pleasure lost, and he is filled with grave apprehensions; with wicked tongue he curses the creator nature for fashioning others suitable to rule and for not making him the first and last and the fairest of men. Such rulers oppose providence and behave insolently toward the Deity. As victims they slay the best from among the people so that undisturbed they may waste and squander in luxury the public revenues as though they were their own private patrimony and treat free men as slaves and, at times, behave towards their most competent ministers as though they were purchased slaves. These men are ignorant of what is right, deprived of prudence by their abuse of power, and foolishly oblivious of their former condition.

Manuel was unable to charge the *protostrator* Alexios [Axuch] with any offense, since he had in no way aggrieved or annoyed him, nor
[144] slackened even a little the devotion and faithfulness required of him. But, counterbalancing the good that Alexios had done him by depressing the opposite scale of the balance, incited by mere insinuations and allegations made by certain mischievous men, and observing that Alexios was warmly loved by both commanders and troops and that he was munificent and openhanded to all—it may be that he secretly coveted his wealth—he had him taken into custody in Sardica before the break of dawn while he was lying with his wife, and not only did he strip him bare of all his possessions but, tonsuring him a monk, he cast him into one of the monasteries on Mount Papykios.[407]

So that the emperor's wrongdoing and disgraceful conduct should not appear to be inexcusable and premeditated, calumniators were secretly induced to accuse Alexios of using his powers of witchcraft against the emperor, powers which were so illusory and efficacious that the sorcerer could fly in the air and remain invisible to those upon whom he wished to swoop down with sword in hand; their other buffooneries and vulgarities to which sound ears ought not to listen were such as those of which the Hellenes, fabricating fables, accused Perseus.[408]

The most glib of Alexios's accusers, chief fabricator and inventor of this nonsense, was Aaron Isaakios of Corinth, who had mastered the Latin tongue when he was carried off captive to Sicily together with his fellow countrymen. At this time, he was serving as interpreter for Latins who were granted an audience with the emperor.

Alexios's wife, daughter of the *porphyrogenitos* Alexios,[409] the first-
[145] born of Manuel's brothers, and among womankind the prize of peerless beauty, a radiant ornament spoken of by all with deep affection, held wifely affection and discretion in high esteem and attempted to kill herself at this. Frustrated in this undertaking, she fell groveling at the feet of her uncle, the emperor, and pleaded with him more vehemently than a woman beating her breast in grief, more piteously than a sea-eagle,[410] more grievously than serpents, and more plaintively than the halcyon bird[411] to forgive the man for her sake, invoking God and whatever thing and name were held as awesome by the pious and declaring that her husband was a true and faithful servant of his throne and completely blameless. But she could not change the emperor's mind or persuade him to rescind in any way what he had decreed for Alexios even though she had moved him to tears with her pathetic appearance and propitiatory gestures, and poignant words. Her life was given over to weeping like a mourning dove, and she walked in circles through the house, moaning and wailing and lamenting her loneliness; consumed by excessive grief, and having exhausted her possessions caring for her two sons, she became deranged, and in the end she withered.

Alexios embraced the black habit and was uplifted by his passion for the divine, seeking to reach the highest peak of moral virtues by flying high above things mundane like a soaring eagle. During his former life he had abounded in riches and indulged himself in worldly pleasures. He had been extremely fond of meat dishes and had delighted in foods dressed with rich sauces. Given to feasting splendidly, he would be served at table

with meats even on fast days (I mean Wednesday and Friday), as well as on dominical feasts, or a feast day of a glorious martyr, or of one of Christ's disciples; now he dined on greens and herbs and feasted on fruits and sacrificed unburnt offerings[412] and suffered the pangs of hunger. Later, when celebrating a feast day, he would rejoice in partaking of fish at dinner, and when he recalled the savory dishes and sumptuous meat courses, he called this the dissembling of the belly and the means whereby the appetite is aroused, as the gluttons and meat-eaters contend, saying that they are unable to control themselves even a little; for it is [146] obvious that food, of whatever kind, contributes to the strengthening of the sick body and restores good health [spring 1167].

And what of cherished Justice? Does she who is many-footed and many-handed,[413] sharp-eyed and all-seeing,[414] with ear reaching almost down to her feet, haply forget or mark not or completely leave unavenged the unjust calumniations which the accusers concocted against guiltless and praiseworthy men? Not at all! She brings these matters into the light of day, for she peers into the innermost recesses of the earth and overhears whatever is uttered under breath.

Whether Justice was wroth with the emperor over this unjust action, I shall not recount at this time. It behooved Manuel, who was wordly wise and not at all an ignorant and unlettered man, not to waste his labor seeking out him whose name began with alpha as the one to succeed him and bring an end to his rule, but to leave the charge of the reins of government to him who says he is the *alpha* and *omega,* as John instructs me in the Apocalypse.[415]

Justice visited the accusers and laid different punishments on each of them; she bore down most heavily upon Aaron, binding him with his own rope. Not long afterwards, he was caught practicing magic, and a replica of a tortoise came to light; inside the tortoise shell was a human figure whose feet were bound and chest pierced through by a nail. Aaron was seized while unrolling a book of Solomon which, when unfolded and perused, could conjure up legions of demons who, on being asked to do that for which they had been summoned, hastened to fulfill the command and eagerly executed the order.

These were not the only reasons for which Aaron was taken into custody. While translating messages carried by envoys from the Western nations before the emperor, he perceived that they did not run counter to the emperor's wishes, and admonished the envoys that they were too [147] quick to accede to the demand for payments, advising them not to concede so facilely, since the emperor would regard them with greater affection and they would be more highly esteemed by those who spoke their own language. The audience was concluded, leaving the emperor ignorant of Aaron's admonitions, these acts of insubordination concealed thanks to the use of a foreign tongue. The empress, a Latin by race who understood exactly what was said, pondered over the issues as they were set forth and disclosed everything to the emperor. Vexed by what he heard, he punished Aaron cruelly by extinguishing the light of his eyes and confiscating all his possessions.[416]

When Andronikos later reigned as tyrant, Aaron, an evildoer who was bedeviled by a nature lusting after the most wicked deeds, urged him not

to be content with gouging out his opponents' eyes, but either to condemn them all to death or to remove them by inflicting the most grievous tortures. He gave himself as an example that attacks were made not only by the hand, for as long as he lived and moved, breathed and talked, he could give counsel, and he could slit the enemy's throat with his tongue as though it were a sharp knife.[417] With other such absurd and fiendish advice, he encouraged the irascible and perverse little old man to relish exceedingly in murder. Isaakios Angelos, who deposed Andronikos afterwards, gave little recompense to Aaron, the author of such evil deliberations and blandishments, and cut out his tongue to destroy its poison.

Emperor Manuel firmly regarded Skleros Seth and Michael Sikiditēs with a secret anger and justly moved to punish them, whence by his
[148] command they were blinded by the sizzling hot iron for their devotion to astrology and the practice of the demonic magical arts.

Skleros had passionately desired a nubile virgin and made a vigorous attempt on her honor but was rebuffed and held in contempt by the maiden. He then sent her a peach[418] by way of a procuress. The virgin, concealing it in her bosom, was driven mad with passion and consumed by an insane lust, and, in the end, she was deflowered by him. The young girl's kinsmen, who were grievously injured by her humiliation, inveighed most nobly against him who arms demons against maidens and who, like the serpent, the author of evil, despoils virgins with a fruit and drives them away from a prudent life as if from Eden. Skleros's sight was taken from him, and thus he found bitterness in wooing her on whom he cast a lustful eye.

Sikiditēs, by resorting to unmentionable magic spells, darkened the orbs[419] of his spectators, tricking them into believing that what they saw was real, and diverted his viewers as he conjured up ranks of demons to attack those he wished to terrify. It so happened that once, while looking down at the sea from the vantage point of the imperial palace, he observed a fishing boat carrying a cargo of bowls and dishes. He challenged his companions that should they be willing to make a wager, he would not hesitate to make the boatman lose his mind, get up from the rowing bench, and with the pair of sculls smash the pottery to smithereens. They accepted the wager, and soon the pilot rose up from his bench and, taking the oar in his hands, struck the utensils repeated blows until he had pounded them into dust. The onlookers from above broke out into
[149] laughter, considering what had taken place a marvel. Not long afterwards the seaman, laying hold of his beard with both hands, wailed plaintively and described his madness as sent by God, and the more he recovered from his delusion the more he lamented his fate. When asked what had possessed him to dispose of his cargo in this fashion, he related with deep emotion that as he was pulling at the oars, he suddenly saw a blood red serpent, its back like a firebrand,[420] stretched out over the bowls. Peering at him intently and fixedly in the manner of dragons, it seemed bent on devouring him and did not uncoil itself until the pottery had been smashed to pieces; then suddenly it vanished, disappearing from sight.

Such was this story, but there was also another told of Sikiditēs. Once, while bathing in a bathhouse, he had an altercation with those who were cleansing themselves with soap,[421] and they all moved into the inner

chambers. Shortly afterwards, the bathers came running out of the bathing room in panic, falling over one another; catching their breath, they related to those gathered around that certain men, blacker than pitch, had jumped out of the hot water and chased them out of the bath while kicking them on their buttocks with the soles of their feet.[422]

For these and other acts even more outrageous the two were deprived of their sight, but they survived. Seth went back to his old ways, while Sikiditēs, who had been tonsured a monk, composed after some time a [150] treatise on the Divine Mysteries [Sacraments]; he, who was unworthy of the divine gifts, let loose thereby the howling of dogs.[423]

A glorious deed was now performed by the emperor [1162–73]. The cities of Asia, Chliara, Pergamon, and Atramyttion,[424] were suffering terribly at the hands of the Turks. Formerly, the neighboring provinces had not been settled because the inhabitants of villages were exposed to enemy attack. Manuel fortified these with walls and protected the nearby horse-breeding plains with fortresses. In this way, these fortress towns swelled in population and abounded in the good things of civilized life, surpassing many prosperous cities; fields were cultivated and gave forth abundant crops, and the nurturing hand of the gardener made fruit-bearing trees of every kind take root there so that the wilderness was transformed, in David's words, "into pools of water,"[425] and that which was formerly uninhabited was transformed into the habitable. If Manuel had conceived and performed but one great deed, if one action had profited his subjects [Ausones][426] the most during the years he ruled the Romans, it was this, perhaps the finest and most beneficial to the common welfare. Who, passing by, knowing how untilled the land had been and what kind of men it had sheltered, more ruthless than the club-bearing Periphetēs and more savage than the pine-benders Sinis and Skiron whom Theseus had slain in olden times,[427] did not raise his hands and pray that this emperor be rewarded with an eternal lot in Eden, a green and indestructible place? These fortresses, all with the same name (Neokastra [Newcastle]), were sent a governor from Byzantion and contributed annual revenues to the imperial treasury.

[151] When the Hungarians again violated their oaths, war broke out, and issuing forth in season in order to bring it to a conclusion, Manuel came alive with renewed vigor like a rich man's field of wheat which requires reapers in the prime of strength.[428] When the proper time had arrived for the expedition, he set out on the road to Sardica, where the forces which he planned to lead against the Hungarians were commanded to join him [after Easter, 9 April 1167].[429]

While the troops were being assembled, reports came of the two bronze statues of female figures which long ago had been placed above the arch erected on the west side of the forum of Constantine, the one called the Roman Woman and the other the Hungarian Woman. As a result of time which alters all things, the figure which took its name from the Romans was overthrown from its upright position, while the other remained fixed on its pedestal. Manuel marveled at what he heard and immediately sent word to raise up the statue of the Roman Woman and to overturn and pull down the statue of the Hungarian Woman, thinking that by transposing the statues' positions, he could reverse the outcome of events, and, as it were, raise up the fortunes of the Romans which had been cast down by the Hungarians.

When the armies had been brought together, he debated whether he himself should march with them against the Hungarians, or whether he should entrust his forces to a general to seek out the enemy. It was
[152] everyone's opinion that the emperor should remain in Sardica and that the commanders-in-chief of the campaign should be proclaimed from among the officers. As the outcome of these events was unknown, and the disgrace of a defeat would be minimized and a victory magnified and exalted most gloriously since either one of these would occur during the emperor's absence, Andronikos Kontostephanos, *dux* of the fleet, was appointed commander-in-chief of all the forces.

As the troops were preparing to march out of Sardica, the emperor, standing within earshot, addressed them in noble, eloquent, and very persuasive terms. He encouraged Kontostephanos in the forthcoming campaign, not only suggesting tactical maneuvers but also the time of attack, the military equipment to be used, and the battle formations to be drawn up. He roused to battle the subordinate commanders and the commanders of the horse and all those in arms, reminding them of former contests and convincing them to strive eagerly to emulate these, to endure the impending hardships bravely, with God's help to bring these endeavors to a successful issue, and to return with splendid trophies. If they would thus magnify him by defeating the barbarians, he, in turn, would load them down with gifts.

When these words were spoken by the emperor, the troops appeared to be delighted by what they heard. They eagerly welcomed his exhortations and embraced his words in silence. As he finished speaking, they expressed their emotions with vigor and their soulful exhilaration,

charmed by the honey of his words which seemed to them completely to wash away whatever unpleasant memories they carried from former battles. They applauded the emperor with acclamations and contended stoutly that they would prove themselves by fighting eagerly and mightily. They shouted out to the general not to delay but to lead them on to the enemy.

Suddenly, while the troops were in this state of excitement, a loud commotion spread through the camp. A certain Hungarian came riding his horse at full speed, but before he could advance very far, he fell forward on his face together with his mount. When the emperor heard what had happened, he was jubilant and exhorted everyone to take courage, divining the future from this incident and urging them to rejoice in the certain happy conclusion to the war. [153]

Meanwhile, he invoked God the Savior to be the leader of the armies, and Andronikos, girding himself as general, marched out thence with all his forces. After some days, he crossed the Sava and the Danube and entered Zevgminon.

The Hungarians did not lose heart at this but assembled their troops and recruited no small number of allied forces as mercenaries, especially the Germans, as was reported. They installed over them Dionysios [Dénes] as commander-in-chief, a man of mettle who had often drubbed the enemy's ranks, and, boasting over their successes, they marched out in a show of arrogance. When this Dionysios, who prided himself in his previous victories over the Romans, first heard that the Roman army had crossed the Istros, he boasted loudly that he would gather once more the bones of the Romans fallen in battle and raise a sepulchral mound to serve as a trophy, as he had done in the past,[430] for he had perpetrated such a barbarity when he defeated Gabras and Branas, as I have already related.[431]

On the day commemorating the feast of the martyr Prokopios [8 July 1167], Kontostephanos arrayed his troops for battle, put on his coat of mail, donned the remainder of his armor, and commanded the rest to do the same, and everyone joined his company and stood at attention. He placed himself in the forefront of the battle line, entrusting the right wing to Andronikos Lapardas and the left wing to other company commanders [taxiarchs]. He stationed other troops in battle array and deployed them a short distance from either wing so that they might come to the timely aid of any divisions in distress. [154]

When Andronikos had thus arrayed his forces and taken up his position, a courier appeared bearing letters from the emperor commanding that the engagement be put off and designating in the dispatch another day. The general took the missive and concealed it in his bosom, neither heeding its contents nor revealing its instructions to the grandees present and commendably diverted attention to other matters. That particular day was rejected as being unlucky and unfavorable for a military encounter, but since the successful completion or failure of great and mighty deeds depends on the goodwill of God, I do not know how it was that Manuel could put his trust in the conjunctions and positions and movements of the stars, and obey the prattle of astrologers as though they were equal to judgments coming from God's throne.

Kontostephanos, realizing that a few words of exhortation from his trainer often braces the athlete for the contest at hand, roused the troops by reciting the following words.

Remember, O Romans, your valor in war; remember, and do not be minded of anything unworthy of the glory and fortune at hand, knowing full well that mountain-ranging beasts flee in fright from those who courageously track them in order to lay hands on them; all those who are afraid to face them are a ready feast of raw flesh to be devoured. We must play the man against these beastly barbarians lest we succumb to them, and by ignobly giving way to love of life, we lose it instead of saving it; this is the way opposing evils
[155] are wont to act upon virtues when they are entrenched next to them or nearby. Moreover, we are not palsy-stricken mortals nor is the enemy made of bronze; nor does he protect himself with coats of mail and ride swift-footed horses while we, to the contrary, enter the lists with naked bodies; nor is the adversary cunning in the art of warfare while we, on the other hand, are unfit; formations, military exercises, and equipment are the same for all. It goes without saying that in eloquence and learning we excel the barbarians, and that being experienced and comprehending, we surpass them in generalship and stratagems. In previous clashes we have contended hotly with the Hungarians, invading and ravaging their land. Thus we shall now engage them in battle, and as though from habit we shall emerge victorious. Yea, O men! Yea, O fellow soldiers! Even so you shall see your children and wives. Let the deep-eddying Istros drown out the cries of the barbarians, broken and perishing in its eddies; pouring forth its bloodstained waters over the land, let it declare the defeat of the Hungarians and proclaim the victory of the Romans, astounding the spectators with the novelty of its flood.

We must bear in mind, moreover, that he who sent us forth on this campaign relies on each and every one of us, and warming himself with high hopes and the oaths that we have sworn before him to fight bravely and mightily, he envisions the captives and the magnitude of the victory. Let us not, therefore, on the one hand, disgrace him, and, on the other, shame ourselves by showing cowardice before the present danger which has no other end but death. The worst of evils does not relish retreat, and for us to give way but a little is to betray everything.

Having spoken in this fashion, Kontostephanos led his troops to an open plain. Dionysios led out his forces against him with cheerful countenance, clapping and rejoicing as though he were going to play a game. Not knowing what to do on the spur of the moment, he neither divided his troops into right and left wings, nor did he separate his horse from the phalanxes, but forming them into a close and compact mass in the shape
[156] of a tower, he led them on like a black cloud with a coarse and unmitigated arrogance. His standard, waving in the wind, was raised on a thick, high-reaching pole on wheels, pulled by four yoke of oxen. The enemy line, wholly constituted of lance-bearing cavalrymen, was truly a fearsome and terrifying sight. The men armed cap-a-pie, and it was a spectacle to behold the horses displaying fillets and cinches and wearing frontlets and breastplates as protection against missiles. The snorting of the

horses and the sunlight flashing brilliantly in reflection from the weapons as the armies approached each other created a most unusual sight that inspired fear and wonderment on both sides.

Since the two opposing forces had closed the space that separated them, and it was midday, Kontostephanos deemed the time right for the battle to commence. He commanded the troops of both the right and left wings who were following close behind to cut down the barbarian rear guard and ordered the mounted archers to shoot uncommonly fast and thick. The purpose of the stratagem was to break up or to repel the compact Hungarian ranks; it was a battle out of Homer that day, "buckler pressed on buckler, helm on helm, and man on man,"[432] the horses were head to head, "the battle, that brings death to mortals, bristled with spears,"[433] and the armies swayed back and forth like an undulating serpent rattling its scales. Dionysios moved forward like an immovable wall, stretching forth his lance against both Kontostephanos and the troops surrounding him. When the Romans met his attack, both sides fought for a while with lances, jostling one another; once the lances were shattered and the battlefield became fenced in by the piling up of pikes, they unsheathed their long swords and fell upon one another, flailing away. When their blades were blunted by the troops' armor made all of bronze and iron, the Hungarians were at a loss, for they had not expected the Romans to withstand their onset. The Romans, taking hold of their iron maces (it was their custom to carry this weapon into battle), smote the Hungarians, and the blow against head and face was fatal. Reeling back, [157] many fell off their saddles; others bled to death from the wounds. When this unbroken formation scattered in disorder, there was no Roman who did not strike and lay low a Hungarian, or who did not strip the fallen, or who did not put on the enemy's panoply, or who did not mount the horse whose rider he had slain.

As it was late in the day, a shrill blast of the trumpet sounded retreat, and Dionysios's lofty banner was taken down; the ferryboats were launched into the Istros, and the army was transported to the other side. A rumor which jangled the general's nerves was spread throughout the Roman camp, to the effect that the Hungarians were expecting a force of stout mercenaries on the morrow. Because of this report, which could not be wholly dismissed, Andronikos, with the successful conclusion of the battle, straightway departed thence.[434]

Thus were the Hungarians defeated by superior generalship, and the emperor, informed of this most glorious victory, offered thanks to God, applauding and rejoicing. Communicating these cheering successes to the inhabitants of the queen of cities, he dispatched letters of glad tidings heralding the splendid victory.

A few days later, he prepared a triumph and entered the megalopolis through the Eastern Gate,[435] which opens out in the direction of the acropolis. To celebrate a magnificent triumph on the occasion of this stupendous and genuine victory, he issued instructions that the most lavish preparations be made for the procession. Every purple-bordered and gold-speckled cloth was hung, and the citizens, flowing towards the procession like the rush of a swollen stream, emptied out the agorae, houses, churches, workshops, and every other place in the capacious city. Nor

[158] was the triumph lacking in troops of captives, and many of these entertained the spectators and magnified the solemn procession as they marched along. To the wonderment of all, on both sides of the route along which the triumph was to pass, standing side by side, were platforms raised to two and three stories, and the rooftops above all were crammed with spectators. When the time came for the emperor to join the triumphal procession, he was preceded by a gilded silver chariot drawn by four horses as white as snowflakes, and ensconced on it was the icon of the Mother of God, the invincible ally and unconquerable fellow general of the emperor. The axle did not creak loudly,[436] for it did not carry the dreadful goddess, the pseudo-Virgin Athena, but the true Virgin, who, beyond understanding, bore the Word through the word. Following behind were the emperor's renowned blood relations and all ministers of senatorial rank and illustrious dignitaries who enjoyed the emperor's favor. Next in the line of procession was the most glorious and most great[437] emperor mounted on a stately horse and arrayed in the imperial regalia. Close behind came Kontostephanos, the man responsible for the triumph, receiving praise for his victory and congratulations for his generalship. He entered the Great Church [Hagia Sophia] and offered up praise to the Lord before all the people and then proceeded to the imperial palace. Unstringing himself like a bow from the excessive tension, he relaxed at the horse races [spring 1168].

Manuel spent the following spring in physical recreation, and as the sun rode past Cancer and passed by Leo, and the burning heat of Sirius gradually abated, and the winter solstice had already taken on a gloomy aspect [autumn 1168], he marched out to the western parts and encamped near Philippopolis. He had heard that the satrap of Serbia (at that time it was Stefan Nemanja)[438] had become inordinately insolent. A mischievous fellow who deemed meddlesomeness to be shrewdness, Nemanja nurtured an insatiable appetite, eager to expand his territories. He mounted
[159] a heavy attack against his own countrymen and pursued them with the sword, and, completely ignoring his own boundaries, he subjugated Croatia and took possession of Dekataroi.[439]

To make trial of Nemanja's intent, the emperor dispatched Theodore Padyatēs with a military force. The toparch Nemanja was in such a hostile temper that he fell upon the Romans and immediately launched an undeclared war. When he saw that the emperor was in pursuit, he showed himself in battle but briefly and then hid in the cover of mountain caves which he sealed with stones. At last his pride was shattered, and he prostrated himself at Manuel's feet. Lying outstretched, mighty in his mightiness,[440] he pleaded that he not be made to suffer cruelly; he was anguished lest he be removed as sovereign over the Serbs and political power be transferred to those who were more fit to rule, those whom he had pulled down so that he might seize power.

Thus did Manuel deal with Nemanja and prevail upon him to make a pledge of good faith: whenever he observed him straying from the straight and narrow, or acting independently, or entering into an alliance with the king of the Germans, or inclining towards the Hungarians and sharing a common purse and pouch with them,[441] he was more diligent than a shepherd guarding a small flock. And Nemanja feared Manuel

more than the wild animals fear the king of beasts; often Manuel led out only the cavalry and commanding his bodyguards, "Follow me," crossed the Roman borders and rode against Nemanja at full tilt, restoring conditions in these parts according to his own design.

What followed these events? Manuel, who wanted to campaign in foreign lands,[442] had heard of Egypt's bountiful productivity, how extensive were the fields fertilized by the Nile, the giver of fruit and rich grain, where the plentiful harvest was measured by the cubit. He determined to set his hand in the sea and his right hand in the rivers,[443] to observe with his keen eyes and take into his hands the coveted blessings of Egypt which had been brought to his attention. These thoughts motivated him [160] to leap over the lands under foot even while these were still deeply troubled, laid waste, and put to the torch. Nor had they vanished or been rendered invisible, but, like the Hydra, they continually restored themselves;[444] it was an ill-timed ambition that Manuel should vie with kings whose fame was great and whose domains had extended not only from sea to sea[445] but also from the boundaries of the East to the Pillars of the West.

Manuel shared his ambitions [summer 1168] with Amalric, king of Jerusalem,[446] and found him not averse to the scheme. With Amalric's promise to cooperate in the venture, he fitted out an armada to sail against Damietta[447] consisting of over two hundred long ships, ten from Epidamnos [Dyrrachium] and six swift-sailing ships manned by Euboians; he appointed the grand duke Andronikos Kontostephanos commander of the fleet. Entrusting sixty of these triremes to Theodore Mavrozomēs, he sent him forth to the king to announce the launching of the rest of the fleet and the arrival of Kontostephanos. Amalric was to make himself ready for the expedition and to provide provisions for the knights of Jerusalem who were to campaign with the king against the Egyptians.

Not long afterwards, Kontostephanos set sail (it was the eighth day of the month of July [1169]). He stopped at Melivoton,[448] where the emperor came to inspect the fleet and give final instructions for the task ahead, and two days later sailed to Koila, situated between Sestos and [161] Abydos, and embarked the army of Roman and auxiliary troops assigned to the triremes. When a favorable and fair wind arose, the stern cables were loosed and the sails were spread, and Konstephanos gave orders for the ships to make their way to Cyprus. While at sea he came upon six ships dispatched by the amir of Egypt[449] on a reconnaissance mission, and captured two, while the others which had kept their distance escaped by virtue of their superior speed.

He came ashore on Cyprus, made his arrival known to the king, and inquired as to his intentions, whether he should await the king there or continue on his way to Jerusalem. The king, in the manner of Epimetheus, who gave no thought to his actions only to repent of them grievously afterwards, was deeply troubled in his heart that he had wholeheartedly agreed to succor the emperor and that he had encouraged him to undertake the expedition against the Egyptians. He thought it best to procrastinate so he could ponder on what should be done. After a long delay, he signaled Andronikos to hasten to Jerusalem to take counsel with him and decide what joint action they should effect.

When Kontostephanos arrived in Jerusalem, Amalric once again procrastinated, and a smoldering regret weighed heavily on his soul. Putting forward among many other excuses "the pretext for Patroklos,"[450] he cited the levying of his own troops as not the least of these. Andronikos was vexed because of the waste of precious time which could never be laid hold of again, like hair that is not long in the back.[451] He was especially troubled over the continual depletion of provisions by the fleet's complement. The emperor had provided a three-month supply of grain for the naval forces beginning with the month of August, and it was now the end of September.

[162] When he decided to set out, the king proposed an expedition by land rather than by sea and suggested that Andronikos follow suit, contending that he was certain that it was a much easier and safer route and that as an added boon both Tounion and Tenesion[452] would surrender at the first assault. These small villages, subject to the amir of Egypt, in which the majority of the inhabitants were known by the name of Christ [Christians], were not difficult to assault or to penetrate, as they were situated on a flat plain. Andronikos, persuaded by the king's argument, abandoned his own course of action, and the Romans made their way unopposed and attacked the aforementioned fortresses. These they subdued by agreement, since they were not sufficiently garrisoned and could not put up a stiff resistance. Following this, they pushed forward.

After joining up with the fleet, which was already riding at anchor, and blockading Damietta, they engaged the Saracens before the city (for the latter had forthwith poured out) and met them in arms [30 October to 2 November 1169]. Thus the Romans took them by surprise and overwhelmed them by the daring of their attack and with battle cry and tumult pushed them back behind the gates until the enemy could not endure to look them straight in the face. This action took place on the day the triremes ran ashore on the Nile and the king arrived by land. The next day the Saracens again joined battle with the Romans, and they clashed along the winding and gently curving surrounding wall. But once again the Saracens were unable to resist the Romans. Taking up their positions a short distance from the gates and never moving out beyond the walls, they conducted hostilities in this fashion. Whenever the Romans mounted an attack against them, they turned in flight and poured in

[163] through the gates to avoid sustaining heavy losses since they dared not pit their troops against their adversaries. Thus it was for many days. The purpose of this tactic was none other than to outwit the Romans so that by making them waste their time they should lose all hope in accomplishing their objective.

The following day, Andronikos moved up siege engines and pounded the wall, but not without great effort and danger; the barbarians hampered the work of the engineers by shooting at them from above, discharging missiles more thickly than snowflakes and contriving various ways to defend the wall. He succeeded, however, in demolishing a part of the wall near which stood a church which smelled of sweet incense and was dedicated to the Mother of God. The story is told by the townsfolk that near this spot the Virgin Mother and her spouse Joseph paused to rest from their wandering when hastening to Egypt to escape the child-

slaying Herod.[453] The Saracens, accordingly, jeered at the Romans and showered Andronikos with insults for not sparing the church wherein the Christians assembled to celebrate their cherished sacraments and chant their prayers and thank-offerings.

Since Andronikos had yet to accomplish his purpose, he decided to make trial of the defenders by mounting a more forceful attack. He spoke with the king and finally convinced him, after pressing him strongly, to lead out his troops and deploy them along the entire wall and, when this action was successfully accomplished, to throw up ladders and have his men scale them. Amalric lauded Andronikos's words and apotheosized him for his excellent strategy, but swearing an oath on Christ's tomb, he contended that he would not undertake the task unless wooden towers were constructed first to be placed along the walls. Having so spoken, he gave orders for the palm trees growing all about to be cut down and planed for use in the high-reaching towers.

The lofty palm trees of leafy crown were felled, the groves emptied of [164] trees, and every garden stripped bare, but the fitting and joining together of the truss beams was never completed, for the king put off the work to be done over a period of many days, ever waiting for tomorrow and never executing the measures that had been resolved upon. Observing these things, Andronikos was vexed. The army's provisions were short; some of the troops had no money with which to purchase the necessities of life and were threatened with death by starvation, while the rest were indignant because, not having their own market, they were compelled to pay exorbitant sums to the king's grain merchants in return for meager foodstuffs. When the time agreed upon for the campaign had long since elapsed, the troops began to grumble and vent their anger, especially since the siege, which had lasted over fifty days, proved to be fruitless and futile.

The emperor's written instructions did not allow Andronikos to take measures that were not agreeable to the king, and so he could only wait to see what the king proposed to do. But he soon realized that Amalric was neither devising an effective plan nor assisting and sharing in the toils of battle and that the troops, reduced to helplessness, were in grave peril. So hard pressed were they by famine that in the desperate search for food some laid their hands on forbidden provender, and all ate roots and plucked the fronds of the palm trees which they boiled and served up as a meal. Furthermore, ominous rumors were being spread that auxiliaries would soon be arriving to assist the besieged from the sultan of Egypt and the Arabs in the East and that Assyrian mercenary horsemen were very close by. So Andronikos gave up talking into the ear of the dead. In disgust, he stripped himself of the Latin drivel and decided to conduct the campaign on his own.

He assembled his troops, and pronounced,

> To remain in this place a long time is grievous, and to return empty-handed without having inflicted any injury against our enemies is a shameful thing;[454] but what is even worse than those two evils and wholly ridiculous is the task of convincing a man who is not only in complete disagreement with the judgment of the Ro- [165]

mans but who is also no better disposed towards us than are our adversaries. Do you not perceive that the king, who has set up his camp far from ours, never moves forth from there, and that our fellow combatant, our ally, behaves as though he had been engaged by us as a spectator to some festive recreation and not as a doer of martial deeds? Do not our adversaries behave in the same way when they put off the battle and do not issue forth from the gates fighting? Henceforth, it is not this threat that I fear or that we shall depart without having achieved some success, but lest we be unable to save our very lives. Nor am I concerned about or do I give thought to whether the king will join his forces with ours in battle, but how we may escape his cunning, since he no longer conceals nor hides his treacherous ways behind a curtain, and how we may depart unharmed, repelling the danger before our eyes.

Perhaps stronger potions, like those of olden times, have now been concocted by the Egyptians, potions whose effect is not only to lull grief to sleep and bring unexpected cheerfulness to the deeply distressed soul, like that which long ago Thon's wife gave to the Laconian, banishing pain and sorrow and causing all evils to be forgotten, but also to make warriors effeminate and forgetful of prowess.[455] It was, I ween, the cup of these potions that the Egyptians offered Amalric, who, bewitched, it would seem, by the drink, and in his cups, then fell into a lengthy torpor. His shield was hung on a peg, his sword slept in its scabbard, and his spear was fixed in the earth on its spike. Should this not be the case, then perhaps he changed his mind, held spellbound by silver, and his ears, plugged by gold, tickled him, making him hard of hearing.

And now the treaties of alliance he had tendered the emperor are undone, since he honored them only with his lips while rejecting them in his heart.[456] We are compassed about by grave dangers, consumed[457] by both warfare and famine; the boasts of Romans on
[166] our behalf have taken flight, and glorious achievements are dissolved. It would have been better had we not put in to this place of anchorage after sailing over immense and boundless seas than to sail away unsuccessful. Therefore, let us not now spread the ships' white sails with which we sailed from Byzantis, but only those of dark color to denote the blot of shame.

O countrymen and fellow soldiers and all of you mercenary troops present here, let us separate ourselves from these haughty and arrogant knights from Palestine who have shown themselves faithless to the Romans. Let us charge the barbarians, storm the walls, and fight until we take this city, and let us contend for the riches within as though they were already in hand. Though the wall protects the barbarians, and the discharge of missiles takes place from on high, we have our shields which are not easily held up by men (for they are superior to Aias' shield of sevenfold bull's hide)[458] but are raised up in defense like city walls; not only are they unshaken by arrows and invulnerable to blows inflicted by hand but they are also impervious to any missile discharged by engines of war. Standing up against these like battlement houses a short distance from the wall, we shall deal with its defenders.

If, indeed, you choose to do your duty, time it is to trust in me, since I will happily endure with you whatever must be done. Let none say that Andronikos is persuasive in argument and most ca-

pable of inciting others to martial deeds but that he himself is a wretched leader who knows not how to repel the enemy. Be assured that the foe shall see the face of my helmet before they see yours.[459] When necessary I shall fight in the forefront, and if the state of affairs requires it I shall lead the rear guard. May God accomplish our designs and turn back every calamity on the heads[460] of those whose land we lay waste.

Having uttered these words, he armed himself, and the rest dispersed from the assembly and dressed in full armor. As the day grew longer and was approaching the third hour [9:00 A.M.], the divisions were drawn up for battle, and Andronikos marched out in advance of the whole army. The Saracens secured the gates with bars and bolts and spread out engines of war to defend these and took up their positions on the walls. [167] They repulsed the attackers with all manner of weapons, making the entire area within missile range impassable, thanks to the weapons they slung from the battlements and shot from bows. Despite this, Andronikos advanced on horseback and hurled his lance against the gate. Then the archers and everyone else moved into action; repeatedly the trumpets sounded out the call to battle and the cymbals were struck loudly so that the defenders on the walls and in the towers would be unnerved by the continuous shouting of the troops, their charge, and the discharge of all kinds of war engines.

The scaling ladders had already been brought forward and were firmly fixed on many sections of the wall when the news of what was taking place struck the king a piercing blow. It was as though he were suffering from a deep and unexpected hurt or that a lightning bolt had robbed him of his senses and left him dumbfounded. As soon as he recovered from his vertigo, he called for a horse and leaping onto it appeared before the Roman forces with his picked troops. Checking all attacks, he admonished them to desist from giving battle to men who had just made it known to him that they were ready to surrender themselves and the city to the emperor without bloodshed.

This benumbing information immobilized the Romans as they were about to take the city by storm, and the king negotiated treaties which, instead of rendering honor to the Romans, gave advantage to the Agarenes. Moreover, when the soldiers heard of the treaty, they could think only of returning home and did not pause to examine carefully the terms of the peace. In their haste, they filled the camp with confusion, and their ignorance of seamanship was more ruinous than fire. Without orders [168] from the general they set fire to the siege engines and rid themselves of most of their equipment. Then they made for the rowboats. Looking out to the restless sea,[461] they rushed madly onto the ships without considering the untimely voyage into wintry seas (for it was the fourth day of the month of December) [c. 13 December 1169].[462]

It was something to behold the multitudinous fleet of vessels putting in along the docks *en masse* and putting out again to scatter in ten thousand directions, some choosing to follow their own course but all steering their ships towards their homelands so that hardly six triremes remained in the harbor to carry Andronikos back. With the king and appropriate escort,

Andronikos marched overland to Jerusalem, bypassing Ikonion, and arrived at Byzantion.[463] Many ships encountered adverse winds and sank, men and all, while the rest, dispersed by heavy seas, at length reached the City's docks at the approach of spring. [1170]. Not a few, once they reached land and were emptied of their passengers, were abandoned like Charon's ferryboats to be borne without ballast by the rising and falling waves, thus surviving both the agitation of the shallow sea and the sailors' negligence.

The Saracens were very fearful of another Roman attack. To avert a future naval expedition they dispatched envoys to the emperor with rich gifts and confirmed the peace treaty.

Since the empress was already in travail and about to give birth, the Purple Bedchamber was swept clean and meticulously prepared for the
[169] childbirth and the mother's reception. When the labor pains[464] became acute, the parturient empress entered the Purple Bedchamber.[465] The sight of the emperor, who was in attendance and anxious for his wife, eased her pangs; even more, he cast frequent glances at the stargazer, the gaper at heavenly signs. Since it was a male child that issued forth from the womb [14 September 1169 (1168?)],[466] and the astrologer's art predicted that he should be blessed, a child of destiny, and successor to his father's throne, prayers of thanksgiving were offered up to God, and everyone applauded and rejoiced.

Celebrating the child's birthday and name-giving [22 September],[467] Manuel, as is the custom among the Roman emperors, regaled the City's residents[468] and named his son Alexios, choosing this name neither impulsively nor in honor of the grandfather's name, but taking heed of the oracular utterance in answer to the question: "How long shall the dynasty of Alexios Komnenos reign?" The oracular response was *aima* [blood]; if divided into letters and recounted in their order, the alpha clearly designated Alexios, the iota John [Ioannēs], and the next two letters Manuel and his successor to the throne.

As the boy increased in stature[469] and shot up like a flourishing and luxuriant young plant, the emperor had another purpose to accomplish. He transferred to his son the oaths of allegiance that had earlier been pledged to his daughter Maria and her betrothed, the Hungarian Alexios [24 March 1171]. The emperor, his son, and those who were to pledge their oaths of allegiance to the latter entered the great and celebrated
[170] Church of the Mother of God in Blachernai.[470] Having transmitted the dominion to the offspring of his loins by this ceremony of oath-taking, shortly thereafter he separated his daughter from Alexios and plighted his wife's sister,[471] who had recently set out from Antioch with Baldwin, as his wife.

When the life of the ruler of the Hungarians came to an end [1172 (1173?)],[472] Manuel, who deemed his demise an unexpected stroke of good fortune, forthwith dispatched Alexios [Béla III] with a splendid entourage and the full trappings of royalty to succeed to the throne of Hungary and reign over his fellow countrymen. Crowned without any trouble with the kingly diadem of Hungary, Alexios became the incontestable master of the whole nation.[473]

The emperor once again carefully searched for a husband for his

daughter. Making light of Roman nobles who were candidates for marriage, he carefully selected those dynasts of nations who were unmarried or those with sons who, following the death of their parents, would succeed to the paternal throne. The first place fell to William, king of Sicily.[474] One envoy after another was sent to him, while he dispatched envoys back again to negotiate the marriage contract; the embassies alternated, and the preliminary wedding deliberations were drawn out in idle chatter. When these oscillated like a scale rising and falling and were frequently altered and modified, the emperor finally changed his mind, deeming a marriage with the king of Sicily to be disadvantageous to the Romans.[475]

The maiden, a princess wooed by many,[476] was like Agamemnon's daughter Electra[477] raving long in the palace and, stately as a white poplar [171]
wet with dew, longing for the marriage bed. Later, after the emperor had given the matter much thought, she became the consort of one of the sons [Renier] of the Count of Montferrat [February 1180 (1179?)],[478] who was fair of face and pleasant to look upon; his well-groomed hair shone like the sun and he was too young to grow a beard, while she had passed her thirtieth year and was as strong as a man.

Having reached this point in my history, I shall include the following. There is a gulf in the western sea called the Adriatic which recedes from the Sicilian sea and, separating itself as an effluence of the Ionian, flows a long way in the direction of the north wind. The northernmost recesses are inhabited by the Enetoi, who, in their own dialect, call themselves Venetikoi; nourished by the sea, they are vagabonds like the Phoenicians and cunning of mind. Adopted by the Romans when there had been need for naval forces, they had left their homeland for Constantinople in swarms and by clans. From there they dispersed throughout the Roman empire; retaining only their family names and looked upon as natives and genuine Romans, they increased and flocked together. They amassed great wealth and became so arrogant and impudent that not only did they behave belligerently to the Romans but they also ignored imperial threats and commands.

Buffeted by a series of villanies, one worse than the other, the emperor now recalled their offensive behavior on Kerkyra and turned the scales against them, spewing forth his anger like the tempestuous and stormy spray blown up by a northeaster or north wind. The misdeeds of the Venetians were deemed to be excessive, and letters were dispatched to every Roman province ordering their arrest, together with the confiscation of their communal properties, and designating the day this was to take place [12 March 1171].[479] [172]

On the appointed day they were all apprehended, and a portion of their possessions was deposited in the imperial treasury, while the greater part was appropriated by the governors. Those Venetians who had dwellings in the City, especially those who were unmarried, planned to escape, and since there rode at anchor in the City's dockyards a three-masted ship of greater capacity and magnitude, as was reported, than any ship that ever lay in a harbor, they boarded her at night and raised anchors. Unfurling the sails, they returned home thanks to the winds. Fire-bearing ships and imperial triremes filled with men carrying one-

edged axes on their shoulders[480] pursued them closely. They approached the vessel but could do nothing, since the ship was driven so fast before the wind that she appeared to be flying rather than sailing; they despaired particularly because of the utter futility of boarding the vessel, thanks to her height and the desperation of those on board.

They were thus able to sail straight to Venice, their homeland. Strengthening their fleet the following year [September 1171], they attacked the islands; in Euboia they laid siege to Evripos[481] and were able to occupy a section whose buildings they burned to the ground. With the advent of spring they sailed thence and put in at the island of Chios [1172].[482]

When Manuel was informed of these happenings, he dispatched the grand duke Andronikos Kontostephanos with some one hundred and fifty triremes, a fleet which was neither inferior to that of the Venetians
[173] nor in any way less resolute or less well equipped. Roman troops were assembled from everywhere and made ready for the great battle against the enemy, and not a few allied ships were brought in, furnished by the province of the Slavs.[483] Terrified at the first report of the departure of the Roman fleet, they passed the night at the oars. Sailing from Chios, they crossed over to other islands, which they left behind in their continuing flight, then sailed towards others, and finding these inhospitable, they moved on to the next. The Romans were vexed that their naval action was unsuccessful, that they had not turned their prows towards the Venetians. Andronikos advanced as far as [Cape] Malea and chased vainly after the unattainable;[484] sailing over the open sea in pursuit of the Argo,[485] he backed water from the roadstead and put in at the City [spring 1172].

As the Venetians saw that they could not defend themselves, they made peace with the king of Sicily [September 1175], thinking that he might immediately undertake their defense and protect them in case the Romans attacked. The emperor, heeding these reports (for he knew that a petty cause often leads to momentous changes and calamities), directed his attention to earlier treaties with the Venetians [1179] and attempted to cancel their treaties with the king of Sicily. When they refused to set them aside, he won them over with offers of forbearance and friendship in answer to their demands. He not only renewed their privileges of equal citizenship with the Romans but also returned their possessions stored in the imperial treasury. The Venetians decided that it was more profitable
[174] than grievous to forgo the redistribution of their personal wealth for greater commercial benefits and agreed to receive in several payments fifteen hundred pounds of gold in return for their losses.

The following deeds were also accomplished by Emperor Manuel. Let [175]
our narrative proceed and record each event in its proper place and time. Since the sultan [Kilij Arslan II] would not embrace peace, for it was inimical to his enrichment, whereas it was always most profitable to have his Turks pour over the Roman borders, the emperor once again marched out against him. He would not allow the Turkish ruler to sleep, but, as though prodding a ravening beast, he maddened him, roused him from his lair, and provoked him into battle. Indeed, neither armistices nor truces, compacts, treaties, nor the negotiations of envoys could prevent or stave off mutual attacks, for both sides were prone to hot and reckless acts. Eager for warfare, they marched against each other on the slightest pretext; their chief business was to strip off suits of armor, assemble troops, fall to, and exchange blows. The two rulers differed from one another in this way: the sultan appeared always to be deliberate and to exercise forethought, reflecting carefully on his actions and cautiously winding up the skein of battle[486] through his commanders (no one ever saw him standing in the front line of a phalanx or sharing in his soldiers' toil); the emperor, on the other hand, was courageous by nature, reckless in battle, and daring in the deeds worked by his hand, and when the report came that the enemy had made one of its frequent incursions, wreaking havoc on his realm, he was the first to mount his horse and [176]
boldly march out his troops.[487]

Because Manuel wanted to rebuild Dorylaion,[488] he provoked the barbarian to give battle. The sultan responded by pretending that he had not known that the emperor had arrived at Dorylaion and sent an embassy to inquire as to the cause of the difficulties and to appeal to him to depart. With curling lips Manuel perused the contents of the sultan's letters. He reckoned that it was no small wonder that the Sultan should be unaware of the march on Dorylaion and should feign to be unaware of the reason. Since it was imperative to rebuild the city, Manuel, the first man to carry stones on his back, set the manly example for others to follow. Thus the walls were raised with great speed, the palisade was thrown up outside, and wells were excavated inside for drawing up an abundant water supply.

The Turks knew that they would be in danger should they be forced to abandon the fertile plains of Dorylaion on which their herds of goats and cattle grazed, romping in the verdant meadows, and should the city be restored with a Roman phalanx installed as a garrison. They gave free rein to their horses and rode at full speed against the Romans. Guarding against their forays in search of food, they prevented them from gathering wood and slew those they took captive. The emperor easily surmounted this obstacle. At the exact moment when the Romans who were charged with collecting the necessities sallied forth, he gave the command for the sounding of the trumpet, issued first from the entrenched camp, and led the way. Never leaving the side of those in search of provisions, not even briefly, he sometimes would not return to camp until late afternoon or

evening. Because he was intent on carrying the war to the Turks, they were unremittingly begrimed with dust in their flight and set fire to the crops and burned their tents so that the Romans should not succeed in securing supplies.

[177] Once, when the emperor had turned aside to eat and was peeling a peach[489] with his knife, a Turkish attack against those gathering food was announced; casting away the fruit at once he girded on his sword, donned his coat of mail, and mounted his horse to ride on at full speed. The barbarians in battle array quickly broke rank when they saw him; then, feigning flight, they wheeled round and smote their pursuers, putting their rout to advantage by shooting and overthrowing those who pressed upon them. The Turk spurs his horse again and again, and as its legs quickly strike the ground it is furiously swept along; the Turk, holding the arrow in his hands, discharges it from behind and slays the foe who is rushing to reach him by meeting him first, thus overthrowing his enemy about to overtake him, and suddenly the pursued becomes the pursuer.

When the emperor had rebuilt Dorylaion and had taken every safeguard for its defense, he departed and went to Souvleon[490] which he resorted and garrisoned. Confident that he had set all other matters in excellent order, he returned to the queen of cities [before Epiphany, 6 January 1176].[491]

Not long afterwards, the adversaries rekindled their resolve against each other and resorted to mutual recriminations. The emperor charged the sultan with ingratitude towards his benefactor and with unmindfulness of the emperor's previous acts of kindness, of his manifold assistance in establishing the sultan in his rule over his own people; the sultan blamed the emperor for his offhanded breaking of faith, for forsaking friendship, for abruptly violating the established articles of peace, and for arousing him with promises of bountiful gifts that were inscribed in imperial documents in royal purple ink and then granting him but a pittance.

[178] For these reasons the emperor collected the existing forces and augmented their numbers with fresh recruits. He also enlisted not a few mercenaries, especially from among the Latin race and from the Cumans along the Danube. Numbering his troops in the tens of thousands, he marched out intent on destroying the Turkish nation, and on taking by storm Ikonion and her walls, and on holding captive the sultan whose neck he would trample as a footstool[492] when he prostrated himself.

Now prepared for the expedition, he entered the Great Church which is named for the Divine and Ineffable Wisdom and there invoked the Divinity to be his helpmate and to grant him victory. But that He did not assent to these pleas was evident when at the war's end victory was given the enemy according to the inscrutable judgment of God.

The emperor set out from the queen of cities [summer 1176], passing through both Phrygia and Laodikeia, and came to Chonai, a prosperous and great city, the ancient Colossae, this author's homeland.[493] He entered the enormous Church of the Archangel [Michael], incomparable in beauty and a marvel of craftsmanship, and then marched on to Lampē[494] and the city of Kelainai, where are the headwaters of the Maeander[495] and where the Marsyas River discharges into the Maeander; there it is said

Apollo flayed Marsyas who, as if he had been driven mad by the sting of the gadfly, had challenged Apollo to a musical contest.[496]

From there he went on through Choma, halting at the ancient abandoned fortress of Myriokephalon,[497] so called, I believe, either because of what had happened or as a prediction of what was to occur; for at this place many tens of thousands of Roman heads would fall in violent death, as I shall relate.

The emperor always provided for well-ordered stations; he formed entrenched camps and carefully undertook his departures according to military tactics, even though he had to make his way slowly because of [179] the pack animals loaded with engines of war and the numerous noncombatants who were charged with their care. However, the Turks, who showed themselves from time to time only to engage in light skirmishes, rode on ahead and destroyed the grass along the way so that the horses of the Romans would have no forage, and they contaminated the waters so that the Romans would have no pure water to drink. The Romans were grievously afflicted by a disease of the bowels which utterly ravaged the army.

Because of these events, the sultan gave heed to war and drew upon substantial numbers of allied troops from Mesopotamia and from among the barbarians of the same race from the north. He also dispatched an embassy to the emperor to ask for a peace treaty and to promise to carry out the emperor's wishes, whatever they might be. All those who were experienced in warfare, especially in Turkish combat, and who were advanced in age, entreated Manuel to receive the embassy with open arms rather than to place all hopes on the die of battle. They begged him to keep in view how prodigious the contest would be, that the terrain was not easily passable but beset with ambuscades, and that he should neither overlook the excellent Turkish horse at peak strength nor ignore the sickness that afflicted the army. Manuel paid no heed whatsoever to the words of the older men but instead gave ear to his blood relations, especially those who had never heard the sound of the war trumpet, who sported beautiful hair styles and displayed bright and cheerful faces and wore around their necks collars of gold and translucent necklaces of sparkling gems and precious pearls. The envoys he dismissed empty-handed.

The sultan continued to pursue discussions over peace terms. But when he perceived that no progress was being made on the treaties and that the emperor was boasting that he would give him his answer at Ikonion, he occupied the rough ground called the defiles of Tzivritzē,[498] through which the Romans had to pass after leaving Myriokephalon. There the Sultan crowded together his phalanxes to resist the Romans. [180] This place is a far-stretching defile with mountain passes that descends gently the steep northern slope to the hills below, opening up into broad ravines and then dropping down on the other side to jutting rocks and precipitous, beetling cliffs.

It appears that Manuel took no precautions on behalf of the army when he set out on such a path. He neither lightened the loads of the pack animals nor did he put aside the wagons carrying the siege engines, nor did he attempt to rout the Turks in advance from the overgrown mountain passes with a company of his light troops, thus smoothing the

way for the army. After making his way over the open plains, he elected to be pressed in by this narrow defile, even though he had been forewarned. He was soon to verify these reports with his eyes when the barbarians, having occupied the mountain ridges, would attack, emptying their quivers with discharges of arrows, thereby putting the Romans to flight and checking their advance.

The emperor, nonetheless, led on his phalanxes. The month was September [17 September 1176]. Constantine Angelos's two sons, John and Adronikos, Constantine Makrodoukas,[499] and Andronikos Lapardas, together with their own troops, formed the van of the army. Following these came the right wing, led by Baldwin, the brother of the emperor's wife, while Theodore Mavrozomēs commanded the left wing. Next came the pack animals, the camp menials, and the wagons carrying the siege engines. Then came the emperor himself with his picked troops, followed by Andronikos Kontostephanos as the rear guard.

The troops about Angelos's sons, Makrodoukas and Lapardas, passed through the rough terrain without injury, for the infantry, sent on ahead, startled the barbarians, dislodging them from the hills below the mountain where they had been posted to give battle, and sent them scurrying back to the steeper slopes for cover. Perhaps the troops who followed would have passed safely through the Turkish melee also had they only closed ranks with the companies who had preceded them and used their archers to repel the onslaughts of the attacking Turks, but they neglected to maintain closed ranks, allowing the superior number of Turks swarming down the hill sides from the higher ground to scatter the troops and engage them in a most reckless manner. The Turks routed Baldwin's men, wounded many, and slew not a few. Thereupon, Baldwin, seeing that his troops were in a sorry plight, too weak to break through the enemy's ranks and escape, and pressed hard on all sides, gathered certain of his knights and rode through the Turkish phalanxes, but, surrounded by the enemy, he was slain. All his companions fell with him, displaying desperate courage in their daring and noble deeds.

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Elated by their success, the barbarians closed all avenues of escape to the Romans, who, pressed closely together, were unable to move through the mountain pass. The Romans in this narrow space fell over one another, unable to harm the enemy, and in blocking the way to those marching with them they made it impossible for them to defend themselves. Thus they were easily killed by their attackers, for there was no aid whatsoever from the troops in the rear or from the emperor, nor was there any possibility of retreating or breaking out on either flank. The wagons drawn along in the middle not only stopped the troops who had gone on ahead from turning back and rendering aid but also acted as a barricade against the forward advance of the emperor's troops.

The ox was felled by a Turkish arrow, and the driver expired by its side. The horse and its rider were cast down together.[500] The hollows were filled with bodies. The groves were glutted with the fallen. The babbling, rushing streams flowed red with blood. Blood commingled with blood, human blood with the blood of pack animals. The horrors that took place there defy all description. Since they could neither advance nor retreat (for the Turks took up positions in the rear and made the way

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forward impassable), the Romans, like cattle in their pens, were cut down in this gorge.

Whatever noble purpose and burning desire to resist the adversary still survived was soon extinguished and lost, and all their zeal deserted the Romans when the enemy brought before them another calamitous spectacle: the head of Andronikos Vatatzēs raised on a lance. He was the Emperor Manuel's nephew[501] who had been dispatched with an army levied in Paphlagonia and Herakleia of the Pontos to oppose the Turks of Amaseia.

The emperor, bewildered by these reports and abominable spectacles, looked upon his nephew's head lifted high and saw before his eyes the magnitude of the danger in which he was ensnared. Despondent and sullen, he gave himself over to grieving, as they say, with muffled tears and passively awaited the future.

The Roman divisions which had marched on ahead safely traversed those precarious pathways and occupied a hill which provided enough security for a bivouac in an entrenched camp.

The Turks exerted themselves mightily to overcome the emperor's troops, for if they had put to flight the greatest number and stoutest part, then they believed they would easily paralyze the others, just as a serpent's coils perish when its head is crushed, or a city, after its citadel falls, and it is wholly plunged into ruin, suffers the worst horrors. The emperor repeatedly attempted to dislodge the barbarians blocking the pathways [183] and pressed his troops hard to clear a way through, but he saw that his plans were not succeeding, that his losses would not be less by remaining where he was, for the Turks were ever prevailing, as they fought from higher ground. And so he led a charge against the enemy with a few of his troops and enjoined the rest to save themselves as best they could; from what he could perceive there was no hope.

Manuel slipped out of the phalanx's iron grip as though it were a trap set for a weasel. He suffered many wounds and bruises from sword and mace wielded by the Turks: his whole body was covered with injuries, his shield was pierced by some thirty bloodthirsty arrows, and he was unable to set straight his helmet which had been knocked askew. But beyond all expectations he escaped the clutches of the barbarians, protected by God who long ago had screened David's head in the day of battle,[502] as the lover of psalms himself relates. The other Roman divisions fared much worse. Pierced continually from all sides by the metal heads of lances and continuously smitten by arrows, they perished as they fell over one another. There were some who passed through the ravine, repulsing the Turks stationed there, and advanced to reach the next hollow, where they were cut down by the enemy troops posted there. This pathway cuts through seven trench-like and contiguous valleys, becoming wider for a short distance and then contracting again into a narrow pass; these valleys were carefully guarded by Turkish troops. Nor was the remaining area lacking in enemy, for the whole region was filled with them.

Then a strong wind blew, whipping the sandy soil into a violent sand storm that enveloped both armies. They fell upon one another, attacking their adversaries as though they were fighting in the night, and in the darkness that can be felt,[503] they slaughtered their own friends for it was

[184] impossible to distinguish between countryman and foreigner. Turks and Romans drew their swords against their own men and slew whoever approached as an enemy, so that the gullies became one huge grave, a burial place of diverse nations, the common resting place of Romans and barbarians, of horses, oxen, and pack asses.

The greater part of the Romans fell, as did most of the emperor's most illustrious kinsmen. When the dust had settled and the blinding mist had dissipated, some were to be seen (alas, how pitiful the spectacle!) buried to the waist and neck in the corpses. They stretched forth their hands in supplication and with piteous gestures and voices echoing a mournful refrain pleaded with those nearby to come to their aid, but none who passed could defend or save them. Everyone who saw their suffering foresaw his own calamity and ran to escape mortal danger; appearing pitiless without wanting it, each fled as fast he could to save himself.

Emperor Manuel paused to rest in the shade of a wild pear tree, to regain his spent strength, having neither armor-bearer at his side, nor lancer, nor bodyguard following him. When a cavalryman, a man of common and humble station, saw the emperor, he took pity and approached him, and moved by devotion he eagerly volunteered to serve him to the utmost of his ability; thereupon he adjusted the emperor's helmet which had slipped to one side.

While the emperor was resting beneath the wild pear tree, a certain Turk ran up and grabbed the emperor's horse by the reins since there was no one to hinder him; Manuel struck him on the head with the piece of his lance which he still held and knocked him to the ground. Soon other Turks in search of captives rushed at him, but he repulsed them with ease; the emperor, catching up the lance of a cavalryman at his side, transfixed one of the attackers and killed him; the cavalryman, unsheathing his sword, cut off the head of another.

When another ten Roman troops had assembled about the emperor,
[185] he departed, eager to rejoin the divisions which had gone on ahead. After proceeding a short distance, however, his advance was again barred by the Turks as well as impeded by the corpses of the fallen which lay about in the open in heaps, obstructing the roads. Crossing over the rugged terrain and the swollen mountain stream flowing nearby, and treading on the carcasses and riding over them, he collected another band of Roman soldiers who came running when they saw him. When he looked up he espied his niece's husband, John Kantakouzenos, one man hotly contending against many, bravely pressing his attack while looking about to see if anyone was coming to his aid. A short time afterwards, the emperor saw him fall and despoiled because no one had come to his defense.

When the Turks who had slain Kantakouzenos saw the emperor passing by (for it was impossible to escape their notice), they formed into a band and set upon him as though in pursuit of great prey; they were undecided whether to take him captive or to kill him. All were mounted on Arabian stallions, and in appearance they stood out from the many: they carried elegant weapons, and their horses were bedecked with splendid ornaments, in particular with adornments of tinkling bells suspended from horsehair that reached far down the neck. The emperor roused the mettle of the men around him and easily repulsed the enemy's charge. He

pushed forward little by little, sometimes by the law of warfare and sometimes without bloodshed, outdistancing the Turks who had joined together in their rush to seize him. Glad and thrice-pleased, the emperor overtook the divisions that had gone on ahead, less concerned for themselves than anxious that he had not yet appeared.

Before joining up with them, he had been overcome by thirst while still in the region of the stream mentioned above, and he asked one of the men standing nearby to fill a pitcher with water and to bring it to him to drink. Taking only so much of the water as to wet his palate,[504] he poured out the rest so that he should not experience the pleasure of the liquid [186] passing down his throat. The drinking water, he saw on close inspection, was defiled by gore; he wailed aloud and said that fortunately he had not tasted of the blood of Christians. A certain man standing nearby who showed himself to be rash and impudent, more unpleasant than these troubled times, unblushingly commented: "Get along with you, O Emperor, this is certainly not so, oh no! This is not the first time; often in the past you have drunk unto intoxication from a wholly unmixed wine bowl of Christian blood, stripping and gleaning your subjects." The emperor cheerfully suffered this accusing and abusive man as though he had not heard him or as one who had no reproofs in his mouth.[505]

When the emperor saw the Turks ripping open the moneybags of the treasury and seizing the gold and silver coin strewn on the ground, he exhorted the Romans around him to fall on the barbarians and take possession of the monies to which they had a greater right than did the Turks. The same man once more stepped forth and shamelessly reviled the emperor for giving such orders: "These monies should have been offered willingly to the Romans earlier, not now, when they can be won only with great difficulty and bloodshed. If he [Manuel] be a man of strength as he boasts he is, unless it is the sour wine that speaks [?],[506] let him meet the gold-plundering Turks in battle, and after bravely thrashing them, let him restore the loot to the Romans." Manuel remained silent before even these words, neither grumbling nor muttering under his breath but suffering the rashness of the reviler as did David the impudence of Semei of old.[507]

Late in the day, Andronikos Kontostephanos, who commanded the rear guard, appeared unharmed, and many of the other forces which were largely unscathed rushed to meet Manuel.

As night fell and darkness succeeded day, the fighting ceased. Each man sat with his head in the palm of his hand, distraught and terrified by the imminent danger. These men did not number themselves among the [187] living, for they heard the barbarians running along the edge of the camp, in piercing tones exhorting their countrymen who had gone over to the Romans in the past (whether out of necessity or because they had been converted) to leave the camp that very night because everyone within would be dead come the dawn. The Romans spent the night in their clans and with chosen friends, and fear turned their complexions pale just as the leaves of trees change color in the leaf-shedding season.

The emperor himself suffered the travail of ignoble designs. As soon as he gave birth to them he presented them to his companions, and his plan of secret flight and the abandonment of so many souls to slavery and

death shocked his listeners, especially Kontostephanos, as words spoken by one who had lost his senses or was whirling about because of dizziness. Those who gathered to deliberate on what course of action should be taken took sorely to heart what they heard, but when a certain unknown soldier standing outside the tent heard the imperial scheme, he raised his voice, wailing aloud, "Alas, what are these things that the emperor has put into his head?" Directing the force of his words to Manuel, he declared, "Are you not the one who has squeezed us into these desolate and narrow paths, exposing us to utter ruin, the one who has ground us as though in a mortar between these cliffs falling in upon us and the mountains pressing down upon us?[508] Would not our crossing these rough and harsh paths be the same thing as passing through the valley of weeping[509] and the mouth of Hades? What charge can we bring against the barbarians for investing these narrow, rugged, and winding places and ensnaring us? And now will you deliver us over to the enemy like sheep for slaughter?"[510] Stung to the heart, Manuel relented in his soul and chose another, more suitable course.

[188] But He who in olden times had left a seed for Israel so that His own inheritance should not utterly disappear, becoming as Sodom and being made like to Gomorrha,[511] He who chastises and heals again, who strikes down and restores to life,[512] who does not allow the rod of sinners to be upon the lot of the righteous,[513] had compassion then upon the holy nation, not wishing to cast them off forever.[514] He quite unexpectedly moved the sultan's heart to mercy, which was incompatible with his nature, and whereas the sultan had formerly stood in fear of the emperor's valor, he was now moved to pity by Manuel's misfortunes. Thus He who sets as naught the counsel of Achitophel by way of Chusi and changes Abessalom's mind by promising even greater destruction against his enemies,[515] deflected the Turkish ruler from his duty. Misled by the counsels of his grandees, who in peacetime received money by the handful from the emperor, the sultan dispatched an embassy to discuss a peace based on a treaty with the same terms as before. He anticipated that the emperor, urged on by the Almighty, would accept the compacts which were being forced upon him.

The Turks, unaware of the sultan's aims, moved out at the crack of dawn [18 September 1176] to encircle the Romans like wild beasts rushing to gulp down a prepared dish or to carry off both abandoned eggs and undefended nest.[516] Riding in a circle around the entrenched camp and raising their barbarian war cry, they struck down those within with their arrows. The emperor therefore commanded John, Constantine Angelos's

[189] son, to attack the Turks with his troops; obedient to the imperial command, he attempted to repulse them, but he was unable to perform any noble deed and returned. Next, Constantine Makrodoukas led out his forces mustered from among the eastern divisions, but he, too, turned back after making a brief showing.

The sultan dispatched Gabras,[517] the most honored and esteemed of his officials, to the emperor. Henceforth, the Turks, by command, ceased their attacks from all sides, and the Romans ended their sallies. On being received by the emperor, Gabras rendered a profound obeisance in the

barbarian fashion, and at the same time presented as a gift from the sultan a Nisaean[518] horse with silver-mounted bridle from among those horses kept at rack and manger for use in solemn processions, and he also presented a long, two-edged sword. As he initiated the discussion of peace terms, using soft words, he mollified the emperor's evident discomfiture, soothing his raging passion as though the words he whispered into his ears were enchantments. Gabras observed the yellowish appearance of the surcoat over the emperor's coat of mail and remarked, "This is not an auspicious color, O Emperor, but in the hour of warfare it very much militates against good fortune." Manuel, forcing a brief smile at these words, removed the surcoat embroidered with purple and gold and presented it to Gabras. He then accepted the horse and sword, had the treaties drawn up, and set his hand to them. Time would not permit certain articles to be spelled out precisely, but it was stipulated that the fortresses of Dorylaion and Souvleon were to be demolished.

Now that Manuel found the barbarian to be speaking truthfully on behalf of peace and not disposed to devising deceitful stratagems, he requested that he might depart by a route other than the road he had [190] taken earlier so that he should not retrace his steps, desiring to bypass the fallen dead. But the guides led him over the original route rather than over another so that he should see the horrible spectacle with his own eyes. Indeed, the sight was worthy of tears, or, more accurately, the magnitude of the evil was too great for tears. The ravines were leveled with corpses, while the hollows rose up to become sepulchral mounds and the groves were hidden. The slain had had their scalps torn from their heads, and the phalluses of many had been cut off. It was said that the Turks took these measures so that the circumcised could not be distinguished from the uncircumcised and the victory therefore disputed and contested since many had fallen on both sides. No one passed by on the opposite side[519] without bursting into tears and calling by name his slain companions and close friends.[520]

At this point in the narrative I can now say that it is difficult to protect mankind from the future and that none can deliver us easily from the events which overtake us except the Deity, who, through our supplications, takes pity and turns aside the perils, or shakes the cup and thereby blends the unmixed wine and dilutes the pure wine because of his love for mankind. At the time the emperor had first proposed to march against the Turks, as he lay sleeping he saw himself in a dream boarding a flagship together with many of his close friends with whom he sailed into the Propontis [Sea of Marmara]; suddenly the mountains of Europe and Asia appeared to collapse and everything in the shattered vessel was lost, while he was barely able to swim to dry land. The day on which he set out on his dangerous march, a certain man, an interpreter, and a Roman by race, whose surname was Mavropoulos, came to him and related that he dreamed he entered a church named after [Saint] Cyrus, and as he was making a propitiatory offering he heard a voice coming from the icon of the Mother of God saying, "The emperor is now in the utmost danger," [191] and "Who will go forth in my name to assist him?" The voice of one unseen answered, "Let [Saint] George go." "He is sluggish," came the

reply. "Let [Saint] Theodore set forth," then suggested the voice, but he was also rejected, and finally came the painful response that no one could avert the impending evil.[521] So much for these matters.

After they had descended over the rough ground, the Turks pressed upon the Romans from the rear; it was said that the Turk [sultan] regretted setting free the prey that was in hand and that he permitted his troops to follow in order to inflict the same injury as they had done before the treaties had been drawn. The entire Turkish forces did not escort the Romans through the nearly impenetrable terrain, but rather they sporadically followed close upon them in bands, and thus the chiefs and the majority of their soldiers returned home laden with the spoils of war. The pursuers slew many, especially from among the wounded and the noncombatants, even though the emperor had ordered his most martial and energetic commanders to take charge of the rear.

When the Romans reached Chonai, they knelt in gratitude that they would no longer have to look upon the enemy. The emperor made provision that every ailing man be given a silver stater for special medical treatment and went himself to Philadelphia, where he remained several days recuperating from the injuries he had sustained during the campaign.

Messengers were sent on ahead by the emperor to relate the events that had taken place to the Constantinopolitans describing the emperor as one who had suffered the same fate as Romanos Diogenēs, who also had lost the greater part of his army while campaigning against the Turks in the past and was himself taken captive and carried off [Manzikert, 1071].[522] Then he extolled the treaties made with the sultan, boasting that these had been concluded beneath his own banner which had waved in the wind in view of the enemy's front line so that trembling and fear fell upon them.[523]

[192] Along the way, Manuel visted Souvleon and demolished the fortress in accordance with the sultan's wishes, but he left Dorylaion untouched. The sultan, therefore, dispatched an embassy to remind him of the articles of the treaty and expressed his surprise that the emperor had not demolished Dorylaion immediately. The emperor responded that he had been able to give but little attention to urgent matters, made no mention whatsoever of dismantling Dorylaion, and simply recited that part of the Pythia's oracle addressed to Epikydes' son [Glaucus]:

> Yet hath the Oath-God a son who is nameless, footless and handless;
> Mighty in strength he approaches to vengeance, and whelms in destruction
> All who belong to the race, or the house of the man who is perjured.
> But oath-keeping men leave behind them a flourishing offspring.[524]

The Turk, setting apart from his whole army an elite division numbering twenty-four thousand men, appointed the *atabeg*[525] as commander and sent him to ravage the cities and provinces as far as the sea with instructions to spare nothing and to bring him back water from the sea, an oar, and sand. The *atabeg* carried out his orders and fell upon the cities along the Maeander. Attacking them suddenly without warning, he wasted

them mercilessly. He took by force the cities of Tralles, Phrygian Antioch,[526] Louma, and Pentacheir and seized some other fortresses, all of which he sacked completely. He continued on, laying waste the coastal provinces.

When the emperor was apprised of these events, he resorted to various stratagems; issuing forth from his tent without the blare of trumpets or horns, he said, "We have no need of such as these now, but of bows and lances, so that those who (in the words of David) hate us and have made a noise and lifted their heads[527] may be expelled from the Roman provinces." In no wise could he justify his setting out against the enemy, and so he dispatched his nephew John Vatatzēs,[528] a vigorous commander in [193] time of need, and Constantine Doukas,[529] a youth growing his first beard and who, like luxuriant plants, promised to bear fruit prematurely, as well as Michael Aspietēs.[530] He strongly exhorted them to achieve their mission with prudence and in an orderly manner, and above all they were not to engage the barbarians unless they first had precise knowledge of the enemy's numbers and were confident that they could defeat them in battle.

The Turks, whose onslaught was stopped only by the sea, returned with enormous plunder, for they also ravaged those regions which they had bypassed during their descent. Vatatzēs' officers, at the head of the forces provided by the emperor together with those they collected along the way, hurriedly made their way to the fortresses of Hyelion and Leimmocheir where, in olden times, a bridge spanned the Maeander River.[531] Because the scouts whom Vatatzēs had placed along all the roads leading there reported that the Turks had turned back and were no longer forging ahead, the commander divided the army into two sections and deployed the greater part as ambushes along the roads the enemy was to traverse. Then he stationed the remainder along the old bridge with orders to wait until a portion of the Turks had crossed over and then to meet them courageously and without fear.

While Vatatzēs, having deemed this plan the best tactic, deployed his troops accordingly; the Turks crossed over and, pelted by missiles cast from the higher ground, tumbled into the river and drowned. The *atabeg* rallied his heavy-armed troops about him into a compact body and engaged the Romans in nearly equal combat, wishing to inflict heavy losses on the foe in order to give his compatriots the opportunity to cross over the river. But as every soldier was not eager to attempt the crossing, it proved to be very slow, and those who balked perished cruelly. The *atabeg*'s protracted resistance, fiercely fought, proved him to be a man of prowess and noble deeds. When he learned that the Romans were posted [194] along the opposite bank of the river and, there, were killing those Turkish troops who attempted to cross over, his morale was shattered and his great courage gave way to the resolution to save himself. Altering his present course, he withdrew upstream to find another crossing place. Since the river could not be forded at any point and he was in fear of his pursuers, he floated his shield in the water and used it as a boat, thus opposing the harshness of necessity in a most excellent manner. With his left hand he held his horse as it swam; in his right hand he grasped his naked sword as if it were an oar, and so he quickly rowed across the

river's expanse. But he did not escape death in the end. On reaching the opposite shore, he ascended a hill and shouted in triumph, boasting loudly. None of the notable Romans who recognized him drew near, but one of the Alan allies rushed to the spot where this novel rowing terminated and slew him with his two-edged sword. Consequently, the Turks fled in disorder. The majority were engulfed by the Maeander, and only a few out of the many thousands were able to save themselves.

This deed, more than any other, revived the fortunes of the Romans and silenced the crowing of the Turks. As there was no one to oppose them, the Romans advanced with rejoicing, ravaging and laying waste nearly all of that part of Phrygia which stretches along the Maeander, whose winding streams empty into the sea.

In this battle, Aspietēs fell in the following manner: a Turk engaged him, but unable to strike him a blow on the body (for Aspietēs' weapons were mighty and his shield reached to his feet), he charged Aspietēs'
[195] mount; struck a fatal blow to the face, the horse reared back and, raising its front legs, threw its rider into the river.

In addition to this exploit, the emperor, firm in his resolve to accomplish another, marched first against the Turks encamped in Lakerion and then against Panasion.[532] Successful in driving the Turks out of Panasion, he then pursued those in Lakerion. Before entering the lands where the enemy was encamped, he dispatched Katidēs of Laodikeia to reconnoiter the Turkish positions and to report with all speed what he had observed. As the emperor was rushing to seize the Turks as booty for the taking and easy prey, Katidēs frightened them off by telling them of the emperor's arrival. Thus provoked, Manuel flew into a rage and decreed the ablation of his nose as punishment. The emperor did not hesitate for a moment but hastened on without engaging the foe.

As in the past, he sent Andronikos Angelos[533] against the Turks, but this time he did not fare well in the campaign. Sending along with Andronikos the very best of the eastern divisions and Manuel Kantakouzenos,[534] a brave man valiant in battle, he also launched other illustrious Romans against the Turks in Charax, which is situated between Lampe and Graos Gala.[535] Andronikos first encamped his armed forces at Graos Gala, where he safely deposited the pack animals and baggage before he proceeded towards Charax with the lightly armed troops. He performed no courageous feat worthy of such an army, which had been led there under these circumstances, but rather limited his actions to the seizure of flocks and a few Turkish shepherds before he returned thence in great fear. When certain barbarians showed themselves at night in the rear and shouted out, he did not wait to ascertain the numbers of his pursuers or to deploy his troops for battle, but giving rein to his mount, he spurred it
[196] on with his hands, feet, and voice so as to quicken its pace, not in the direction of the camp, but towards the city of Chonai. Seeing that his horse was still able to continue, he did not end his ride there but eagerly exerted himself to reach Phrygian Laodikeia. The army, thrown into confusion by the sudden disappearance of its commander, broke rank and fled in total disarray, leaving behind both flocks and captives.

In all likelihood, because it was still night, the Romans would have fallen upon one another and have fought among themselves had not

Manuel Kantakouzenos stood in their way with drawn sword and struck the deserters with its flat side, commanding, "Stand fast. There are no enemy forces attacking, so whither are you flying?" Thus they finally ended their irrational flight at full speed down ravines and up hills.

Suffering grievously on account of Andronikos's ignominious flight, the emperor came near to pouring contempt upon Andronikos by parading him through the streets of the City dressed in a woman's garment. But, being fond and ever indulgent of his blood relations, he suppressed his anger; moreover, he was informed that very few Romans had fallen in this battle.

No one had distinguished himself in this campaign, either on the rapid march inland to engage the barbarians or during the even more speedy withdrawal. A certain Turk had taken up a position on high ground where he crouched and discharged his deadly arrows, killing many Romans as they passed by and sending them on their way down into Hades. Penetrating shield and breastplate, his arrows were an irresistible evil. Therefore, all who laid claim to valor joined together to oppose him; when at close range, they let fly their arrows and furiously struck at him with their lances. He, however, openly performed a war dance, dodging the missiles, and then, twirling about, he cut down his attackers until Manuel Xeros jumped from his horse and, under cover of his shield, [197] charged the Turk with sword in hand. Taking all the arrows on his shield, Xeros slew him with a fatal blow to the head. The Turk found Xeros determined on killing him, unbending, truly adamant, and unyielding to his plea that he be spared. He suffered one and then a second ill-timed blow as he begged for humane treatment from those for whom he himself had been an evil destroyer.

My kinsman, enrolled in the clergy of the city of Chonai, a Levite in rank [deacon], and a man of great courage who accompanied the remainder of the army to Charax in military attire, looted whatever he could get his hands on in the Turkish tents. Even in the face of danger he did not leave the spoils behind but carried away such loot as Turkish garments in a pouch and a thick-fleeced ewe. As he walked slowly with all eyes turned on him, he was applauded by some as being fearless in perilous times and the very best of those who campaigned at that time, but others derided him for sparing the life of a sheep. He made his way in this fashion, reproaching when it was practicable the runaways who took flight while no one was pursuing them [1177–79].

Not long afterwards [end of 1179], the Turks invested the city named after Claudius Caesar [Claudiopolis].[536] They first blocked the defending garrison assigned to the fortress from issuing forth and laid siege to the city. Those within threatened to capitulate and surrender the city unless outside help were forthcoming, contending that they could not endure starvation for very long, and, moreover, that they did not have the means to repel the enemy.

Manuel, unwilling to wait for news of disaster, rose up the next day and set out for Claudiopolis as fast as possible via Nikomedia. He took with him none of the royal luxuries—not even royal pavilion, bed, or mattress—but only the horse trappings and armor woven of chain mail. He extended the distance of the day's march in his eagerness to reach the [198]

besieged before they should suffer dangers beyond description. He passed the nights without sleep and resorted to artificial light as he marched through Bithynia, which is completely covered with heavily wooded glens and in many places is impassable because of the thickly shaded forests. Whenever he had need of rest, the earth was his throne and hay and chaff his bedding; when rain fell and the day's march happened to end in a ravine, he was soaked by the water dropping from above and his sleep was interrupted by the streams of water flowing under his mattress. Actions such as these brought him more affection and admiration than when he wore his diadem, donned the purple robe, and mounted his horse with gold trappings.

The barbarians positioned about Claudiopolis caught sight of him as he approached, first aware of his arrival from the military standards of his divisions and the radiant splendor of their arms, and forthwith took flight. Manuel pressed the attack, pursuing the enemy as far as possible. Thus, to the Roman inhabitants of this city who had already given in to the designs of the Turks, the emperor's appearance was most welcome; it was like the relief sailors must feel when, after laboring wearily at the oars and sweating profusely, a fair wind blows and the melancholy of winter is succeeded by sweetest springtime or like some distressful situation which is followed by more auspicious conditions.

The following must also be recorded. This emperor, unable to undertake military operations against those nations that dwell around the Ionian gulf or, rather, ever having before his eyes their assaults against the Romans which he deemed formidable and difficult to withstand, realized that the Roman forces were unequal to the task of standing up against the Western armies, that they were like earthern pots striking kettles.[537] He also realized it was possible that the nations would enter into a compact against the Romans, suspecting they would actually join in a conspiracy. Safeguarding himself from afar in all kinds of ways, he contended that it was permissible to lead on the barbarians in the East, to buy their friendship with money and to convince them by feats of arms not to pour over his borders. But the Western nations which were scattered over many places he viewed with suspicion, for these men were boastful, undaunted in spirit, lacking all humility, and trained to be ever bloodthirsty. They all dressed in great opulence and wore armor into battle; and they also nurtured an unsleeping hostility against the Romans, a perpetual, raving, hatred as they looked askance at them. [199]

And so to Venice, Genoa, Pisa, Ancona, and the other nations spread along the sea, he offered friendship ratified with sworn compacts and won them over with sundry friendly gestures as he provided them with quarters in the queen of cities. Anxious lest one of their so-called kings should muster a large military force and then attack the Romans, he plied them with gifts of money; and he exercised his influence over those peoples who were in danger of falling under the sway of a more powerful ruler and roused them to take up arms. [200]

Time and again he armed the Italians against Frederick, the king of Germany. The latter demanded that they should submit and turn their affairs over to him, while the emperor dispatched envoys who emboldened the Italians, enjoining them to prevail against Frederick and to beware of the king's crafty ways.

Frederick attempted several times to enter elder Rome to be crowned, but Manuel thwarted the move by writing to the pope [1167–68],[538] "Do not bestow your glory upon another,[539] and do not repeat the restrictions of the fathers[540] lest you discover later that your soul is smitten with regret thanks to the unforeseen in these actions and to unreasonable negligence, at which time the evil will be wholly incurable." Consequently, the king was shut out of Rome the very glorious as though he were an unarmed commander boasting of myriads of troops.[541]

When the walls of Milan were destroyed by the Germans [1 March 1162], the city's inhabitants outwitted those who forced them to swear never to rebuild them, first by protecting themselves behind a deeply dug trench, contending that they had not therefore perjured themselves, and then by restoring the walls with the help of the emperor.

Following these events [1177], Manuel enlisted as a friend of the Romans the marquis of Montferrat [William],[542] who could boast a noble

lineage and fair children, as well as great power and influence, by granting him abundant gifts and by marrying his own daughter Maria to the marquis's younger son. Thus, as we stated a short while ago,[543] he further frustrated the machinations of the ruler of the Germans. The latter dis-
[201] patched his official, called a *cancellarius* in the Latin language and logothete by the Hellenes (this was the bishop of Mainz [Christian]), with a large force, and he won over the Italian cities; detaching them from the pope, he appropriated them without fear [1179]. The emperor, by supporting the marquis with promises of largess, persuaded him to oppose the bishop of Mainz with his own son Conrad, comely and in the bloom of youth, brave and prudent beyond measure, and flourishing in vigor and bodily strength. When battle was joined, he repulsed the Germans, turning them to flight with his cavalry, and took some captives among whose numbers was the bishop of Mainz. He would have been sent on to Byzantion had not the emperor prevented this out of compassion [Feast of St. Michael, 29 September 1179].

There were no cities in Italy or even in more distant regions where this emperor did not have someone sworn to be faithful to his cause. Indeed, these men reported to the emperor whatever mischief and intrigue the enemies of the Romans contrived behind closed doors.

Once [before 1 April 1173], certain envoys of the emperor came to Ancona on affairs of state. They achieved their goals and completed their mission, which was either to win the friendship of certain persons whom they call *lizioi* [lieges] for the emperor or to gain some other advantage for the Romans. The king of the Germans, advised of this mission, flew into a rage and sent his troops to lay siege to Ancona, to chastise and punish the inhabitants for concluding an alliance with the Romans and for welcoming their envoys whose only purpose was to do him mischief and to remove the cities from his favor and allegiance. His troops surrounded the city as an enemy stronghold and mounted an attack against the Anconians [1 April–15 October 1173].[544] They demanded that the Romans be
[202] handed over, but the Anconians were so mindful of these threats, or so distraught by the palisaded camp thrown up by the enemy, or perhaps so distressed by this military investment that they did not deliver those whom the Germans importunately demanded but dismissed such thoughts from their minds and heroically endured the present danger. As the siege was protracted, with the enemy prolonging their investment, the Anconians laid hands on strange foods and unaccustomed fare, like those who choose to run after banquets but feed on bread.

The emperor's envoys convened an assembly of the people to inquire whether they might bring in assistance. The people replied that it was permissible, but, as was obvious, they did not have an abundance of money. The envoys assured them, calling upon God as their witness, that the emperor would defray all expenses. They were urged not to delay, else the worst would be guaranteed at the hands of those who would take the city: the abduction of childen and women, and the plunder of monies and possessions. Thereupon the city sent for a certain Count William [of Marchisella] by name and a certain noblewoman [Aldruda Frangipane, countess of Bertinoro][545] who, recently deprived of her husband by Death, had inherited her husband's family power and authority. Once the

people had agreed to make bountiful payments to these two, the enemy was beaten off with ease, and the citizens rejoiced over the recovery of their liberty as if their city had swum to the surface from the bottom of the sea. The emperor had good cause to be gladdened by these events; he heaped praise upon the Anconians and, admitting them to the same civic rights enjoyed by Roman citizens, he promised to provide them with whatever legitimate and practicable needs they might request. He also sent ever-increasing sums of gold.

Thus was concluded the affair of the Anconians, who were disposed to remain steadfast in their loyalty, rather than to change their minds with every turn of the wheel of fortune. One might be perplexed as to the reason why they thrust aside the demands of a neighboring monarch who was more deserving of leading them, as was the king of the Germans, and favored the Roman emperor, who held sway over much of the visible earth and shadowy mountains,[546] were it not for their innate consciousness of right-doing which remained undaunted and ardent in the face of danger, unshaken before adversity. Moreover, the Anconians would have [203] been hard put to answer the accusation that as slaves to gain, holding out their hands and begging, they had defected from the ruler who had recently been appointed over them in order to follow another,[547] who had aroused their desire for profit and had catered to their venality.

While the emperor was thus managing these affairs, the Romans jeered at him for vainly nurturing such inordinate ambitions and setting his eyes upon the ends of the earth,[548] for overstepping by far the bounds fixed by former emperors, and for squandering to no useful purpose the revenues which he collected by his authority, gleaning the tax registers and exhausting the extraordinary taxes. The citizenry was not at all justified, however, in hurling such accusations, inasmuch as his actions were not completely unreasonable innovations, for he had seen the irresistible power of the neighbor Latin nations and feared a conspiracy, as I have related,[549] that would deluge our lands like a swollen mountain stream suddenly cresting and sweeping away farmlands. Wary lest a small spark ignite the brand which, if by chance it should fall upon flammable wood, will then set off a huge fire that grows into a conflagration, and because of this single suspicion, he attempted to extinguish the cause of vexations by imitating those excellent husbandmen who uproot the young prickly plants which ruin the garden plot and destroy the newly budding wild trees.

As events were to demonstrate after he had departed this life, his thoughts and actions were both sound and reasonable; and shortly after this wise helmsman was cast overboard by circumstances, the ship of state [204] sank.

I will not conceal that he strove to increase the taxes. Nor will I pass over the fact that the authorities went out as tax farmers in his desire to turn virgin ground into fields; with his own plow he cut furrows from which sprang full-grown ears of corn of extraordinary size for his benefit. The collected revenues were not so much deposited in the treasuries or buried in the recesses of the earth[550] as they were drained away in lavish endowments to monasteries and churches and to Romans in want, but by far the larger part was poured out among the divers nations and especially

emptied into the Latin communes. In pursuit of a policy of ostentatious munificence, he dissipated and wasted whatever he gathered with both hands by appointing rapacious tax collectors as procurators in charge of the public revenues.

His kinsmen and close friends also received a proper portion of the expenditures. For example, his niece Theodora with whom, as we have related, he had sexual intercourse, was a member of the imperial retinue except that she did not wear a crown; supercilious by nature, she would enter the palace only when it was swept clean, as she arched her eyebrow in conceited disdain. The son she bore the emperor, as well as the other sons who came one after another, diverted to themselves seas of money.

The emperor easily succumbed to the influence of the chamberlains and the eunuchs of the bedchambers; the same was true for those attendants from foreign-language nations who spoke broken Greek and driveled in their speech; and he even gave orders favoring the affluent, repeatedly inclining his ear to them and readily granting their every request. To some of these the means of livelihood flowed so profusely that they swam in rivers of money, as do the illustrious of the world and the grandees of the greatest nations which, totally lacking in learning and in knowledge of the Hellenic language, go in search of the course [of these riches] in the manner of peaks and cliffs hearkening to the reverberating echo of songs played on the shepherds' flutes. Fully confident in these men as his most loyal and devoted servants, he not only entrusted them
[205] with the highest offices but also appointed them judges as though they had recently become experts in the law.

Whenever it was necessary to register taxable lands in certain provinces (which was often), this coterie of experts was preferred. Should a Roman nobleman, one prudent and sagacious, be associated with them, he was sent along so that while he drew up the tax register and designated what taxes were to be collected, his barbarian colleague gathered in the profits and sealed the moneybags to be delivered to the emperor. But most of these measures worked against the emperor, and his plans were rendered ineffectual; because he was suspicious of the Romans, turning them away as embezzlers, he did not realize that in cheering the money-loving barbarians and benefiting evil-minded manikins, he was alienating the native Romans who by nature and training were honest and faithful. Since the Romans realized that the emperor was suspicious of them, and that they were looked upon as being no more than servants grasping after unjust gain rather than as trusted officials, they sided with the foreigners with whom they were sent in pairs as though they were trace horses harnessed alongside the imperial chariot. They simply carried out their orders; they harvested the coins, tying them together as though they were sheaves being taken to the threshing floor, and delivered them to that barbarian who had been appointed over many and was deemed worth more than most other men. Everything else they neglected, although every now and then they brought a few coins to the emperor as though they were the choice parts of the whole; but the greater portion they appropriated by stealth for themselves, and so the emperor's virtuous and faithful servant[551] first kneaded his own bread from the ground wheat—that is, the gold coins—and afterwards gave a share to his colleague.

A work of this emperor was the tower standing not far from the sea whose waves washed the dry land called Damalis;[552] another tower was built on the opposite side of the straits right next to the Monastery of Mangana. The emperor constructed these towers in order to block the occasional attacks by barbarian ships by stretching an iron chain from one [206] shore to the other, thus rendering impenetrable both the regions in the vicinity of the City's acropolis and the channel whose waters coursed all the way to the palace complex in Blachernai.

The emperor was criticized for his passion for erecting beautiful structures, for having built the very long peristyle galleries at both palaces which shimmered with gold mosaics that depicted in the variegated colors of flowers and in the wondrous craft of the artists his feats against the barbarians as well as whatever other benefits he had provided for the Romans. He also erected most of the splendid edifices along the strait of the Propontis wherein the Roman emperors spend the summer in relaxation; just as the rulers of Persia in ancient times had built Susa and Ecbatana, so did he raise these, but in adornment they far surpassed the former.[553]

He withstood the toils of war exceedingly well, enduring the hardships which the times demanded of him; he suffered the cold, abided the stifling heat, and resisted sleep; but when he was not campaigning he indulged himself in luxuries and took pleasure in recreation. If one carefully observed how much he relished savory dishes and enjoyed the playing of the small lyre and cithara with harmonious singing, one would have said that he had grown up only in such amusements and that pleasure was the primary purpose of life; if, on the other hand, one considered how, in difficult times, he set aside his readiness to indulge in every kind of trivial luxury, one marveled how he moved back and forth between the two.

Undertaking to rebuild the enormous and most beautiful church of Hagia Eirenē [Holy Peace], situated near the sea and which had been erected long ago by the excellent Marcian [450–57] and was laid waste by fire, he restored a portion of this temple from the foundations but did not complete the work.[554]

He founded a holy monastery near the mouth of the Pontos at a place called Kataskepē [Covering], named for the Archangel Michael, and, gathering together the most celebrated and renowned monks of the time, he provided for them to lead an altogether solitary and untroubled life. [207] Recognizing that ownership of landed estates as well as being troubled about many things[555] diverted from tranquility those who had chosen the solitary life and led them away from the life in God which was their special calling, he did not set apart for them any small property or assign fields and vineyards to the monastery. By paying for the monks' necessities from the imperial treasuries, he thus restrained, I believe, the excessive desire of most to build monasteries. He also provided an example for those who followed that whenever there was a need to set up church buildings, it was also necessary to provide board for the solitaries who had no means of subsistence and had set themselves free of material concerns.

He so disapproved of the present situation where those who profess to be monks are richer in substance and more careworn than those who are

fond of wordly pleasures that he revived the *novella* of that most excellent emperor of heroic prowess and great wisdom, Nikephoros Phokas,[556] which prohibited the monasteries from increasing their properties but which eventually had become a dead letter and lost its authority, by appending his signature in red ink that, like blood, warms again and quickens with life.

Nor did he desist from blaming his father and grandfather and all his remaining kinsmen who had founded monasteries and assigned to them fruitful parcels of land and verdant meadows; he cast blame or heaped ridicule upon these men, not because they had granted a portion of their possessions to God, but because they had not performed their good works in the best way. For it was fitting that monks should set up their habitation in out-of-the-way places and desolate areas, in hollow caves and on mountain tops, and that they avoid this fair City situated on the Hellespont even as Odysseus avoided the lotus and the irresistible Sirens' songs.[557] But some monks sought the praise of men and set up their
[208] whited sepulchers[558] in full view of those entering the churches, and, even when dead, they desired to depict themselves as crowned in victory and with cheerful and bright countenances. They built their holy monasteries in the marketplace and at the crossroads and confined themselves to these as though in caves, not choosing the path of moral virtue as characterizing the monk but rather the tonsure, the habit, and the beard. Because of these things, either in an attempt to uphold monastic dignity, which had fallen flat and was fast disappearing, or in fear lest he be caught doing what he had condemned, the emperor took a course different from that of his kinsmen.

There is a law laid down by the Romans, which, I believe, prevails also among the barbarians, that provides for soldier's pay and their periodic inspection to ascertain whether they are well-armed and have cared for their horses; the new recruits were first tested to see if they were able-bodied, skilled in archery, and experienced in brandishing the lance, and only then were they registered in the military rolls. This emperor, pouring into the treasuries the so-called gifts of the *paroikoi*[559] like water into a cistern, sated the thirst of the armies by the payment of provision money and thereby abused a tactic begun by former emperors and rarely resorted to by those who had frequently thrashed the enemy.

He was not aware that he was enfeebling the troops by pouring countless sums of money into idle bellies[560] and mismanaging the Roman provinces. The brave soldiers lost interest in distinguishing themselves in the face of danger, as no one any longer spurred them on to perform glorious exploits, and now the concern of all was to become wealthy. The inhabitants of the provinces, who in the past had to pay the imperial tax-collector, now suffered the greatest horrors as the result of military greed, being robbed not only of silver and obols but also stripped of their last tunic, and sometimes they were dragged away from their loved ones.

[209] For these reasons, everyone wanted to enlist in the army and many bade farewell to their trades as tailors and cobblers, claiming that these provided them with but meager and insufficient necessities, while some ran away from their charge of grooming horses and others, washing away the mud from brickmaking and wiping off the soot from working the

forge, presented themselves to the recruiting officers. After handing over a Persian horse or paying down a few gold coins, they were enrolled in the military registers without due examination and immediately were provided with imperial letters awarding them parcels of dewy land, wheat-bearing fields, and Roman tributaries to serve them as slaves. Sometimes a Roman of royal bearing would pay taxes to a half-Turkish, half-Greek barbarian[561] manikin who knew nothing of pitched battles even though the Roman was as superior to the tax collector in the mastery of warfare as was Achilles to him, or he could be compared to one bearing arms in both hands who contended with an unarmed opponent hitting out from sheer passion.

This disorderliness of the troops brought deserved suffering to the Roman provinces; some were plundered by alien peoples and made subject to their rule, while others were devastated, ravaged by our own men as though they were enemy lands.

How long, O Lord, wilt thou forget thine inheritance,[562] and, turning thy face away from us, make a way for thy wrath?[563] When wilt thou look down from thy holy dwelling place,[564] and, seeing our affliction[565] and oppression, save us from impending evils and deliver us from the fear of even greater calamities?

In addition to that which has been recounted, the following must be included in the history. Most of the Roman emperors would not wholly accept that they should only rule, and wear golden apparel, and make use of the public properties as though they were their private possessions; neither would they deal with free men as though they were their slaves. For they believed that they would suffer tribulations unless they were resolved to be godlike in form, heroes in prowess, wise in the matters of God as was Solomon, most excellent defenders of the doctrines of faith, more exact measures of the moral life than the canons, and, in short, infallible expositors of divine and human affairs. They felt, therefore, that it was their duty to censure the more boorish and insolent individuals who [210] introduced strange and new doctrines or else to refer them to those whose vocation it was to have knowledge of things pertaining to God and to expand upon them. But they would not take second place even in these cases and so became themselves authors of doctrines and sat in judgment as well as provided their definitions, even frequently punishing those who disagreed with them.

Hence the emperor, gifted with a silver tongue and an innate grace of expression, not only wrote letters of great charm but also labored over catechetical sermons, called *selentia,* which he delivered before public audiences. In speaking, he would touch upon sacred doctrines and expand on questions pertaining to God. Often he would pretend to be puzzled and initiate inquiries into the Scriptures; then to resolve such questions he would assemble all the scholars.[566] All this would have been praiseworthy if in extending his inquisitiveness to these matters he had not disputed the doctrines which were beyond human understanding, or if in fixing his mind on these things he had not been so obstinate, or if he had not distorted the meaning of the written word, as he often did, to accord with his own intent, providing definitions and giving exegeses of doctrines whose correct meaning the Fathers had formulated as though he

fully comprehended Christ due to his having received from the Divine the most lucid instructions pertaining to the mysteries of his person.

When there was a discussion of the scriptural verse which states that God incarnate is both the Offerer and the Offered,[567] the learned men of the time were divided into opposing factions; the deliberations were protracted, and arguments were offered and rebutted. When the question
[211] had been rightly resolved,[568] and the emperor had concurred with the pious and excellent judgment, the following were deposed as holding contrary views: the bishop designate of Theoupolis, the great Antioch, Soterichos Pantevgenos; Eustathios of Dyrrachion; Michael of Thessaloniki, who adorned the orator's chair and mounted the evangelical pulpit; and Nikephoros Basilakēs, who expounded on the epistles of Paul in the churches, illuminating with the light of the eloquence of language those statements of the apostle darkened by obscurity and hidden by the depth of the Spirit.[569]

It is said that while this doctrinal dispute was being decided in public debate, an unseasonable and portentous thunderclap rent the air, deafening the assembly as well as the emperor, who was sojourning then in Pelagonia. A certain man of letters, one Elias, who was superior to most in his station in life and a sentinel of the army, opened a book on the subject of thunder and earthquakes and, coming upon the meaning of thunder at that particular season, gave the following interpretation: "The fall of the wise."

These men who were deposed, the most learned of the time, were expelled from the church and ostracized from every holy ministration; many others, who were cloistered, were also evicted from their sacred precincts.

Some years later, Manuel began an investigation of the saying of the God-Man, "My Father is greater than I."[570] He showed little concern for the exegeses of the Fathers, which were excellent and sufficient for the exposition and clarification of the issue, but instead introduced his own
[212] interpretations, contentiously defending his novel beliefs. By forcing the sayings of the blessed teachers of the *ecumenē,* unsullied in the truth and spoken with divine wisdom, to suit his own definition, he proposed to have his answer sanctioned. There were some who contended that the Father was called greater as the cause [of the Son], while some understood this saying to refer to the human nature and assumed flesh and not to the Logos so that by his going to and coming from the Father,[571] the Prince of the World[572] and Searcher should find no place whatsoever in him. Others considered the saying "greater" to apply to the Logos, not only in his nature and essence but also because of the extreme *kenosis*[573] and humiliation of his incarnation. Still others piously accepted other interpretations, but Manuel, I know not on what grounds, rejected these as not adequately addressing the issue and gave his own definition.[574]

He convened a synod, assembling all those who were learned in the divine doctrines, and exhorted everyone to suscribe to the dogmatic tome, laying down this definition: "I concur with the teachings of the God-bearing Fathers pertaining to "my Father is greater than I," and I affirm that this saying refers to his created and passible flesh."[575]

I do not know how they designated the flesh-bearing Son as being

inferior to the Father, for if indeed he was divested of his equality because he assumed human nature and dwelt among us, he would not thus have been able to preserve his own glory confined by the limitations of *kenosis;* or had he not deified and exalted that which had been abased by rendering it a partaker of his glorification by way of the union [of the two natures], he himself in turn would have been abased, which would be absurd.

Emblazing this doctrine in red letters, as though with a flaming sword,[576] Manuel threatened anyone who impulsively dared to scrutinize it with expulsion from the faith and death, especially anyone who grumblingly attacked it. He had the decree inscribed on tables of stones[577] on the advice of certain men and set them up in the Great Church.[578] All others looked with suspicion upon the analysis of that which had been confirmed—making the Logos appear inferior because of the flesh—especially because it ignored the doctrine of *kenosis* and the meaning of [213] his human nature.

What a thing it was that this man wrought[579] near the end of his life [March–May 1180]! Included among the excommunications listed in the *Book on Catechism* is the anathema directed against the god of Muhammad, about whom is stated, "He neither begat nor was begotten," and that he was a solid [holosphyros].[580] Manuel proposed to have the anathematization expunged from all the catechetical books beginning with the codex of the Great Church. The reason was specious: he contended that it was scandalous that the Agarenēs, when being converted to our God-fearing faith, should be made to blaspheme God in any manner.

He summoned, therefore, the most great Theodosios [Boradiotēs, 1179–83], who at that time governed and adorned the chief throne, as well as those hierarchs of the City who excelled in learning and virtue, and made known his proposal to them with a bombastic introduction to the issue. They all shook their heads in refusal, unwillingly even to listen to his proposals, which they considered slanderous and detracting from [214] the most true glory of God. They piously explained the text which supposedly was a cause for scandal and an obstacle and made it quite clear that it was not God, the creator of heaven and earth,[581] who was subject to anathema, but the solid God fabricated by the deluded and demoniacal Muhammad and who was neither begotten nor did he beget; for Christians believe God to be a father and it was these absurd and frivolous words of Muhammad which they utterly proscribed. Inasmuch as he did not know the meaning of *holosphyros* and the mind in his breast was one not to be beguiled,[582] Manuel let the opposition perish[583] and set forth his own tome with the assistance of those members of the imperial court whom he knew to be opportunistic as well as learned, in which Muhammad's babbling (for I cannot call it theology) was upheld and former emperors and members of the hierarchy were thoroughly unbraided for being so stupid and thoughtless as to suffer the true God to be placed under anathema. He delivered the tome to the sacred palace [patriarchal residence] to be read publicly, sending along the leaders of the senatorial council, the senate, and the learned nobility to lead the way applauding the contents like a band of youths. So plausible did reason make the doctrine appear, not with the words which the Holy Spirit teaches but in

the enticing words of man's wisdom,[584] that it was very convincing by virtue of the diverse scope of the issue, the attractiveness of its elaborate arguments, and in the careful examination of the meaning of its contents.

[215] Perhaps the *holosphyros* god about whom Muhammad spoke so foolishly would have been glorified as the true God had not the patriarch resisted so strenuously, had he not determined that the meaning of the contents was misleading because of the introduction of novel doctrines, and had he not prevailed upon the bishops to suspect these as being noxious. Manuel, as if he had suffered a calamity, heaped contumely on the bishops and called them the foolish things of the world.[585] But he was afflicted at the time with a grievous disease which was to take his life, and consequently he was ill-tempered.

Expatiating on the former tome, he resorted to discrepant elaboration and rhetorical embellishments which he then epitomized, and thus once again making the doctrine enticing, he publicly posted a second tome. since he happened to be residing then in Damalis at the palace complex called Skoutarion to benefit from its mild climate and gain relief from the crowds of people while receiving thorough medical care, by imperial command the assembly of bishops and all those who were honored because of their learning sailed thither. They had not yet disembarked from the boats when one of the emperor's most trusted under secretaries presented himself (this was Theodore Matzoukēs)[586] and addressed the patriarch and the company of bishops; he informed them that it was not possible at the present to see the emperor because he was suffering some indisposition due to his illness, and he required them to read the documents he held in his hands.

[216] One dealt with the doctrine under discussion, which, as we have said, the emperor had submitted with the intent that the assembled bishops should affix their signatures with dispatch; the other represented the emperor disputing with the chief shepherd Theodosios and the synod in terms that were neither moderate nor elegant but rather criticized the opposition of the patriarch and his bishops as unreasonable. The emperor threatened to convoke a larger synod and to confer with the pope himself on the issues. "I would be an ingrate and a fool," said he, "if I did not return to him who made me emperor, the God of all, a fraction of the good things I have received from him and did not make every effort to prevent the true God from being subjected to anathema."

The listeners were so far from being intimidated by such threats that the archbishop of Thessaloniki, the most learned and eloquent Eustathios, who was filled with indignation by what was read and could not suffer the true God to be called a solid, the fabrication of a demoniacal mind, said, "My brains would be in my feet[587] and I would be wholly unworthy of this garb," pointing to the mantle [*mandyas*][588] covering his shoulders, "were I to regard as true God the pederast who was as brutish

[217] as a camel and master and teacher of every abominable act."[589] The bishops were nearly struck dumb by what they had heard, for he had shouted out these words, visibly shaken by pious zeal. Dumbfounded, the reader of the document returned to the emperor. Manuel, perturbed by the report of what had been said, gave an artful defense of his position, commending forbearance as never before. He counted himself among the

most orthodox of Christians and asserted that he came from most holy parents, while shunning the censorious and the scoffers. He urgently appealed that a judgment be made between him and the archbishop of Thessaloniki, for he said that if he should be absolved of believing in a god who is a pederast and of distorting the faith, then a just punishment should be imposed upon him who belched out blasphemies against the anointed of the Lord.[590] However, should he be condemned as glorifying another god than Him whom Christians worship, then he would learn the truth and be deeply grateful to the one who should convert him from error and initiate him into the truth.

Shortly thereafter, when the patriarch came to see him and charmed him with his reasonableness, Manuel got over his anger and pardoned Eustathios for speaking amiss, accepting the reasons he chose to give for [218] his defense. Finally he chided him by saying, "Being a prudent man you should not show yourself to be foul-mouthed or inordinately overbold of tongue."

Later a public hearing was given to the dogmatic tome, and when all had lauded the contents as being reverently orthodox in its teaching and had gladly subscribed to it, the assembly was dismissed. The bishops departed exulting in the fact that in opposing the emperor they had won out over him, while he rejoiced in having bent them to his will, having achieved with a few words what he had been unable to do with the earlier prolix tome.

On the following day, however, when the synod convened at the patriarchal residence to act upon the agreement (for the imperial officials appeared at dawn to assemble the bishops), they were no longer of the same mind but again shook their heads in denial, contending that the written decree still contained certain reprehensible words which should be excised and replaced by others that would give no offense whatsoever to correct doctrine. Once again the emperor was provoked and charged that their inconstancy and fickleness plainly showed that they were devoid of any intelligence. After a long delay, they barely agreed to remove the anathema of Muhammad's god from the catechetical books and to write [219] in the anathema of Muhammad and of all his teachings. Having proclaimed and confirmed this doctrine, the many synods and assemblies came to an end.

I must not neglect to record another noteworthy event. There was a certain eunuch by the name of Niketas who presided as bishop over the city of Chonai and who was the habitation of every virtue; indeed, such were his oracular powers, his ability to foresee the future, that he was reckoned as one of the greatest of seers and deemed a marvel by those who knew him. While ours was a wicked and adulterous generation,[591] we were fortunate to have such a good man. When the emperor [Manuel], newly crowned as successor to his father's throne, passed through Chonai on his way from Armenia and entered the Church of the Archangel [Michael], he had been blessed by the hand of this bishop. The latter was celebrated because of his virtue and his fame was spread far and wide. The clergy and of these the most astute doubted whether Manuel, a mere youth with the first growth of down on his cheeks, would really be able to govern the empire, which very much needed a man with shaggy beard,

grown hoary in prudence, and, moreover, whether he could overthrow his brother Isaakios, who had a more lawful claim to the throne and was ensconced in the queen of cities. This great man, truly a man of God,[592] resolved the question and answered their doubts: "Yes, this lad shall govern the empire and his brother shall submit to him,[593] for thus has God ordained and decreed. You may even know those things about which you have not inquired, that he shall outlive his own grandfather, I speak of his forefather Alexios, the emperor of the Romans, by a few years,[594] and when his end approaches he will go mad."

This prophecy was known to me, the author Niketas, together with many others, for the seer was my godfather in holy baptism. As to what this madness would be and how it would be manifested, no one could
[220] contribute to the prediction; some related the forecast to his madness for gold, while others believed he would fall victim to some frailty of the flesh. When the controversy over the above-mentioned doctrine was initiated and the emperor recklessly contended for the first time that the god glorified by Muhammad as *holosphyros,* who is neither begotten nor begets, is the true God, everyone agreed that this was the fulfillment of the prophecy because this doctrine, being wholly the opposite of the truth, was truly and absolutely the worst kind of madness.

The emperor first took ill before the month of March in the then current thirteenth indiction [1 September 1179 to 31 August 1180], at the time the doctrinal issue was emerging. The controversy was resolved around the month of May, and with the coming of September the emperor came to the end of his life. He had achieved nothing very notable for the empire and had made no provisions or arrangements for events following his death because he in no way would accept that death was near, for he contended that he had certain knowledge that another fourteen years of life was to be freely given him. The wise and thrice-blessed Patriarch Theodosios advised him to take thought, as a father, of the affairs of state while he was still in possession of his faculties and to search for someone who should steadfastly cleave to his son, the successor to the throne who had not yet reached puberty, one who should be as devoted to the emperor as to his own mother. Those most baneful charlatans of astrology who urged the emperor to spend his leisure time in sexual pleasures boldly told him that he would soon recover from his illness and shamelessly predicted that he would level alien cities to the ground. What was even more incredible, being glib of speech and accustomed to lying, they foretold the movement of the universe, the convergences and conjunctions of the largest stars, and the eruption of violent
[221] winds; they very nearly predicted the transformation of the entire universe, showing themselves to be oracular ventriloquists rather than astrologers. Not only did they reckon the number of years and months and count the weeks until these things would take place and clearly point them out to the emperor but they also designated the exact day and anticipated the very moment as though they had precise knowledge of those things which the Father had put in his own power[595] and concerning which the Savior censured his inquisitive disciples. The emperor sought caves and hollows as protection against the winds and prepared them for habitation; he removed the glass from the imperial buildings so that they

should not be damaged by the blasts of the winds while his attendants, kinsmen, and sycophants also anxiously involved themselves in these undertakings, with some burrowing into the earth like ants and others making tents, fastening them with threefold cords[596] and cutting sharp pegs to serve as supports.

But, as I was saying, as the symptoms of the emperor's disease worsened, he rashly made use of the bathing room; there, he saw that, like the water, his hopes for continued life were being washed away. He briefly discussed his son Alexios with those in attendance, and, foreseeing the events that would follow his death, he intermixed his words with lamentations.

On the advice of the patriarch, he renounced his earlier trust in astrology.

Finally, placing his hand on an artery to take his own pulse, he sighed deeply, struck his thigh with his hand, and asked for the monastic habit. As was to be expected, these words raised a confused clamor. No provision had been made for monastic garb, but the emperor's attendants managed to procure from somewhere a black threadbare cloak. They removed his soft royal vestments and dressed him in the coarse habit of [222]
the life in God, converting him into a spiritual soldier with a more divine helmet and a more holy breastplate,[597] and enrolled him in the army of the Heavenly Ruler. The tattered garment, which neither reached to the feet nor covered the whole body, left the knees bare so that no one who witnessed the scene remained without fear as he reflected on human frailty at the end of life and the wretchedness of the body cast around us like an oyster shell and united with the soul.

Thus, he departed this life and the throne in the thirty-eighth year of his reign less three months [24 September 1180]. I think that the lengthy duration of his reign can be explained by that ancient adage which states, "but the last syllable of the word shall bring you profit."[598] The last syllable of his name stands for the number thirty-eight.

He was buried beside the entrance to the church of the Monastery of the Pantokrator, not in the temple itself but in the shrine attached to it. Where the church wall led round to an arch, a broad entrance way was opened around the sepulcher, which was faced with marble of a black hue, gloomy in appearance, and was divided into seven lofty sections. To the side, resting on a base, was a slab of red marble the length of a man which received veneration; it was formerly located in the church of [St. John the Evangelist] Ephesos and was commonly reported to be that on which Christ was washed with myrrh and wrapped in burial linen clothes after he had been taken down from the cross. This emperor had it taken out of the church, and, placing it on his back, he carried it up from the harbor of Boukoleon to the church in the lighthouse of the palace [Pharos][599] as though it were the actual body of God conveying its grace on him. Not long after the emperor's death, the marble slab was removed from the palace to the place described above with proclamations, I believe, that declared loudly all the feats for which he who lay silent in the tomb had labored and struggled so hard to achieve.

III. *The Reign of Alexios Porphyrogenitos, the Son of Emperor Manuel*

FOLLOWING Manuel Komenos, who died in this manner, his son [223]
Alexios, who had barely reached puberty and was still in need of pedagogues and nursemaids, reigned.[600] The affairs of the Romans were borne on an errant and helpless course, worse even than that of Phaëthon, who attempted to cleave a path through the starry sky when he had mounted his father's gold-studded chariot.[601] The emperor, a mere adolescent who lacked an understanding of those things that are expedient, paid no attention to any of his duties, for he had been nurtured on soft airs, and, not having learned for certain what joy and sorrow are,[602] he became a votary of the hunt and a devotee of the chariot races; he kept company with his fellow playmates, and his character was imprinted with the worst qualities.[603] Indeed, his father's companions and blood relatives, attending to other matters, neglected to provide him with the finest education and [224]
upbringing and did not notice the ruination of public affairs. Some of these men passionately desired the empress and wooed her. Eagerly seeking to win her love in return, they arranged their hair in charming curls, rubbed themselves with sweet oils as though they were infants, and effeminately wore necklaces set with precious gems, all the while looking on her longingly.[604] Others, being avaricious and rapacious, stealthily appropriated public revenues by finding ways to spend lavishly, as well as finding new extravagances in which to indulge so that their purses which yesterday were empty and drawn tight today were full and bulging. Yet others, who craved to sit on the throne, directed all their energies to this purpose. For just as confusion reigns everywhere with the overthrow of a noble-minded and earnest leader, as when a column is removed from its firm and steadfast base the whole structure leans in the opposite direction, so did each pursue his own end, and all conspired against one another. And as equality of privilege was no longer esteemed by the great and powerful and by the emperor's kinsmen, concern over the affairs of state dissipated and assemblies and councils disappeared.

When, as it was said, the *protosebastos* and *protovestiarios* Alexios Komnenos,[605] Emperor Manuel's nephew on his father's side, had sexual relations with the young emperor's mother and often consorted with her, thus coming to prevail over all others, those blood relations who had been made equal in power by Emperor Manuel and were distinguished by the highest rank were choked with vexation. Seeing tyranny take root, they distrusted the *protosebastos,* not so much because the emperor might

[225] suffer some harm, but because they feared that they themselves might be apprehended. Anxious for the future because of these developments, they were concerned to save themselves from the present danger. Indeed, the rumor was already being bruited about, that Alexios was having sexual intercourse with the emperor's mother and that he planned to depose the young monarch, to mount both mother and throne.

Thus the empire was racked with total confusion and every kind of stormy calamity; the state of affairs could be likened to the myth of the serpent who inflicted damage as he dragged along the deaf and blind hindpart of his body. The portent which appeared when Emperor Manuel was departing this life was fulfilled: a certain woman who resided on the banks of the Propontis had given birth to a male child with a deformed and tiny body and the head a large and extraordinary thing. This was interpreted to be the sign of Polyarchy, the mother of Anarchy.[606]

Andronikos Komnenos, Emperor Manuel's cousin, about whom we have spoken at length in that emperor's history, resided at that time at Oinaion.[607] Upon learning of Manuel's death and the dissension at court, he revived his old passion for tyranny.[608] Since the narration of the events
[226] in the life of this man has been interrupted, for the sake of continuity it will be best not to omit anything noteworthy.

Andronikos, having escaped Manuel's clutches, chose perpetual exile. Passing through many cities and seeing many towns of the barbarians, he finally became the guest, as we have already recorded, of Saltuq.[609] He was toparch over the province adjacent to Chaldia which he had won and which, in former times, had been tributary to the Romans before it had submitted to the Turks and their religion. He occcupied, with Saltuq's consent, a certain fortress whose natural defenses he augmented with his technical skill, and he remained there together with his fellow wanderer and fellow traveler, Theodora Komnenē, who lay with him unlawfully since she was the daughter of Isaakios the *sebastokrator;* Isaakios and Andronikos were the sons of brothers.[610]

Emperor Manuel, no more able to apprehend Andronikos than Ixion could seduce Hera, concentrated on embracing his niece Theodora as though she were a cloud,[611] and he succeeded in his purpose, thanks to Nikephoros Palaiologos, who at that time had assumed the governorship of Trebizond. Shortly afterwards, he won over Andronikos, who was enticed with the bait of Theodora and angled with his passionate love for her and his ardent devotion to the children which Theodora bore him. Andronikos dispatched envoys to the emperor begging for amnesty as well as safe conduct, since he could not trust that his arrival would elicit much sympathy. When the emperor had consented to both requests, Andronikos after some time gave himself up.

Andronikos, being most cunning and excelling in diverse wiles, hung around his neck a heavy iron chain which reached down to his feet; he secured it close to his body, concealed inside his cloak. Thus the chain was undetected by the emperor and unseen by the court until he exposed
[227] it before the emperor the first time he appeared before him. Stretching himself out on the floor, mighty in his mightiness,[612] and holding forth the chain and shedding tears, he pleaded fervently, begging forgiveness for his alleged misdeeds. The emperor, taken aback by these doings, was

himself moved to tears and commanded his attendants to raise up the suppliant. Andronikos avowed that he would not rise unless the emperor commanded one of the bystanders to drag him by the chain over the path to the throne and dash him against it. And so Andronikos's request was granted. It was Isaakios Angelos, the man who later deposed Andronikos from his tyrranical rule, who rendered this service. It may be that this was not by unreasoning chance or accident.[613]

Andronikos, welcomed at that time [July 1180] with great splendor and rewarded with extravagant kindliness as was fitting for such a great man who had returned home after a long exile, was sent off to take up residence at Oinaion[614] and bring to an end his lengthy migration and chronic wandering. Both men recognized that should they remain together in the same place, they would suffer the same mishaps as before, for they could not wholly suppress Envy, which incites men to bring accusations against their rivals to gain the affection of rulers and to slander others to strengthen their own cause with the end of rising to higher offices.

Far from Zeus and his thunderbolt, Andronikos did not return to his former wicked ways, nor did he wander beyond the frontiers of the Roman empire, and imperial gifts were heaped upon him.

While at Oinaion, he heard of Manuel's death and received detailed information of the disorders within the palace, how Emperor Alexios entertained himself with horse races and was given to amusements in which childish minds delight, how some of his noble guardians, like bees, frequently winged their way to the provinces and stored up money as though it were honey while others, like goats, craved after the young [228] shoot of the empire and continually desired to gain possession of it; still others, emulating hogs, fattened themselves on the most sordid revenues and, choosing not to lift their heads and look at anything laudable or beneficial for the common fatherland, rolled about in their filthy deeds, rooting like swine after every evil gain.

Andronikos searched very meticulously and thoroughly to find an opportune and plausible excuse for seizing the throne. After much thought, and after contriving every possible scheme, he finally came upon the written oath he had sworn to Manuel and his son Alexios. There he found inserted among the others the following clause (he was bound not to distort the words by false interpretations but to take them at face value): "And should I see or perceive or hear anything bringing dishonor to you or inflicting injury to your crown, I shall relay this information to you and thwart any such attempt as far as I am able."

Brooding on these words like a fly on an open wound, he found them extremely useful for achieving the despotic rule for which he had so long been laboring, the rule due him for his dignified bearing and commanding disposition. He sent successive letters to his nephew Emperor Alexios, to the patriarch Theodosios, and to the remaining devoted friends of the deceased Emperor Manuel, relating his distress over the ugly gossip and professing his indignation lest the *protosebastos* should not be removed from control over the throne and relegated to a lesser rank, not only because of the approaching, indeed, the already manifest, destruction of Emperor Alexios from that quarter but above all also for the unseemly and unacceptable rumor to gentle ears being proclaimed from the wall

tops and lying in wait at the gates of princes and being echoed throughout the universe.[615] Expressing and writing these things with great conviction
[229] and charm (for he was, if anything, well versed in letter writing, ever quoting from the Epistles of Paul, the orator *par excellence* of the Holy Spirit), he won everyone to his views so that they concurred that he was the only true friend of the Romans who, over a long period of time and because of his hoary experience, had carried off the highest prizes.

Andronikos left Oinaion and made his way toward the queen of cities. On the way, he administered his own oath to whomever he met and explained the reason for his revolt to those who questioned him. Those who nurtured a desire to overthrow the government were eager to believe the ancient prophecy that Andronikos would some day reign as emperor; they swarmed about him excitedly like jackdaws around a soaring eagle with crooked talons. Thus did the Paphlagonian faction behave toward him as he made his way, receiving him with great honor as though he were a savior sent from heaven.

The *protosebastos* Alexios raged furiously;[616] confident of his own power and his great influence over the empress, he was like the serpent which, having fed on an abundance of evil herbs, is terrible to look upon.[617] Nothing whatsoever could be done except through him. And if someone accomplished something in secret by begging a favor from the empress or by having his petition granted while the emperor was engrossed in playing with nuts or casting pebbles, even this did not escape his attention. To assure that the accomplishments of others would be returned to him for review like the whirl of eddying waters, he had the emperor promulgate a decree that henceforth no document signed by the
[230] imperial hand would be valid unless first reviewed by Alexios and validated by his notation "approved" in frog green ink. He made his moves freely as though playing a game of draughts, and all the revenues which had been collected with much sweat by the preceding Komnenian emperors who, I might add, stripped even the indigent, were channeled to the *protosebastos* and the empress; and that was fulfilled which Archilochos plainly wrote, that what has been amassed at the expense of much time and labor often flows into the belly of the whore.[618]

Henceforth, the entire City looked to Andronikos, and his arrival was regarded as a beacon and bright shining star in the moonless night.[619] The mighty and the powerful encouraged Andronikos by dispatching letters in secret to hasten his entry, telling him that there was no one to oppose him or even to obstruct his shadow, and that they were waiting to receive him with open arms and to take him readily to the heart.

It was preeminently the *porphyrogenita* Maria, Emperor Alexios's half-sister, who, together with the *kaisar,* her Italian husband [Renier], encouraged Andronikos to step forth bravely. Maria nearly choked with rage at the thought of the *protosebastos* wickedly cavorting in the paternal marriage bed. Reckless and masculine in her resolution, by nature ex-
[231] ceedingly jealous of her stepmother, and unable to endure that she had been bested and was held suspect as a rival, Maria dispatched letters to Andronikos prodding him like a horse at the starting gate anxious to run the race, delighting in the evil joy of her own making and bringing on her

own ruin. Unable to conceal her hatred for the *protosebastos,* she opposed him openly and never ceased from plotting to do him injury.

She won over to her side several of her kinsmen, in particular those whom she knew to side with Andronikos and to be hostile to the *protosebastos* (these were Alexios Komnenos, begotten of Emperor Manuel through his niece Theodora; Andronikos Lapardas; Andronikos's two sons, John and Manuel; the eparch of the City, John Kamateros; and many others). Conspiring to confirm the oath of allegiance to her brother and emperor while endorsing the death of the *protosebastos,* she awaited the opportune moment for his overthrow.[620]

She deemed that the appropriate occasion would be the procession of the *protosebastos,* together with the emperor, to Bathys Ryax [Deep Stream][621] to perform the sacred rites pertaining to Theodore, the Martyr of Christ, on the seventh day of the first week of Lent [7 February 1181].[622] Thus she made preparations for the undertaking and suborned the cutthroats of her opponent to lay bare the murderous knife, but because of an unexpected turn of events, she was thwarted in her plot. When both the deliberation and the plot were exposed a short time afterwards [1 March 1181], the conspirators were brought before the [232] imperial tribunal. The trial, although conducted *pro forma,* was not based on the determination of the facts; the sentence followed immediately, and the accused were carried off to prison like speechless fishes without being given the right to answer the charges.

The *porphyrogenita* fled with her husband to the Great Church [before Easter, 5 April 1181], asserting that she was escaping her exceedingly wrathful stepmother and her violent lover. Not only did she excite the pity of the patriarch and the clergy but she also moved the majority of the promiscuous rabble to such a degree that they very nearly shed tears over her. A good portion of the indigent populace was angry on her account because she had plied them with gifts of copper coins, thereby inciting them to rebellion and showing contempt for the special privileges accorded those who seek asylum. Thus she took new courage, and when she was offered amnesty for her crimes,[623] she turned a deaf ear and also demanded a new trial for her fellow conspirators and their release from prison. She could not bear that the *protosebastos* should be in control of the administration of public affairs and asserted that he had transgressed and offended against the law and, in consequence, had sullied the dynasty. She insisted, furthermore, that he be ejected from the palace and uprooted for causing the emperor's ruination like a tare growing alongside the noble plant and choking the wheat.[624] [233]

She openly pursued ends that were not to be realized.[625] The *protosebastos* clung to the palace apartments like an octopus clamping its suckers on a rock. And when her brother, the emperor, threatened to evict his sister the *kaisarissa* from the temple by force if she did not voluntarily remove herself from the sacred precincts (by saying emperor, I mean that the demands were made by the *protosebastos* and the emperor's mother), she replied that she would never depart of her own free will.

Fearful lest she be seized and arrested, Maria stationed guards at the church's portals and posted sentries at the entranceways, converting the

house of prayer into a den of thieves[626] or a well-fortified and precipitous stronghold, impregnable to assault. Her actions became more and more reprehensible. She enlisted mercenaries and transformed the sacred courtyard into a military camp. Italians in heavy armor and stouthearted Iberians from the East who had come to the City for commercial purposes were recruited, as was an armed Roman phalanx, and all the while Maria paid no heed to those who exhorted her to sue for peace, nor did she give way to the patriarch himself, who pressed her vehemently to the point of becoming exceeding wrathful, often censuring her in a passion.

The entire populace from the other side of the City rejoiced without reason and could not be constrained. The excessively tumultuous rabble
[234] of Constantinople, which rejoiced in rashness and was perverse in its ways,[627] was comprised of diverse races, and one could say that it was as fickle in its views as its trades were varied. And since it has ever been the normal course of events for the worst cause to triumph, and for people to seek the single sweet grape among many sour ones, the rabble is impelled by no reason whatsoever, nor does it take precautions to restrain agitators. At times disposed to sedition on the basis of mere rumor, it is more destructive than fire, throwing itself, so to speak, against drawn swords and senselessly resisting projecting headlands and the soundless swell,[628] while, at other times, cowering in fear at every noise, it bends its neck so that whosoever desires may trample upon it. It was fairly accused of inconstancy of disposition and of being extremely untrustworthy. Neither were the inhabitants of Constantinople ever observed doing what was best for themselves, no did they heed others who proposed measures for the common good, and they were forever resentful of those cities flourishing nearby which, safeguarded by land and sea, distributed and poured out their goods in abundance to other cities of foreign nations. Their indifference to the authorities was preserved as though it were an innate evil; him whom today they extol as an upright and just ruler, tomorrow they will disparage as a malefactor, thus displaying in both instances their lack of judgment and inflammable temperament.

It was under these circumstances that there was a muster of forces assembled into military companies. At first they openly defended the *porphyrogenita* Maria, ostensibly taking pity on her as suffering undeservedly; then they inveighed against the *protosebastos* for behaving badly without cause and for abusing his good fortune; finally, they were vexed at the emperor's mother. Gradually they rose up in open revolt. Three priests, one bearing an image of Christ in relief[629] into the forum, and another taking up and carrying a cross on his shoulder, and a third waving
[235] a sacred banner in the breeze, drew on the seditionists as milk draws flies. Responding as though to a prearranged signal, they shouted acclamations in praise of the emperor (this, indeed, is the sure sign of those moving to sedition; beginning with the best of principles their end is revolution) and subjected the *protosebastos* and the empress to anathema. They did not confine these activities only to the vicinity of the Milion[630] but also gathered at the turning post of the magnificent Hippodrome while they faced the palace. When this was repeated over many days, the populace was incited to open rebellion.[631] In a rage, many willfully pulled down the most splendid dwellings and plundered their furnishings while the *pro-*

tosebastos and the empress looked on with remarkable *sang-froid.* Among these was the very beautiful residence of Theodore Pantechnēs, the eparch of the City, who presided over the probate court, distinguished himself on the judge's bench,[632] and saved his own life by taking flight. The mob carried off everything within, even the public law codes containing those measures which pertained to the common good of all or to the majority of citizens; these were powerless before the craving for private gain and could not wet the winebibber's pharynx.

Seeing that matters were going from bad to worse, the supporters of the *protosebastos* decided to take counsel as to how to stave off ruin. Since they could not see the *kaisarissa* Maria changing her mind in any way or moderating her excessive demands, they decided to move against her with a military force and to drive her out of the holy temple as from some bulwark.

Not a few troops were assembled from both the eastern and western [236] divisions and brought together into one camp at the Great Palace, and a reconnaisance was undertaken to determine an advantageous position whence to launch an assault upon the church while the *kaisarissa* deployed her troops in her desire to decide the contest in her favor. All the dwellings adjacent to Hagia Sophia and adjoining the Augousteon[633] were demolished by her men, and they ascended the great triumphal arch which stands in the Milion and prepared to offer resistance to the imperial troops. Soldiers entered the Church of St. Alexios,[634] which bordered on the courtyard of the Augousteon, and stood guard.

On the seventh day [Saturday], the second of May in the fifteenth indiction [1181],[635] the imperial troops, bounding from the palace at dawn, entered first the church of John the Theologian, also called Diipeion,[636] under their commander, a certain Sabbatios, an Armenian. Afterwards they appeared on the roof of the church and let out unintelligible cries. When the time for battle was at hand and the forum was especially full about the third hour of the day [9:00 A.M.], they inflicted no little injury on the *kaisarissa*'s troops who fought from the triumphal arch of the Milion and the church of Alexios to take the advantage of fighting from above, hurling down their arrows like thunderbolts from on high. Other well-equipped contingents issued forth from the palace, filled the streets, and occupied the lanes leading to the Great Church, so that the populace was prevented from giving aid to the *kaisarissa,* as all approaches were cut off by men-at-arms. Her own troops sallied forth from [237] the temple, crossed over the open court of the Augousteon, and engaged the imperial forces in the streets; a few contending against many, they were soon exhausted and their courage sapped.

The struggle was keenly contested, with the discharge of arrows and hotly disputed hand-to-hand combat. The moaning of the smitten and the cheering on of those spilling blood could be heard on both sides. Until high noon the battle was evenly matched, and Victory, undecided, balanced the scales equally, favoring one side and then the other, but towards sundown, she clearly favored the imperial troops.[637] Maria's men were driven from the church, pushed from the streets into the Augousteon, and shut in, trapped inside, while those standing upon the arches of the Milion and fighting from the church of Alexios took flight. Once the

imperial troops had taken possession of these positions, they fixed the standards portraying the imperial family above the arches, and the gates of the Augousteon were shattered by the axe and the stonecutter's tool.[638] The *kaisarissa*'s troops, bombarded by the enemy from the top of the arches, were no longer able to resist and suffered heavy casualties in hand-to-hand combat with those soldiers who had poured into the open court of the Augousteon. They slowly stole away, protected for a time by the stone missiles and arrows discharged by the defenders positioned above the gallery of the Catechumeneia (also called the Makron), which faced in the direction of the Augousteon and the building of Thomaïtēs.[639] Finally, the troops from the church, hard pressed by those smiting them from all sides, withdrew from the open court of the Augousteon and
[238] entered the outer narthex which displays the exquisite mosaic of the very first and greatest of the archangels serving God [Michael] with sword drawn, standing guard over the temple. Consequently, the imperial troops could not advance any further in fear of the temple's narrow passageways or could the *kaisarissa*'s exhausted soldiers exit to give battle.[640]

The *kaisar* was afraid that he and his wife might be apprehended ignobly by their adversaries, and the patriarch was anxious lest the enemy troops enter the temple, with unholy feet trample the holy floor, and with hands defiled and dripping with blood still warm plunder the all-holy dedicatory offerings. Thus, the patriarch donned his pontifical vestments and took the Holy Gospels in his hand, and all three descended to the *proskenion* [outer narthex] of the temple, also called the Protekdikeion,[641] where the troops fighting on behalf of the *kaisarissa* had lodged after their flight. The *kaisar* assembled the men-at-arms who guarded the entrances of the church and those of his Latin bodyguard who were still unscathed, as well as his wife's servants, all told about one hundred in number. He stood on a raised bench located at the Makron in the midst of his troops ready for battle and said the following:

> It had been better had we donned our armor and taken up the sword against the enemies of the cross[642] and not against compatriots and coreligionists; it is because they have badly mismanaged the affairs of the Roman empire that they must be removed, and it is by necessity and not by choice that we have sharpened our lances against them. Let us bravely oppose our assailants and reflect not
> [239] that we are of the same race and religion but look upon them first as enemies of God whose holy temple they enter without shame, and then let us avenge ourselves against our adversaries. Moreover, we cannot be held responsible for the need to defend ourselves. Even though we did not give offence to them or take up arms against them, they came against us brazenly as though we had been set forth last, as it were appointed to death;[643] they trample upon what is right and proper and desire to drag out of the temple those who have taken asylum with God. It is not right that they should do this, since there is no crime with which they can charge us; it is utter madness to reprove in any way or not to stop inflicting suffering on those who seek refuge with God, whom we put forward as mediator and arbitrator in our dissensions.
>
> Nor should you regard it an unholy act to defend yourselves and

to strive eagerly against him who smites you and to return to him the death he brings you, nor must you suffer the compatriot, who attacks with sword and kills, to come and go without receiving a blow, but deem every man an enemy who is evilly disposed to kill and let him fall. God's grace will surely be bestowed upon us if we keep out those blood-thirsty murderers from this holy temple and resist those who, with mouth agape, are eager to rush upon the holy vessels and furnishings and seize them as plunder. Were this not the case, and had they made the distinction between the sacred and the profane, they would long before have given up their desire to penetrate the outer and inner narthexes, since the victory was already theirs. They are so utterly shameless that not only do they imagine themselves as taking what is ours but these stupid men are also bent on appropriating the things of God. Nay, verily by Him who was nailed to the cross and by this my lance, they will most certainly fail in their attempts because God's things will be protected from defiled hands, nor shall we be abandoned.

Having spoken these words and other similar sentiments, he went down into the outer narthex where, as stated above, stands Michael, the Prince of the Heavenly and Sacred Hosts with sword drawn. The rest followed him as their commander, all bearing shields and looking like bronze statues. The *kaisar* then drew up his troops in battle array, fortified himself with the sign of the cross, and sallied forth before his men. The enemy forces in the open court of the Augousteon, thrown into confusion and pressed hard by the *kaisar*'s first assault, poured out of the entrances; many of the imperial troops were wounded, and one was run through by the sword and killed. [240]

After this, the *kaisar* returned to the place from which he had set out. Then the imperial troops no longer dared to enter the open court but preferred to fight by firing missiles.[644] As the day was already in decline, the exhausted combatants stopped fighting. The patriarch dispatched to the empress his own servant, called a *palatinos* because his function was to present himself to the palace and convey recommendations to their Imperial Majesties and then to return thence with their answers. After he had threatened the empress with quick-sighted divine wrath that perceives in a flash unlawful acts wherever they may be perpetrated, and he had made known the *kaisarissa*'s cries for a truce, there arrived as arbitrator of the dispute, the grand duke Andronikos Kontostephanos, together with the grand *hetaireiarch* John Doukas[645] and many other distinguished nobles adorned with the highest dignities.

Yielding obedience to night's behest[646] rather than trusting in conciliation, they brought an end to the fighting, and on the following day [3 May 1181] they plucked up their courage to renew hostilities. But the arbitrators came before the *kaisarissa* and her husband and gave her pledges of good faith confirmed by oaths, assuring her that nothing unpleasant would befall her. She would not be deprived of her dignities and privileges by her brother the emperor, or her stepmother the empress, or the *protosebastos* Alexios, and full amnesty would be granted her supporters and allies. Thus battle was not joined a second time. Once the oaths were sworn and peace was concluded, the troops disbanded. With the coming [241]

of night, the *kaisar* and his wife left the temple and came to the Great Palace where the rulers resided.

Thus ended the affair concerning the *kaisar* and the causes for which this inglorious war began, bringing down upon us divine retribution for the sacrilege perpetrated in the holy temple. Nor do I absolve the suppliant *kaisarissa* from guilt, inclined as she was towards reckless acts and agitation against the government, and one could also accuse those who refused to yield even a little to her supplications, who preferred evil strife and, as a result, filled the house of prayer with bloody murder and were thus guilty of lawless conduct. The Roman general Titus, who besieged Jerusalem in ancient times, spared the Temple of Solomon and distinguished himself in his efforts to preserve it from destruction, exposing himself to the sorties of the Jewish legion within, with substantial losses to his own troops, rather than perform any act hateful to the gods against this sumptuous and wondrous work; this even though he was a man who did not know the God from whose temple he drew back,[647] a temple that rendered false worship to gods who did not make the heavens. How much more then should God-fearing Christians pay honor to this most beautiful and holy temple which the hands of God[648] have truly constructed and fashioned into an inimitable work of art from beginning to end, a veritable heavenly orb upon the earth.

The *protosebastos* was very angry with Patriarch Theodosios for ardently opposing his purposes and thwarting his designs. At first he suborned many bishops against him, corrupting them with gold and drinking parties. He proposed the patriarch's deposition *in absentia* for supposedly siding with the *kaisarissa* in her rebellion against the emperor and for
[242] allowing her to use the holy temple as a base of operations and with arms to stir up sedition and foolishly and thoughtlessly to incite a revolution. The *protesebastos* would have ousted him from the patriarchal throne with ignominy and by force had not the *kaisarissa* refused to give him the opportunity to remove the patriarch and replace him with another. She diligently guarded this most holy man lest, to deliver himself from troubles, he withdraw to the monastery he had built on the island of Terebinthos[649] to live in quietude and she then be forcibly taken from the temple and subjected to great harm. The *protosebastos* now was able to gratify his anger by expelling the holy man from the sacred palace and confining him to the Pantepoptēs monastery.[650] He pondered diverse courses of action and wrestled with many ideas, meeting with the most wicked members of the senate and consulting those clerics who feared neither the vengeance of God nor the wrath of men as to how this holy man might plausibly and speciously be ousted. But he failed to achieve his aim, and no cause whatsoever could be found to justify the patriarch's deposition. Moreover, the empress and almost all, if not all, of the emperor's blood relations revered the man enormously. Then, against his will, the crooked serpent,[651] unwinding his coils and swallowing down again the venom which he had prepared to vomit all over the saint, approved of the patriarch's return to his throne.[652]

[243] When the appointed day for his return had arrived, all the magistrates and clerics who loved virtue and honor, as well as the entire populace of the City, assembled at the holy monastery [Pantepoptēs] and escorted

him in a most splendid procession, showering the streets with perfume and filling the air with the scent of Indian sandlewood and aromatic fragrances. So huge was the number of people who joined in the procession that even though the patriarch set out at early dawn from the Pantepoptēs monastery, he returned to the Great Church of the Holy Wisdom of God only late in the evening. So great was the shame that covered the faces of the bishops for condoning his trial that they avoided the public byways not only because of their sin against the patriarch[653] and the universal derision heaped on them as a result but also because they were afraid that they might be killed. Thus were these events concluded.

Andronikos, lifted up by his desire to rule, was set on the wing by the frequent letters flying at him from afar dispatched from the houses of the illustrious, as I have already stated.[654] Finally his daughter Maria came to him as a runaway [May 1181], proving herself worthy of such a father, and he was provided by God with a teacher who instructed him fully as to what was transpiring in the palace.[655] Spurred on like a racehorse by the words he heard from her, which were much to his liking, he crossed the borders of Paphlagonia, arrived at Herakleia in Pontos, and continued on his way, seducing and winning over all those he met on the way by his multifarious wiliness and insidious manner and dissembling ways; who, unless he had been made of insensate stone[656] or his heart forged on an iron anvil, could have remained unmoved by the flood of tears shed by Andronikos as from a fountain of black water,[657] and who could not but succumb to the deceitful, enticing, silver-tongued wheedling with which [244] he professed his zeal on behalf of the right and expounded on the need to liberate the emperor [beginning of 1182?].[658]

The *protosebastos* did not completely ignore these events, even though he was unmanly and not only spent the early morning in sound sleep but also wasted most of the day sleeping. So that the sunlight, so welcomed by other men, should not force open his eyes because of its brightness, he darkened his bedroom with opaque curtains and made the darkness his secret place[659] whenever dealing with important matters. It would be closer to the truth to say that, delighting in dark deeds, he dispersed the nocturnal darkness with artificial light, and when the sun rose in the eastern horizon, nudging the wild beasts from their lair, he shut out the light with carpets and purple curtains. An effeminate dullard, he made the majority of the nobles dependent upon him in a novel fashion by washing clean the mouths of those whose teeth had rotted and smearing with pitch those men who [like corroded bronze statues][660] had been cast out long ago. By and large, he used the emperor's mother as an advance fortification or, to tell the truth, as an irresistible mollification (for she pulled in everyone as though on a line by the radiance of her appearance, her pearly countenance, her even disposition, candor, and charm of speech), winning over with bribes those who had suffered arbitrary treatment and lulling them to sleep with lavish gifts so as to gain their allegiance to himself as second in command to the empress. So no one who was enjoined to resist Andronikos, who was now in reach of the throne, went over to him, thus spurning the *protosebastos,* and none was taken in by Andronikos's masquerade as tyrant-hater.

Nicaea, the preeminent and greatest city of Bithynia, refused alto-

[245] gether to submit to Andronikos, and John Doukas,[661] who was charged with her watch and ward, remained unshaken by Andronikos's letters, even though his arguments were more devastating than the blows of siege engines and more powerful than any battering ram. Moreover, the grand domestic, John Komnenos,[662] the governor of the province of Thrace, stopped his ears to Andronikos's enchantments[663] and baited him as a tyrant. Pouring over his letters as though they were a smooth and shiny mirror, he clearly recognized Andronikos as a Proteus who took on many forms and now behaved in the manner of a tyrant.

When Andronikos approached Tarsia[664] and the majority of the inhabitants round about the city of Nikomedia joined him, Andronikos Angelos, whose sons Isaakios and Alexios followed Andronikos on the throne, was sent against him with a considerable force. Hostilities were waged near the village of Charax,[665] and Angelos was resoundingly defeated, although the forces he engaged were unequal and the opposing commander no match for him in battle; the clash was with a certain eunuch who had enlisted the services of farmers unfit for warfare and a contingent of Paphlagonian soldiers.

Immediately following the defeat, Angelos retreated ingloriously to the city and was required to hand over the monies designated for military expenditures. He worried lest he be apprehended on the grounds that he sympathized with Andronikos and had worsened the conditions he had been sent to improve, and persuaded by his sons, six in number and all young in heart and brave in deed, he undertook to fortify his own house, situated outside Kionion,[666] by erecting ramparts; he also won over some of the populace to his side. But he realized that he did not have the strength to resist the superior imperial force and that he could not prevail over his adversaries and made arrangements to flee. Taking his six sons
[246] and his wife, he boarded a ship and went over to Andronikos. On seeing Angelos appoaching, Andronikos declared: "Behold, I *will* send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee."[667]

At his cousin's arrival, Andronikos took heart and saw that his aspirations were moving towards fulfillment. He discontinued his incursions into the byways; turning his back on the cities of Nicaea and Nikomedia and putting an end to his haphazard movements, he raced on to Constantinople as though he were making his way to the land of the Philistines.[668] He camped on a site above Chalcedon called Pefkia [Little Pine Trees] and burned many watch fires all through that night, not for the needs of his own troops, but to give the appearance of a much larger army.[669] This thrust the Byzantines into a state of suspense. In causing them to look out in the direction of the straits to see what was going on, Andronikos hoped to have them come down to the shore or ascend the hills so that even from afar he might signal them and win them over. So far then had advanced the cause of Andronikos, whose temples had grown hoary and forehead bald.

The *protosebastos* Alexios had no infantry with which to ward off the advancing enemy, for some had already decided in secret to pass over to Andronikos's side, even though they could not safely cross the straits to join him, while others thought that simply staying at home and taking no sides whatsoever was sufficient to prove their allegiance to the emperor.

Thus did craftiness of mind and the Roman emperors' frequent practice of ascending the throne through murder and bloodshed instruct the many to think and say.

Alexios attempted to repel the encroaching danger in a naval battle. Triremes covered the Propontis, some propelled by Roman oarsmen and manned with soldiers on deck ready to give battle, but the mightiest part [247] and fiercest in battle were those of the diverse Latin nations residing in the City. On these the *protosebastos* poured rivers of money, since he relied more on them for assistance than on the Romans. He hastened to install as captains of the triremes those men who were most loyal to him and to entrust the fleet to his closest kinsmen, but when the grand duke Kontostephanos, who was in sole command of the fleet, proved adverse, Alexios was compelled to change his mind. Andronikos Kontostephanos took command of the entire fleet and blocked the passage across the straits from the eastern shore; with Kontostephanos were some of the *protosebastos*'s kinsmen and domestics.

Shortly thereafter, the emperor dispatched a member of the clergy as his envoy to Andronikos. This was George Xiphilinos[670] who, when he came into the presence of the tyrant, handed over the emperor's letters and elaborated on their contents. Included were promises of more bountiful gifts and greater dignities and the favor of God, the Prince of Peace, should he desist from his present plans, leading to civil wars, and return to his former way of life. It is said that Andronikos undermined the negotiations undertaken by the envoy Xiphilinos and refused to yield wholly or in part to the exhortations directed at him. He rejected the appeal and delivered a vaunted harangue to the envoys and angrily demanded that if they wanted him to return whence he had come, let the *protosebastos* be cast out from the center of authority and account for his wrongdoings and let the emperor's mother confine herself to the monastic [248] life, receiving the tonsure once and for all.[671] As for the emperor, let him rule in accordance with his father's testament and not be choked, like an ear of corn by darnels, by those who share his reign.

Not many days afterwards, the grand duke Andronikos [Kontostephanos] defected to Andronikos, taking with him all the long ships manned by Romans. This act, more than any other, elated the rebel and utterly crushed the *protosebastos;* despairing of all hope, his spirit was broken. No longer did Andronikos's supporters meet in secret, but openly reviling the *protosebastos* and delighting at the turn of events, they sailed over to Chalcedon. When they met Andronikos in troops, they marveled much at his noble stature, his comely form, and his venerable old age. Tasting of the honeycomb of his tongue and captivated by his grandiloquence, like water-grass drinking in the rain or the mountains of Sion soaking up the dew of Hermon,[672] they returned rejoicing as though they had found the celebrated golden fleece, or the repast of ground meal cited in the myth,[673] or the renowned table of the sun set before them[674] and at which they were sated.[675] There were those, however, who recognized at first sight the wolf in sheep's clothing[676] and the serpent who attacks as soon as he is made warm and does evil to them who have taken him to their bosom.[677]

After these events, Andronikos's sons, John and Manuel, and all the

rest whom the *protosebastos* had incarcerated, were released, while his own favorites, supporters, and kinsmen were imprisoned. The *protosebastos,* who had been apprehended in the palace and placed in the custody of the Germans who carry on their shoulders the one-edged axes,[678] re-
[249] mained in confinement. In the middle of the night he was furtively removed from the palace to the sacred palace built by Patriarch Michael,[679] and his guard was increased for greater security.[680]

O, how the course of events is reversed and sometimes is altered quicker than thought! He who yesterday initiated an undeclared war against the church, he who was insolent and self-willed and inordinately over-proud, dragging the refugees thence in defiance of propriety, he who had countless throngs buzzing around him, today is a captive without hearth or home, without follower, aide, savior, or redeemer.[681] The *protosebastos* endured these things with great difficulty and was made to suffer even more: his guards would not allow him to sleep, and whenever he was about to doze off they fell upon him and compelled him to hold his eyes open as though they were horn or iron.[682] The patriarch, who bore no malice but pitied the man's reversal of fortune, attended to his needs and relieved his distress by conversing with him. He urged the guards to treat him reasonably and not to make his lot worse than it already was.

Several days later, the *protosebastos,* sitting on a pony and preceded by a banner on a reed blowing in the wind, was led out of the temple in the early morning; abused in this fashion, he descended towards the sea. There he was thrown aboard a fishing boat and transported across the straits to Andronikos. Afterwards, his eyes were gouged out; all those in authority, who assembled publicly, sanctioned this act together with Andronikos.

[250] Thus ended the joint reign of the *protosebastos* or, rather, his tyranny which was never firmly established. Had his hands been armed for battle and his fingers instructed for war,[683] and had he not been a weakling warrior[684] and a stammerer spending half the day snoring, he could have barred Andronikos's way into the City and preserved himself from the evil of that time. He could have used the imperial treasury as he liked, and he could have employed the triremes, manned by Latin troops, to subdue his adversary Andronikos, as the Latins, wrought of bronze and delighting in blood, were superior to the Roman naval forces. But in their confrontation with destiny, the *protosebastos,* so it seems, lost his nerve, while Andronikos, exerting himself greatly, tripped him up at the heels as he came running against him and carried off the splendid victory.

While Andronikos was still biding his time across the straits, he dispatched all the triremes under the command of the grand duke, and with his elite troops that had been selected from among the soldiers who had enlisted in his cause as he made his way through the provinces, he mounted a war against the Latins in the City. The City's populace regained their courage and incited one another to fight side by side, and strife broke out on land and sea. Surrounded and hemmed in by both throngs, the Latins were unable to resist. They attempted to save them-
[251] selves as best they could, leaving behind their homes filled with riches and treasures of all kinds such as are sought by men bent on plunder; nor

did they dare to remain where they were or to attack the Romans or to submit to, and endure, their onslaught. Some took their chances by scattering throughout the City, others sought asylum in the homes of the nobility, while yet others boarded the long ships manned by their fellow countrymen and escaped being cut down by the sword. Those apprehended were condemned to death, and all lost their properties and possessions. The triremes, loaded with refugees, put out from the City's harbors in the direction of the Hellespont and spent the rest of that day anchored at the seagirt islands which are neither far from the queen of cities nor far out in the open sea: I speak of Prinkipos[685] and Protē[686] and all the islands around them rising up from the deep. The next day, after burning down and destroying several monasteries on these islands, they departed, plying all oars and with sails unfurled. Pursued by no one and putting in wherever they wished, they inflicted as much injury as possible on the Romans in these parts.[687]

During these days a comet appeared in the heavens, a portent of future calamities which clearly pointed to Andronikos. Now the fiery mass appeared to be stretched out, portraying a serpent's sinuous shape, and now it contracted into coils; at other times, opening up into a yawning chasm as though it were about to swallow from above everything below, thirsting after human blood, it struck terror into those who gazed at it. It continued on its course that day and through the next night, and then it vanished.

And a hawk trained to hunt, with white plumage and feet shackled with thongs, that often molts in its nest and rejuvenates itself, swooped down from the east upon the Great Church of the Logos [Hagia Sophia]. It entered into the building of Thomaïtēs, where it attracted many spectators who looked upon it as an omen. There were those who contrived means to capture him. The hawk rose up and flew down towards the [252] Great Palace; coming to rest on top of the chamber where the newly crowned emperors were customarily acclaimed by the entire populace,[688] it returned after a short time to the temple. Having thrice flown this same circuit, the bird was caught and taken to the emperor. The majority regarded this as a portent that Andronikos would be apprehended forthwith and subjected to violent punishment, for the omen of the bird's flight, they contended, clearly referred to Andronikos, since he had been frequently cast into prison, and the hair of his head was snow white. Others, more clever and discerning in their interpretation of the future, maintained that the threefold flight to the same destination augured that at the end of Andronikos's reign as emperor of the Romans he would once again be subjected to imprisonment and the stocks.

Everyone was ferried across to Andronikos, and the last to cross over was Patriarch Theodosios, together with the distinguished members of the clergy. When Andronikos heard that the great high priest was approaching his tent, he immediately went out to greet him, wearing a violet-colored garment of Iberian weave, open at the sides and reaching down to the knees and buttocks and covering the elbows; on his head he wore a grayish black headdress shaped like a pyramid. Throwing himself down in front of the horses hooves, he lay outstretched, mighty in his mightiness.[689] Shortly afterwards, he rose up and licked the soles of the patri-

arch's feet, proclaiming him savior of the emperor, defender of virtue, champion of truth, and rival of John of the Golden Tongue [Chrysostom] and bestowed upon him every title of honor. The patriarch looked upon Andronikos for the first time and perceived his vicious glare as he scrutinized him, his insidious effrontery, his self-serving and affected manner, his stature reaching a height of slightly less than ten feet, his strutting, and his supercilious leer. He saw that Andronikos was a calculating man

[253] ever-wrapped in thought, who deplored those who so foolishly befriended him to their own utter ruin, and he declared, "Heretofore, I had only heard the report of you;[690] now I have seen you and have come to know you very well." Quoting from the Psalm of David, he said, "As we have heard, so have we also seen,"[691] Thus artfully upbraiding Andronikos for this theatrical antics of throwing himself on the ground and fawning like a dog and associating what he saw with what he had heard from Emperor Manuel, who had so portrayed Andronikos in words that although he was unknown to the patriarch it was as though he were standing before his eyes. However, the equivocal meaning of the patriarch's words did not escape Andronikos of many wiles, who well understood the concealed meaning of the patriarch's words that pierced his soul like a sword brandished with both hands. Perceiving that the patriarch's thick brows knitted in anger revealed his innermost feelings, Andronikos remarked, "Behold the deep Armenian,"[692] for it was rumored that the patriarch's paternal family were Armenians.

Andronikos derided the patriarch yet another time. During a conversation with him, he appeared vexed and complained that he was the only remaining guardian of Emperor Alexios and that there was no one to share his toil and trouble, not even his holiness, even though the emperor

[254] [Manuel], Emperor Alexios's father, had entrusted his son to the patriarch's care and the administration of the state to him.[693] The patriarch replied that he had long ago laid down his responsibility for the emperor and that from the time that Andronikos had entered the queen of cities and taken control of the government, he had been counted among the dead. At the patriarch's reply, Andronikos, turning red in the face, asked what he meant by laying down his charge and, pretending not to understand, asked him to explain his barbed statements. The patriarch, who did not want to enrage the beast and bring him roaring against him, or to make the camel vomit by forcing open its mouth, as is the custom, did not give the true meaning of his words but interpreted them differently, replying that he would no longer look after the emperor but would ignore his charge, for Andronikos alone was capable of caring for him.[694]

Once the affairs of the palace were being managed by Andronikos's sons and supporters according to his will and pleasure, he finally departed from Damalis [April 1182]. As he was crossing over the the straits, he

[255] cheerfully recited under his breath the verse from David, "Return to thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord has dealt bountifully with thee. For he has delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling."[695] When Alexios and his mother Xenē[696] left the palace and moved into the imperial buildings of Manganēs in Philopation,[697] Andronikos went there and made a profound obeisance to the emperor, embraced his feet, beating his breast as he was wont to do, and shed tears;

paying his respects but perfunctorily to Xenē, he left shortly afterwards. When he entered the pavilion which had been readied for him nearby, he was surrounded by the pitched tents of every noble and notable even as hens gather under their wings their chickens.[698]

At that time, a certain man, another Iros,[699] a homeless and filthy wretch, was caught in the dead of night roaming around Andronikos's pavilion; his arms were bare to the shoulder and he was squint-eyed. At first, he was accused by Andronikos's attendants of resorting to sorcery, [256] and then he was delivered over to the city populace; collecting dry wood and fagots in the theater, they burned him without benefit of a trial.

After spending many days with the emperor in Philopation, Andronikos decided to enter the megalopolis to see the tomb of his cousin, Emperor Manuel. He arrived at the Monastery of Pantokrator and inquired where the corpse was entombed;[700] standing before the sepulcher, he wept bitterly and wailed piteously. Many of those who were standing nearby, not knowing what a dissembler Andronikos was, admired him greatly and remarked, "O, how wondrous! How he loved[701] his kinsman, the emperor, even though he persecuted him relentlessly and showed him no mercy!" When several of his kinsmen tore him away from the tomb, saying that he had mourned enough, Andronikos gave no heed to their pleas and requested that he be allowed to abide a while longer by the grave as he had something to say alone to the deceased. He raised his hands as in supplication with his palms turned outwards and lifted up his eyes towards the marble sarcophagus, and moving his lips but making no sound that could be heard by his companions, he carried on a discussion in secret. To most, it appeared as though he were muttering some barbarian incantation. Others, especially those who wished to show off their wit, declared that Andronikos, to mock Emperor Manuel, clearly attacked his corpse by saying, "You have been my persecutor and the cause of my many wanderings, and you have made me the subject of nearly universal gossip as I miserably followed the course of the sun's chariot. And now [257] this marble with its seven clusters of ivy holds you as a prison from which there is no escape while you sleep the sleep from which there is no waking until the last trumpet is sounded;[702] I shall fall upon your family like a lion pouncing on a large prey,[703] and I shall exact fitting revenge for the injuries I have sustained at your hands when I enter the splendid seven-hilled megalopolis."

Thereafter, he made his way to every illustrious and splendid dwelling, and stopping off as passers-by do, he conducted the affairs of state according to his will and pleasure, while encouraging Emperor Alexios to devote himself to the chase and indulge in vain pursuits. The guards he set over Alexios supervised his coming in and going out[704] with greater vigilance than the mythical many-eyed Argos[705] and allowed no one to meet with him alone to discuss any matter whatsoever. Andronikos himself was wholly concerned, not with how to promote the welfare of the Romans, but how to remove from the palace the virtuous counselor and the devotee of the war god, mighty in combat, and anyone else who had distinguished himself by some exploit.

He rewarded the Paphlagonians for their goodwill towards him and everyone else who joined him in his rebellion, honoring them with digni-

ties and lavish gifts. Splendid dignities and magnificent offices were transferred to certain individuals according to whim, and he promoted his own sons. Stripping others of their offices, he awarded these as suited him to those who followed after him in the same way that those apostates of the
[258] living God in former times followed after Baal[706] and preferred his glory to the praiseworthy honor formerly given to the righteous man as his portion.[707]

Some of these men were expelled from house and native city and separated from their loved ones, while others were given over to prison and iron manacles, and still others had their eyes gouged out without any formal charge being brought against them.[708] They were accused in secret because they were scions of nobility, and the fact that they were often victorious in warfare or distinguished by noble stature and excessive elegance, or by some other praiseworthy trait, nettled Andronikos and inspired in him no great expectations; instead, this only kindled the embers of old vexations, causing the ashes of forgotten wrath slowly to ignite.

The flux of those times was irresistible and the mutual distrust, even among the most genuine friends, an intolerable evil. Not only did brother ignore brother and father neglect son,[709] if such was to Andronikos's liking, but they also cooperated with the informers in bringing about the utter ruin of their families. There were those who personally informed against their relatives for scoffing at Andronikos's actions or for being devoted to Emperor Alexios's hereditary rule, thus shaking themselves free from Andronikos's grip. In the very act of making accusations, many were themselves accused, and while exposing others as workers of evil against Andronikos, they themselves were denounced by the accused or by others who were present; both accusers and accused were led away to the same prison.

John Kantakouzenous attested that having struck with murderous fists a certain eunuch by the name of Tzitas, knocking out his teeth and bloodying his lips because he was discovered discussing the calamities that had befallen the commonwealth, he himself was seized on the spot,
[259] blinded, and cast into a dark dungeon for having sent a greeting through the jailer to the prisoner Constantine Angelos, his wife's brother.[710]

For these reasons, therefore, the whole head was in pain,[711] and these works were performed in the open as though they could never be verified, like the monstrosities subtly contrived by Empedoclean Strife.[712] It was not only every man of high degree and distinction of the opposing faction who suffered most piteously; he was also most unfaithful to his own attendants. But yesterday he had fed them the finest wheat[713] and set before them the fatted calf[714] and mingled stronger drink[715] of the finest bouquet, including them in the circle of his closest friends; today he treated them in the worst way possible. On one and the same day, one would often see the same man, like Xerxes' helmsman,[716] both crowned and butchered, praised and cursed. Many who had sided with Andronikos, if they were at all perceptive, deemed praise from him to be a deliberate insult, the conferring of any human benefit the prelude to vomiting up one's possessions, and a show of regard, certain ruin.

When he had established his tyranny, it went unnoticed at first that he was a pernicious poisoner, but after an interval of some days, it was

bruited about by one and all that he was adept in concocting deadly potions. The first to take this ruinous descent to Hades was the *kaisarissa* Maria, Emperor Manuel's daughter, who more than anyone longed to see his return to his country. By seductive promises he corrupted a certain [260] eunuch by the name of Pterygeonitēs, Maria's father's attendant now in the woman's service, to pour the baneful drug into her cup; the poisonous potion was not the kind that brought on instantaneous death but lulled its victims little by little and drained their lives unhurriedly.

Not long afterwards, Maria's husband, the *kaisar,* followed the same fate as his wife. It was said that he too, did not die naturally but that man-slaying[717] Andronikos was also the cause of his death, and it was conjectured that one wine cup had snuffed out the life of the two anointed ones.[718]

Andronikos wished to give his daughter Irene to Alexios in marriage. He had begotten Irene through his niece Theodora, the child of Emperor Manuel's brother;[719] Theodora had given birth to her after having sexual intercourse with him. He drew up a laconic petition and, signing his name in ink at the bottom, submitted it to the holy synod for a hearing and deliberation. The petition dealt with the question of whether it was permissible to negotiate the marriage contract if only a slight impropriety were indicated, for the marriage would do much to unite the eastern and western parts of the empire, many captives would be rescued, and a host of other benefits would accrue to the public welfare. And this terse document, like some wide-mouthed soup ladle, or Poseidon's trident,[720] or Discord's shapely apple, stirred up the synod and caused division among those senators who served as judges; it would be truer to say it armed them against one another and divided them into opposing factions. After they had been bribed with money and appeased by being promoted to [261] higher dignities, the majority gave their approval. Would that they had not done so! They acted as though the marriage were not prohibited. The more insolent of the judges, accustomed to giving their votes in exchange for banquets as they went begging like vagabonds among the houses of the notables, and those members of the synod who were fond of gold and hucksters of divine things evaded the issue by contending that since the couple to be married were both born of illicit unions, the laws view such offspring to be unrelated and without any connection whatsoever, and they said that it was a sign of ignorance even to think of subjecting to inquiry a matter which is as clear as the day. The opposition would not even deign to give ear to such arguments. Using the laws as their weapons in close combat, they turned back the attacks and refused even more vigorously to condone so unlawful an act. Those who advocated this excellent judgment and supported the better cause were a few bishops and clergymen and several prudent members of the senate. The patriarch's indignation rallied them and stirred them up, preventing them from siding with the impious and going astray. Neither did Andronikos's ranting perturb the patriarch, nor did the forcefulness of his words discomfit him, nor did threats confound him. He was as unshakeable as that jutting rock around which the high-rising wave is ever stayed and the brine roars and boils, dissolving the water into spray, making the sounding sea to howl loudly and afar as the rock remains firmly fixed on its foundations.

Realizing, therefore, that he could not prevail,[721] and that calamity was manifestly imminent and the worst evils were carrying the day, the patri-
[262] arch rose up and departed from the sacred palace and came to the island of Terebinthos [September 1183], where he had prepared a place of refuge and a burial place for his body. Andronikos regarded Theodosios's unexpected and voluntary withdrawal as a great stroke of luck and completed the marriage contract, designating the archbishop of Bulgaria, who was present at that time in the City, to solemnize the marriage. He also deliberated on a candidate of his choosing to succeed to the patriarchal throne. He selected Basil Kamateros to become ecumenical patriarch [II, August 1183–February 1186]; it was stated that Basil enticed Andronikos to choose him by being the only hierarch who agreed in writing to do whatever was pleasing to Andronikos, even though these things be utterly unlawful, and also to abhor whatever was displeasing to Andronikos.[722]

Not only were the affairs of the City in such turmoil, but the provinces suffered even worse, thanks to the evil spirit who overturned everything undertaken by the Romans to their disadvantage. The sultan of Ikonion, like Tantalos [Sisyphos?], forever in dread of the rock suspended above his head (I speak of Emperor Manuel), on learning of the latter's departure for the nether world took possession of Sozopolis by the law of warfare, and pillaging the surrounding towns, he brought them under his dominion. He afflicted the most splendid city of Attaleia with a long siege, sacked Kotyaeion [Kutahiya], and compelled many other cities to submit to him.

While residing in Philadelphia, John Komnenos, whose surname was Vatatzēs, a man not lacking in military skill and one who had carried off many victories against the Turks, nobly set himself against Andronikos and took no heed of his orders. When the latter threatened him harshly, he rebuked him in turn even more sternly; distressed by the news that
[263] Andronikos was attempting to establish a tyranny, he roundly admonished and upbraided the tyrant as a demonic adversary intent on exterminating the imperial family.

As a result, the Asiatic cities were fraught with internal strife and wars. The actions now taken were more grievous than those undertaken by the neighboring enemies; in other words, whatever the hand of the foreigner did not pluck, the right hand of the inhabitant reaped, the kinsmen, ignoring the laws of kinship, went to war against one another as though they were barbarians.

Andronikos decided to arm Andronikos Lapardas, a man short in stature but enterprising in warfare, against Vatatzēs and enlisted a sizeable force to serve under him. At this time, John Komnenos, who had taken ill and was encamped somewhere near the city of Philadelphia, marched his sons Manuel and Alexios against Lapardas. Vatatzēs, who knew of the frequent turns taken by the conflict and that many on both sides were slain in these internecine struggles, was aggrieved and saddened by the malady that confined him to his bed at a time when he should have been defending the public good by displaying his military prowess. Then he would have received the customary acclamations from the eastern cities on the occasion of his victory and his deeds would have told the sort of leader with whom the old and decrepit Andronikos had

matched himself. But eagerness resurrects even the dead, and there is nothing stronger than a sensitive heart,[723] and thus he gave orders that he be lifted on a simple cot and carried to a hill whence the battle's progress would be visible. After he had instructed his sons as to how he wished them to array the troops, his forces won a notable victory, and Lapardas's men turned their backs and were pursued some distance and cut down.

A few days later Vatatzēs died. After mourning bitterly, all of the Philadelphians decided to go over to Andronikos and eagerly winged [264] their way to the imperial city. As they paid court to Andronikos, they croaked like cawing crows at the eagle Vatatzēs and his eaglets and like drones buzzed around the streets and the palace, which is the practice of those who are mischievous and speak with forked tongues. The sons of the grand domestic, afraid lest they be apprehended and delivered over to Andronikos, departed and took refuge with the sultan of Ikonion, but what they were to suffer later makes it clear that no one is allowed to jump over the snares or to slip through the net cast by Divine Providence. Displeased after a lengthy sojourn with the sultan, who was unwilling to defend them against their enemies, they decided to set out for Sicily. With a fair wind, their ship sailed across to the Cretan sea, but a contrary wind blew up during their passage, and they were compelled to land on Crete where they were recognized by one of the sentries, an ax-bearer of Celtic origin. They were apprehended and reported to the exactor of tribute, who attempted to send them forth from the island safe and sound and furnished them with barley, wine, and with whatever other provisions were necessary for the voyage. But their presence had become known to everyone, and Andronikos was informed of the whereabouts of the wretched Komnenians, whereupon he who hated the light begrudged the men their eyesight and deprived them of the light.

Then Andronikos, who regarded the death of Vatatzēs [Pentecost, 16 May 1182] as a divine visitation, added another deceit to the rest of his duplicities and advised Emperor Alexios that he should be crowned em- [265] peror. Shedding hot tears, he lifted him onto his shoulders[724] and carried him up the pulpit of the Great Church in the presence of countless witnesses, both citizens and foreigners; carrying him back in the same manner, he appeared to be more affectionate than a father, one who accepted the charge to protect the youthful scion of the empire with his right hand and clearly fulfilled the saying of David, "For thou has lifted me up, and cast me down."[725]

Zealously banishing everyone [from the court], Andronikos, now the lord of all, administered the affairs of the empire as he liked. His first objective was to remove the emperor's mother from the emperor. To accomplish this, he continually made accusations against her and threatened to leave because she was openly opposed to the common good of the state, saying that her every action was devious and that she actively conspired against the emperor.[726] To incite the populace's outrage against her, he brought them together in the sacred palace on many occasions and, using the arts of the demagogue, persuaded them to seize eagerly upon the resolution he had taken against the empress. He compelled the excellent Theodosios against his will to agree in writing to her removal from the seat of government and to her expulsion from the palace; the

shameless from among the base populace would have seized Theodosios by the beard in complete disregard of his famed piety if he had not acceded to Andronikos's demands and thus averted the danger of violence [August 1183].[727]

From among the judges of the *velum,*[728] Demetrios Tornikēs, Leon
[266] Monasteriotēs, and Constantine Patrenos, who had not as yet been added to the lists of those who belonged to Andronikos's circle nor openly and servilely subscribed to his every whim and bent their knees in submission, very nearly lost their lives. When they were required to prosecute the empress for the charges brought against her, they responded that first they wanted to ascertain whether this tribunal and trial were taking place according to the will and pleasure of the emperor. Andronikos, as though pricked with an ox-goad by this query, declared, "These are the men who incited the *protosebastos* to perpetrate his foul deeds. Seize them." Forthwith, the bodyguards removed the two-edged swords from their shoulders as though to strike them down, and the populace, grabbing hold of their cloaks, insolently pulled them hither and thither so that they barely escaped with their lives.

Andronikos next attacked the grandees. The latter, who deemed such deeds intolerable and beheld the Cyclopean feast[729] taking place before their very eyes, pledged to give no sleep to their eyes nor rest to their temples[730] to insure that Andronikos would be dead and stained by his own blood before he should dye his garment with the purple he coveted. With fearful oaths they ratified their alliance against Andronikos, who, like some ferocious boar on a rampage of destruction,[731] was bent on uprooting the imperial family. The conspirators were Andronikos, the son of Constantine Angelos, the grand duke Andronikos Kontostephanos, and their sixteen sons, all in their prime, with swords drawn for battle. They were joined by the logothete of the *dromos,* Basil Kamateros,[732] and many other kinsmen and notables.

But the conspiracy did not escape Andronikos, and in the end it was betrayed. Then Andronikos led a charge against Andronikos Angelos,
[267] who was encamped a little distance beyond the gates of the City, and compelled him to flee with his sons. Fortunately, he escaped the dragnet spread out for him by Andronikos's troops by chancing upon a boat filled with empty amphorae; heaving these overboard together with the refuse of the fishing net, he and his sons boarded and sailed out of danger. Taking captive Kontostephanos, his four sons, and Basil Kamateros, Andronikos blinded them all, together with others who were accused of participating with those who agreed to the conspiracy only on the basis of unsubstantiated and doubtful hearsay.

Having thus slaughtered those whom he had long been most eager to seize, Andronikos bided his time to assail others: some he delivered over to prison, some he comdemned to banishment, and some he utterly destroyed in various ways.[733] Those few who remained were anxious to go along with the majority and to reverse their former course. They changed their minds like the unstable planets and offered their necks to Andronikos to be tread underfoot, revolving around him as their axis, and so Andronikos hastened to bring about the ruin of the empress. After leveling several accusations against her, he finally charged her with treason and convened a

court sympathetic to his cause with judges certain to condemn, not try, the wretched woman. The empress, who had attempted to enlist the help of her sister's husband, Béla [III], the king of Hungary, writing him letters and tempting him with grand promises to ravage the lands around Braničevo and Belgrade, was led away to a cramped dungeon near the [268] Monastery of Saint Diomedēs.[734] There she was grossly reviled by the guards as the butt of their jokes, and, pining with hunger and thirst, she was haunted by a vision of the executioner standing on her right where his edge would cut most surely.[735] Andronikos's ferocity did not abate even a whit. In the words of David, he perceived trouble and wrath[736] and hastened to deliver her over to death, annoyed by the fact that she was still numbered among the living. Ere long he again assembled the justices who mete out injustice and whose right hand is the right hand of iniquity.[737] He inquired as to what punishment the laws decree for traitors of cities and provinces; receiving in hand a written judgment sentencing such criminals to death, his assault against the empress went unchecked. When these lawless men raised their voices and shouted aloud as they cast their votes that this ill-starred woman must depart this life, a decree condemning her to death was immediately signed by her son, the emperor, written as though with a drop of his mother's blood.

Elected to carry out this loathsome and unholy deed were Andronikos's firstborn son Manuel and the *sebastos* George, the brother of Andronikos's wife. Both men recoiled from their selection in disgust and contemned the emperor's decree, declaring that they had not concurred earlier in the empress's execution and that their hands would remain guiltless of such defilement; now, even more so, they could not endure to see her innocent body broken. This unexpected reply struck Andronikos like a thunderbolt. He continually twisted the hairs of his beard around his fingers, his eyes were filled with fire, and, shaking his head up and down, he repeatedly pitied himself and was greatly troubled[738] that he did [269] not have friends who delighted in blood and were eager to commit murder at the nod of his head. Holding his rage in check, like a hot-blooded horse champing at the bit or like smoke wrapping itself around a flame, he quenched his unremitting anger and postponed the execution. A few days later [end of 1182?], he condemned the ill-starred empress to a wretched death by strangulation. The sentence was carried out under the supervision of Constantine Tripsychos, who held the office of *hetairiarch,*[739] and the eunuch Pterygeonitēs, who, as we have mentioned above,[740] wickedly caused the death of Maria *porphyrogenita* by poisoning. And she, who was the sweet light[741] and a vision of beauty unto men, was buried in obscurity in the sand of the nearby shore (O Sun, who didst look down upon this defilement, and Thou, O Word of God, who art without beginning, how inscrutable is thy forebearance!). The bloodthirsty soul of Andronikos exulted at this, for with the extermination of Manuel's family, with the imperial garden laid waste, he would reign as sole monarch over the Roman empire and hold sway with impunity.

With the advent of the month of September in the second indiction of the year 6693 [1182], he was determined to ascend the throne. Therefore, presumably with Andronikos's sanction (although he concealed his purpose), the members of his perverse conspiracy raised before the council

the issue of the insurrection fomented by the Bithynians and the reception of Isaakios Angelos and Theodore Kantakouzenos[742] within the city
[270] of Nicaea, as well as the wickedness worked by the Prusaeans by granting shelter to Theodore Angelos[743] and making common cause with the Nicaeans. The council contended that the seditionists would not be stilled in any other way except that Andronikos should become emperor, since he whose hair had turned silver gray by time was able to speak more wisely than the young, that he should sit on the throne and bind his head with the bejeweled imperial diadem and reign together with the emperor, who had been cut off from the friends of his youth,[744] for he could perceive clearly what must be done and carry out the action to be undertaken more forcefully and authoritatively than the young Alexios. Immediately, the bystanders and those members of noble birth and holders of high office who had assembled to support Andronikos, shouted out in unison that the proposal laid before them represented their wish of long ago and that there was no time for delay; in truth, unless they combined persuasion with force they would be unable to advance their cause.[745] They began the acclamation, thereby publicly proclaiming Andronikos's elevation, as follows, "Many be the years of Alexios and Andronikos, the Komnenoi, the great emperors and autocrats of the Romans," chanting with mouths open wide and their voices almost bursting.

When the news of this happy event was broadcast among the foolish citizens (for this is how the Constantinopolitan populace must be described), the masses, who represented every race and trade and age, rose up following the termination of the council meeting and congregated like swarms of bees pouring out of their hives.[746] The report of Andronikos's public proclamation soon spread everywhere and reached the ears of these vile toadies—a certain judge of the *velum* (I purposely pass over his name), promoted to the office of petitions[747] as Andronikos's warmest supporter, and a certain other man, honored with the office of protonotary,[748] who lived by his tongue, taking second place to none as an ignoble agent of the tyranny. As though with one breath, they arrived at the tyrant's dwelling where these unlawful rituals were celebrated (this
[271] was the so-called House of Michaelitzēs). They removed the headdresses which denoted their senatorial rank, and taking the white linen stoles that hung down over their shoulders, they rolled them up into balls. Then, directing the vulgar populace as leaders of the chorus, they conducted the festivities that followed. Changing the pitch of the voice so as to sing a melody varied by modulation, jumping about frenetically, and clapping their hands, they kicked their feet and whirled up and down in the midst of the crowds, and they beat the earth as they danced, with song and shouting.[749] O, what shamelessness, small-mindedness, and levity!

When Andronikos had gone down from the tyrant's dwelling to the palace in Blachernai and had entered the high-vaulted chamber within called Polytimos, Emperor Alexios made his appearance amid paeans and groans (for not everyone was swept along by the times). He found the palace crowded and saw that Andronikos was acclaimed by all as emperor. Of his own will, yet with soul unwilling,[750] he therefore gave his sanction to the proceedings and, together with the others, flattered the little old man, urging him to reign as co-emperor; thus Andronikos at-

tained the goal he had so passionately desired for many years. In seeming disregard of the assembly, his most devoted supporters, as though taking him by surprise, held him securely by both arms and set him down on the gold-spangled couch on which the emperor sat. Removing his dark gray pyramidal headdress made of wool, one group put a red one on him, and another dressed him in an imperial robe.[751]

On the following day, when the public proclamation began in the Great Church, Andronikos was proclaimed first and Alexios demoted to second in rank. The reason given was the best and most specious: it was not proper, they said, for a beardless child who had not yet reached [272] maturity to take precedence in the proclamations over the gray-haired Andronikos, who was venerable in his counsel and, thanks to the nobility of his nature, endowed with the capacity to see both before and after.[752] When Andronikos entered the sacred palace on his way to be crowned, for the first time he appeared to the people to be in good humor, and the wild beast, altering his grim gaze, promised many of the suppliants a change for the better in the state of affairs. This was all a manifest deception, a cheat's false promise, and his cheerful countenance, betokening the barest humanity, was a transient image overshadowing his inner savageness.

In the holy temple, the customary coronation rites were concluded, and the moment came for Andronikos to receive the Immaculate Consecrated Elements. He partook of the Heavenly Bread, and as he drew near to the chalice to drink the Precious and Life-giving Blood contained therein, he lifted up his hands towards the cup and assumed the aspect of one in deep suffering, swearing on the Awesome Mysteries in earshot of nearly all those standing in the holy sanctuary that the only reason he chose to reign was that he wished to assist this one in his rule (pointing to the emperor, his nephew Alexios who stood at his side), him whom he strangled several days later and dispatched to the bottom of the sea.[753]

As Andronikos left the holy temple, he was escorted by a most splendid brigade of bodyguards, complemented by a very large number of shield-bearers (he had given such instructions because he was sore afraid), and passing by the Church of Christ Savior in Chalkē,[754] he did not advance in slow and cadent pace as was the custom with emperors celebrating a triumph but let his horse proceed freely. However, even this event was an issue for dispute: some contended that it was fear that gave [273] rise to the spectacle, while others maintained that because of the day-long strain and the fatigue caused by the encumbrance of the imperial trappings, the old man was unable to contain the excreta of his bowels over a long period of time and defecated in his breeches. Andronikos arrived at the Great Palace and celebrated the inauguration festivities for several days; then he turned his attention to other deeds filled with violence.

In his desire to dispose of Emperor Alexios, he once again assembled his loyal council and gathered together the partisans who conspired with him in his unhallowed acts. Pronouncing all together the Homeric verse, "No good thing is a multitude of lords; let there be one lord, one king,"[755] and "Better the aged eagle than the fledgling lark,"[756] they resolved that Emperor Alexios should become a private citizen, no longer recalling their obscure arguments made to so many about the need to protect the youthful

emperor and to preserve the empire. These things had been shouted out heretofore and given as excuses to those who questioned the cause behind these events, to those who lived in the most splendid city of Constantine but were not aware of the developments that had transpired[757] and were wholly ignorant of the reason for which they had taken place.

Before the citizenry was fully apprised of this resolution, the death sentence against the emperor was elicited from that wicked confederacy as these murderers openly applauded the verse of Solomon, "*Let us bind*
[274] the righteous, because he is not for our turn, and he is grievous unto us even to behold."[758] In the night, Stephanos Hagiochristophoritēs, Constantine Tripsychos, and a certain Theodore Dadibrenos, the commander of the lictors, fell upon Alexios and throttled him with a bowstring [before 24 September 1183].[759] When the corpse was taken up and brought to Andronikos, he kicked it in the side and mocked the parents of the dead youth as his body lay stretched out, deriding the father as a perjurer and wantonly insulting his weak mother as a well-known harlot; afterwards, one of the corpse's ears was pierced with a nail, and a wax impression of Andronikos's signet ring was hung from it by a thread.

The body was condemned to be thrown into the deep and the head cut off and again exhibited to Andronikos. When the orders had been carried out, the head was hidden in a hole in a corner of the district called Katabatē;[760] the body was enclosed in a lead coffer and cast into the bosom of the sea. The fishing boat which carried this most piteous cargo was taken out to sea to the accompaniment of song and dance by two men held in high esteem, John Kamateros, the keeper of the emperor's inkstand, who was later appointed archbishop of Bulgaria, and Theodore Choumnos, who was honored with the rank of *chartoularios*.

IV *The Reign of Andronikos Komnenos*

BOOK ONE

THUS did Emperor Alexios disappear from the world, not yet fifteen [275]
years of age. He had reigned for three of these years, but not alone and unaided, for as he was but a child, his mother at first governed the realm, and then the affairs of the empire were administered by two tyrants. It was as though the sun were hidden behind the clouds, and it seemed as though Alexios was subject instead of ruler, commanding and doing whatever the rebels proposed until his life was choked out.

When this loathsome deed had been accomplished, Anna, Emperor Alexios's wife, the daughter of the king of France [Louis VII], was joined in wedded life to Andronikos. And he who stank of the dark ages[761] was not ashamed to lie unlawfully with his nephew's red-cheeked and tender spouse who had not yet completed her eleventh year, the overripe suitor embracing the unripe maiden, the dotard the damsel with pointed [276]
breasts, the shriveled and languid old man the rosy-fingered girl dripping with the dew of love.

Andronikos thereupon requested a second favor of the patriarch who satisfied all his wishes (I speak of Basil Kamateros) and of the synod of that time [c. October 1183]. He asked to be released from the oath which he had sworn to Emperor Manuel and his wretched son, together with all the others who were looked upon as having violated their pledges. The members of the synod, who had received from God the power to bind and loose all sins[762] without discrimination, forthwith published decrees granting amnesty to all those who had breached their oaths. Like an admirer, Andronikos rewarded them for carrying out his orders and readily granted their every request no matter how small or paltry it might be. He paid them the highest honor by sitting in council with them and by having their benches and couches placed close to the imperial throne. Nonetheless, these hierarchs, who were chosen and admitted into his presence, became objects of ridicule, and after a few days of this fantasy of honor and the illusion of glory, Andronikos returned to his former ways like a twig that is forcibly bent, but then springs back to its original position when released. Rather, he deviated even more from his previous behavior; so that he should not appear to be the most unstable of men, suffering from an inconstancy of character even in matters of little consequence, he made it difficult for the hierarchs to gain an audience as he sat [277]
on his splendid throne. And they, who but a short while before had been exalted by sitting in the imperial council and had boasted that they had been awarded this high privilege because, in the words of David, they were "the faithful of the land,"[763] now withdrew and hid their faces in shame, pitying themselves for having fallen away from God by loosing

those things which cannot be loosed and by fawning over Andronikos in vain.

The news of Andronikos's accession and Emperor Alexios's murder reached Alexios Branas and Andronikos Lapardas, the commanders of the divisions which were engaged in resisting, at Niš and Braničevo, Béla, the king of Hungary, who was ravaging the surrounding lands and wreaking havoc with the sword. Lapardas despaired for his life and henceforth ever suspected that Andronikos's wide-gaping jaws would one day open and swallow him. Branas, on the other hand, had already declared himself among Andronikos's supporters and welcomed the transfer of imperial power. After giving a great deal of thought to the many ways in which he might escape, Andronikos Lapardas, like a Laconian hound[764] in hot pursuit, found one salutary path that would lead him away from the countenance and power of Andronikos, and he would have preserved himself from injury had he persisted in this design and had not ventured on another course of action. With a passionate desire to punish Andronikos and avenge the crime against his lord and emperor, he dared to revolt. He knew that the West would not come over to his side nor be willing to take up and continue the battle against Andronikos because of the presence of his fellow general Branas. Thus he set his eyes on the East, where he was better known because there he had often exercised the highest commands, and that was, moreover, the breeding ground of eager champions of resistance.

[278] After consulting with his fellow commander and persuading Branas to stay at his post, he set out immediately to meet with the aged and newly made emperor, outrunning Rumor, which clearly perceives those things hidden beneath the earth and often sees future events as though they had already taken place. He stayed only a brief time at Orestias, his native city, which others called Adrianople, just long enough to see his sisters there and to make arrangements to go abroad and then hastened his crossing to the East as quickly as possible, for Rumor, the gossipmonger, was already shouting out in the crossroads and broad thoroughfares and from the walls and housetops and in every direction within earshot, heralding his flight. One night, therefore, he and his companions came down to the sea, embarked on ships made ready at Hyelokastellion[765] for this purpose and crossed to the other side. After a brief respite here, he hoped to escape utter destruction and being served up as a prepared feast and ready dessert for the waiting jaws of Andronikos. It seems he had been blotted out from the book of the living[766] by Providence and was destined to become food for the beast.

Hence, since the Divinity's will was contrary, he was seized and sent to Andronikos by those very men whom he hoped would help preserve him unharmed and enable him to work great and noble deeds, those men in whose might of hand and soul he had trusted to find every kind of support in overthrowing Andronikos. These were figments of a deluded imagination and proved to be dream-like apparitions. At Atramyttion, he was apprehended by a certain Kephalas, a man of great power and the [279] tyrant's most trusted supporter, and he was entrusted into the hands of Andronikos as a sacrificial victim. His eyes were gouged out, and he was cast into the Monastery of Pantepoptēs. There Lapardas lamented the

fact that he had miscalculated the force of the circumstances that opposed him: he had cast the die of rebellion for the best reasons, but Fortune had taken no heed whatsoever of those things which he had undertaken with good counsel and had sided with the worst faction.[767]

Thus God does not reveal to us whether our lives shall be free from toil and sorrow, neither does he give us any presentment of future evil, or allow us to choose a way of life without danger. This man, who often proved himself a most excellent general, thought it a base act to serve Andronikos after the death of Emperor Alexios. Anticipating that he would be put to death by the tyrant, he chose voluntary exile in the face of certain execution and was taken unawares by him from whom he fled, falling into those hands he sought to escape; supposing that he would take Andronikos from behind in hot pursuit, he was met head-on, engaged face to face, and overpowered.

Not long afterwards, Lapardas departed this life. Andronikos had been so frightened by his defection that all throughout Lapardas's flight he had been haunted by his own imminent destruction; he had feared him because he was sudden and quick to give battle and distinguished by manly courage. In the realization that no headway was being made against him by continued pursuit or by armed combat, the contriver had devised a novel stratagem. He had sent to the governors of the eastern provinces imperial letters whose contents truly spoke in wickedness:[768] Andronikos contended that he had sent Lapardas to Asia and that whatever actions Lapardas should undertake, even though unclear to most in purpose, would be done according to plan and on behalf of his rule, and he urged [280] all to welcome him without hesitation. Andronikos's intent was to thwart thereby the onrush of many who were suspicious as to why Lapardas had resolved to oppose Andronikos and was marching out the ranks of warriors[769] as his adversary. Andronikos testified to the rebel's loyalty and commanded that the fugitive be welcomed as though sent by him. But even if these novel letters effectively achieved their purpose, it was impossible to foresee how quickly the man would be taken.

Having repulsed this terror beyond all expectations [before Christmas 1183], the emperor's niggardly soul was gladdened even as the corn with dew upon the ears.[770] He set out from the City and, making his way leisurely with brief stopovers, came to Kypsella.[771] After enjoying himself in the chase in those parts, he arrived at the monastery founded by his father in Vera and visited his father's tomb, escorted by his bodyguard and in the full imperial splendor which his father had long ago desired but never attained; it was from his father that Andronikos inherited his passion to become emperor. During this period, which many called the halcyon days, he desisted from inflicting injury and returned shortly to the imperial palace, as the Feast of the Nativity was at hand.

With the coming of spring [1184] he attended the horse races and spectacles and then assembled all the troops, those from the western and eastern armies who had not rebelled, and took the road leading directly to the city of Nicaea. He dispatched Alexios Branas, who had returned from the regions of Braničevo, with a large force to be drawn out in battle array around Lopadion. The Lopadians had already joined their neighbors, the Nicaeans and the Prusaeans, in revolt. Since the expedi-

[281] tion fared well for Branas and he had brought a successful conclusion to the campaign, he continued on to Nicaea, where he joined forces with Andronikos. When both armies were gathered together into one force, Andronikos determined to assault the city. The defenders were insolent, not only when Andronikos was absent, but they also scorned him when he was present; appearing on the wall, they defended themselves with weapons and delivered blows of vulgarities, sparing neither missile nor obscenity. The gates of the city were shut and securely bolted, but the gates of the lips opened wide, and the defenders' tongues issued forth from the breastworks of the teeth to discharge missiles of scurrilities against Andronikos. Cut to the quick by such darts, he breathed forth a fire of wrath,[772] forcing out a Typhonian blast, and was unable to contain his resentment, for the city of Nicaea boasted to be impregnable, or very nearly so, thanks to her mighty walls built all of baked bricks. At that time, soldiers who abhorred Andronikos streamed into the city. Among these were Isaakios Angelos, who later put an end to Andronikos's tyranny and held sway over the Romans after him, and Theodore Kantakouzenos, as well as Turks who were invited inside, all of which seemed to him to bode no good for the besiegers.

For many days, Andronikos rode up to the walls but was unable to accomplish anything; it seemed to him that he was assaulting precipitous mountains, or that he was foolishly engaging stony ridges in battle and contending against Arbela[773] and the walls of Semiramis,[774] or shooting arrows into the sky. The defenders fought furiously: with weapons they beat back the assaults made by weapons; and with their war engines they rendered totally useless the stone-throwing machines contrived by the

[282] ingenious Andronikos, who set up a battery of wall-demolishing siege engines and employed miners, making use of everything possible to bring down the city's walls. Emulously vying with those present, Andronikos boasted that he was supremely skilled in the art of taking cities. On the one hand, he positioned the siege engines, carefully examined the sling, secured both the withy end and the crank handle, and reinforced the battering ram with iron; the defenders, on the other hand, leapt forth from the city's hidden posterns, put the torch to the war engines, and smashed them by hand; when similar engines were moved up to the walls, they demolished them like the threads of a spider's web.[775] When Andronikos saw all his deliberations brought to naught, he contrived an inhuman deed which had been executed a few times in the past by both besiegers and besieged.

Euphrosynē [Kastamonitissa], the mother of Isaakios Angelos, was brought from Byzantion. Andronikos proposed at first to use her as a shield for the siege engines, but instead he placed her on top of the battering ram as though it were a carriage and moved the engines of war up to the walls. One could not but both weep and marvel at such a spectacle—weep because this strange sight was the cause of fury compounded by the fact that the perpetrators shrank not from an act so incredible and alien to human nature—and marvel that the frail woman, seated on top of the engines of war and hauled to the city's walls, had not died of fright. For the first time, mortals were to see soft feminine flesh become a bulwark for iron, exchanging its function for a dissimilar one,

the fragile human frame projecting out from the hard engines of war to prevent metal from smashing against metal, the human body giving cover to iron. The defenders discharged their missiles from the walls as before, but with great care, so as to wound and strike down the attackers while preserving the noblewoman from all bodily harm; it was as though by gesturing with her hands and nodding, she deflected the missiles away from herself and transfixed them in the hearts of the enemy. Then did Andronikos perceive that this inhuman contrivance would accomplish [283] nothing. As for the Nicaeans, sallying forth at night, they set fire to the engines of war and pulled the woman up by a rope, or like Harpies snatched her up and carried her off, leaving Andronikos behind beating his breast like another Phineus[776] with no meat to set before the hungry beast of his anger. Thus the Nicaeans, who knew great glory for their bravery against the enemy, displayed yet more manliness, and they prosecuted the war with increased vigor and courage.

They appeared on the walls and performed noble deeds and poured down abuse on Andronikos, calling him butcher, bloodthirsty dog, rotten old man, undying evil, Avenger of men, lover of women, Priapos,[777] and more aged than Tithonos and Kronos, and every other obscene thing and name. According to reports, they leaped down from the battlements and poured out of the gates. Andronikos, with ashen face and unnatural scowl, twisted his flowing, curly beard with his finger as though he were plying the loom and made no secret of his anger as he wove cunning wiles against the Nicaeans.

Hungering like a dog, which has nothing to feed on, in the words of David,[778] he would go round about the city, and, like a bear at a loss marching forth,[779] he berated the regiments and castigated the commanders for being inept in warfare and avoiding battle.

Theodore Kantakouzenos, a bold man and in the prime of his life, like [284] newly treaded wine fermenting in the wine vat, observed Emperor Andronikos one day as he was making a circuit of the city with a sizeable contingent of troops and cavalry regiments. Motivated by a sudden impulse, he leaped forth through the open eastern gates, followed by a few other horsemen, and tilted his lance against Andronikos as he rode out in front. Charging at an ever-quickening pace, he dug his spurs into his horse, urging it to fly as though nature had furnished its feet with wings, but he missed his mark and destroyed himself. When the horse tripped over a hole and fell on its knees, Kantakouzenos was thrown from his saddle: the front of his head struck the ground as he fell head over heels, his back muscles suffered serious injury, and he lay in a daze with his strength spent. Thereupon, many of Andronikos's troops rushed forward with swords drawn and decapitated him; others severed his body piecemeal according to Andronikos's wishes. Shortly afterwards, Kantakouzenos's head, raised on a pike, was exhibited to the inhabitants of Constantinople and paraded through the streets of the City.

The Nicaeans, deprived of their daring and invincible champion, mourned the fallen man greatly and lost heart. They looked to Isaakios Angelos and wished to submit to him and to have him serve as their leader. But he was irresolute and, like Aeneas, stood aloof from the contest,[780] looking into the future and imagining that the emperorship was

reserved for him to the glory of his family, for he did not highly regard the sovereign.

He entered into negotiations with the Romans, and, as a result, the zeal of the troops gradually diminished, and their noble and inspired élan was snuffed out. They met together and in tragic terms declaimed of the terrible hardships the besieged must endure as though these were taking
[285] place before their very eyes. Reflecting on Andronikos's cruelty, they considered the diverse kinds of torture and suffering that prevail according to the law of warfare whenever a city is taken by force, and they cowered like leverets; as Kaineus,[781] according to myth, was changed from a woman into a man, they, on the other hand, succumbed to womanish softness, and none cherished the idea of performing deeds of virtue. It was as though with Kantakouzenos's death they had all perished with him and their daring and ardor for warfare lay buried.

Nicholas, the archbishop of Nicaea, realized the grim realities of the situation and argued for the necessity to be generous. Summoning the people to the church, he proposed that they yield to the times and circumstances. Ere the city was deluged by the waves of battle, they would do best voluntarily to hand it over to Andronikos, as it was evident that Andronikos, who had nothing to distract or divert his attention elsewhere, would never return empty-handed and that the Nicaeans were little by little abandoning the watch and ward of the city and inclining towards the cause of peace. Everyone considered the archbishop's suggestion an excellent one, and he grasped the ensuing good with both hands. Donning his sacred vestments and taking into his hands the Holy Scriptures, he commanded the church attendants and all of the remaining citizens to follow him so that neither women nor children would be missing from the procession. They were to bear no weapons and to wave olive branches as suppliants,[782] with head and hands uncovered and feet bare, presenting themselves as true suppliants and exciting pity with their gestures of wretchedness and their submissive cries.

In such manner did they pour forth from the city. Emperor Andronikos, taken by complete surprise by this unexpected spectacle, blinked many times to verify the reality of what he beheld; he thought that all that he saw was but a dream. Once assured that his eyes were not playing
[286] tricks on him, he put aside all sentiments of noble-mindedness and sincerity befitting an emperor, and the deranged man perverted mercy; having no lion skin to put forth, he donned the fox skin,[783] pretending to receive them gladly and nearly shedding tears. This was an old trick of Andronikos to conceal the truth.

But he did not play the role for long. Soon he cast off his soft words,[784] smoother than olive oil, like so many rags and openly demonstrated to the Nicaeans and, in particular, to those who excelled in rank and nobility of birth how great was the wrath nurtured by the old man[785] and how, as his rancor, hatred, and malice smoldered, he was in time to dispense retribution. Many were forced to become fugitives from their homeland, while others, cast headlong from the walls, suffered a most horrible death. As for the Turks, he impaled them in a circle around the city.[786]

He extolled Isaakios Angelos for his words and deeds, for Isaakios did not make use of his teeth as weapons and missiles[787] as Theodore Kanta-

kouzenos had done; instead, he had rebuked the latter many times for speaking insolently against the anointed of the Lord[788] and for unsheathing the tongue from his mouth like a sharp sword.[789] Andronikos filled Isaakios with great expectations, thus nurturing by divine direction his own murderer, the man who was to remove him from the throne and whom he cherished for as long as Providence decreed, and he sent him back to Byzantion while he marched on to the city of Prusa with his troops.

He began the siege immediately and established an entrenched camp [287] south of the city, where it appeared that the wall was approachable because here the terrain was level, whereas the rest of the city was situated high on a rocky and rounded hill which jutted out precipitously. The engines of war and the men did not remain idle but performed their tasks suitably. Andronikos, who was given to loquaciousness, attached winged words to the volant shafts of missiles and shot these into the city. These letters borne through the air offered encouragement for a change, and amnesty for evils, should they open the gates, welcome him inside, and seize Theodore Angelos and Lachanas of the marketplace[790] and the witless Synesios,[791] to use Andronikos's words, as well as their partisans, and give them up. He repeated this for a considerable number of days. Nor was the battle waged against Prusa inferior to that joined against Nicaea in regard to both the prowess of those men who engaged the imperial divisions and the hatred that was felt for Andronikos, the cause of hostilities. Prusa was a city of beautiful towers, encompassed by formidable walls which were double in the southern region. When the two armies joined in battle there were many sallies and many fell on both sides.

As it was fated that this city should bow under the yoke of Andronikos and that the majority of the inhabitants be taken captive and suffer utter ruin, a portion of the wall, repeatedly struck by the siege engines, crumbled. Moreover, when the addition to the old wall at this spot and the girt timbers were thrown down, it appeared to those within that the entire section of the wall struck by the siege engines had come tumbling down, and an unintelligible cry rose up and terror gripped the hearts of all. Frightened almost to death by the crashing noise of the dislodged stones, the defenders abandoned their posts without ascertaining the [288] extent of the damage, descended from the walls, and collected in the streets in a state of confusion. As a result, the enemy easily gained entry into the city through the gates and by way of the scaling ladders placed against the walls. The Prusaeans were seized and cruelly killed; their possessions were carried away as plunder, and the fatted beasts, the flocks of sheep, and the herds of cattle which had been driven into the city to feed the inhabitants during the siege were slaughtered. Such were the horrors inflicted at that time.

Afterwards, Andronikos entered the city and lodged within, but he did not conduct himself as a meek emperor[792] and savior before the Prusaeans, who were former and future subjects even though they had rebelled for a time, but like a ravenous lion falling on unpenned and shepherdless flocks, he broke the neck of one, devoured the inward parts of another,[793] and did even worse things to a third; the rest he scattered in the direction of cliffs and mountains and chasms. In this fashion did Andronikos be-

have. Since there had been no preceding formal compact or truce with the citizenry of Prusa, nor had a voluntary surrender been negotiated, and as the city had been taken by force, he utterly ruined and destroyed the vast majority, portioning out his savage anger in manifold and diverse punishments.

He had Theodore Angelos, an unmarried youth with the first down of hair on his cheeks, blinded, placed on an ass, and led away beyond the Roman border and gave instructions that he be then released so that he should roam alone wherever the beast of burden should take him. And Angelos would surely have become food for beasts,[794] which was what
[289] Andronikos intended when he inflicted this punishment on him, had not the Turks met up with him, taken pity on the youth, and, leading him to their tents, tended his wounds. Leon Synesios and Manuel Lachanas, as well as forty others, he hanged on the branches of trees growing alongside Prusa. He inflicted punishments on many more: the hands of some he cut off and clipped their fingers as though they were branches of grapevines, and he severed the legs of others. Many were deprived of both hands and eyes; some lost their right eye and left leg and again others suffered the reverse.

Having thus brutally deprived his own reign of those who excelled in bodily strength and miltary experience, Andronikos departed for Lopadion where he perpetrated the same crimes. He deprived the bishop of one of his eyes because he showed no indignation against the seditionists, having submitted meekly and calmly to their movement against Andronikos and stood by without bringing charges, and he returned to the palace delighting in such trophies, leaving behind the cultivated vines of the Prusaeans that climbed trees in close embrace weighted down with the bodies of the hanged like so many clusters of grapes. He allowed none of the impaled to be buried; baked by the sun, they swayed in the wind like scarecrows suspended in a garden of cucumbers by the garden-watchers.

Returning to the City to the acclamations of the populace and the adulation of flatterers, whom the palace ever maintains, he became even more arrogant. In the summertime [1184], when he turned his attention to spectacles and horse racing, a section of the railing of the imperial box
[290] collapsed, killing about six men.[795] The fanatic Hippodrome mob became agitated by what happened, and Andronikos, pale with fear, gathered together his bodyguards and jumped from his seat to beat a retreat to the palace, but his favorites pleaded with him to set aside this unseemly resolve and convinced him to remain firmly seated for the time being. They feared he would perish should he rise up and depart, for the factions would then join forces and attack him and his supporters. He remained there only a short while, until the horse races and gymnastic games were concluded, and removed himself completely from the subsequent spectacles in which those who clamber up ropes with hands and feet and dance high in the air on small and delicate tightropes amuse the spectators; moreover, the wing-footed hares and the hunting hounds demonstrated how fond of such novel sights were those who frequented the amphitheater. In this wise then did these events take their course.

There was a certain man named Isaakios[796] (not Isaakios Angelos) of noblest birth, the son of the daughter of Isaakios the *sebastokrator,* who,

as our history has recorded, was Emperor Manuel's brother. This Isaakios, appointed by his granduncle Emperor Manuel, governor of Armenia and Tarsus and general of the troops stationed in these parts, met the Armenians as adversaries in battle and was taken captive. He was incarcerated in a fortress for many years, during which time Emperor Manuel died. Later ransomed by the Hierosolymitai, who are called friars,[797] he deemed it fitting to return to his homeland to enlist Andronikos's help in repaying the ransom money on the advice of Theodora, with whom, as we have often said, Andronikos had sexual relations; this Isaakios was her nephew. Constantine Makrodoukas, the husband of Isaakios's maternal aunt, and Andronikos Doukas, Isaakios's kinsman and fast friend from childhood, urged Andronikos to receive Isaakios favorably and to pity him his lengthy exile.

But this Isaakios, who imagined his homeland to be as distant as the [291]
stars, did not wish to submit to Emperor Andronikos, and he paid no heed to the advice of kinsmen or cherished companions of his youth.[798] Aspiring to power, he passionately desired to become emperor himself, and unable to bow to the yoke of rulers, he ill-advisedly used the monies, provisions, and auxiliary forces sent him from Byzantion to canvass for the throne. Therefore, with a large force he sailed down to Cyprus, where he first represented himself as the lawful ruler commissioned by the emperor [c. 1183]. Producing for the Cypriots imperial letters which he himself had composed, he read aloud counterfeit imperial decrees ostensibly representing his responsibilities and did those other things which those who are deputed by others to govern are required to do. Not long afterwards, he exposed himself as a tyrant, revealing the cruelty which he nurtured and behaving savagely towards the inhabitants.

Such was the disposition of this Isaakios that he so far exceeded Andronikos in obdurateness and implacability as the latter diametrically surpassed those who were notorious as the most ruthless men who ever lived. Once he felt secure in his rule, he did not cease from perpetrating countless wicked deeds against the inhabitants of the island. He defiled himself by committing unjustifiable murders by the hour and became the maimer of human bodies, inflicting, like some instrument of disaster, penalties and punishments that led to death. The hideous and accursed lecher illicitly defiled marriage beds and despoiled virgins. He irresponsibly robbed once prosperous households of all their belongings, and those indigenous inhabitants who but yesterday and the day before were admired and rivaled Job in riches, he drove to beggary with famine and nakedness, as many, that is, whom the hot-tempered wretch did not cut down with the sword.

Alas and alack, how the ways of ungodly men prosper! They flourish who deal treacherously. Thou hast planted them, and they have taken root; they have begotten children, and become fruitful. Thus did the prophet make his defense to the Lord when speaking of judgments.[799] For that generation, one might say, produced hemlock to ripen for no other [292]
purpose than to bring death to those to whom it was offered, and utter ruin to the majority of cities whose government they lawlessly seized.

When Emperor Andronikos heard of these events, in no way whatever could he be restrained, for he saw that which of old had terrified him now

about to befall him (he suspected that the letter *iota* would put an end to his rule).[800] He sought some means by which Isaakios might be apprehended and his anticipated destroyer sent from this life; he was afraid lest Isaakios sail from Cyprus and overthrow his tyrannical rule, knowing full well that Isaakios would be warmly received by all, since the evil from afar seems less grievous than that which is at hand, and the greater evil which awaits us appears less oppressive than that which afflicts us in the present. It seems to be a human trait to be content with any brief and incidental relief from suffering.

But he had no means with which to subdue the absent enemy, and thus he turned his anger against those at hand, doing the same thing that dogs are often wont to do: retreating before anyone who throws a stone at them, they defend themselves by barking, but once the stone is thrown, they attack with snapping teeth. Indeed, he put on trial Isaakios's uncle, Constantine Makrodoukas, and Andronikos Doukas, who made a pledge of good faith before Andronikos that they did not wish to see the worthless Isaakios set loose and returned to his homeland. A few days later, they were charged with the crime of *lese majesty,* despite the fact that they were the most eminent leaders of Andronikos's party and the most powerful members of his faction.[801] On the one hand, there was Makrodoukas, who, besides the various proofs of friendship he had diligently bestowed on Andronikos, was also married to the sister of Theodora with whom, as has been often recorded, Andronikos had illicit relations; Andronikos Doukas, on the other hand, was a lecher and a knave, with shamelessness
[293] written on his face, who pretended to be the staunchest supporter of Andronikos's cause. Whenever Andronikos resolved to gouge out the eyes of someone, Andronikos Doukas, an apt pupil of the murderer who from the beginning[802] delights in the ruin of human beings, would also decree the loss of hands or decide on impalement, frequently uttering imprecations against Andronikos and upbraiding him most shamelessly for not inflicting suitable punishments for offences committed.

When the most splendid and auspicious day arrived on which the bodily ascension of our Lord and Savior into the heavens is celebrated [21 May 1184], all the attendants of the imperial court were summoned to assembly; consequently, there was a tumultuous concourse and sudden rush of representatives of every race and nation to the place where the emperor was sojourning. At that time he had taken up quarters at the Outer Philopation, as it was called. It was as if those who were gathering were singing a palinode, and as they came running, they took another route that led to the so-called palaces of Manganēs, which were also built inside the Philopation and were later razed by Andronikos. When large, extremely large, crowds had swelled the gathering, and no one was missing whose presence was required, Doukas and Makrodoukas suddenly were ushered from the nearby ground-floor prisons and paraded before the court and assembled throng as condemned criminals. Led forth as under judgment, they saw the emperor leaning out from the upper chambers, and they played their role by raising their eyes and solemnly crossing their hands. Stephanos Hagiochristophoritēs, called Antichristoph-
[294] oritēs[803] by the people of that time who converted his name according to his works (for he was in fact the most shameless of Andronikos's atten-

dants, filled with every wickedness),[804] picked up a stone the size of his hand, took aim, and threw it at Makrodoukas, the most excellent of the emperor's in-laws, the most venerable in age, and by far the richest. He urged everyone to follow his example, and looking round at the entire assembly, he badgered anyone who did not cast a stone and vilified him as being disloyal to the emperor and threatened that he would shortly suffer the same sentence.

Intimidated by this threat, the entire assembly picked up large stones and hurled them at the men; the spectacle that followed this mischief was piteous and incredible, and the stones rose up into a heap. As the men were still breathing, certain attendants who were assigned this task lifted them up and wrapped them in the blankets which cover the pack saddles of mules. They carried Doukas to the opposite shore which had been set aside for the burial of the Jews,[805] while they brought Makrodoukas to a hilly promontory on the side of the straits opposite the Monastery of Mangana, and both men were impaled.

For the first time the Constantinopolitans saw with their eyes what they could not believe with their ears; heretofore when such things had been related to them, they would stop up the orifices of the ear, but now that these things were taking place before their very eyes, they wailed aloud. And as they contemplated the deed, they were utterly bewildered and suffered a double torment over these events: for they were overcome by the sufferings of their countrymen. Those who imagined that the danger had not drawn near to them endured over a longer period of time the trial of those who were already caught up in the midst of vexations. Others desisted from their grievous boding once the evil, which in the past they had turned over in their minds, had materialized. Those who always were able to foresee the future with knowledge of its dangers as though it were the present were robbed of sleep at night, and during the day their conscience was pricked with every kind of torment. Strangest of all, it was not only these men whose inner faculty of judgment was [295] troubled because they prayed and wished for no good to come to Andronikos who suffered; so also did they to whom he was devoted and ever granted some boon; for they were all suspicious of his treacherous nature and the fickleness of his mind. Moreover, they feared his eagerness to inflict punishment, nor could they ignore the acute danger to themselves.

Our history must not pass over the following. Certain outspoken persons made bold to ask Andronikos for permission to take down the bodies of the hanged men. And he, like Pilate with reference to the God-Man, asked if they had been dead a while;[806] informed by the hangmen that they had perished miserably,[807] he said that he deemed them worthy of pity, weeping as he spoke, and asserted that the severity and authority of the law were stronger than his own impulse and disposition to do otherwise and that the judges' sentence superceded his own choice of action.

O teardrops, shed by those of old and ourselves in the affliction of our souls, showering down on our hearts as from a cloudburst! O portent of greater sorrow and unequivocal proof of inner distress! Sometimes they flow or trickle from the tearducts from joy, but this was not the case with Andronikos, for whom the flow of tears presaged certain death. O, the

light of how many pupils have you extinguished with your hot flow? O, how many have you swept along to Hades in your torrential downpour? O, how many have you washed away in your deluge! O, what manner of men have you dispatched to their graves as their very last bathwater, or as a drink-offering made over their tombs and poured out as the last libation?

In this wise did Andronikos remove Constantine Makrodoukas and
[296] Andronikos Doukas from the world of the living, and both men learned in what fashion he repaid his debts for favors rendered. Not long afterwards, he hanged the two Sebasteianos brothers on the opposite shore of the straits called Perama on the grounds that they had conspired to take his life [summer 1184].

Andronikos continued to occupy himself with these and many other, and even worse, crimes. Alexios Komnenos, who was cupbearer to Manuel Komnenos and a scion of the same family (for he was his brother's son),[808] was condemned by Andronikos to banishment among the Cumans, from whom he escaped like a flying serpent,[809] so to speak, and arrived in Sicily. When he appeared before William, the tyrant of that island, he revealed his identity. With him was Maleinos from the province of Philippopolis, a man neither notable for his family, illustrious in station, nor distinguished by profession.[810] The wrath of both men against Andronikos made them labor strenuously to the injury of their own country: Alexios made his charge perhaps with some justification, but Maleinos simply obliged Komnenos and exerted himself to appear to those who did not know better that he was one of those who merited respect. They did not relate these things only for the ear of the king but also before large numbers and won them over. They very nearly caressed the soles of the king's feet and like fawning dogs licked them with their tongues, not so much that Andronikos might be made to suffer miserably but that the tyrant of Sicily might be instigated to seize the Roman provinces as though they were a ready prey.[811]

William was incited by their words. Moreover, he had often heard identical reports from his fellow Latins who had served in the past as
[297] mercenaries with the Romans and had rubbed shoulders in the imperial court but then were scattered hither and yon because of the indifference of the hardhearted and merciless Andronikos.[812] Marshaling his military forces in full array, he selected a large number of mercenaries whom he enthused with large stipends and swollen promises and thus enrolled thousands of knights. He transported his land force to Epidamnos[813] and took the city without a blow [24 June 1185, Feast of St. John the Baptist]. Directing the naval force to sail straight to the seaports of Thessaloniki, he seized the provinces along the way as they capitulated.

In concert, the land [6 August 1185] and sea forces [15 August 1185][814] seized and girded the splendid city of Thessaloniki with the taslet of Ares. The city was taken by siege and a few days later [24 August 1185][815] admitted the enemy within, not because the defenders were helpless and unskilled in warfare, but because of the betrayal of the strategos David Komnenos.[816] The Thessalonians saw no valor in the man; in his constant dread of Andronikos he was most adroit only in seeking ways to escape his irresistible hands[817] by hiding, if needs be, beneath the waves of the

sea, or by losing himself among steep crags, or by hiding out on mountains or in caves, or else in being swallowed up by some monster of the deep as was the fugitive prophet [Jonah].[818] He did not take it upon himself to do anything. It was the misfortune of the Thessalonians that he who was appointed governor and inglorious commander of the troops, [298] that he who was more effeminate than woman and more cowardly than the deer, taking his and the city of Thessaloniki's future captors by surprise, should openly summon the enemy while they were still a good distance away and with premeditation place himself in their hands as a willing captive.

Moreover, when the battle was under way and all manner of weapons and siege engines were employed against the city, he remained a spectator rather than an antagonist of the enemy troops; neither was he observed throughout the entire siege sallying forth even though the city's defenders forcefully roused him to do so, nor did he submit to do their bidding but instead stifled the citizens' fervor like a worthless hunter holding back the courageous onrush of his whelps.[819] Accordingly, absolutely no one saw him dressed in his suit of armor; rather, he shunned helmet, coat of mail, greaves, and shield like those tenderly reared ladies who know nothing outside their shaded women's apartments, and he made the rounds of the city mounted upon a mule with his mantle gathered and fastened from behind, wearing elegant gold-embroidered buskins reaching to the ankles.[820] When the siege engines smote the walls, bringing the stones crashing down to the earth, David laughed at the whistling sound made by the stone missiles and the thunderous clap as they struck the wall. As the walls fell in ruins from the breaches, he remarked to the good-for-nothing little fellows in his company, squeezing himself beneath a sturdy arch in the meantime, "I listen to the old lady's bellowing"; so spoke he who still had need of a nurse, and thus he called the largest of the siege engines whose stone missiles hurtled forth from its fitting to demolish the city's walls.[821]

Such then was the traitor unfortunately assigned to guard Thessaloniki;[822] allotted a pirate for pilot and a sorcerer for physician, the city capitulated after putting up a brief resistance.

The evils which ensued were another succession of Trojan woes sur- [299] passing even the calamitous events of tragedy,[823] for every house was robbed of its contents, no dwelling was spared, no narrow passageway was free of despoilers, no hiding place was long hidden. No piteous creature was shown any pity; neither was any heed paid to the entreaty, but the sword passed through all things, and the death-dealing wound ended all wrath. Futile was the flight of many to the holy temples, and vain was their trust in the sacred images. The barbarians,[824] who confused divine and human things, neither knew how to honor the things of God nor to grant sanctuary to those who ran to the temples; the same fate which befell those who stayed in their common dwellings, namely, quick death dealt by the sword or being stripped bare of all possessions which the plunderers considered the greatest beneficence, met those who fled to the temples for refuge—not to mention the even more calamitous circumstance, the terrible affliction of the soul caused by the press and congestion of the throngs that entered the holy temples.[825] Bursting in upon the

sanctuaries with weapons in hand, the enemy slew whoever was in the way, and as sacrificial victims mercilessly slaughtered whomever they seized [the clergy].

How could men who defiled the divine and took absolutely no heed of God be expected to spare human life?[826] It was less novel that they plundered the votive offerings to God, placed profane hands on the sacred, and looked with shameless eyes upon those things forbidden to be seen than it was unholy to have dashed the all-hallowed icons of Christ and his servants to the ground; firmly planting their feet on them, they forcibly removed their precious adornments and then threw the icons out into the streets to be trampled under foot by the passers-by, or they cast them into the fire to cook their food. Even more unholy, and terrible for the faithful to hear, was the fact that certain men climbed on top of the
[300] holy altar, which even the angels find hard to look upon, and danced thereon, deporting themselves disgracefully as they sang lewd barbarian songs from their homeland. Afterwards, they uncovered their privy parts and let the *membrum virile* pour forth the contents of the bladder, urinating round about the sacred floor; they performed these lustral besprinklings for the demons, improvising hot baths for the avenging spirits through which they swam with great effort and thereby contriving great misfortunes for mankind and inflicting dreadful sufferings.

When it was time to put an end to the horrors and for the hostilities to cease, the Sicilian commanders rose up to restrain the murderous onrush of the majority. One of the commanders, on horseback and clad in heavy armor, entered the temple of the myrrh-bearing martyr [Saint Demetrios]; some he smote with the flat side of his sword, and on others he inflicted wounds, but he was barely able to stay the course of evil.[827] These evils were not sufficient unto the Thessalonians, for if the day following the fall put an end straightway to the casting of the besieged down into the House of Hades, the subsequent afflictions pressed the wretched survivors in myriad other ways to seek the end of life and to prefer death to life, so that like sorely pressed Job, many prayed for death and obtained it not.[828]

And every other Latin soldier who took captive his opponent in battle ill-treated him and showed him no mercy. He perpetrated every evil proposed by the arrogance of victory; he robbed his adversary, and, subjugating him, inflicted injury that was indeed intolerable, defying description. Even if the Roman seized could speak the Italian language perfectly, he was nonetheless so far estranged from this alien race that not even his dress had anything in common with the Latins; it was as though he were detested by God, condemned to drink unmingled the
[301] Lord's cup of wrath and to take the cup unmixed.[829] What death-dealing viper, or deadly heel-menacing serpent, or bull-killing lion does not overlook stale meat when sated with fresh game? Thus did Latin inhumanity wreak ruin, taking live captives; it was not moved to pity by supplications, softened by tears, or gladdened by cajolery. And should someone sing a pleasant tune, it was regarded as the shriek of kites or the cawing of crows. Should the music be so beguiling that even rocks were made to rise up, as happened with Orpheus's melodies, for naught did the lyre player strike the chord, and in vain did he lift up his voice in sweet

song.[830] Should the barbarian succumb to the song as though it were the swan's dying and honor-loving song, his relentless soul would alter it, once more effecting death and remaining as implacable as before, or obdurate before every supplication like an unyielding anvil.[831] The members of his race knew how to indulge his singular wrath and were disposed to submit to his irate commands.

What unending evil was permitted this Roman-hater, and what animosity he had stored in his heart against every Hellene! Even the serpent, the ancient plotter[832] against the human race, did not conceive and beget such enmity. But because the land which was our allotted portion to inhabit, and to reap the fruits thereof, was openly likened to paradise by the most accursed Latins, who were filled with passionate longing for our blessings, they were ever ill-disposed toward our race and remain forever workers of evil deeds. Though they may dissemble friendship, submitting to the needs of the time, they yet despise us as their bitterest enemies; and though their speech is affable and smoother than oil flowing noiselessly, yet are their words darts,[833] and thus they are sharper than a two-edged sword.[834] Between us and them the greatest gulf of disagreement has been fixed,[835] and we are separated in purpose and diametrically opposed, even though we are closely associated and frequently share the same dwelling. Overweening in their pretentious display of straightforwardness, the Latins would stare up and down at us and behold with curiosity the gentleness and lowliness of our demeanor; and we, looking [302] grimly upon their superciliousness, boastfulness, and pompousness, with the drivel from their nose held in the air, are committed to this course and grit our teeth, secure in the power of Christ, who gives the faithful the power to tread on serpents and scorpions and grants them protection from all harm and hurt.[836]

And now to continue with the sequence of events. The Sicilian forces which entered the city of Thessaloniki and committed their godless crimes began the siege on the sixth day of the month of August, in the third indiction, in the year 6693 [1185], and ended it on the fifteenth day of the same month without sustaining any injury whatsoever.

It was not, as we have said, only during the first days of the siege that the Thessalonians suffered the worst possible atrocities; even when it was over, the scale of fortune did not incline towards humanity, nor did their captors look upon them kindly. They appropriated the dwellings, expelling their masters and depriving them of the treasures stored within, and they also removed their clothing, not even refraining from taking their last undergarments, which conceal what nature has commanded to be covered as unseemly. Nor did they dispense to the masters any morsel of the fruits of their labors into which they had entered,[837] and they made merry all day long.[838] Those who had gathered in the dainties of cuttlefish were left to wander about hungry in the streets, barefoot and without tunic, to sleep upon the earth; and they who heretofore were dressed in fine garments now had the ground for their bed, the sky as their roof, and a dungheap as their comfortable couch. Of all those things related, that which was the worst and afflicted the very soul was not permitting the masters to enter their houses. Should one do so at any time or merely put his head inside, he was seized by those within as though by the ancient [303]

evil of Skylla.[839] He was questioned and repeatedly asked his reason for coming thither, or for casting a glance inside, or for stepping on the threshold of the outer door, and he was given many lashes and compelled to give over monies which he was suspected of having hidden there. Pretending to pour out his heart to them, cowering, so to speak, under their boasts, and looking round timidly, he was led out of the dwelling; while afraid lest he be despoiled, yet he was eager to learn whether that place in the house wherein he had hidden his coins had escaped the notice of the enemy who made a most diligent search to find them, or whether he had succeeded in keeping them safe and undetected. Often, when someone did hand over the money he had concealed, with the expectation that he would be released from his own house, he still was not spared lashings and the blows were multiplied; and tortures of diverse kinds were inflicted so that he should reveal even more hidden treasures. And should someone who had nothing to give maintain earnestly, now as before, that he was indigent and explain that, as he was passing by this particular street, he had had a compelling desire to see his paternal home or the house he himself had built at heavy expense, now being both spectator and mourner of his former estate and effects, there was none to show him mercy or to rescue him.[840] Such a man would be subjected to torture and torments; he would be suspended by the feet, a heap of chaff would be placed under him and ignited, and he would be blackened by the smoke. His mouth would be smeared with dung, his ribs pierced by arrows, and being subjected to a host of other punishments, he would either give up the ghost as the result of these sufferings or would be dragged out by the feet, half dead, as so much garbage from the house, and would lay exposed in the open square.[841]

What then? If the Sicilians welcomed the former masters of the houses with such kindnesses and paid them court in this fashion, did they per-
[304] chance admit with tender feeling and treat with kindheartedness the rest, who passed by their dwellings as though they were the mouths of caves leading down into hell, or the Cretan labyrinth, or the Laconian pit?[842] Not at all! How could it be otherwise with such men who were more savage than the wild beasts, and who were wholly ignorant of the meaning of pity, and who rejoiced over human calamities? Like dogs, the victims drew back from those who overtook them and did not molest them with their teeth, but crouched before their pursuers without even barking and voluntarily shut their jaws. The Sicilians confiscated any property that they reckoned to be of great value[843] and turned it aside to their ways,[844] squandering it on harlots[845] and nearly coming to blows with each other. So far were these men from having pity on their victims—these men who boasted that they would seize the entire Roman empire as a deserted brood of chicks and lay hands on her as on abandoned eggs[846]—that they were moved to laughter over the nakedness of so many; they were convulsed with uncontrolled guffaws whenever someone emaciated from hunger passed by with swollen abdomen, sallow and corpselike from feasting on vegetables and banqueting only on bunches of grapes gathered in fear from the nearby vineyards. Thus did they take pity on those who wore tattered garments and covered those parts of the

body which needs to be hidden with rush mats, while with the stems of the rush they plaited coverings to provide shade for the head. And when they met these creatures in the streets, the Latins, with grinning laughter, would grab their beards with both hands and pull the hair on their heads, contending that these were unbefitting; they ridiculed the shagginess and length of the beard and insisted that the hair be clipped round about [305] according to their own style.[847] Whenever they rode through the marketplace on horseback, they would brandish their ashen spears and knock down any poor wretch in their way. Should there be a mire or a mud puddle nearby on the same side of the street, they would push them in, for they deemed such chance meetings as producing no good, and so they shoved them aside with great loathing and blocked their way. Should the Romans at any time eat coarse barley bread or any other food which sustains the human body, they would come upon them without warning and mock them, knock over their bowls, and kick over the table to ruin the meal. They would not allow them to draw nigh the time's bread of grief,[848] or approach the mixed cup of wine turned sour, or take the cup which had received the cistern's thirst-quenching water. These utterly shameless buffoons, having no fear of God whatsoever, would bend over and pull up their garments, baring their buttocks and all that men keep covered; turning their anus on the poor wretches, close upon their food, the fools would break wind louder than a polecat.[849] Sometimes they discharged the urine in their bellies through the spouts of their groins and contaminated the cooked food, even urinating in the faces of some, or they would urinate in the wells and then draw up the water and drink it. The very same vessel served them as chamber pot and wine cup; without having been cleansed first, it received the much-desired wine and water and also held the excreta pouring out of the body's nozzle.[850]

Nonetheless, the Sicilians so honored the servants of God who are accounted among the firstborn,[851] took such heed of the miracles they wrought, and were so astonished at the marvelous and novel wonders by which Christ glorifies those who with their own bodies have glorified him[852] that they would collect in jars and basins the unguent which exuded [306] from the crypt of Demetrios—who was renowned in miracles and among martyrs—and pour it over their fish dishes; they would rub their leather footgear with this sweet oil and use it for all the purposes which olive oil now serves. The unguent issued forth as from an inexhaustible fount, or gushed out as from a great deep in a most novel manner, so that even the barbarians deemed the phenomenon a miracle, and they were amazed by the grace which the martyr received from God.

Even when the time was sounded for the Romans to assemble in the temples for the singing of hymns, the boorish members of the army did not keep away, but went inside as though to attend church services together with the Romans, to offer up to God a sacrifice of praise.[853] They did no such thing, but instead, babbling among themselves and bursting forth in unintelligible shouts or violently throttling certain Romans because of some incident, they caused a great disturbance and confounded the hymn, so that it seemed as though the chanters were singing in a strange land[854] rather than standing in the temple of God. In response to

those who were praising the Lord, many would let loose with ribald songs, and, barking like dogs, they would break in upon the hymn and drown out the supplication to God.[855]

To make a long story short, these were the sufferings of the besieged Thessalonians which certain authors have described in their own detailed account of the historical events.[856] When he who dwells in the high places and looks on the low things[857] looked down from heaven[858] and saw that none of the captors understood or sought after God, and that they all had become good-for-nothing and had turned to lawless deeds,[859] he resolved to mock them, to destroy them utterly, to trouble them in his own fury,[860] and to take pity on the afflictions of his own people,[861] to award them the
[307] prize of freedom, giving heed to their grieving spirit,[862] and not to set at nought their broken hearts.[863] He shortens, it seems to me, the long duration of woes for his chosen people,[864] and those things with which before he had violently threatened the Babylonians[865] for showing no mercy to Sion and her delicate sons and daughters in their abduction and captivity,[866] he visited upon them [the Babylonians] in an instant. And the Lord was glorified as never before in the testimony of his martyrs,[867] and he magnified his own mercy[868] at that time, moved, it seems, by litanies and by hearkening to the prayer of the archbishop of Thessaloniki.

This man was Eustathios, who was renowned the world over for his learning and virtue, for his praiseworthy and beseeming prudence, and for his admirable and quite remarkable depth of experience, who was by far superior to others in eloquence and every kind of wisdom, both sacred and profane, a brimming mixing bowl with its own peculiar and extraordinary style. He chose to suffer affliction with his own flock,[869] rather than to emulate the hired hands, who when the wolves come abandon their flocks and flee.[870] Although it was possible for him to emigrate when the approach of the enemy was awaited and before they had invested the city, he could not justify to himself such an action, for by remaining he could save many.[871] Willingly shutting himself in the city, he shared the afflictions of the sufferers to the end, so as to persuade them with his own example; to exhort them to suffer the chastisements of God as though they were but the stings of a gentle father and to await healing again from him who smiteth. "For if he knows," Eustathios said, "how to smite often, he is also wont to heal much more often.[872] Indeed, if one bears his
[308] afflictions meekly and thankfully, and is not so disgusted by bitter anguish as to become devoid of all affection for him who visits these things upon him, and submits with sighs to Providence, that man is freed from the depth of divine judgments,[873] having learned to give thanks to the Lord who alone dost well to him;[874] it is as though the ship of life, borne by fair winds, carries to him the objects of his desire, smoothly and easily, and without shipwreck in the manner of ships bringing their cargoes from afar."

On being seen by the strategoi, who are called counts in the Latin language,[875] the archbishop managed to alleviate the worst of the sufferings, carrying away decrees that provided for relief and granted all other major requests—his eloquence could move the unlaughing stone.[876] His appearance alone commanded respect. The foreigners would rise up from their seats and hear him gladly,[877] and they would become gentler and

kinder in disposition, like an inflamed wound that is soothed by water poured from a light hand. Even though they were birds of prey with crooked talons that flew on high near the clouds and hovered oppressively over the Romans in their power, threatening to resettle them in Sicily, he nonetheless gathered together and warmed those whose teeth chattered with fear, and who suspected that even worse evils were to follow their present afflictions, even as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings;[878] he transformed the bitter wrath of the conquerors as Moses did the waters of Merrha by casting a tree in their midst.[879]

Let the story of how liberty was to be won and through whom God was to work this new marvel await the proper time.

Let the narrative return whence it digressed and record the history of Emperor Andronikos.

Andronikos hanged the Sebasteianos brothers on the gallows for supposedly plotting to depose him and raise to the throne Alexios Komnenos. [309] Komnenos was the son begotten by Manuel through his illicit relations with his niece Theodora and then joined in marriage to Andronikos's daughter Irene, who was descended from the same bloodline. A short time afterwards Andronikos seized Komnenos and cast him into prison; later he maimed his eyes and banished him to Chelē, a coastal fortress situated at the mouth of the Pontos, wherein a tower was built to receive him. Andronikos loathed his daughter Irene and banished her from his presence, commanding her neither to grieve nor to mourn for her husband ever so little; if she had a daughter's love for her father and felt any anguish for him who had begotten her, she would loathe her husband and convert her former affection to an equivalent hatred. But she, as was fitting, could not deny her love for her consort; she sang a doleful dirge and appeared in tatters with her hair shorn.

Thus this admirable and much vaunted bond of matrimony was suddenly broken asunder by the most accursed flatterers and judges who contradicted the laws, they who strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.[880] It was predicted that those things which long had been separated once again would be joined together, the East would be united to the West, and the ancient hostility eliminated; nations differing from the Romans in language and purpose would concur, and the earlier disagreement would be replaced in a novel manner by an identity of customs so that spears would be beaten into ploughshares[881] and lambs would feed with the lions.[882] The good government of cities would be magnified, and there would be a [310] continual increase in, and an abnormal growth of, the crops of the earth so that the prickly shrub would bring forth pears and the fig tree bristle with ears of corn, or, as the poets say of the sexual union of Zeus and Hera, as they lay on a bed of dewy lotus, the crocus sprouted and the hyacinth sprang up.[883]

In truth, the fabricators of such tales were clearly shown to be fools. They contended that they were wise,[884] and able to foresee future events, and had foreknowledge of what lies ahead, and yet they could not see what was under their very noses. In accordance with the prophetic curse, seeing, they perceived not, and hearing, they understood not.[885] Or even if they were able to perceive with certainty, and accurately to pronounce words of destruction,[886] and to fashion their teeth into arms and missiles,[887] instead

they spoke to please and for profit. They held their tongues when expedient, and pursued with all their might the goal of pleasing men.[888] Since it was not fitting that the palace should keep praisers of evil, and they themselves did not wish to know the good, they diligently adhered to wickednesses and acclaimed those who were pleasing to the emperor; and, verily, the emperor was not pleasing to Him through whom kings reign.[889]

Not only did Andronikos treat Alexios savagely and cruelly in this fashion but he also apprehended and imprisoned the most notable of his attendants. Not long afterwards, seizing the noblest of these in large numbers, he deprived them of their eyes. He singled out a certain Mamalos, who was numbered among Alexios's secretaries, reserving him for the last course of his Cyclopean feast.[890] Andronikos carved up the meat and smothered it with a rich sauce so that it would be worthy to delight no other banqueter except himself and would not fall short of the dainties served at the feasts of the Furies and at the banquets of the Telachines, the like of which no cook ever had dressed and garnished for them. Mamalos was to be consigned to the flames in the Hippodrome.

[311] The fire was ignited, and the flame shot up high into the air along the turn of the racecourse, equal to that of the Chaldean furnace; kindled by naphtha and brushwood, it burned seven times hotter than usual.[891] Mamalos was brought forward bound by ropes and as naked as when he first saw the light of day as he emerged from his mother's womb. The furnace workers who stood beside the youth, garlanded, with the first down upon his lip and cheeks, prodded him with long poles, as though he were a sacrificial victim, into the midst of the flames. As he neared the furnace and felt great pain, he became fainthearted, as would any man, and hoping to escape what was already an unavoidable death, he now threw himself against the thrusting poles, deeming the pain inflicted by them to be less than that of the licking flames spreading out from the charcoals; but pushed again into the midst of the fire by the stokers and engulfed by the flames, he would then jump out of the furnace like the quick-darting serpents,[892] running for his life and bounding higher than the Thessalian leap. This drama continued for some time, moving the spectators to tears. Finally exhausted, he fell back, and the raging flames engulfed his flesh and quickly snuffed out his life. The savor of burnt flesh ascending upwards to the heavens[893] polluted the air, while the stench of the acrid smoke and soot was unbearable for the bystanders.

O fierce flame! O burnt offering, most welcomed by demons! O sacrificial victim of the Telachines! O whole offering of avenging spirits! O that which is not the smell of sweetness which the Lord smells[894] but instead a dance of Furies! The evildoer Andronikos, hearing that the ancients sacrificed oxen and honored the gods with the savor of burnt sacrifice, did not deign to do the same, but nurturing a soul more ruthless than that of

[312] the worst men who ever lived, he wickedly applied himself to human sacrifice. Was it some insane Cambyses, or cruel Tarquinius, or the savage and beastly Echetos[895] and Phalaris[896] who perpetrated these crimes? Or which of the Tauro-Scythians, who have given the sanction of law to the murder of strangers,[897] and whose conventions were copied by this far-roaming old man, imposed and inflicted such penalties?

Andronikos inflicted the punishment—not without cause but as the

result of an earlier crime—and with Mamalos he burned certain books that apparently dealt with the reigns of future emperors which Mamalos had read in secret to Alexios in an attempt to convince him that they spoke of him as ascending the throne.

Andronikos later regretted these actions, or else he was deflected from doing the same again. For example, when George Dishypatos (he was a member of the order of lectors who serve the Great Church) was seized and imprisoned, he was made to suffer only because he had criticized Andronikos for the wrongs he had perpetrated, and the latter threatened to have him impaled through and through on spits, roasted over charcoals, and then to be brought before his wife. And, indeed, the corpulent Dishypatos should have been spitted like a suckling pig, roasted, placed in some capacious, I dare say, basket, and, as a delicacy, brought in before the members of his household and placed in front of his wife, had not her father, Leon Monasteriotēs, checked Andronikos's impetuosity and forcefully restrained him from the undertaking. For, like a lion terrifying wild beasts, Monasteriotēs roared out his opinions on the events of [313] the day to Andronikos, who called him the mouth of the Senate. When reports came flying in from everywhere to announce that the Sicilians had taken Epidamnos and were marching on Thessaloniki without battle, Andronikos's wits were troubled and distraught, and for a brief spell his zeal to inflict human torments slackened.

Dishypatos, confined in prison, raised his hands but did not, however, pray after the fashion of David with the words, "Bring my soul out of prison, that I may give thanks to thy name, O Lord";[898] neither did he utter the words of Jonah, "Shall I indeed look again toward thy holy temple?"[899] Rather, he prayed as follows, "Blot me out, O Lord, from the memory of Andronikos, and let me be out of his sight and hearing[900] from year to year, and from month to month, and from day to day; withdraw my name from the book of the living[901] as long as Andronikos lives." And it was God, in truth, who removed Dishypatos from the hands of Andronikos.

That he was too distrusting to value his chief ministers, his ardent admirers, and the executioners of his wishes, Andronikos demonstrated by his inhuman executions of both Constantine Makrodoukas and Andronikos Doukas, the first of whom, as mentioned, he had raised to the dignity of *panhypersebastos*[902] and the other had adopted as his son and [314] had entered in the register of his most cherished friends. He clearly showed the fickleness of his mind and his inability to sustain good will towards his partisans when he blinded Constantine Tripsychos, a long prayed-for man[903] in his need, a man versatile in the services he rendered to Andronikos's tyranny. Such was his excessive love for Andronikos, and such his zealous devotion, that he nearly surpassed all those who supported the cause of Andronikos. Nonetheless, Tripsychos was hindered from carrying absolute victory for himself alone because his rival, and antagonist, in unsurpassed eagerness was Stephanos Hagiochristophoritēs; one prize was to be divided into two, and for Tripsychos the crown of cruelty was being plaited.

Tripsychos was blinded for a minor annoyance which should have been overlooked rather than being subjected to investigation that resulted in

his punishment for speaking out of turn, and this while he was much loved and no less devoted to Andronikos. But during the time of Andronikos, men had to give account for their every idle word;[904] Tripsychos, the examiner of such tattle, subjected many to torture, stripping them bare of all their goods on the grounds that they had spat out a word of complaint against Andronikos or that they had expressed reproach for some grievous inward thought. Now Tripsychos fell cruel victim to similar charges. In the measure that he often measured out, punishment was measured out to him in return, but compacted, pressed down, and running over,[905] and he obligingly fell into the pit that he had often dug for his neighbors[906] (I praise thee, O Justice!) and rolled over himself the stone he had many times heaved against his next of kin.

When one of his relatives informed against him to Andronikos, report-
[315] ing that he had grumbled against Andronikos as though he were one of those who had received no benefactions or had not been treated well by Andronikos (Tripsychos, who had been deluged by so many favors, who had been raised to the highest dignities, and who was referred to in the imperial letters as beloved son and rarest of men in these present times, rich in blessings, a grandee!), Andronikos was cut to the heart, and, convinced of everyone's disloyalty, he became anxious. These charges kindled his anger, and his wrath was lashed into a fury of indignation. When the informer saw Andronikos's growing anger, he felt the need to launch another attack of even sharper words so that Andronikos should be lifted up like a violent blast of wind, or like that bloodstained tempestuous sea of wrath blowing forth and opening up into a yawning chasm to envelop the wretched Tripsychos as another Egyptian captain.[907] He said to Andronikos, therefore, "Tripsychos continually disparages your son John—successor to your throne, legitimate heir of the empire, the fairest of men, who is received by all with open arms—with words of madness and proclaims him an abomination should he be established in the holy place of sovereignty."[908] Once, when Emperor John was passing by in procession and was being acclaimed by large numbers, Tripsychos laughed and derided him by calling him Zintziphitzēs, and heaving a great sigh he said, "O ill-starred realm of Romans, that you must hope in such an emperor!" Zintziphitzēs was a most hideous-looking little man who haunted the chariot rails of the racehorses; most of his limbs were disproportionate, and he was small in stature and corpulent. Moreover, he had a ready wit and was skilled in striking terror in the hearts of palace officials with ribaldry and indelicate gibes, and he was a consummate actor who provoked laughter with his torrent of poetic verse.

[316] Andronikos was unable to bear the accusations which, like missiles, pierced his heart, and like a blast of wind he dissipated Tripsychos's privileges and placed him on parole; later he deprived him of the light of his eyes. Thus did Tripsychos's dominance come to an end, and, so it seems, the words of Solomon, "There are ways that seem at first to be right to a man, but the end of them looks towards death,"[909] were spoken clearly of him and consummated in him.

The Sicilian forces were divided into three parts: one part remained in [317]
Thessaloniki, the second advanced on Serrai, determined to subdue and plunder everything in the vicinity, and the third took a smooth road, where no one fell into their hands or opposed them, and encamped at Mosynopolis, subjugating the land round about.[910]

Andronikos's first concern was to dispatch a commander to defend Epidamnos, and John Branas made his appearance there [before 21 June 1185]. A few days later, the Italians alighted upon Epidamnos, like birds and creatures of the air, and quickly planted their legs astride to scale the battlements of the walls with impunity [24 June 1185]. Branas was taken captive to Sicily.[911] Afterwards, Andronikos wrote to David, the governor of Thessaloniki,[912] and commanded him to keep diligent watch over the city and not to fear the Latin shoe stitchers[913] who jump and bite and sting, to use Andronikos's own words. Since it was Andronikos who had composed the letters in this vein, only he their author understood their [318]
meaning; the contents of the letters provoked laughter among the citizens who loved to scoff, and rejecting them, they altered their meaning with obscene and vulgar words which need not be mentioned.

Assembling, moreover, the Roman forces, both eastern and western, and dividing them into divisions, Andronikos assigned one to the command of his son, Emperor John, who was sojourning in the province of Philippopolis; the second he committed to Choumnos, the *chartoularios;* the third to Andronikos Palaiologos; and the fourth to the eunuch Nikephoros, who was held in honor by Andronikos and exulted in the dignity of *parakoimomenos.* He also dispatched Alexios Branas with another force.[914]

Andronikos's son indulged himself in the chase in the vicinity of Philippopolis, imagining that the sacking of Thessaloniki was as remote as the taking of the gates of Cadiz[915] or the pulling down of the Dionysian small pillars;[916] the others did not venture to draw near and provide assistance to the beleaguered city. Pitching their tents at a great distance, they were informed by scouts and couriers who stole their way into the enemy camp as to the goings on about Thessaloniki. Only Theodore Choumnos took it upon himself to draw close in order to come to the aid of the Thessalonians by engaging the enemy forces who were blockading the city or, if possible, by slipping inside. But he fell short of the mark on both counts and retreated most shamefully. His companions, unable to bear the sight of the front of the enemy's helm,[917] turned their backs and fled without a backward glance, acquitting themselves like men in but one thing alongside the rest of their countrymen, namely, never to remain supine but to examine with their own eyes the enemy as reported to them by their spies, and from their deeds to learn how impetuous these men were in battle.[918]

When famed Thessaloniki fell, the Sicilian forces were divided, as I [319]
have already recounted;[919] one could say that, like the mythical Chi-

maera,[920] formerly united in nearly equal parts, they were then separated. The forepart, being the strongest, like the lion advanced directly upon the queen of cities; the middle part grazed in the regions of Amphipolis and Serrai; and the hinder part, the fleet, crawled like a serpent over the waters,[921] and kept watch over the metropolis of the Thessalonians. Even though the Romans were not of one accord, shooting missiles at one camp and engaging a small enemy force in close combat, they took courage. The enemy troops, after occupying Mosynopolis, were preparing to move forward, since not a single Roman soldier had shown himself. The Romans had earlier occupied the mountain flanks in those parts and had no need to descend to the plain and await the fury of the enemy's charge. Therefore, the Italians decided to delay no longer, but to march in close order together and to direct themselves towards a single goal, the assault and capture of the fair city of Constantine.

Alexios Komnenos, who accompanied them but was not given a turn as commander, incited them as he pondered on things that were not to be brought to pass.[922] The stupid Alexios, who was unworthy even to lead sheep, intended to labor on behalf of the king of Sicily, this Melitidēs.[923] He pranced about as though he had already been invested with the imperial insignia and elected emperor, and addressing the alien troops, he contended that his own desire to assume the majesty of his paternal uncle, Emperor Manuel, was no less than that of the Constantinopolitans
[320] and that he would be as welcome by the Romans as the sun which shines by day and would be deemed as necessary a good as is the breathing in of air.[924] Such then were these events.

Meanwhile, Andronikos made the rounds of the city walls and gave orders that those sections that had fallen into disrepair because of the ravages of time be shored up and restored. The work was begun forthwith. Therefore, all the houses attached to the outside of the walls, consequently making the area inside accessible to the enemy, were demolished. Some one hundred long ships were anchored along the seashore, ready to sail out to the aid of those cities threatened by the Sicilian fleet, to give assistance to the Constantinopolitans (for they were expecting the imminent arrival of the enemy), and from time to time to blockade the bay of the sea which runs in like the channel of a river to wash the shore of Blachernai.

Having disposed of these common concerns, he slackened his efforts, satisfied that he had taken all adequate and necessary measures to resist and subdue the approaching enemy of the Romans. Informed that Thessaloniki had fallen, he proceeded to maltreat the kinsmen of David whom he had appointed guardian of this city, as we have already seen, and taking them into custody, he cast them into prison.[925] In a public address, he asserted that the event was neither of great consequence nor was it an accomplishment worthy of the boasts of the Sicilians; this was not the first time, for in the past, Time was delighted in bringing about
[321] the fall of cities, and victory shifts from man to man.[926] When bombarded with alarming reports brought in one after the other by messengers—such as, the enemy has now taken Amphipolis, and, again, that having plundered the provinces beyond, they are now encamped opposite Mosynopolis—he dismissed them as not being calamitous and claimed

that he would march out against the enemy and utterly destroy them in the manner that hunters kill boars, one at a time. Coming forth briefly from their lair in which they are confined, ravenous for the meat exposed as bait and a snare, the boars are impaled on the spear or deeply wounded in their guts. In the same way, the Italians, who had become careless because they had met no resistance, would continue to advance, motivated by the lust for more spoils, but, to their surprise, they would meet their final destruction, and their unrighteousness would come down on their own crowns.[927]

These were nothing more than the obviously deceptive excuses of a man who resisted the natural order of events, mere songs to soothe a citizenry already seething against him; and although he resorted to these and every other device, Andronikos was not man enough to repel the barbarians. Despite such, and so many, present evils, and despite the fact that everyone expected the most pitiable tribulations and wailed aloud as though they were already present and impending, he suffered these intolerable conditions with equanimity and assumed a philosophical attitude toward them, as though these horrors pertained to others. And all this while, craving power and lusting for the throne, he plunged headlong into inhuman habits and surpassed by far all tyrants who ever lived.

He would often set out from the City with a troupe of courtesans and concubines to search out the most deserted locations where the climate was abundantly clement, looking about in the manner of wild beasts at the meeting of glens and forcing his way into verdant groves. He was followed by his ladyloves, like a cock by barnyard hens, or a he-goat leading the she-goats of the herd, or like Semele's son Dionysos escorting the Thyades, Sobades, Maenads, and Bacchantes; only he did not put on a fawn skin and wear the saffron-colored robe. On fixed days he could be seen by some of his courtiers, among these his nearest kinsmen, as though from behind a curtain, opening wide every passageway to flute girls and courtesans with whom he indulged himself at all times in the [322] pleasure of intercourse. He amused himself in voluptuous entertainments, like Sardanapolos who carved out as his epitaph the words, "His wealth consisted of all that he ate and all that he reveled in."[928] He was a follower of both Epicurus and Chrysippos,[929] and, suffering from lechery, he sought to attain the sexual prowess of the cuttlefish.[930] Madly ravenous for sexual intercourse, he truly emulated Herakles in his despoiling of the fifty-one daughters of Thyestes.[931] But he did not have powers of licentiousness equal with him who summoned Ioleos to assist him against the many-headed Hydra, so he also sought help in revitalizing his genitals for the purpose of sexual intercourse by resorting to ointments and extravagant preparations. He ate of a Nilotic animal, very similar to the crocodile,[932] repugnant to those who deem such things inedible but which excites and arouses those who engage in intercourse to sexual fulfillment.

On his return to the palace from his out-of-doors merrymaking and many amusements, he was escorted by his bodyguard of barbarian units, pestilent fellows who delighted in their lack of education and most of whom did not understand the Hellenic tongue. From among such ill-bred companies, he always chose his guards and watchmen. Finally, he procured for himself a shark-toothed watchdog such as brings lions to bay

and unhorses a heavily armed cavalryman with its snarl. At night, the bodyguards slept at some distance from the imperial bedchamber while the dog was tied to the doors. The possessor of a yelp of brass, it would jump up and bark loud and long at the slightest sound.

Continuing in this fashion, Andronikos delighted in the stupidity of the Constantinopolitans and ridiculed them as being pulled around by the nose; he poked fun at their eagerness to pay court to, and to fawn on, the sovereigns; even the horns of the deer that he had hunted and which excited wonder because of their height, he suspended from the arches of
[323] the agora, ostensibly to show the size of the wild beasts that he had caught but in actuality mocking the citizenry and defaming their wives for their incontinence.[933]

Whatever day he arose and returned to the megalopolis from the extravagant amusements and delightful sites along the Propontis was considered an unlucky one; it seemed that he came back for no other reason than to slaughter and kill whomever he suspected of plotting against him. Andronikos's arrival meant loss and despair for many, or the departure from this life, and the worst possible evil of which he could think. He let down the fine and delicate plumb line of his cruelty to the very bottom of his soul; straitening his every action according to its measure, he considered the day wholly lost on which he had not devoured the flesh of some notable, or had not put out the lights of the body,[934] or had not contentiously upbraided someone, frightening him out of his wits with his scowl and Titanic indignation. He was like some grave pedagogue who often brings the whip down on the children, reproving them whether they deserve it or not, and is irritated by any sound unpleasant to his ears.

At that time, men lived in gloom and despair. Not for many was sleep carefree, soft and ignorant of grief. Settling down at the edge of the eyes, it would fly away,[935] often deceived or frightened away by Andronikos appearing in an evil dream;[936] such was the state of those upon whom this savage, overpowering, and implacable man had but incidentally visited the wrath of his cruelty. It was as the God-Man had foretold would take place in the last days, namely, that "there shall be two men in one bed; one shall be taken and the other shall be left."[937] And this actually took
[324] place in those days when husband or wife suddenly would be seized and taken away to be physically punished.

Even women were not spared his vengeance and abominations; many lost the light of their eyes and suffered hunger, incarceration, and physical tortures. The father ignored his children, and the sons took no heed of their father;[938] five of one house were divided three against two and two against three.[939] Fleeing the wrath of Andronikos as though it were the conflagration of Sodom,[940] families became fugitives from their own country, but they would have been spared all injury had they measured out their exile with Andronikos's life. Now, however, when they laid claim to their household possessions, they were neither crystallized into a pillar of salt as was Lot's wife,[941] nor did they become dead salt,[942] but otherwise losing their savor, they perished wretchedly.

Thus Andronikos, who was irascible by nature and boasted of a savage and cruel character, who was immutable in his disposition to inflict punishment, who made sport of the misfortunes and sufferings of those close

to him[943] and of the destruction of others, was convinced that he was consolidating his rule and strengthening the throne for his sons, and in this knowledge increased the pleasure of his soul. And yet he did participate in many virtuous actions, for not towards everyone was he inclined in a hostile manner, parading death and destruction before them. He comforted the indigent with gifts, especially if there was some hope that the suppliant was not terrified by Andronikos's crimes and did not violently hate him, and this was like finding a highly prized panacea and salutary antidote in the flesh of that serpent [Satan], or plucking a sweet-smelling rose from thorns, or preparing a delicious feast of starlings and [325] quails from hellebore and hemlock.

He so punished the greed of the very powerful, and, thanks to his diligent searching, he so restricted the hands of those who reached out for the properties of others, that the majority of the provinces increased their population. For every man, according to the prophet's pronouncement, reclined in the shade of his trees,[944] and, gathering the fruit of the vine and harvesting the crops of the earth, he ate with gladness and slept sweetly, unafraid of the tax collector's threat, untroubled by the thought of the avaricious exactor, unvexed by the extortioner, and not terrified by the despoiler. Rendering unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's,[945] he was free of any demand that he pay double and multiply his talent;[946] heretofore, one was required to give his coat[947] and was forced to cough up his very soul in sore distress. An appeal to Andronikos was like a deadly enchantment, a spell that dispersed the tax collectors, a bugbear terrible to the ear of those who collected more than was authorized, and a benumbing paralysis of the hands which heretofore were concerned only with taking first. The voluntary gift of many was sent back, for their riches were considered as corrupting as the moth[948] or some other corroding power that destroys whatever it touches. He sent out, in some cases, public officials who commanded very large salaries, and with threats of dire consequences should they ignore his orders. But he refused to sell these public offices to those who wanted them, to hand them out to the baseborn for a sum; instead, he carefully selected them and appointed them to office without receiving payment in return. Consequently, those who in the past were swept aside by time and were brought down to Death by the ills of public affairs, shook off their prolonged, heavy sleep and put away from themselves their mortification of old as though some archangel had sounded a trumpet in their ears;[949] and as Ezekiel's vision wishes it to be, bones were drawn to bones and joints to joints.[950] Within [326] a short time the greater number of cities revived and recovered their former prosperity. Perhaps it would be fitting to add here the words of the psalmist David: "He turns a wilderness into pools of water, and a dry land into streams of water."[951] Andronikos recalled the public officials in order to bring an end to the physical abuse administered by the tax collectors and to limit the many successive tax demands which the clever tax gatherers had fabricated and confirmed as an annual obligation, thus devouring the broken people as though they were a piece of bread.[952]

There was, it seems, a most irrational custom which prevailed only among the Romans. (It is this: ships that are overtaken by a storm, swaying backwards and forwards in the winds as the sea roars, are to

receive help from no one as they are driven in upon any harbor or place and cast ashore by the waves. On the contrary, those who happen to live nearby prove to be worse than the storm by breaking up the ships and seizing everything not swept away by the sea). Andronikos stormed against such wickedness and transformed the tempestuous zeal of so many to capsize the ships into a gentle breeze, so that this one deed alone was sufficient to merit him acclaim. The officials at court had considered the evil to be incurable or absolutely immutable, like some acquired habit that can only get worse. Many Roman emperors in the past had wished to bring an end to this absurd custom, and dispatching bundles of imperial decrees, they threatened with utter ruin those who took up arms against shipwrecks and seized their cargoes, but these imperial constitutions remained a dead letter; it was as if the cresting waves of this tempestuous evil washed away the imperial red ink so that it appeared as though the scribes had written on water, making it impossible to discern the specific ordinances.

[327] Such were the words that they spoke, but Andronikos, looking keenly at those standing round about him, sighed deeply and said,

> There is no wrong that cannot be set aright by the emperors, nor is there any transgression of the law which lies beyond their power. The former emperors, it seems, were slack, or they pretended to be vexed over these grievous ills. For if they had truly wished to put a stop to these life-destroying acts and to promote openly those things which constitute the observance of the law, they would have set aside the red ink, and, disregarding the papyrus as being totally ineffective, they would have considered those who mourn in blood and lament not with tears. Finding those plunderers harsher than the squalls and shallow reefs which caused their ships to be cast ashore by the billows, they would have used against them the sword which is borne not in vain and without purpose,[953] and they would have executed the lawless. I am now convinced that when they wrote, they wrote wickedness,[954] and exhibiting no laudable suffering over the evils of others, they joined in the assault on the suffering and thereby strengthened the contemptible customs from whose correction they voluntarily withdrew.

Having said these things, he added,

> Men, you who are related to me by blood, and those of you whose loyalty to me has been rewarded by my favor, and all the rest standing about, those of you who have been admitted to the senate, as well as those who have been appointed to serve the empire of the Romans in some other capacity, hearken to me, hearken! The words that I shall speak loud and clear will not be carried away by the wind without fulfillment, but those of my words which are not implemented in due course will move me, who decrees what must be done, to wrath, and my fury shall fall with grievous and unbearable consequences upon those who disobey my commands and take no heed whatsoever of the imperial dictates. It is necessary that all pernicious actions by the Romans, those detrimental to the public weal, cease. Let it be known by those who pursue the avaricious life

that, if they do not voluntarily desist from desiring the properties of others, they will be deprived of their own possessions and will sigh with the indigent, just as the dust is blown away from the face of the earth by a furious storm; and this shall be so especially for those who fall upon ships and plunder their cargoes, sometimes wrecking and dismantling them, If any of you, therefore, administers an office on behalf of our throne, and if any of you is the owner of landed properties along the seabord, foster first in yourself and then in your subjects the fear of God, and deference and reverence towards my rule; otherwise, any wrongdoing on the part of the governor of a province or the land-owner shall be required of your soul many times over, and, if you be innocent in hands and pure in heart,[955] then your assistants will pay for the unlawful deed. When the pestilent master is flogged, then his attendants will come to their senses; and should the subject be wont to emulate his master by following him in his former reprehensible actions, then, by his being flogged and forced to learn a new lesson, his subject will follow, treading on the heels of the common good as the child follows in the step of its mother. [328]

So you should know now the manner of exacting satisfaction from him who disobeys my command: he shall be suspended from the mast of the ship, and should the roaring waves have swept it away, on a hilltop near the sea, he shall be fastened to a huge upright beam hewed from the nearby mountains, so that he may be clearly visible to all those sailing the boundless seas like a sail displayed from the yardarm and like a man shipwrecked on land; he shall stand as a symbol that no one should ever again dismantle ships and plunder their cargoes, in the same manner that God stretched his bow in the sky as a sign that never again shall there be water for a deluge.[956]

After speaking these words, he directed his mind to other purposes, portraying himself as extremely agitated and utterly inflexible in the resolutions he had taken or in making any compassionate concession in those matters on which he had given his verdict. They who heard his words were nearly petrified from fear (for they knew from experience that Andronikos neither knew how to jest nor how to hide one thing in his mind and say another);[957] later, when they had regained their composure, they wrote letters and dispatched them by couriers to the overseers of their own estates and to those who administered their public offices in their stead, solemnly entreating and urgently imploring them to be on the watch, vigilant lest some ship should suffer shipwreck and sustain some damage, and, if possible, to rebuke the very winds or,[958] as in the mythic tale of Aiolos, to bottle up the winds in bags so that they should blow up no squalls which violently churn the sea.[959] [329]

Henceforth, no ship buffetted by heavy seas was to have any of its cargo plundered, or any part of its decks dismantled, or its mast taken down, or its anchor removed, or deprived of any of its munitions down to every slender cord; but whatever was washed up on the land by the tempestuous winds, or dashed against the reefs, or shattered by the jutting rocks was regarded warily by the passing people as though they were the barks of Charon bringing up the souls of the dead from the cave of

the netherworld; or they were honored like the ancient sacred ships carrying envoys to the oracles, and with trembling the mass of the people, together with the public officials, saw to it that nothing was lost on land that had not been destroyed by the surge of the sea. It was indeed a bright calm coming out of a storm, and the spectacle was a change truly wrought by the most holy right hand of God.[960]

At great expense Andronikos rebuilt the ancient underground aqueduct which ran to the middle of the agora bringing up rainwater which was not stagnant and pestilential but sweeter than running water. He had the Hydralēs River conducted through sluices into this water conduit, and near the streams that fed the river at its source, he erected a tower and buildings especially suited as a summer resort. Now all those whose dwellings happen to be in the vicinity of Blachernai and beyond are supplied with water from this source. He did not, however, restore the entire cistern so that the water could be channeled into the center of the agora, for the thread of his life had reached its end. Such was the concern of those who reigned after him, especially those who presently hold sway, to complete this work of common utility that Isaakios, who removed
[330] Andronikos from both throne and life, demolished the tower and razed these most delightful buildings in envy of Andronikos's magnificent work.

Reviving the office of praetor, Andronikos appointed notables and the noblest members of the senate to these posts. He exalted them with bountiful gifts and sent them forth nourished, so to speak, on benefices, thereby taking care that they be sent to the cities without imposing any burden and with resolve to attend diligently to the cause of the lowly with compassion and judgment. With sufficient resources at hand at all times (for they were paid at the rate of forty and eighty minas [pounds] of silver coin), they spared the imperial treasury, which was enriched by the voluntary contributions of some who thereby were saved from the hands of the ruler, or they received in return some other benefit. As a result, the cities quickly grew in population, the land yielded crops a hundredfold, and the necessities of life were sold for little.

Andronikos was very affable towards anyone who had any accusation to make against those who use the right of might, and being no respecter of persons, he did not deny the righteous man his right. In his judgments, he listened with equal attention to the man of humble station and the great man of family and wealth. He would roundly rebuke the guilty, and if a man who was proud and of ill-repute was accused by an indigent, and had been discovered in the act of wrongdoing, or extortion, or smiting his fellow man with his fist, he would impose a suitable punishment.[961]

Once, certain rustics presented themselves to him and inveighed against Theodore Dadibrenos, who had lodged with them while making a tour of inspection; procuring those things of which he and his servants and all his carriages had need, he had made no payment when he departed. This was the Dadibrenos who, as mentioned above, had participated with others in strangling Emperor Alexios.[962] Andronikos conducted the trial between him and the country folk, and, finding that the
[331] charges were true, he sentenced him to twelve lashes and commanded the officials of the imperial fisc to pay the expenses many times over.

Then, as now, there was a convention of declaiming publicly on divine

doctrines, but Andronikos did not wish to discuss or listen to newfangled ideas about God, even though he had tasted of our wisdom [Holy Scriptures], and not only with the tip of his forefinger. He rebuked Euthymios, bishop of New Patras, a man of prodigious learning and John Kinnamos inside the imperial tent when they were debating at Lopadion on the saying of the God-Man, "My father is greater than I,"[963] and, flying into a rage, he also threatened to cast them into the Rhyndakos River if they did not desist debating about God. This is not to say that Andronikos had become a complete savage. To the contrary, he regarded learning highly and did not keep the fathers at a distance from the purple but brought them near to the throne and warmed them with frequent gifts, paying them no small honor. He showed himself to be one who greatly esteemed divine philosophy as of much value and praised the eloquent professor of rhetoric, and the experts in law.

To prepare his burial place in the huge temple dedicated to the Holy Forty Martyrs which was raised in the very heart of the City and was extremely beautiful,[964] he diligently restored the dilapidated parts of the temple and rekindled the beauteous form which had been extinguished. The icon of our Savior Christ, through which, it is reported, Christ spoke long ago with Emperor Maurice, he covered over with precious adornment.[965] From the small garden of the Great Palace he took the huge porphyry washing basin around whose rims are two terrifying serpents coiled round another, a marvel to behold, and placed it near the outer door of the temple, and to the temple he also transported the remains of his wife from the Monastery of Angourion, where they had been laid to rest. Outside, near the perforated gates of the temple facing north in the direction of the agora, he set up a huge painted panel of himself, not arrayed as an emperor or wearing the imperial golden ornaments, but dressed in the garb of a laborer, of turquoise color and slit all around and reaching down to the buttocks; his legs were covered up to the knees in white boots, and he held a huge curved sickle in his hand, heavy and strong,[966] that caught in its curved shape and snared as in a net a lad, handsome as a statue, with only his neck and shoulders showing forth. With this representation, raised higher than all other pillars and inscribed monuments, Andronikos instructed the passers-by and made conspicuous to those who wished to understand the lawless deeds he had perpetrated in putting to death the heir and wooing and winning for himself both his throne and his wife.[967] [332]

Near the four-sided bronze monument that rose high above the ground called Anemodoulion,[968] on which were represented nude Erotes pelting one another with apples, he planned to set up a bronze statue of himself on a column. He had earlier ordered that the paintings of Empress Xenē, Emperor Alexios's mother, whom he had ordered strangled, be done over so that she appeared as a shriveled-up old woman because he was suspicious of the pity elicited by these radiant and very beautiful portrayals, worthy of the admiration of the passers-by and spectators. Now he yielded to those who wished to obliterate most of these images and replace them either with Andronikos shown as emperor, accompanied by Alexios's bride, or with the figure of Andronikos worked in relief. [333]

Moreover, he erected costly buildings near the Temple of the Forty

Martyrs to house him whenever he should be visiting the shrine. Because he could not ornament the buildings with paintings or delicate mosaics of diverse colors depicting his recent deeds, having accomplished none, he resorted to showing his deeds before he became emperor. In addition to chariot races, there were scenes of the chase, with clucking birds and baying hounds; deer, hare, and wild boar hunts; and with the *zoumbros*[969] run through with a hunting spear (this animal is larger than the high-spirited bear or spotted leopard and is bred and raised by the Tauro-Scythians). There were also scenes of rustic life, of tent dwellers, and of common feasting on game, with Andronikos cutting up deer meat or pieces of wild boar with his own hands and carefully roasting them over the fire. Similar scenes also depicted the way of life of the man who is confident in the use of bow, sword, and swift-footed horses[970] and who flees his country because of his own foolishness or virtue.

Andronikos compared his fate to that of David and contended that he, too, had been forced to escape the traps of envy and often migrate to the enemy's country. He recounted how David, living meanly and poorly, secretly stole away the necessities of life and smote the Amalekites with the sword as he kept watch over the borders of Palestine from a short distance away at Sikelas, and how he would have killed Nabal for refusing to bring him food in answer to his petition,[971] while he, Andronikos,
[334] passing through nearly all the Gentile nations, bearing the name of Christ[972] before all and preaching as though he were an apostle, received the highest honors wherever he went and an escort of honor when he departed. These things he expounded with compelling persuasion; indeed, he spoke thus to men of eloquence and learning so long as the affairs of state were calm and tranquil.

When those things which threatened Andronikos began to be realized and carried to completion, he was seized with an utter desperation which surpassed in excess every form of inhumanity. His realm was growing smaller, and the enemy, like rivers swollen by heavy rains that overflow their banks, inundated the earth and made desolate everything under foot. He also saw that because he showed little concern for its welfare, the citizenry was beginning to speak out and was being gently urged on to rebellion. But as one overcome by drowsiness and neither seeing nor giving ear to the lawless deeds of the warring nations, he travailed in pain and brought forth iniquity.[973] Not only did he condemn to death all those he had confined to prison, putting some to death by the sword, casting others into the deep of the sea after ripping open their bellies with the sword, and removing others from life by divers means, but he also sharpened his sword against their kinsmen. "For what advantage is it," he said, "if, when one head is cut off, many more sprout, and there is no one to apply to these the sizzling iron? The demigod and hero Herakles must be praised in that he had Ioleos to cauterize and destroy the Hydra's ability to grow more heads."

Thereafter, he assembled his partisans and those judges who could be bought and who hover about the imperial table like vultures over carrion and decked out in tragic phrases the knaveries of the Italians and all the wicked deeds[974] with which they had enveloped the western provinces and the cities they had seized by the law of warfare; the blame for all this he

laid only upon those who opposed him, together with their blood relations and favored near relations. These men thirsted after Andronikos's destruction and left no stone unturned to assure that he be toppled from the throne and suffer a most wretched death. Unable to secure the support of their countrymen, they brought in an alien army which behaved like a swarm of locusts that escapes the fire only to drown by water.[975] This was Andronikos's response: "Not by my old age shall they rejoice who love enmity and exult in the din of war, but that which they desire to befall Andronikos, Andronikos shall visit upon them. If it is ordained that Andronikos shall be dragged down to the halls of Hades, they shall go first to prepare the way; only then shall Andronikos follow." [335]

Afterwards he paraphrased the words of Saint Paul, "the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do, since my enemies are warring against me and bringing me into captivity to act contrary to my will,"[976] and sought to remedy the evil. His partisans, who raised their voices and loudly shouted for him to remove his enemies from the face of the earth and to spare none, sanctioned the destruction of all those he had cast into prison or who were sentenced to banishment, as well as their attendants and kinsmen. And forthwith the decision was set down in writing, with the *protoasekretis* dictating, the officer in charge of petitions taking down the words, and the *protonotarios* of the *dromos* leading the shouts of approval.[977] Their names, together with those of their collaborators who ran in pursuit of vainglory while they feared and dreaded Andronikos, I shall not cite; their ringleader and chief was Stephanos Hagiochristophoritēs, whose thunderous voice crashed throughout the palace, sweeping away, like a frothy swift river current, all who were deemed suspect by Andronikos. [336]

The preamble to the decree read as follows:

> Prompted, not by the directive of our mighty and holy master and emperor, but by the will of God, we cast our vote and pronounce that it is for the common good and especially for the benefit of Andronikos, the savior of the Romans, that all those who have been apprehended and incarcerated for being obdurate and seditious, or who have been banished, must be utterly destroyed; furthermore, their kinsmen and blood relations shall be seized and put to death. Should this be accomplished, Andronikos who, with God's help, holds sway over the realm of the Romans, will enjoy a brief respite and will concern himself with public affairs, deal with the injudiciousness of conspirators, and force the alien Sicilians, who no longer have anyone to instruct them as to what tactics to use against the Romans, to sing a different tune. Henceforth, for all such as these, who, having been seized and their eyes gouged out, remain inflexible in their malice, there shall be no other way left to bring them to their senses except to deprive them of life, an anchor that we must drop as the last salutary measure for the malignant who are so deranged as to kick against the pricks[978] and to have no understanding whatsoever that being stone deaf, they whet the sword to be used against them.

In summary, these and other such things were expounded in this lawless decree which was followed by a list of those to be arrested and put to

[337] death. It also defined the manner in which each and every one was to die.

In wonderment I cite the other actions of these men which I deem altogether unholy, but I particularly marvel at this action which I have just related. I am astonished beyond measure by the crimes they sanctioned, by how they could have conceived of ascribing their own bloodthirstiness to God, and, without blushing, how they could call their motivation divinely inspired when from the beginning[979] it was the murderer who instigated their deliberation. They could have composed a different preamble and expressed themselves without shame, without baldly slandering the Divinity as delighting in blood, he who brought man into being in the beginning without creating death and to whom the voice of Abel's blood cries out,[980] and who explicitly declared that he does not desire the death of the sinner but that he should convert and live.[981]

Having sentenced all to death in this manner, they dissolved the assembly. Andronikos took into his hands the judicial ballots which had been cast in favor of these abominable acts and kept them safe in a chest. I do not know what he had in mind, but I think that looking ahead to future events, he sensed the abject fear that was to befall him afterwards. He also secured the speeches which he had secretly instigated, exacting them from the members of the assembly, and denied responsibility in those instances when he had aggrieved some or subjected others to physical torments. He contended that the judges and the senate had determined the punishments which were endured by those who offended him before and after he came to the throne, and that he had only enforced their decisions (for he beareth not the sword in vain)[982] and executed their judgments.

At this time he eagerly desired to carry out the published decree, but his son, the *sebastokrator* Manuel, refused to comply and said that he could never agree to an act which was not published as an imperial constitution, as stated in the preamble by those who issued it. Moreover,

[338] he could never tolerate or claim as his own a decree placing practically the whole Roman populace under the death penalty and doing away not only with those who were of Roman descent but also with many foreigners. An infinite number would be put to death on the basis of this decree, the one being seized and killed, and so, too, another who had neither been banished nor had sprung from an oak[983] but from a father and mother, or who had shown a connection through marriage and friendship.

When imperial edicts directed that the judicial decision should become effective, those who had been removed to different provinces and those who had been confined wherever in prisons would have gathered together in one place; and each one would have been put to death, as sheep for slaughter,[984] in the manner prescribed, had not God, according to the words of the prophet, brought down his own sword upon the apostate dragon, the crooked serpent,[985] who flees under the sea in whose waters he resides, imagining only the hedonistic life and perceiving nothing but things visible.

Something else happened which impelled Andronikos to such wickedness. He knew that the empire was in desparate straits on all sides and that the Sicilians would soon be on top of him, bearing down like the

hundred-headed Typhon, while those within the City thirsted after his death, for they believed in the visitation of God and supposed that his dissolution would be the solution to their difficulties. And Andronikos suspected that the Divinity had abandoned him for having killed the nobility in so many ways, although he still contended that he was of the fold of Christ[986] and a member of the same family that was being afflicted. [339] Thus he turned eagerly to the prediction of future events. He flattered and paid court to the accursed demons as Saul of old had later looked to the women who had in them a divining spirit and whom he had earlier persecuted in order to propitiate God on his behalf.[987]

He recognized that the ancient divining art of sacrifice had been abolished, that the revelation of future events through this technique had also ceased and wholly vanished, that augury as well had flown away beyond the borders of the Roman empire, together with dream interpretation and the observation of omens, and that only those impostors survived who falsely divined through tubs and basins, together with those who carefully observe the positions of stars and who deceive others no less than they themselves are deceived. He set aside astrology as being both more common and obscure in revealing future events and yielded himself wholly to those who read the signs of the unknown in the waters, wherein certain images of the future are reflected like the shining rays of the sun.

Andronikos declined to be present at the mysteries, shunning babbling rumor which sees through the secret rites and divulges them to all. Therefore, he entrusted this loathsome deed of the night to Stephanos Hagiochristophoritēs, of whom we have made frequent mention.[988] He enlisted the services of Seth, who had performed such rituals from boyhood and for which Emperor Manuel gouged out his eyes, as we have mentioned when recounting the events of his reign,[989] and asked the question: Who will rule after Emperor Andronikos or who will depose him? How he performed the secret rite I would rather neither learn nor describe, and they who so desire may be informed from another source. The evil [340] demon replied or, rather, dimly indicated, as in murky waters, a certain Isaakios; the entire name, however, was not spelled out, but only a *sigma* in the shape of a half-moon, behind which was formed an *iota*. The oracle was unclear and only gave an indication of what was to be, or it would be closer to the truth to say that that which one could not be sure of knowing was beclouded with uncertainty by the multiform demon which feeds on evil by night. Andronikos surmised from what he heard that the letters designated the Isaurian; he contended that this was Isaakios Komnenos, who ruled as tyrant over Cyprus and whom he suspected of aspiring to his throne, since he had sailed from Isauria to Cyprus. Isaakios was an evildoer as no other, a ruinous Telchine, a flooding sea of calamities, an Erinys [avenging deity] raging furiously against the erstwhile happy and prosperous inhabitants of this island. I express my sympathy in words for those who experienced this common disaster.

Andronikos wondered at the oracular response and said, "Ask not only after my successor but inquire also as to the time." When this question was posed, the earth-loving spirit fell into the water with a loud noise and prophesied by means of incantations that which it should not have revealed, that it would be within the days of the Exaltation of the

Cross [14 September]. It was the beginning of the month of September when these events took place. When he heard the response to his second question, Andronikos smiled an unpleasant, false, and scornful smile and said that the oracle was nonsense (for how could Isaakios set sail from Cyprus and cover such a distance within so few days and remove him from the throne?) and paid no heed whatsoever. He asked John Apotyras
[341] (he was appointed judge of the *velum* by Andronikos and consequently was an ardent minister of his wishes) whether it was necessary to arrest Isaakios Angelos, since the responses of the oracle might pertain to him (for they looked into the distance neglecting that which was under foot), but he did not interpret the oracle in that way. Andronikos, for his part, heaped scorn on John Apotyras for even thinking that these things might pertain to Isaakios Angelos, contemning the man for the effeminacy of his character and contending that he was incapable of any clever enterprise; his doom was approaching and the Divinity was wiser than he.

The hot and hasty Stephanos Hagiochristophoritēs, who cared for his lord and emperor in various ways, agreed to arrest Isaakios Angelos and after confining him to prison to subject him to that death which Andronikos was to sanction. He arrived at the house of Isaakios near the Monastery of Peribleptos[990] in the late afternoon of the eleventh day of September in the year 6794 [1185],[991] and entering the courtyard, he ordered Isaakios to descend and follow him wherever he should take him. As was to be expected, Isaakios delayed, speculating that as soon as he appeared, the worst of all possible evils would befall him. Hagiochristophoritēs was resolved to use force and admonished his attendants not to hesitate to grab Isaakios by his hair or seize him by his beard. They were to bring him down from his room in disgrace and lead him away as they beat him and then to thrust him headlong into the place of confinement he would designate.

His attendants were ready to do his bidding. Isaakios saw that he could not escape the dragnet spread out by the angler which was already closing in on him. He did not turn coward or become fainthearted, but, as one about to die, he chose to give battle. In the hope of escaping death or,
[342] rather, fearing that he would not be able to stamp freely over the plains as did the Homeric horse that had fed his fill[992] (for the falcon was poised and the seizing of the prey not difficult), like the war horse that pricks up its ears to the sounding charge of the trumpet,[993] with bristling mane, snorting and leaping, he closed with the enemy, scornful of the swords, disdainful of Ares, pouring out threats, and caring for naught.

With sword drawn (his head was bare and over his body he wore a cloak of two colors which descended to the waist and then separated into two pieces) he mounted his horse and raised his sword hand against the head of Hagiochristophoritēs. Terrified by the onrush of Isaakios, who, with unsheathed sword, was clearly bent on killing him, Hagiochristophoritēs turned around the mule he was riding and spurring it repeatedly, managed to get by the archway[994] of the gate. But before he was able to pass through, Isaakios brought down a mortal blow and struck the poor wretch in the middle of his skull. Having cleaved him in twain, he let him lie there, the sport of dogs,[995] like a fatted beast besmeared in its own blood. As for Hagiochristophoritēs' attendants, he terrified the one with

his bare sword, cut off the ear of another, and sent another flying elsewhere, whereupon all fled to their homes. Then Isaakios rode at full speed towards the Great Church by way of the thoroughfare Mesē. As he passed through the agora, he shouted out to all that with this sword (for he was still carrying it naked in his hand) he had killed Stephanos Hagiochristophoritēs.

On entering the holy temple, he ascended the pulpit from which murderers publicly confess their crimes, asking forgiveness from those entering and leaving the most holy shrine. Those of the City's populace who, with their own eyes, had seen Isaakios riding into the Great Church, as well as those who had learned of his deed by hearsay, came streaming in by the thousands to see Isaakios and witness what was to become of him. They all supposed that before sunset he would be seized by Andronikos and subjected to the most terrible and novel punishments which [343] could be contrived for his suffering by the ingenious fabricator of such horrors. Isaakios's paternal uncle, John Doukas, together with his son Isaakios, came to his assistance and hailed his act of sedition, not because they were participants with Isaakios in the slaughter of Hagiochristophoritēs and accomplices in shedding his blood, but because they realized their ruin would follow, since they had given surety for one another to Andronikos when compelled to confirm their oath of loyalty to him.

With teeth chattering in fear, they expected to be apprehended at any moment and saw their death before their eyes. At great length they earnestly entreated the promiscuous crowds that streamed into the temple to remain with them and to help them as best they could, persuading them that their lives were threatened. The crowd nodded assent to their petition and took pity on them for their misfortune. Because none of the emperor's supporters was present to protest these developments, neither from among the illustrious nobility nor from among those who retained Andronikos's favor, nor ax-bearing barbarian, nor lictors dressed in scarlet, nor any one else, the assembled throng became bold and excited. Since there was none to obstruct them, their tongues became loosed and unbridled, and they promised to join together to provide the three with every assistance.

Thus Isaakios passed the whole night [11–12 September 1185], not in discussion about the throne, but in prayer that he not be killed; he knew that the flesh-eating Andronikos would sacrifice him like an ox or savor raw bits of his flesh like Cyclops.[996] Thanks to his anxious supplication, several of the assembled populace shut the gates of the temple and [344] brought in lights and persuaded many by their example not to depart for their homes. By morning there was no inhabitant of the City who was not in attendance and who did not pray to God that Isaakios might reign as emperor and Andronikos be dethroned, taken into custody, and made to suffer all the torments he had inflicted as he plotted against the life of almost everyone.

It so happened that at that time, according to the dispensation, as it seems, of Divine Providence, that Andronikos was not present in the imperial palace but was at the palace of Meloudion, situated on the eastern side of the strait leading into the Propontis. Near the first watch of the night,[997] he heard of Hagiochristophoritēs' death and did nothing

more for the time being than to address the citizens of the capital with a brief dispatch that exhorted them to desist from attempting to foment rebellion; it began as follows: "He who has received, has received; punishment has ceased."

In the early dawn, Andronikos's attendants attempted to restrain the swelling mob, and Andronikos himself arrived at the Great Palace on an imperial trireme. Nor did any other proposal to check the tumultuous concourse fall on the ears of those who hear; many came near to being killed by merely muttering that no good could come of all this. As if by a preconcerted signal, the common herd ran *en masse* as though possessed with Corybantic frenzy to the Great Shrine of the Logos, inciting one another and bantering with those who did not share their zeal; they had not armed themselves with any kind of weapon but simply stood by idly and observed what others were doing. The learned among them called them a putrid member which did not suffer together with the rest of the body politic.

Next, they broke into pieces the keys and bolts of the public prisons
[345] and set the prisoners free; these were not all criminals, but many were members of illustrious families who had pined behind locked doors for some fortuitous and insignificant fault, or incidental remark, or for a crime committed against Andronikos by some friend. This event united the people even more and brought those who earlier mumbled against Andronikos but hesitated to do anything that might expose them to danger wholeheartedly into the enemy camp. They were now seen bearing swords and shields and fenced with long coats of mail, but the majority were armed with clubs and with wooden beams taken from workshops. The surging throng proclaimed Isaakios emperor of the Romans, and one of the sacristans climbed a ladder and took down the crown of Constantine the Great which was suspended above the holy altar and set it on Isaakios's head.

So that what followed may not remain unrecorded and unheard by future generations, Isaakios, for his part, was perplexed by the coronation, not because he did not cherish the crown with a passion, but because he suspected how troublesome and difficult it would be to attain. He felt that these events were simply being acted out in a dream,[998] and fearing the wrath of Andronikos, he did not wish to provoke him any further. The aforementioned Doukas,[999] who was standing with Isaakios, removed his hat, and baring his bald pate that shone brighter than a full moon, made earnest supplication that the diadem be set on his head. The mob refused, asserting that they never again wanted an old man to rule over them as emperor. They had had their fill of evils at the hands of the grizzled Andronikos; thanks to him, they abhorred every old man full of years and on the brink of the grave, especially if he had a beard parted in the middle and tapering at the end.

[346] When Isaakios was anointed emperor in this manner, there occurred another event worth telling. As the imperial horses with their goldtrappings were about to be transported across the straits to the passageway of the Little Columns, one of them reared its legs, broke loose from the groom, and ran through the streets. When captured, it was taken to Isaakios as a mount.

Isaakios left the Great Church accompanied by Patriarch Basil Kamateros, whom the multitude had induced against his will to participate in and approve of their actions. When Andronikos arrived at the Great Palace, the mingled murmur pricked his ears, and shortly afterwards, seeing at a glance what was taking place, he gave his attention to resisting the mob and assembled his companions to give battle. Only a few of them were ready to follow his call for action, and so he took direct charge of the battle. Taking hold of a bow, he sent his arrows against the attackers from the embrasures of the highest tower, called Kentenarion.[1000] He soon realized that he was attempting to accomplish the impossible and spoke to the people through a messenger. He agreed to lay aside his crown and deliver it over to his son Manuel, hoping to still the tumult and to ward off the danger at hand. But exasperated more than ever by his words, the mob heaped the most atrocious insults on both him and his designated successor.

Because the multitude was now pouring inside the palace through the so-called Karea Gate, which had been broken down, Andronikos fled, taking wing in his purple-dyed buskins. Struck mad by God, on the way he removed his ancient amulet and the cross and donned a barbarian cap that tapered to a point like a pyramid. Thus attired, he boarded the same trireme which had brought him from Melanoudion to the Great Palace. There he took on board Anna, the bride of Emperor Alexios, who, when [347] the latter departed this life, suffering the death we described above,[1001] was taken to wife by Andronikos. He also took with him his mistress Maraptikē, for whom he had a most ardent and passionate love—greater even than that of Demetrios Poliorketes of ancient times for Lamia, whom Ptolemy took captive when campaigning in Cyprus and who played the flute quite tolerably[1002]—and sailed away as fast as possible towards his destination. He chose the route leading to the land of the Tauro-Scythians [Russia], excluding all Roman provinces and other foreign territory as untrustworthy.

It was in this manner that Andronikos was driven from the throne of the Roman empire. Isaakios arrived at the palace, where he was acclaimed forthwith emperor and *autokrator* of the Romans by the assembled throng; thereupon, he dispatched troops to pursue Andronikos. Large numbers of the citizenry, who had entered the palace without any difficulty, since there was no one to obstruct them or to prevent them from doing whatever they wanted, seized as plunder all the money they found still stored in the Chrysioplysia mint (besides the raw metals which had not been coined, there were twelve hundred pounds of gold, three thousand pounds of silver, and twenty thousand pounds of copper coins) and whatever else they could lay their hands on and carry away either individually or with the help of many others. Entering the armories, they removed countless weapons. They proceeded to despoil the churches inside the palace and went so far as to pull the ornaments off the holy icons and to make away with the most sacred wrapping in which, according to an ancient tradition which has been handed down to us, was folded the letter of the Lord written in his own hand to Abgar.[1003]

After spending many days in the Great Palace, Emperor Isaakios moved to the palace in Blachernai, where messengers arrived announcing

the capture of Andronikos, who had been apprehended in the following manner. While making his escape, he came to Chelē, accompanied by a few of his attendants who had served him before his reign as emperor and by the two women he had brought with him. When the inhabitants there
[348] saw that he was wearing none of the imperial insignia, and that he was hastening to sail on to the Tauro-Scythians as a fugitive, fleeing without being pursued,[1004] they neither dared nor deemed it proper to take him into custody (they feared the beast no less that he was unarmed; for they cowered just at the sight of him); they prepared a ship and Andronikos boarded it with his followers. But even the sea was vexed with Andronikos because he had often defiled her depths with bodies of the innocent; the waves rose straight up and fell back into a yawning chasm and leaped up again to swallow him, and the ship was cast towards shore. Again and again this happened, and Andronikos was hindered from crossing over before his captors arrived on the scene.

Thus the wretched Andronikos was arrested, bound, and thrown into a boat together with the women. But even at that time Andronikos remained ever the same, a man of many wiles and passing wise. Seeing that he could use neither his hands nor feet and that there was no sword at hand to perform some brave deed and escape his captors, he enacted a tragedy. Deftly modulating the plaintive tones of his voice, he sang a pathetic lament that paraded the forcible confinements of the past, and like a dexterous musician plucking the strings of a melodious instrument, he recounted in poetic strains how highborn was his family, distinguished for bravery; how fortunate had been his former station in life; how his earlier existence, even though he had been a homeless wanderer, had not at all been unbearable; and how pitiable was the present calamity which had overwhelmed him. The ingenious women responded to Andronikos in song and improvised an even more mournful tune. He began the lamentations, and they, following his lead and singing together, answered him.

For naught did Andronikos recite all these things, and in vain did he of many devices contrive them; for the unholy deeds which he had perpe-
[349] trated stopped up the ears of his captors like beeswax: not one of them was moved to pity, or listened to his Sirens' song which he sang in the manner of women,[1005] or, more properly, with cunning and deceit, and the moly failed Hermes[1006] because of God's wrath.

He was confined in the so-called prison of Anemas[1007] with two heavy chains weighing down his proud neck, the iron collars used to fetter caged lions, and his feet were painfully shackled. Bound in this fashion he was paraded before Emperor Isaakios. He was slapped in the face, kicked on the buttocks, his beard was torn out, his teeth pulled out, his head shorn of hair; he was made the common sport of all those who gathered; he was even battered by women who struck him in the mouth with their fists, especially by all those whose husbands were put to death or blinded by Andronikos. Afterwards, his right hand cut off by an ax, he was cast again into the same prison without food and drink, tended by no one.

Several days later,[1008] one of his eyes was gouged out, and, seated upon a mangy camel, he was paraded through the agora looking like a leafless and withered old stump, his bare head, balder than an egg,[1009] shining

before all, his body covered by meager rags; a pitiful sight that evoked tears from sympathetic eyes. But the stupid and ignorant inhabitants of Constantinople, and of these more so the sausage sellers and tanners, as well as those who pass the day in the taverns and eke out a niggardly existence from cobbling and with difficulty earn their bread from sewing, even as tribes of flies are gathered together and swarm around milk pails in the springtime and drink deep from the ivy-wood cups filled to overflowing,[1010] gave no thought to the fact that but a few short days [350] earlier this man had been emperor. That he had worn the imperial diadem and had been hailed as savior, acclaimed and adored by all; that they had confirmed their loyalty and devotion to him by the most awful oaths was forgotten. Now, carried away by unreasoning anger and an even greater madness, there was no evil which they did not inflict wickedly on Andronikos. Some struck him on the head with clubs, others befouled his nostrils with cow-dung, and still others, using sponges, poured excretions from the bellies of oxen and men over his eyes. Some, using foul language, reviled his mother and all his forebears. There were those who pierced his ribs with spits. The more shameless among them pelted him with stones and called him a rabid dog. A certain incontinent prostitute, grabbed an earthenware pot filled with hot water and emptied it over his face. There was no one who did not inflict some injury on Andronikos. Thus reviled and degraded, Andronikos was led into the theater in mock triumph sitting on the hump of a camel. When he dismounted, he was straightway suspended by his feet by a cord made of cork oak fastened to the two small columns on which rested a block of stone that stood near the bronze she-wolf and hyena whose necks were bent down.

Suffering all these evils and countless others which I have omitted, he held up bravely under the horrors inflicted upon him and remained in possession of his senses. To those who poured forth one after another and struck him, he turned and said no more than "Lord, have mercy," and "Why do you further bruise the broken reed?"[1011] Even after he was suspended by his feet, the foolish masses neither kept their hands off the much-tormented Andronikos, nor did they spare his flesh, but removing his short tunic, they assaulted his genitals. A certain ungodly man dipped his long sword into his entrails by way of the pharynx; certain members of the Latin race raised their swords with both hands above his buttocks, [351] and, standing around him, they brought them down, making trial as to whose cut was deeper and boasting loudly as to the dexterity of their hands which resulted in such a noteworthy wound.

After so much suffering, Andronikos broke the thread of life, his right arm extended in agony and brought around to his mouth so that it seemed to many that he was sucking out the still-warm blood dripping from the recent amputation.

He reigned for two years, and for one year he was the actual master of the empire without donning the purple toga and the imperial diadem. He was well-proportioned and of wondrous comeliness,[1012] erect in posture and of heroic stature, and although he was well into old age, his face was youthful in form. He was the healthiest of men because he did not indulge in delicacies; neither was he incontinent in matters of the stomach, a gourmand drinking neat wine, but in the manner of Homeric heroes he

preferred meats roasted over the fire,[1013] and thus no one ever saw him belch. But if ever he did suffer a stomachache as a result of toil and fasting the whole day long, he quickly overcame his ailment, helping his body to heal itself by partaking of a morsel of bread and a sip of wine. He took a physic but once during his reign, and then only because he was exhorted to do so against his will by the physicians who contended that, although he was not indisposed, it was necessary to take the efficacious medicine as a precaution. At sunset, after drinking the cathartic slowly, he evacuated whatever waste matter there was in his excretory organs,[1014] and to those companions who asserted that most thought that what the oracle declared of old, "O Scythe-bearer, you have four months left,"[1015] was said of him, he smiled and said that this was clearly false. Even should his body endure every kind of illness for a year on end, he was confident that he could resist because of the robustness of his physique, and it seems that he imagined that he would succumb to a soft death and
[352] that the end of his life would be a peaceful one; as for a death that would be just the opposite, he either purposely pretended that there was no such possibility or he had never put it in his mind.

The story has come down to us that once, during the horse races, Andronikos extended his hand and pointed out to his cousin Emperor Manuel the columns between which he himself would be suspended and said that some day an emperor of the Romans would be hanged there and ill-treated by the entire City's populace; Andronikos was speaking of Manuel, but it was not he who was to succumb to this fate.

Such was the death which overtook Andronikos, who was desolated like one rudely awakened from a dream. In the City his image had become an abomination,[1016] whether it be the features of his face as one would visualize them or his portrait found on walls and panels; large numbers of the populace abused these and ground them down and scattered them over the City, even outdoing what Moses' chosen followers did to the idol of the bull they cast in drunkenness.[1017]

After several days, his body was taken down from the most pitiable gallows and pitched into one of the vaults of the Hippodrome like an animal's carcass. Later, certain people who displayed some measure of compassion and did not indulge their wrath in all things removed Andronikos's corpse and laid it to rest in the lowest district near the Monastery of Ephoros[1018] which is situated at the Zeuxippon; even now it is not completely decomposed as can be seen by those who wish to look. Isaakios, blameless and just in all things, or so he thought, refused to allow the corpse to be removed and consigned to the grave or to be carried to the Church of the Holy Forty Martyrs which Andronikos had ambitiously restored, adorning it with splendid decorations and extraordinary votive offerings, and in which he had provided that his body's dust be sheltered.

Andronikos gave himself over to the epistles of Paul, the divine herald. Continually taking his fill of their trickling honey, he composed excellent
[353] letters embellished with incontrovertible arguments which he derived from this source. He adorned with gold an icon of the divine preacher of Tarsus, which had been painted by an ancient hand and set it up as a votive offering in the Church of the Holy Forty Martyrs. When his downfall was imminent, teardrops trickled from the eyes of the icon. On

being informed of this Andronikos dispatched his ministers to verify the report. One of those chosen was Stephanos Hagiochristophoritēs; climbing a ladder (for the icon was suspended), he wiped the eyes of Paul with an unused and spotless cloth, but as soon as the wellsprings were wiped dry, they poured forth yet more tears. Marveling at what he had seen, he returned to report the wonder to Andronikos, who was greatly troubled[1019] and shook his head from side to side, muttering that it appeared that Paul was weeping for him, a portent that the worst calamity was to befall him. He loved Paul ardently and was exceedingly devoted to his words and presumed that he was loved by him in return.

In a word, Andronikos would not have been the least of the Komnenian emperors had he mitigated the intensity of his cruelty, had he been less quick to apply the hot iron and to resort to mutilation, ever blemishing and staining his vestments with blood, inexorably driven to punishment. Such practice he copied from the barbarous nations with whom he associated when, above all men, he was compelled to wander far and long. He might have been the equal of the Komnenians and their match in every way, for he was also responsible for the greatest blessings on behalf of humanity. He was not inhuman in all things, but like those creatures fashioned of double natures, he was brutal and human in form.[1020]

There were, moreover, iambic verses, contained in books and recited by many, that predicted Andronikos's future, among which was the following:

> Suddenly rising up from a place full of wine,
> A man livid and arrogant in manner,
> Spotted, grizzled, a multicolored chameleon,
> Shall fall upon a stalk and mow it down.
> But he too, being cut down in time, [354]
> Will miserably pay the price
> For those wrongs which the wretch committed in his lifetime;
> For he who bears the sword shall not escape the sword.[1021]

By a place full of wine, Oinaion was meant, as is evident from the name of the land whence Andronikos set out for Constantinople, as I have already related.[1022]

V *The Reign of Isaakios Angelos*

BOOK ONE

THÚS Isaakios Angelos succeeded to the throne with no trouble whatsoever by purchasing it, so to speak, with the blood of Hagiochristophoritēs. He left the Great Palace and arrived at the palace of Blachernai, where he played the role of the righteous man most masterfully, continually repeating the verses which were said of the bovine emperor and mistakenly applying them to himself. [355]

> The form shows forth the place and the manner
> Whence you came, proving to me what a friend you are;
> Being yourself temperate, you teach your dearest friends self-control;
> Earning alone the glory that emanates from the palace,
> By taking the sovereignty from the dying man, O most excellent one;
> And shortly you shall prosper in the rule.[1023]

As emperor, he anointed his head with an abundant measure of compassion for the indigent, and behind his closet door he held converse with God the Father who sees in secret.[1024] All those who had suffered afflictions in exile and those whom Andronikos had stripped bare of their properties or whom he had physically maimed Isaakios gathered together and rewarded with substantial benefactions, restoring whatever of their possessions had been kept hidden in the imperial treasury and had not disappeared or which, awarded by Andronikos to others, still survived. In addition, he greeted them with a generous hand and provided large sums of money from the palace treasuries. [356]

He also directed the war against the Italians, who had already taken Thessaly and Amphipolis. Unreservedly emboldened, they boasted that they would easily subdue the megalopolis by land and by sea, that they would occupy her as a deserted nest[1025] and, within a few days, effortlessly plunder her. The people looked upon Isaakios's reign as the transition from winter to spring, or as the steady calm following the storm. They came streaming in from all parts of the Roman provinces, not only those under arms but also those who had been disabled in the past, and the youths no less; some came only to look upon the liberator Moses and Zorobabel leading back the captives of Sion (for thus did they deem Isaakios), others to receive their customary soldiers' pay, and some to enlist in the army and to acquit themselves like men against the Sicilians.

When Andronikos's downfall became known to those who marched away together with Andronikos's son, Emperor John, to the province of

Philippopolis, they immediately seized him and gouged his eyes out. Waiting for someone to console him and finding no one, and for someone to grieve with him and beholding no one,[1026] he died an agonizing death.[1027]

His brother Manuel was also arrested and blinded, despite the fact that he in no way assented to his father's crimes[1028] and that this was well known, not only to those who frequented the agora but above all to Isaakios, who deprived him of his sight.

[357] When Isaakios saw the considerable concourse of people from the eastern cities who came to take part in the campaign against the Sicilian enemy, he welcomed them readily and gladdened them with as many gifts as possible. Then he armed them and dispatched them to the army under Branas's command. To the Roman divisions in the field who fought the enemy troups, he sent the imperial rations and gave added support to the struggle at hand to the sum of four thousand pounds of gold.

The Sicilian adversary had not yet heard of Andronikos's fall and confidently continued their advance, intending to terminate their march at Constantinople; their fleet sailed out and put in at the islands nearest the City. But He who does not allow the Giants to be saved by the greatness of their strength and by war chariots and horses,[1029] and showers His grace on the humble,[1030] caused the proud to fall. Coming down once again in truth, He did not confound their tongues[1031] but divided them into three parts. The one part was left to keep watch over the presiding city of the Thessalians [Thessaloniki] and remained in force with the support of fast-sailing ships; the second part plundered the territory around Serrai with impunity; the third part did not remain wholly undivided, but one section drank and bathed in the Strymon while laying waste the lands around Amphipolis, and the other, advancing joyfully as though anticipating their entry into the capital, encamped at Mosynopolis. Ever victorious and meeting absolutely no resistance, they made reckless sallies. They separated according to companies, each going its separate way, and scattered in the hope of despoiling anyone coming out of, or carrying provisions into, Mosynopolis.

[358] The *strategos* Branas observed the activities of the barbarians in those parts and led on the army from time to time, but he could barely persuade the troops to come out of the mountains but for a little and take to the plain fit for driving horses. In their first attack they performed bravely and routed an enemy division, bearing out the myth of the Myrmidons[1032] in their own actions; they were suddenly transformed into men of valor and ever cut down those in the rear ranks. The rout of the enemy continued all the way to Mosynopolis. After successfully engaging the enemy before the city, they attacked the defenders within. They set fire to the gates guarded by the enemy (for fear and shuddering had already compassed their bodies),[1033] and, leaping inside, they reveled in slaughter, having for so long been starved of the savory repast of warfare. As they consumed the wealth of the nations,[1034] they were surfeited and made fat by the booty, and they became presumptuous over against the enemy around Amphipolis, passing over their recent victory as though it were stale food.

They marched, therefore, in battle array, as though they were the

Camp of God,[1035] or an army of lions, against the horses, armaments, and remaining divisions of the enemy still encamped about the Strymon. When the die of fortunes was cast contrariwise by the hand of God, they, who were formerly haughty and disdainful, boasting that they could well-nigh lift up and move mountains[1036] with their lance, were as though struck by lightning or by the violent crash of thunder. Driven mad by the dreadful reports of what had befallen their near friends at Mosynopolis, they procrastinated in giving battle and sluggishly drew themselves out in battle order. The Romans, on the other hand, putting aside their humility of spirit and darting forth like eaglets dwelling high in the clouds[1037] in [359] pursuit of fowl on the ground, raced with wingless speed to engage in battle those who had formerly reproached them as having turned into birds.

When both armies converged on the same position (it was called the place of Demetritzēs),[1038] then more and more the Sicilians demonstrated their cowardice. They decided to sue for peace, and to this end they sent an envoy to enter into negotiations with Branas. At first, the request delighted the Romans; shortly afterwards, however, they changed their minds, suspecting that the enemy's proposals were a stratagem, and if this were not the case, it was undoubtedly evidence of cowardice. Without waiting for the call to battle or the sounding of the war trumpet or any other mobilization order customarily given by commanders before battle, they attacked the enemy with swords bared. Up to a certain point the Sicilians received the charge of the Romans bravely and courageously, and the tide of battle ebbed and flowed, but finally they succumbed to the excessively impassioned charge of the Roman troops; they turned their backs and fled in disorder. When overtaken, they were cut down, taken captive, driven into the Strymon River, plundered, and stripped. It was in the early afternoon of the seventh day of the month of November when these events took place [1185].

Both generals of the army were apprehended: Richard, the brother of Tancred's wife,[1039] who commanded the Sicilian fleet, and Count Baldwin, who was not descended from a noble and illustrious family but was highly regarded by the king for his competence in military science; he was, above all others at that time, girt with the dignity of generalship. Exulting in his earlier victories over the Romans, he likened himself to Alexander the Great, the Macedonian, except that he did not have on his chest, as did Alexander, hairs depicting a beak and representing wings,[1040] and he boasted of having achieved even greater deeds than Alexander in a [360] briefer span of time and without bloodshed.

Those troops who had escaped the net of battle that had been cast, together with those who had overrun the lands around Serrai, hastened straightway to Thessaloniki and embarked on the long boats as soon as they arrived from their hasty flight. But they were not to have a fair voyage; furious storms that bore their destruction rose up to cripple them and worked their doom, which was first ordained by the will of God to take place on land and then, shortly afterwards, at sea. Many who were too late for the triremes were overtaken while still wandering about Thessaloniki and put to death in diverse ways, especially by the Alan mercenaries. In retaliation for what they had suffered when Thessaloniki fell, they took no

pity upon the enemy and filled the streets and the narthexes of the holy churches with corpses. As they asked the captive Sicilians, "Where in the world is my brother?"[1041] (they meant their fellow Alan whom the Sicilians had killed during the fall), they ran them through with the sword. They also slaughtered those who streamed into the temples, with the words, "Where in the world is the *papás*?" [father] meaning those priests killed when the Sicilians had burst in upon the sanctuaries.[1042]

At this time something quite novel took place. They say that after the fall of the city, the dogs did not snatch at the corpses of the slain Romans, or rend them with their teeth, or mutilate them, but they attacked the bodies of the fallen Latins with such viciousness, unsatiated by the flesh they devoured, that they even broke into graves and unearthed the entombed bodies as prey.[1043]

The two generals of whom we have spoken and the brainless and pernicious Alexios Komnenos, the cause of all these evils, who deserved to dwell in the House of Charon, were deprived of the light of their eyes.

[361] The Latins who reached Epidamnos safely were gladly delivered over to their countrymen who guarded the city as the seeds of many thousands. The king of Sicily, having strengthened its defenses with all manner of weapons, would not deliver the city over to the Romans after the destruction of his armies. In foolish pursuit of famed glory, he insanely held on even after suffering defeat and disgrace. But not long afterwards, because provisions were scarce, he decided to withdraw.

The auspicious conclusion of the land war was such as had never entered our hearts. But God, as ruler over all, cares for all; governing human affairs with great forebearance and taking pity on all things,[1044] for he can do all things, he tipped the scales in our favor. Bringing every good hope, and chastening us but briefly, he scourged our enemies ten thousand times more,[1045] neither by changing the harmony of the elements,[1046] nor by bringing lice forth from the earth, nor by casting up fish and frogs from the river, nor by sending wasps forward as forerunners of the host, nor by any of the other prodigies of old;[1047] but rather, they who were being killed were suddenly transformed by God into relentless warriors and began to slay the murderers, for wickedness is a vile thing condemned by its own witness,[1048] and, pressed by its own conscience, it ever suffers the most grievous consequences.

For what grave charge could the Sicilians, removed from us by shadowy mountains and sounding sea,[1049] lay against the Romans? And should we seek to apprehend the deeper judgments of God, the Lord smites us because he knows our sins. Because those who, by the will of God, laid

[362] hold of us to flog us were both reckless and merciless, they, too, did not escape the just wrath of him who will have mercy[1050] and in measure feeds us the bread of tears and gives us tears to drink.[1051] But, as a lion leaping out of a thicket, like the destructive whelps of a wolf, and like a pouncing leopard, the captors became captives and the victors were vanquished, and the Lord had prepared for them a spirit of error[1052] that revealed the red-colored stains caused by their murderous ways and in need of cleansing. They crossed their own borders and invaded our lands; flogging us for a short time, they were flogged much more.

Thus did Justice take vengeance on the cavalry. The long ships, more

than two hundred in number, also did not escape unscathed as they backwatered. Where they attempted to put their passengers ashore along the Astakenos Gulf,[1053] many were lost as they encountered the Roman forces who prevented them from bringing their ships to land by taking up positions on both shores, thus making it impossible to set foot on either side. Whenever the Sicilian fleet approached land or let down the gangway, a deluge of missiles immediately rained down upon them from all sides, and everyone ran for cover beneath the ships's decks even as turtles withdraw into their shells. Their ships were numerous, but ours, numbering no more than one hundred in all, were eager to give battle. Not only was the fleet heartened but also many of the City's inhabitants, who boarded fishing boats and armed themselves with whatever weapons were at hand, throbbing with eager excitement to sail out against the enemy. The public interest did not induce the emperor and his counselors to give their permission for this; the fact of the excessive numbers of the enemy ships had to be considered. Consequently, our triremes riding at anchor alongshore the Columns [Diplokionion] did not advance any further. The enemy's fleet did not take to the oar and move out from the islands for [363] some seventeen days, since they saw none of our countrymen approaching by land; considering the delay not to their advantage, they prepared to set sail [November, 1185]. After wasting with fire the island of Kalonymos[1054] and the littoral of the Hellespont as well, the fleet sailed homewards. It is said that many ships, men and all, sank in the deep when they encountered tempestuous winds, while famine and disease emptied out others.

Thus, no less than ten thousand fighting men were lost in these campaigns.[1055] The captives taken in both battles, numbering more than four thousand, were incarcerated in public prisons. Had they not been fed from the imperial treasuries or had they not received the necessities of life from some other quarter, and been forced to survive only on bread provided by those God-loving people who visit those in prison, they would have wasted away miserably. He who wielded the scepter over Sicily and had initiated the war against the Romans, when informed of these things, sent letters reproaching the emperor for his lack of mercy and for cruelly allowing so many ranks of men[1056] of such tender age to perish of hunger and nakedness. Certainly they had taken up arms to wage war against the Romans, but nonetheless, they were Christians delivered into their hands by God. The victor, he said, either should have immediately condemned the prisoners to utter destruction, wholly irra- [364] tionally exchanging his own nature for that of the beast and disregarding the law of humanity, or, choosing not to behave in this manner and casting them into prison, he should have broken bread for them consisting of eight pieces[1057] if he were too niggardly to provide sufficient sustenance. The emperor took no heed of the letters' contents. He allowed the wretches to waste away as before, which was the fate he had in store for them. Every day, two and three at a time were often carried out and, deprived of burial rites and libations to the dead, were thrown into the common burial places and deep pits.

The emperor, vested in his jeweled toga and seated on his royal throne inlaid with gold, assembled a multitude around his tribunal, so that he

appeared most formidable to both foreigners and Romans, and commanded the generals of the Sicilian army, that is, Baldwin and Richard, to be brought before him. After they had removed their head coverings and rendered servile obeisance, they were questioned by the emperor as to why they had reviled him, the anointed of the Lord,[1058] who had given no just cause for complaint. Gloating all the while over their present plight, more than was proper, he boasted and exulted in the crushing defeat of the enemy.

[365] At the time the Latin army was still intact and Emperor Isaakios had but just succeeded to the throne. He dispatched envoys, but he made no offer of reconciliation to the generals, or honored them with gifts, or led them on with any pretences of goodwill. He addressed them in an imperious manner, and, smiting them with reproaches and accusations, he bore himself pompously towards men who were still victorious and who had trampled under foot the entire realm of the Romans. Openly praising and extolling his sword with its lethal power, he violently threatened—without yet knowing how he was going to achieve it—their utter destruction and perdition if they did not alter their plans and return whence they had come.

Baldwin, an arrogant man now swollen like a wineskin because of his successes, could not tolerate these written communications. He replied most cleverly to the emperor: he ridiculed his sword as having been honed on the bodies of effeminate men (he was alluding to the death of Hagiochristophoritēs), and he mocked Isaakios as being helpless, for he had never camped out and slept on a shield, or endured a helmet covered with coal dust[1059] and abided a filthy coat of mail. Instead, from a tender age, he had devoted himself to an elementary schoolmaster; he had been taught learned trifles, holding in his hands a pencil and a writing tablet and with a parchment dealing with numbers hanging about his person; he had looked askance at the scourge which fell frequently on hands and buttocks and had known and feared only the crack of the whip, without ever experiencing the threat of Ares or ever hearing the hurtling of spears.[1060] Not only did Baldwin write these things in mockery but he also resorted to persuasion; although he was an enemy, he became a counse-

[366] lor. He urged Isaakios to put away the imperial crown and to lay aside the remaining insignia of sovereignty, and, folding these away, to give up all claim to them and to preserve them for the winner and the better man,[1061] thus referring to the king as his master, and to fall down before him and plead long and urgently for his life only.

Because of these things, the emperor now brought the generals to account, dismissing from his mind the verse of David, "Our tongue is our own: who is lord over us?"[1062] and he condemned them to death because of what they had written.

Baldwin, skillfull in casting reproaches while extolling his successes, was also an inordinate flatterer who assigned the emperor's failure to the slight inferiority of his weapons and engines of war. He deflected the emperor's wrath and mollified his anger by first magnifying his sword as being truly imperial and keen and then contending that the words written by the emperor at that time were words of truth[1063] that had been sealed indeed by the hand of God and were not empty, light talk. He pleaded

that he did not deserve being cast aside as worthless, despite the bitter words he had written, for even Nature considers hatred among enemies as blameless.

Wherefore the emperor remained silent, adding nothing more. I know not whether he was swayed like a woman by the flattery or persuaded by the statement of defense.

Baldwin and Richard were again placed under guard when they left. The emperor, now turning his attention to other matters, gave explicit instructions to those present and to all the rest that from that day on he wished no one to be maimed in body, even though he be the most hateful of men, and even though he plot to take the emperor's life and throne. All those assembled at the imperial tribunal applauded this declaration [367] and shouted in approval almost as it they were listening to the voice of God. All, contemplating the difficulty of accomplishing what was promised and amazed at his excessive gentleness, remarked that the emperor was the perfect gift from God.[1064] It is not possible that someone, especially an emperor, should be characterized by an immutable depravity of nature which cannot be altered or changed for the better, or that he should shelter a rebellious man who lays thieving hands on the throne, even though he should put forth special claim to virtue and with David should not requite with evil those who requite him with good,[1065] or, in times of danger, should chant his verses, "They compassed me about as bees do a honeycomb, but in the name of the Lord I repulsed them."[1066]

Shortly afterwards, however, the emperor gave indications of contradicting the resolution he had declared in public; just as he gave no explicit verbal commands, neither did he hesistate to take action, but he closely emulated Andronikos by destroying all opposition, contrary to Solomon's verse which says, "Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay."[1067]

When the sultan of Ikonion (this was still Kilij Arslan, in green old age and over seventy years old) heard of Andronikos's death and Isaakios's accession, he conjectured rightly that with such changes of emperors, dislocations would most likely occur, especially if a major war was being fought in the West. He now initiated an attack against the Thrakesian theme with picked cavalry and elite troops under the command of the [368] amir Sames [autumn 1185]. Finding the region of Kelbianos[1068] emptied of men experienced in bearing arms (for they all had flowed like torrents towards Isaakios, who had just now donned the purple robe), he took many captives, seized all kinds of herds, and loaded his troops with other spoils.

With the Eastern nations pacified by additional lavish outlays, as well as by the payment of annual tribute (thus did those who sit over us Romans know how to free themselves of the foreigner, pursuing housekeeping cares like maidens of the bedchamber who toil at wool spinning), Isaakios decided to seek a wife from among the foreign nations, for the woman he had married earlier had died.[1069] After his envoys had made the negotiations, he took as his betrothed wife the daughter of Béla, the king of Hungary, who was not yet ten years old.[1070]

He celebrated the wedding rites penuriously [end of 1185 or beginning of 1186], using public monies freely collected from his own lands. Be-

cause of his niggardliness, he escaped notice as he gleaned other cities which were joined together around Anchialos, provoking the barbarians who lived in the vicinity of Mount Haimos, formerly called Mysians and now named Vlachs, to declare war against him and the Romans.

Made confident by the harshness of the terrain and emboldened by their fortresses, most of which are situated directly above sheer cliffs, the barbarians had boasted against the Romans in the past; now, finding a pretext like that alleged on behalf of Patroklos[1071]—the rustling of their cattle and their own ill-treatment—they leaped with joy at rebellion.

[369] The instigators of this evil who incited the entire nation were a certain Peter and Asan, brothers sprung from the same parents. In order to justify their rebellion, they approached the emperor, encamped at Kypsella [early 1186], requesting that they be recruited in the Roman army and be awarded by imperial rescript a certain estate situated in the vicinity of Mount Haimos, which would provide them with a little revenue. Failing in their request—for the punitive action of God supersedes that of man—they grumbled because they had not been heard; and with their request made for naught, they spat out heated words, hinting at rebellion and the destruction they would wreak on their way home. Asan, the more insolent and savage of the two, was struck across the face and rebuked for his impudence at the command of John, the *sebastokrator*.[1072]

Thus did they return, unsuccessful in their mission and wantonly insulted. What words could possibly describe and embrace the endless string of Trojan woes inflicted on the Romans by these impious and abominable men? But none of this now; let us proceed with the narrative in historical sequence.

As Isaakios Komnenos still ruled as tyrant over Cyprus and was not disposed to keep his hands off the revenue payments that were promised to the emperor, or to bend his knee to him, or to moderate the horrors which he wickedly inflicted on the Cypriots, ever contriving novel torments, the emperor decided to fit out a fleet against him. Seventy long ships were made ready; the designated commanders were John Kontostephanos,[1073] who had arrived at the threshold of old age,[1074] and Alexios Komnenos,[1075] who, although of good stature, courageous, and a second cousin to the emperor, had had his eyes cut out by Andronikos and thus was considered as unfit for battle by all those participating in the campaign. His appointment was deemed by many as an inauspicious omen.

[370] The voyage to Cyprus was without danger, with a very favorable wind gently filling the sails, but immediately after entering the harbors, a storm broke out that was more furious than any at sea. Isaakios, ruler over Cyprus, engaged them and put them to flight. The most formidable pirate on the high seas at that time, a man called Megareitēs, unexpectedly came to the aid of Isaakios and attacked the ships, which he found emptied of men, for they had disembarked to join in the land war. The captains of the triremes performed no brave deed but readily surrendered themselves into the hands of the enemy. Isaakios handed them over to Megareitēs to do with them as he wished. He took them to Sicily, where he recognized the tyrant of that island as his lord. Isaakios, after defeating the Romans, enlisted many in his own forces, and many he subjected to savage punishments, for he was an inexorable tormentor; among these

was Basil Rentakenos, whose legs he cut off at the knees with an ax. This man was most skilled in warfare and had served as a teacher to Isaakios as Phoenix of old instructed Achilles to be a speaker of words and a doer of deeds.[1076] The most wrathful of men, Isaakios's anger ever bubbled like a boiling kettle; when in a rage, he spoke like a madman with his lower jaw aquiver, and not knowing how to reward his pedagogue with bright gifts, he subjected him to such retribution. He allowed the ship's crews to go wherever they wished, and they came to their homes as though returning after a long time from a distant shipwreck, as many, that is, as did not succumb to one of the three evils of sea, hunger, and death.

When the Vlachs were afflicted with the disease of open rebellion, the leaders of this evil being those I cited above,[1077] the emperor marched out against them [spring 1186]. [371]

These events, therefore, must not be overlooked and unrecorded. At first, the Vlachs were reluctant and turned away from the revolt urged upon them by Peter and Asan, looking askance at the magnitude of the undertaking. To overcome the timidity of their compatriots, the brothers built a house of prayer in the name of the Good Martyr Demetrios. In it they gathered many demoniacs of both races; with crossed and bloodshot eyes, hair dishevelled, and with precisely all the other symptoms demonstrated by those possessed by demons, they were instructed to say in their ravings that the God of the race of the Bulgars and Vlachs had consented to their freedom and assented that they should shake off after so long a time the yoke from their neck; and in support of this cause, Demetrios, the Martyr for Christ, would abandon the metropolis of Thessaloniki and his church there and the customary haunts of the Romans and come over to them to be their helper and assistant in their forthcoming task. These madmen would keep still for a short while and then, suddenly moved by the spirit, would rave like lunatics; they would start up and shout and shriek, as though inspired, that this was no time to sit still but to take weapons in hand and close with the Romans. Those seized in battle should not be taken captive or preserved alive but slaughtered, killed without mercy; neither should they release them for ransom nor yield to supplication, succumbing like women to genuflections. Rather, they should remain as hard as diamonds to every plea and put to death every captive.

With such soothsayers as these, the entire nation was won over, and everyone took up arms. Since their rebellion was immediately successful, all the more did they assume that God had approved of their freedom. Freely moving out a short distance without opposition, they extended their control over the lands outside of Zygon. Peter, Asan's brother, bound his head with a gold chaplet and fashioned scarlet buskins to put on his feet. An assault was made upon Pristhlava [Preslav] (this is an ancient city built of baked bricks and covering a very large area), but they realized that a seige would not be without danger, and so they bypassed it. They descended Mount Haimos, fell unexpectedly upon the Roman towns, and carried away many free Romans, much cattle and draft animals, and sheep and goats in no small number.[1078] [372]

The emperor marched out against them, and they, in turn, occupying the rough ground and inaccessible places, stood their ground for a long

time. But unexpectedly a blackness rose up[1079] [solar eclipse, 21 April 1186[1080]] and covered the mountains which were guarded by the barbarians, who had laid ambuscades at the narrow defiles; the Romans, undetected, came upon them unawares to send them scurrying in panic. The originators of this evil and commanders of the army, that is, Peter and Asan, and their fellow rebels ran violently to the Istros like the herd of
[373] swine in the Gospels who ran into the sea[1081] and sailed across to join forces with their neighbors, the Cumans. The emperor was hindered by the vast wilderness from making his way through Mysia. Many of the cities there are in the vicinity of Mount Haimos, and the majority or practically all, in fact, are built on sheer cliffs and cloud-capped peaks. Thus, he posted garrisons and did nothing more than set fire to the crops gathered in heaps. Subjected to the trickeries of the Vlachs, who observed him closely, he turned back forthwith, leaving matters there to continue in turmoil [probably July 1186]. As a result, he encouraged the barbarians to sneer even more broadly at the Romans and emboldened them all the more.

On arriving at the queen of cities, Isaakios plumed himself on his achievements, so much so that one of the judges (this was Leon Monasteriotēs) said that the soul of Basil the Bulgar-Slayer [Basil II, 976–1025] was aggrieved because the emperor had utterly cast aside his *Typikon*[1082] and all the writings he had lodged in the Monastery of Sosthenion,[1083] among which he had prophesied the revolution of the Vlachs. Isaakios continued apace, deriding and ridiculing the prediction as being apparently mistaken, contending that he had won over the rebels by persuasion and had instantly led them back to their former subordination and bondage, while it took Basil a very long time to do so, and that Basil had belched forth empty lies and vain prophecies as from the bay-eating throat and tripod.[1084]

[374] Asan and his barbarians crossed the Istros and met the Cumans, from among whom he enlisted a large number of auxiliaries. Then, as was their intention, they returned to their country of Mysia [after summer 1186]. Finding the land swept clean and emptied of Roman troops, they marched in with even greater braggadocio, leading their Cuman auxiliaries as though they were legions of spirits.[1085] They were not content merely to preserve their own possessions and to assume control of the government of Mysia; they also were compelled to wreak havoc against the Roman territories and unite the political power of Mysia and Bulgaria into one empire as of old.

The former triumphs would have been repeated had the emperor himself set out once more against the rebels. But he deferred his own attack until another time and handed over the command to his paternal uncle, the *sebastokrator* John. Without exposing his troops to danger, John commanded them in a most laudable manner and annoyed the enemy with constant attacks whenever they formed in close order to give battle and descended into plains fit for driving horses. Shortly afterwards, he was divested of his command for setting his eyes on the throne.

The *kaisar,* John Kantakouzenos, the emperor's brother-in-law who was married to his sister, succeeded to the command of the *sebastokrator.*

[375] The man was huge in size and most courageous of heart, and with a

booming voice. Although greatly experienced in the art of warfare, he was unsuccessful most of the time, or, rather, all of the time, because of his rashness and arrogance. The light of his eyes had been extinguished by Andronikos, who had heated for him the iron that maims. The barbarians had learned from their recent defeat that to leave the mountains and turn off into the plains was inimical to them. The *kaisar,* mistaking the guardedness of their behavior for cowardice, tracked them down in the manner of huntsmen as he advanced and then set up camp wherever he happened to be at the time without fortifying it with trenches. When the enemy attacked in the night, he barely saved himself, and his troops were sorely afflicted in diverse ways. Those who were caught as they slept were killed, and those who did not have time to strap on their weapons were taken captive; those who were able to escape without their weapons collected around the *kaisar,* only to find him to be more vindictive than the enemy. He ceaselessly insulted and reproached them for being helpless and for utterly betraying him. In an attempt to retrieve the defeat, he donned his armor, leaped on his spirited Arabian stallion, and couched his strong, heavy lance.[1086] Pointing his weapon in the direction of the enemy, he exhorted the survivors of his army to follow him, even though he could not see the enemy and had no idea where they were encamped. When the Romans had been put to flight by the barbarians, their standards were captured and the soft tunics and elegant cloaks of the *kaisar* snatched and put on by the companions of Asan and Peter. The victors, with the standards at their head, once more occupied the plains. [376]

When Kantakouzenos laid aside his command, Alexios Branas was proclaimed general; he was short in stature, but gigantic in the scope of his intelligence and the cunningness of his designs, and he was the most versed in generalship of all men at that time. Taking over the command of the army, he executed his responsibilities as general with caution, not rashly, always advancing step by step, careful to harass the enemy while taking just as much care to keep his own troops out of danger. After traversing much rough terrain, he bivouacked in the vicinity of the so-called Black Mountain and established an entrenched camp. By anticipating any attack, he performed a very great service.

Branas was obsessed by a burning passion for the throne; he held Emperor Isaakios in contempt or, rather, unable to bear seeing him reign, he had before [end of 1185] been detected aiming at the throne when he was general of the troops in the war against the Sicilians. Aware that it would be difficult to gain the support of the Roman forces under his command in fomenting the rebellion for which he painfully longed, he first won over his German allies; but because he later deemed that they would be insufficient help in any future attempt to seize the throne, he decided to follow the same course taken by Isaakios when he traveled without difficulty the road to autocracy. By night he entered the Great Church and proceeded into the sanctuary in order to address those standing without; he entreated those who come inside to come to his aid, to help him avert the emperor's unjust design, asserting that he had never given offense in any manner whatsoever. He supplemented this with a tiresome narration of the great victories he had won, how he had twice attacked the enemy forces and had, as many times, turned them to flight [377]

in great battles and by way of excellent stratagems. Again he fostered the same passion, forcibly restraining and bridling his lust for power as though it were an uncontrollable horse; but this time [c. April 1187], luckily receiving the support of the troops, he was prompted to bring his earlier objectives to a successful conclusion.

[378] His kinsmen consulted, those who were also his fellow countrymen (for they were from Adrianople), many in number and all of them powerful, he put on the red buskins. Next, he went to his native city, where he was proclaimed emperor by all the troops, and then set out for the imperial city and encamped in the Outer Philopation, as it was called.

He approached the City's walls late in the afternoon with his well-armed forces, astride a horse all black but for white horsehairs growing around the brow in a crescent shape, and threatened and exhorted both the imperial troops defending the walls and the City's residents who were spectators of the goings-on. He promised to reward those who sympathized with his cause, and if they should open wide the gates and admit him inside, they would find him to be both savior and benefactor, embracing them with open arms; but if, when entering by the door, as he did not wish to climb up some other way,[1087] he should be opposed and resisted, and if he should be forced, at all hazards, to steal his way inside and to snatch the throne, he would with just cause do to them what savage beasts do when they enter the sheepfold by some way other than the door. Having boasted in such fashion with his troops arrayed to demonstrate his battle readiness, he returned to his camp.

On the following day, when the sun's light began to illumine the eastern skies, he came to the City's walls once again, at the land gates, called the Gates of Charsios,[1088] where he deployed his army into right and left

[379] wings. Taking up his position in the center of the phalanx, he ordered his men to engage the troops that poured out of the City. The emperor did not deploy all his troops within the City's gates to fight mightily on his behalf but commanded one part to stand on the walls above while another part sallied out to the farthest point of the fosse, where it was to oppose the enemy as best it could. Should the troops become exhausted by the heavy press of the enemy, he urged them to stay close to the walls so that those manning the battlements could defend them from above. Until high noon both sides engaged in the discharge of missiles and in skirmishes. For a short time Branas's troops prevailed over those of the emperor, as they were seasoned soldiers, especially those who constituted the Latin infantry. Survivors were searched out from among the captured Sicilian troops, and the emperor set them free from their bonds and prison, placed them under arms, and sent them against Branas. Branas's infantrymen formed a mighty phalanx around him, and they were fenced about with a cavalryman's shield, a long sword and a pointed lance. Supported by their cavalry, they utterly routed the troops from the City, and these were compelled to cross the fosse and cling to the walls; the troops who stood on the walls came to their aid.

[380] Thus ended the events of that day. After suspending hostilities for five days, the tyrant once again massed his forces for battle and came before the walls of the City. Making himself appear terrifying to the citizens in an attempt to incite those within to revolt, he detached a division of his

troops and dispatched them to the northern side of the City, opposite the strait called the Ford of the Ox, from which the waterway can clearly be seen making its serpentine way to the palace in Blachernai, as can all the sections of the City facing north. In compliance with their orders, they ascended the high ground of the hills in that region and raised their standards. As the sun's rays fell on the armor and the newly burnished and smooth corselets[1089] they were reflected like flashes of lightning, so that the City's populace gathered in groups on the hilltops of the City to view the scene with great amazement.

After this, they won over to their side the inhabitants of the Propontis, who, though not all skilled in warfare, were each and every one adept in pulling an oar. The boats they had built for the catching of fish they converted into warships, covering the sides with thick planks; some were equipped with slings, while others took on board bows and quivers. Thus transformed from weavers of nets into fierce warriors, they triumphed over, and prevailed against, the imperial triremes which, while compassing the City, were on the lookout for nocturnal assaults by Branas's troops and diligently kept watch lest the tyrant, despairing of entering through the land gates, slip inside unnoticed through the seaside gates. At first, those on the long ships thought that the fishermen were utterly [381] insane and were confident that as soon as they moved against the fishing boats they would dash them. When the time came to exchange blows, the triremes sailed forth as the crooked and straight war trumpets sounded. The ferryboats moved out in silence; the men on board, breathing fury,[1090] smote the sea with their oars[1091] and engaged the huge ships of the enemy, over whom they prevailed, and hemmed them in along the shore of the City. Because of their great length and slowness in turning, the triremes could not at once inflict damage on the adversary. As the fishing boats moved forward *en masse,* many would randomly surround a single trireme; attacking stern and prow and both sides, they won a resounding victory and raised a splendid trophy.

Unable to bear the disgrace of the defeat for long, the commanders of the emperor's fleet prepared to give pursuit to the fishing boats. They would have quickly destroyed the ferry boats with liquid fire[1092] had not Branas's heavy-armed troops descended from the crest of the hill to the shore and come to their assistance.

The rebel, who saw that he could neither steal his way into the City nor achieve his plans through warfare or persuasion, contrived another scheme. He could either force the queen of cities to submit in the face of famine, setting up against her the mightiest and most powerful siege engine of all—starvation (for the eastern and western parts of the Roman empire had already gone over to him), forbidding any supply ship to put into Byzantion, or he could attack with a larger and more vigorous fleet. These things would have unfolded according to plan had not the Divinity refused to consent to their realization. The emperor saw that the City's [382] entire populace was devoted to him, that not only would they not tolerate that Branas should reign as emperor but that they also subjected him to curses. He carried up to the top of the walls, as an impregnable fortress and unassailable palisade, the icon of the Mother of God taken from the Monastery of the Hodegoi where it had been assigned, and therefore

called *Hodegetria,*[1093] and took courage to fight back on his own, deeming the long confinement inside the City to be detrimental, creating an abominable situation; also, he yielded to the rebukes of the *kaisar* Conrad.[1094]

This Conrad was an Italian by race; his father ruled over Montferrat. He so excelled in bravery and sagacity that he was far-famed, not only among the Romans but also celebrated among his countrymen, and Emperor Manuel was especially fond of him as one graced with good fortune, acute intelligence, and strength of arm. It was he who, having received bounteous gifts from Emperor Manuel, was induced to raise his hand against the king of Germany, and defeated in battle the bishop of Mainz [Christian], the king's chancellor, who had invaded Italy with a huge force. He had seized him, put him in chains, and stiffly maintained that he would not release him unless the emperor of the Romans commanded him to do so.

At the time when Emperor Isaakios had dispatched an embassy to Conrad's brother Boniface to propose a marriage contract between him and his sister Theodora, Boniface had recently taken a bride and was celebrating the hymeneal rites. Now, Conrad had lost his consort in life to Death. The envoys deemed this a godsend and their second choice far superior to their first. They assuaged Conrad with grand promises, and he accompanied them on their return [after 22 March 1187].[1095] The emperor
[383] gave the marriage feast and shortly afterwards Branas's rebellion ensued. Conrad continuously bolstered the emperor's spirits, which were dampened and ignobly languishing, and by inspiring the highest hopes, he served as a whetstone honing a fine edge to the emperor's resolution to give battle.

The emperor gathered together those of the monks who go barefoot and couch on the ground[1096] and brought down those who live on pillars, suspended above the earth; but while he prayed through them to God to bring an end to the civil war and not to allow the sovereignty to pass over, or to fly off, to another, he himself neglected to make preparations for battle, resting all his hopes on the panoply of the Spirit. Conrad, on the other hand, acting as the crab to the mussel,[1097] would often awaken him from sleep and prod him to rise up, persuading him not to rest all his hopes in these mendicants. He counseled the emperor to attend to the troops, to employ the heavy infantry against the rebel, that is, not only the arms on the right hand, which is the assistance of holy men, but also that on the left, which is the armor strengthened by sword and breastplate.[1098] He admonished him, moreover, not to be sparing of money but to spend it freely to raise troops because, with the exception of the emperor's blood relations and those whose residences were in the City, everyone else had submitted to Branas, and it was not possible to bring in a military force from the outside.

Prodded continually by the *kaisar*'s words as though by an ox-goad, the emperor woke from his torpor, threw off his apathy, and began to collect an auxiliary force. Contending that he did not have an abundance of gold coins, he removed the silver vessels from the imperial treasuries and deposited them as security in the monasteries, which abounded in gold. The monies he obtained from this source he distributed for the raising of an armed force. (After the victory, however, he did not restore

the gold and even removed the deposited vessels.) In a short time, Conrad gathered from among the Latins in the City some two hundred and [384] fifty knights, all fierce warriors, and five hundred foot soldiers. Not a few Ismaelites [Turks] and Iberians [Georgians] from the East who had journeyed to the queen of cities for trade purposes were also enlisted. The nobles loyal to the emperor, together with those in attendance at the imperial court, numbered about one thousand men. Such was the zeal that Conrad demonstrated on behalf of the emperor that he was deemed by all a blessing sent by God to the emperor in time of need.

Once, when he came upon the emperor while eating, he uttered a low moan and said, "Would that you showed the same eagerness in attending to the present conflict as you do to running to banquets, falling with gluttonous appetite on the foods set forth, and wasting all your efforts on emptying out dishes of carved meat." Isaakios blushed at these words and turned a bright red; he gave a forced smile, and taking hold of the *kaisar*'s mantle he remarked agitatedly, "Ho there! At the proper time we shall both eat and fight."

At this time, the following omens made their appearance in the sky: stars showed forth in the daytime, the air was turbulent, certain phenomena called halos appeared around the sun, and the light it cast was no longer bright and luminous but pale [4 September 1187].[1099]

Such being the state of events, the emperor assembled his troops and decided that he should no longer remain withdrawn, sitting within doors, but that he, too, should show himself before the rebel with sword drawn. Putting on his coat of mail, he stood within the wall of the City which Emperor Manuel had raised to protect the palace in Blachernai and emboldened his kinsmen and the soldiery standing nearby, exhorting them as follows.

> Certainly it is better and irreproachable in the sight of God that [385] the lawful ruler, even before his subjects, should brave the first danger rather than yield to a revolutionary who foments civil war among those who speak the same tongue. Should there be some among you who are uncertain and undecided in your minds or, on the other hand, are fervidly and passionately devoted to him, or again who yesterday served him slavishly as master but today despise him, I make of you a most reasonable request: remain at home, offering assistance to neither side until the issue is resolved by battle and then submit with the others to the victor, or else leave the City and go over to the rebel before the conflict begins; fight for him and bear the brunt of battle, so that he shall owe you a greater debt of gratitude should he gain the trophies of victory. As for those of you who cleave to me and honor me with your lips[1100] but are inclined to another in your hearts and render to him all your goodwill, I know not whether you shall be praised or weighed in the balance by God, who, loving justice, examines the intents of the heart.[1101] I refuse to think of that which is even worse and most shameless, that is, to desert to the tyrant in the midst of battle, thus setting a bad example even for the best of men to change sides and go over to the enemy, as we observe with birds flying in flocks: when one flies away, all the others fly off with it with a rushing sound, and when another comes to rest, the entire flock follows suit.

He spoke in this manner because he distrusted his paternal uncle, the *sebastokrator* John, who was an old friend of Branas and whose son celebrated his marriage to Branas's daughter shortly before the rebellion. All those who comprised the assembly were greatly aggrieved by these words. The *sebastokrator,* wishing to remove all suspicion from himself, placed all the members of his household and himself under the most dreadful curses if he had ever considered joining forces with Branas; neither was he so ignorant of his duty nor had he taken leave of his senses because of old age and become so complete a fool that he would replace as emperor his brother's son, who had raised from glory to glory the rustic and stranger, with a son-in-law about whose good intentions and actions concerning himself he knew absolutely nothing.

[386] When the time came to give battle, the rebel gave the command for his forces to be drawn out in battle order; the gates of the City were thrown open, and the troops poured forth. The left wing was under the command of Manuel Kamytzēs, who had supplied the emperor with no small sum of money when the mercenary forces were recruited. He was Branas's worst enemy, and realizing what evil would befall him should Branas prevail, he revealed all his substance to the emperor and allowed him to take as much as he wanted, for he deemed it better to part with all his possessions on behalf of an emperor who was his friend and kinsman, and to receive in return much more gratitude should he emerge victorious, than to have his properties fill the coffers of a stranger, implacable and hard-hearted in his hostility, to his own derision and the former's great amusement. Emperor Isaakios himself commanded the right wing, composed of the best and most distinguished men-at-arms; the *kaisar* Conrad brought up the center with the assembled Latin cavalry and infantry.

The foremost place at the center of the opposing army's battle line, where were massed Branas's kinsmen, close friends, and those nobles of good courage who accompanied him, was held by Branas; the divisions deployed on either side were led by accomplished commanders and the Cuman Elpoumēs.

It was not yet high noon when missiles were discharged, the two armies charged, and the infantry forces advanced and engaged in pitched battle. When the sun was ablaze in the zenith and the signal for battle was given, Conrad, with his purple-dyed emblem imprinted on his and his troops' arms, was first to move. He fought then without a shield, and in lieu of a coat of mail he wore a woven linen fabric that had been steeped in a strong brine of wine and folded many times. So hard and compact had it become from the salt and wine that it was impervious to all missiles; the folds of the woven stuff numbered more

[387] than eighteen. When there was but a short distance between the two armies, he came to a stop; the foot soldiers arrayed themselves in the fashion of a wall and raised their javelins to give battle (buckler pressed on buckler, helm on helm,[1102] and shield clashed against shield); the horsemen couched their lances and spurred on their horses with the emperor's division close behind. Branas's troops could sustain neither the first shock of Conrad's heavy armed infantry nor the violent charge of the horse, and turning their backs, they scattered. Terrified on seeing this, the remaining divisions fled.

Branas shouted at the top of his voice, "Stand your ground, O Romans. We outnumber the enemy, and I myself shall be the first to engage them in combat." But though he pressed forward, he was unable to persuade anyone to turn around. He aimed his lance at Conrad, who was fighting without helmet, but he failed to deliver a mortal blow, harmlessly grazing Conrad's shoulder. In vain the weapon slipped from his hands;[1103] Conrad, holding his own lance with both hands, thrust it into Branas's cheekpiece, dazing him and throwing him headlong from his horse. Conrad's boydguards surrounded him and ran him through with their lances. They say that when Branas was first wounded by Conrad, he was terrified of death and so pleaded to be spared. Conrad replied that he must not be afraid; he assured him that nothing more unpleasant would happen than that his head should be cut off, and forthwith it was done.

Because the flight was disorderly, everyone could slay the man he pursued. This happened only at the beginning of the rout, but was not continued thereafter. The Romans spared the blood of their fellow countrymen, and the pursued ran for their lives as fast as they could and escaped. The entrenched camp was plundered by the victors and exposed to looting, not only by the emperor's troops but also by the citizens who [388] poured out of the City.

In this battle, Constantine Stethatos was also slain, pierced in the groin by a lance. He was a good and gentle man who, as governor of the province of Anchialos, was forced to follow Branas against his will, but despite Branas's hopes he was of no benefit to him. He did not save Branas and himself from falling to the sword even though he was the most celebrated astrologer of that time; evidently he had an inkling of something coming which convinced him to remain quietly in his tent, and he was not anxious about the enemy's attack. It is said that, on the basis of the signs of his art, he prophesied to Branas that on that day he would enter the City and celebrate a glorious triumph. Whether Stethatos actually said this, I have no way of knowing for certain, for not all things related by Rumor are devoid of deceit because Rumor loves a good story. If we give credence to the rumor, then the predictions of the prophet Stethatos would seem to have miscarried; on the other hand, a certain devotee of the astrologer's science contended that he was not at all mistaken and had not failed in his art, for he associated the forecasts with Branas's head and one of his feet, which on that day were transfixed on pikes and paraded through the agora, together with the head of a certain baseborn fellow by the name of Poietēs [Poet][1104] which no warrior's hand had taken from him. The emperor, after that brilliant victory and defeat of the enemy, commanded that it be cut off, to what end and purpose I know not.

Thus ended the conflict of that time. The emperor gave himself over to feasting, with the palace gates leading into the court as well as the outer windows opened wide so that all those who wished to do so could come inside and get a glimpse of the triumphant emperor. As he greedily attacked the bread and laid violent hands on the meats, for the purpose of diversion and after-dinner sport, he ordered Branas's head brought forward. Carried inside and thrown on the floor, the grinning head with [389] eyes closed was tossed back and forth like a ball. Later it was taken to his

wife, who was confined within the palace, and she was asked if she knew whose head it was. Fastening her eyes on this pitiable shocking sight, she replied, "I know and my heart bleeds." She was prudent and much esteemed for her ability to hold her tongue, which is so becoming to women and for which her maternal uncle, Emperor Manuel, called her virtuous among women and the flower of his family.

As soon as those who were positioned behind the front ranks during the conflict realized that a rout was taking place, they scattered in flight, and thinking that those who followed were the enemy, they rode on all the harder to avoid capture. Those who followed vied with those who preceded them in the impetuosity of their flight to save themselves. Alarmed at being pursued by the enemy, they prayed openly that their horses' hooves might not strike the ground, thus enabling them to fly like Pegasos,[1105] and that they themselves might become invisible as though wearing the helmet of Hades.[1106] In truth, so great was their terror that they were willing to do and pray for anything. The majority would have slipped and fallen to their death at the bridge which leads to Daphnoution had not someone prevailed upon them to check their headlong flight in good order and to proceed through the archway with utmost caution. This the man accomplished by lifting his hands towards heaven and swearing by the Divinity that none of the enemy was chasing after them but rather had turned around and given up pursuit.

Those who were lowborn and of humble station returned to their homes without harassment or reproach. They found their dwellings,
[390] which lay in an obscure part of the City, preserved from harm and had no fear of anyone coming after to punish them. On the other hand, those who were of illustrious station and had distinguished themselves as governors and magistrates assembled in a body and sent a legation to the emperor, petitioning him to forgive them for their act of sedition in following the rebel; in return for a pardon from the emperor, they swore to remain virtuous and loyal servants in the future, and by their deeds to prove their repentance for having taken up arms against their lord and emperor and for having done violence against him out of sheer madness. Should the emperor, they said, in fueling the immutable passion within his soul, refuse to swallow his wrath for one day,[1107] or should he hereafter hold their sins against them, fanning the smoldering rancor into sparks of rage, they should flee from before the emperor[1108] and seek a distant lodge[1109] among the barbarian nations which despise the Romans. There they would do for the Romans what they are bound to do for those who come streaming into them, for it is not at all novel that one should seek out his enemy and flatter him, finding his adversary to be his friend.

These things did the envoys murmur. The emperor granted amnesty to all, and admitting into his good graces those who approached him as suppliants, he urged them to prove their repentance for having transgressed their sworn oaths to him by appearing before the great high priest [patriarch] to obtain from him the absolution of the anathema which the City's inhabitants had called down upon them when they stood atop the battlements as spectators of the actions below. And many who were God-fearing men appeared before the patriarch; the others nodded their heads in assent at the conclusion of the exhortation but deemed entering

the Great Church and making public confession utter nonsense. I will omit describing how the insolent among these, after leaving their audience with the emperor, mocked and ridiculed him, saying that it was nothing new for one who had been destined for the priesthood—for he was also accused of this—now to instruct them to do what he had been taught from adolescence. Many went over to Asan and Peter; but they returned shortly afterwards when they received imperial letters.

At this time a most unexpected event took place. The emperor actually [391] granted permission to citizens and foreigners alike to pour forth and maltreat the peasants living near the City, as well as those who dwelled along the Propontis, for having gone over to Branas. On the night of the very day that Branas was defeated, liquid fire was hurled against the houses of the unhappy inhabitants of the Propontis; contained in tightly covered vessels, the compound would ignite suddenly and, like bolts of lightning striking intermittently, consume whatever it happened to fall upon. The blazing fire burned and destroyed every building, whether it was a holy temple, holy monastery, or private dwelling. Because the disaster was wholly unexpected and the conflagration spread, consuming not only the buildings, with the flames very nearly covering the sky, but also men's possessions, no one could rescue anything except the monies one could carry away in his arms.

At dawn on the following day as though by invitation, the Latin troops under the command of the *kaisar* Conrad marched out, and the multitude of commoners and beggars of the City and her environs came running, some still bearing arms while others carried whatever weapons were at hand. What did they not seize? What evil did they not perpetrate? They razed buildings, carried off the riches inside, searched through the holy monasteries, removed sacred furniture, desecrated holy vessels, showed no reverence for the venerable gray hair of the monks, disregarded virtue which even the enemy knew how to honor, and, to make a long story short, they ill-treated those they attacked in every way. Many who grumbled because their homes had been stripped were punished with death. These horrors would have continued on and with increased intensity had not certain men reported to the emperor; having suffered grievously themselves, they naturally urged him to correct the situation. The emperor dispatched forthwith men of high rank and noble birth to check the riotous mob attacks, and at long last the extensive destruction was [392] brought to an end.[1110]

But even these words are inadequate as a lament for those whose hearts are compassionate and for whom the tears well up in hot streams at the misfortunes of the suffering. The artisans of the City did not consent to the villanies of which I have given an account, holding them to be horrendous, for the Latins not only were free of speech and plumed themselves on having defeated Branas but they had also inflicted intolerable sufferings on their Roman neighbors outside the City. In bands and companies they burst in upon the houses of the Latin nations like a rushing torrent. Unintelligible cries rent the air, louder than the din raised by flocks of jackdaws, cranes, and starlings as they spread their wings for flight,[1111] or the hunter's halloo and whoop; the victims appealed to one another as they were being dragged by their tunics, but

there was no one there to heed those who proposed conditions of peace; ears stopped, as are those of asps, they ignored every wise sorcerer.[1112]

Irrational anger held sway over the vulgar mob at that time, even as it was emboldened by love of the foreigners' money. They believed that they would expel the Latins from their dwellings with little trouble and with impunity seize whatever treasure was stored within as they had done during the reign of Andronikos. But their hopes were turned topsy-turvy. When the adversary saw the rabble rushing towards them, they barricaded with huge pickets all the streets leading in their direction, and putting on their coats of mail, they took up their stand in close array at the fortifications. The vulgar mob rushed headlong in many attempts to scale the barricades, but they failed in their purpose and were badly mauled by the Latins; drunk with wine and fighting without armor or
[393] arms against armed men, the majority soon learned of their folly and discovered that Epimetheus is inferior to Prometheus[1113] when, smitten by arrows or wounded by spear thrusts at close quarters, they fell to the earth.

Thus did this horror prevail from the afternoon of that day until late evening; at break of day, the Romans, most of whom were armed with weapons, with a great rush assembled to give battle a second time. But certain notables from the emperor arrived to restrain them, while certain representatives of the Latin race outwitted the simple-minded and quelled their excessive impetuosity. The Romans who had lost their lives in the fray were collected; their garments were first removed and their hair clipped short, and their corpses were laid in their court, displayed before the emperor's agents. Feigning sorrow over the loss of their own countrymen, the Latins pleaded that a second battle not be allowed to begin, that they not suffer twice the losses to which they now bore witness. The emperor's agents conveyed these sentiments to the army of artisans, persuading them to look upon the dead and contending that they should not applaud what had taken place, and they finally succeeded in appeasing the rabble and prevailed on them to return each to his own work. In other words, had they not been armed by their intimate friend and leader—I mean captain wine—or to be more precise, had he sharpened their sword for battle, they would not have dispersed so readily and without argument, obedient to the exhortation of the great men who served as mediators. Had they not been drunk with wine from before—indeed, they were heavier with wine than are wine kegs[1114]—what spell or melodies hummed by the Sirens could have lured them toward peace or disposed them to some other noble action? They were continuously mocked for their drunkenness. Menander censures them as follows: "Byzantion makes drunks of its merchants; they drank all night long."[1115] To this point, then, have events borne us.

Smitten now by misgivings, the emperor launched a second attack [394]
against the Vlachs because he had mismanaged affairs in the enemy's country during his first inroad, when he had risen up and left as though he had been attacked by the enemy without having installed Roman garrisons in the fortresses or taken any valuable barbarian hostages. He marched out of the City with a few of his comrades in war [September 1187] with the rest of the army assembled by command. He had heard that the Vlachs were no longer hiding out in the mountains and hills. Having enlisted Cuman mercenary troops, they had penetrated into the regions of Agathopolis, utterly despoiling the land and wreaking havoc. Before the desperate and violent onslaught of the barbarians, he employed the following tactic: he thought he would force the enemy to cower in fear and his own troops not to faint during the impending second assault on the Vlachs if he himself were the first to take up arms and mount his war-charger.

At Taurokomos (a small estate with inhabited villages, situated not very far from Adrianople) he waited for his forces to assemble and commanded the *kaisar* Conrad not to delay his departure.[1116]

Conrad was openly displeased that the emperor showed him favors he [395]
considered unbefitting his family status and not harmonious with his imperial marital connection and was unhappy that all his proud hopes resulted only in his wearing the buskins of uniform color[1117] that are given but to a few (I speak of the insignia of the *kaisars*). Long ago he had taken up the cross at home with the intention of traveling to Palestine, which was now in the hands of the Saracens of Egypt.[1118] On the way he had celebrated his marriage to the emperor's sister. But he agreed to march out with the emperor and help prepare for the impending campaign so that, God willing, he might prevent the Romans from suffering further misfortunes at the hands of the Vlachs. However, he then changed his mind.

With a sturdy and newly reconditioned ship, he set sail for Palestine and came to anchor at Tyre [14 July 1187], where he was hospitably received by his countrymen, who regarded him as some higher power. He fought against the Saracens and recovered Joppa, now called Ake [Acre; 12 July 1191],[1119] as well as other cities for his compatriots. But it was ordained that they should suffer evil fortune in those parts: many excellent and brave generals who had voluntarily undertaken the journey at their own expense, for Christ's sake, were lost, and Conrad himself, who had won the admiration of the Agarenes for his bravery and prudence, survived but a short time before he was slain by an Assassin [28 April 1192].[1120]

The Assassins are a sect who are said to hold such reverence for their chief in carrying out his commands that he has only to make a sign with his brows for them to hurl themselves over cliffs, or to dance over swords, or to leap into water, or to cast themselves into fire. Those in authority [396]

over the Assassins send them to kill the victims they have chosen. Approaching their victims as friends, or asserting that they had some urgent business with them, or pretending that they had come as envoys of nations, they would strike many times with their dirks and kill them as adversaries of their lord without considering the difficulty of the deed or the possibility that they themselves might be killed before they were able to inflict death on another.

The emperor set apart about two thousand select troops which he provided with arms and swift-footed mounts and marched out from Taurokomos towards the enemy; the baggage and camp attendants he ordered to move on to Adrianople. The scouts reported that the lands around Lardeas had been overrun by the enemy, who had killed large numbers and had taken many captives and were observed returning loaded down with much booty.

Sounding the war trumpet at night, the emperor mounted his horse and marched out, to arrive [7 October 1187] at a place called Basternai, where he rested his troops while the enemy failed to show themselves.

Rising early for departure from Basternai after three days [11 October 1187], he took the road leading straight to Beroē. He had not quite gone four parasangs[1121] when a well-equipped soldier appeared with bad news written on his face. Gasping frequently for breath, he announced that somewhere in the vicinity the enemy was returning with captives, easily
[397] making their way on all fronts since they had not met any opposition, and that they were heavy-laden with spoils. Immediately dividing his troops among his commanders and drawing them up into battle formation, he took the road which the adversary was reported traveling.

Since we saw, and were seen by, the Cumans and Vlachs as they handed over their spoils to certain of their divisions (for I myself followed along as the emperor's under secretary), these divisions were ordered to select the shortest routes and hasten on their way until they reached the mountains; the others cheerfully awaited the charge of the Roman cavalry. They fought in their ancestral, customary way: they let fly their darts and attacked with their lances. After a short while, they turned their onslaught into flight and, enticing their adversaries to follow hard behind them as though they were in retreat, then cleaved the air sharper than do the birds and wheeled about to face their pursuers, whom they fought with even greater bravery. Repeating this tactic time and again, they so prevailed over the Romans so that they no longer bothered to turn around, but with naked swords and terrifying shouts fell upon the Romans almost faster than thought; overtaking both him who gave battle and the coward, they mowed them down.

On that day, the Cumans would surely have boasted of winning great glory[1122] against us, and we would have been given over as a reproach to the foolish[1123] had not the emperor himself come to the rescue with his still-fresh troops. The blare and blast of the bronze-mouthed trumpets,[1124] together with the display of representations of dragons suspended on poles and blowing in the wind, terrified the enemy because they gave the impression of a much larger army.

[398] Then the emperor, after snatching away a small number of the captives as though from the jaws of wild beasts, went to Andrianople, which he

deemed a practicable destination; but since the barbarians would not keep still, he chose to retrace his steps. At Beroē,[1125] he checked the sallies of the Vlachs and Cumans with his accomplished generals and especially by taking command himself. However, the enemy, wary of the Romans and retreating in the presence of the emperor, would attack in stealth, bursting in at one place as though to give battle and waiting to attack should the foe present themselves, and then they would move on to some other place; their actions always met with success. While the emperor was marching towards Agathopolis to check their incursions, the barbarians were ravaging the villages near Philippopolis. And when he moved to relieve those afflicted areas, they would in turn ride against those territories from which the emperor had departed. These were the tactics of one of the two brothers, Asan, who was especially shrewd and extremely competent in devising ways out of desperate straits.

The emperor decided once again to enter Zagora to attempt to force the Vlachs to submit. Leaving Philippopolis, he came to Triaditza [Sofia]; for he had heard that the paths from there to the Haimos were not too difficult to travel, in some places being straight and level, and that there were abundant water supplies and pasturage by the wayside for the pack animals should one pass over them in season. However, as the sun was passing the meridian of the winter solstice in its course [December 1187], rivers were freezing over, the cold north wind prevailed in that region, and so much snow had fallen that it covered the face of the earth and packed ravines and even blocked the doors of buildings, he postponed the campaign until the coming of spring. The army was left encamped in that province while the emperor returned with his light-armed troops to the imperial city, where he enjoyed himself at the horse races and delighted in the spectacles.[1126]

With the advent of spring [1188], he marched out again in quest of the [399]
Vlachs. After a full three months away, during which time he failed in his great efforts to take the fortress called Lovitzos,[1127] he abandoned these parts and re-entered the queen of cities. The delights of the Propontis, the pleasurable resorts along her shores, the chase, and horsemanship captivated Isaakios, preventing him from remaining long in the field, and like one who throws away his shield in battle, he was induced to desert to them.

Then the emperor seized Asan's wife and received his brother John as a hostage. In this fashion, however, matters went from bad to worse.

At this time [1188–89], the Philadelphian Theodore Mangaphas attempted to usurp the crown. At first, he won over the many commoners of Philadelphia, who were both insolent and shameless and confirmed their loyalty to him by oaths. He conferred the name of emperor upon himself as he marched along, inducing the Lydians to rebel; he next attempted to win over the neighboring provinces and minted a silver coin with his own inscription engraved on it. As the rebellion gained ground, and the initial derision elicited by these actions was transformed into a mighty blow that aroused the emperor's ire, the latter decided not to delay but to go in search of him with his troops. He arrived at Philadelphia, where he succeeded in shutting in Mangaphas, who later acquired the nickname of Morotheodore [Stupid Theodore] because his cause had

failed. Although he persisted in his seige for a considerable time, he was unable to compel the Philadelphians to submit. Consequently, he resorted to negotiating peace terms and compacts to the effect that Theodore should lay down the imperial insignia and return again to the ranks of private citizen, while the city's inhabitants should be ruled by him who
[400] formerly was their emperor. Receiving as hostages certain of their sons whom he chose, he returned to the megalopolis. Not a few valiant and highborn men perished because of this revolt.

Basil Vatatzēs, the scion of an undistinguished family, had been honored with the office of domestic of the East and girded with the ducal command of the Thrakesian theme because he was married to the emperor's second cousin on his father's side. Not long after the emperor's return to Constantinople, Vatatzēs corrupted with money the majority of Mangaphas's sworn followers. He was unable to capture him and put him in chains, but in banishing him from the city, he deemed that he had achieved for the emperor a great and gladly welcomed deed.

But Mangaphas took refuge with the sultan of Ikonion, whose name was Kaykhusraw,[1128] requesting of him an auxiliary force to fight the Romans. He was refused, but he was given a free hand to enlist as many of the Turks who, greedy for gain and with confidence in their quiver and bow, plunder the Romans. He collected a large force in this manner and fell upon his fellow countrymen among the farming population. He ravaged the draft animals and in countless ways maltreated the Laodikeians and Phrygians and even the inhabitants of my own city of Chonai, burning and destroying the grain fields in summertime; behaving as an enemy, he ruined everything in his path. I will omit from my narration how at times he reproached and punished the Christian flock for behaving humanely. An incursion into Caria brought him many captives whom he delivered over to the local barbarians to be led away into captivity. This impious man even allowed the temple of the commander-in-chief Michael to be destroyed by fire, a great and celebrated edifice surpassing in beauty and magnitude the shrine of the Good Martyr Mokios[1129] in the queen of cities.

[401] When Mangaphas, satiated with such crimes, eventually returned to the sultan, the emperor requested Kaykhusraw, who had recently acceded to the rule of Ikonion at his father's death, not to encourage such evil designs and deeds. He dispatched envoys who offered the sultan money to betray Mangaphas and send him back to him, but he gave a guarantee and pledge of good faith not to punish his act of sedition with death; preserved from all other physical harm, he was condemned to a long prison term. The sultan's brothers, who shared the paternal rule with Kaykhusraw, were displeased with what he had done and would have taken up arms against him for having seized and turned over to the emperor of the Romans, in return for unjust gain, a man who had come to him on his own. However, the sultan placated them with a specious explanation, contending that he had not, in effect, betrayed him since he had come to their country as a wanderer and that now he no longer pursued others or was himself pursued. Thus the matter was resolved.

Not a single year elapsed without bringing some public horror; it was as though the Divinity had spun only troubled days for us mortals. The

conflicts with the surrounding barbarians, whose duty was to chastise us, had but just subsided when the evil beyond our borders, Frederick, king of the Germans, burst in upon us. Frederick dispatched an embassy to Emperor Isaakios with the request, for friendship's sake, that he and his army be allowed to pass through the land of the Romans on their way to Palestine, that provisions be made for them to purchase the necessities of life, and that the emperor's intentions on these matters be announced to him by the dispatch of his own envoys.

The logothete of the *dromos,* John Doukas,[1130] was sent to him [autumn 1188], and pledges of good faith were exchanged to the effect that the king would pass through Roman territory without stroke of sword and without inflicting any injury on city, village, hill fort, or fortified town; the Romans, for their part, would supply the king with abundant provisions so that his troops would not want for anything and would have no trouble putting into their mouths that which nourishes men and feeds horses. After some time, Doukas returned and announced the accord to the emperor. The emperor proceeded to make arrangements for the collection of the food supplies and issued orders that they should immediately be transported by the provincials to those places through which the king was to pass. [402]

As soon as Frederick passed inside the Roman borders, he announced his presence to the Emperor by way of letters carried by illustrious men of noble family and rank [shortly after 20 August 1189]; once again, the logothete was dispatched [beginning of 1189], together with Andronikos Kantakouzenos,[1131] to facilitate the king's passage. But through ignorance of their obligations and their unmanliness (for it is our duty to honor truth as being more important and precious than our own dear friends), they provoked the king's anger against the Romans and induced the emperor to look upon the king as an enemy. The oaths were broken consequently, and the gathering in of the necessaries of life fell short. We who write these things were subjected to a host of troubles, for at that time we were girded with both the governorship of the theme of Philippopolis and the collection of the taxes. We were now commanded by the emperor to rebuild the walls of Philippopolis and to fortify these with a fosse; shortly after we accomplished this, during those difficult and perilous times, we were admonished to demolish them, so that they should not provide the king with a place of refuge.

Frederick made sorties to procure necessary provisions, while the emperor would not allow the king's envoys to return to him[1132] and resolved to block the narrow mountain passes by felling the towering and deep-rooted trees and piling them up to form an insurmountable barrier for the king. Moreover, he commanded his cousin Manuel Kamytzēs, the *protostrator,* and the domestic of the West, Alexios Gidos, to follow close behind with their troops and stealthily attack the Germans as they collected fodder and searched after food. Thus they set up against the king barricades made from the felled trees, so that with no amount of effort could he get around them. The humor of the situation was that the king took another road, arrived before Philippopolis [24 August 1189], and set up an entrenched camp. By passing on the opposite side, he was undetected by the Romans until he appeared in front of them, occupying those [403]

places from which he was to have been barred and for which purpose the mountain passes had been barricaded.

When he entered Philippopolis [26 August 1189], he found the city empty of most of her inhabitants and of these her most prominent; there remained only the indigent soul whose entire substance was reckoned in the clothing he wore, or he was numbered among the Armenians, for they alone of all the nations did not look upon the pass of the Germans as an invasion but as the advent of friends because the Germans have dealings with the Armenians[1133] and they agree with one another in most of their heresies.[1134] The veneration of the holy icons is equally proscribed by Armenians and Germans, both use *azyma* [unleavened wafers] in their divine liturgies, and both hold as lawful other perverse doctrines which are rejected by orthodox Christians.

Despite the fact that he had taken possession of Philippopolis, the king wrote to the *protostrator* [Manuel Kamytzēs] and clearly pointed out that in vain the Romans obstructed his advance and that it was not right that they should impede his urgent passage; neither did he plot now, nor had he in the past, anything detrimental or disagreeable against the Romans,
[404] and he had observed the terms of the agreement inviolate. The *protostrator* made known the contents of the letter to the emperor, and while waiting to receive instructions on what course of action should be taken, he did not advise the emperor to write in return [c. September 1189] seeking conditions of peace[1135] but instead exhorted him to engage the king with manly rigor and reproached him for his ignoble intention and for not boldly commanding the immediate destruction and defeat of the Germans as they sallied forth in bands in search of provisions and poured out hither and thither like scattered flocks.

He wrote these things because he believed in the prophecies of Dositheos, who was the patriarch,[1136] about whom we shall shortly say what is fitting and proper. Dositheos, as though speaking from a tripod, said that the king never proposed to take possession of Palestine, but that his intention was to march against the queen of cities, which he would undoubtedly enter through the so-called Xylokerkos postern.[1137] However, after perpetrating abominable crimes, he would then suffer the counterbalancing vengeance of God's scale of justice. Prejudiced by such worthless judgments, Isaakios blocked up the postern with lime and baked bricks. Often, he held newly wrought arrows in his hands and said that he would have these sharpened in order to pierce the hearts of the Germans. Then he would point to a side door of the palace of Blachernai through which the plains that sloped down gently to the Philopatia, suitable for driving horses outside the battlements, were visible, and he would say that the missiles would be shot through it, laying low the Germans, thus moving his listeners to laughter.

[405] This Dositheos lived as an ascetic in the holy Monastery of Stoudios.[1138] He was a Venetian by birth and was said to be the son of Viticlinus. An intimate of Isaakios before he ascended the throne, he prophesied to him that he would become emperor, and because his prediction proved correct, he was treated with the greatest honor by this emperor and had great influence on him. When Leontios, who shepherded the throne of Jerusalem, departed this life, Dositheos snatched it up.

The passion and power of the emperors being such that they do not hesitate to alter and change both divine and human matters to their own liking, when Isaakios became emperor, he dismissed Basil Kamateros from the patriarchal throne [February 1186], despite the fact that he had strongly supported Isaakios in his rule. The pretext given for his deposition was that he allowed those highborn ladies whom Andronikos had tonsured nuns against their will to take off their black habits and return to their former dress and life. He promoted as patriarch Niketas Mountanēs [February 1186], the *sakellarios*[1139] of the Great Church, but he would not even tolerate this very old man to die on the throne. Charging the man as being simple-minded and condemning him for his blameless old age, he hurled him down against his will from the throne [February 1189].

He was disposed to be more diligent in finding a governor of the church and promoted as great shepherd a certain monk Leontios [February 1189]. From the throne he swore that he had not known the man [406] previously, but that in the night the Mother of God had pointed him out, that she had not only described his appearance and virtue but had also clearly indicated the place where his dwelling was to be found. But before the year was out, he had also cast down from the patriarchal height Theotokites [Leontios], giving no reason while he discussed the matter in public assembly [September 1189].

Having cast out Leontios in this fashion, he decided to contrive the transfer of Dositheos, the patriarch of Jerusalem, and to elevate him to the ecumenical throne. He knew that this was proscribed by the canons, and so the deceitful Isaakios summoned Theodore Balsamon,[1140] the patriarch of the throne of Theoupolis [the city of God], great Antioch, the man most learned at that time in the law. As he conversed with him in private, he pretended to be distressed over the fact that the church should be so lacking in pious and learned men, that monastic virtue should have dissipated and vanished, and that the patriarch no longer shone forth as a daily and ever-moving beacon or skillfully governed the complement of the faithful from the helm of his holy throne. Expressing with indignation these and other such sentiments by way of a prelude, he led him on, saying that in the past he had wished to remove him from the lampstand of the Antiochians to the patriarchal eminence as a brilliant lamp of the laws shining afar, but that he had refrained from making the transfer because it was forbidden long ago by the canons and was not in accordance with the ecclesiastical ordinances. If he, as an expert in laws and canons, could demonstrate such a precedent in the past, then such a transfer now would be accepted by the majority. The deed would truly be deemed a godsend, and the promotion could take place without delay or censure. Thus did the emperor woo Theodore of Antioch, and the latter assented to this course of action.

After that day, there were gatherings of bishops throughout the patri- [407] archal palace, synods and deliberations concerning transfer. The concession was granted at once and confirmed by imperial decree. The patriarch of Antioch was left patriarch of Antioch, and Dositheos was elevated from the throne of Jerusalem to that of Constantinople [February 1189]. The escort of his procession was more splendid and numerous than ever in the past, so that it equaled the triumphs of emperors, and the bishops,

who had been tricked and had violated the canons to no purpose, were dumbfounded at the spectacle.

Unable to bear the derision for long, the celebrated preachers and those from among the bishops who were distinguished by the eloquence of their speech convened clandestine religious assemblies and appealed to the mobs. Dositheos listened to charges that he was an adulterer, that he had mounted another's church, and his second honor was nullified and he was removed from the throne [February 1189].

The emperor was not willing to accept defeat. He fought back and exerted every effort so that the confirmed transfer should prevail. Shortly afterwards, he nullified the actions which had been taken and installed Dositheos anew [c. June 1189]; fearing that the populace might revolt, the emperor ordered that he be escorted to the Great Church by the imperial ax-bearing bodyguards and eminent palace officials. Dositheos was despised by all because he aspired to the throne, as was the emperor for his stubbornness in untimely circumstances and his most hateful selfishness. But once again Dositheos was ousted from the throne [between 3 and 10 September 1189]. Truly he suffered the fate of Aesop's dog,[1141] for he had let his original holy see slip away (another had been appointed patriarch of Jerusalem) and had been deposed from the greater throne.

[408] The grand *skevophylax,* George Xiphilinos, was hereafter promoted patriarch [10 September 1191].[1142] Then, as it was bruited about everywhere, Dositheos selected images of future events from the books of Solomon and certain interpretations of dreams sent by demons and pulled the emperor around, not by his nose, but by his ear.

The *protostrator* [Manuel Kamytzēs], acting on the emperor's instructions, ignored the contents of the king's letter to him and continually harassed the Germans as they went in search of firewood. With about two thousand of his best well-armed horsemen, he decided to proceed by night to the vicinity of Philippopolis and immediately to take up positions of ambush in the hills for the purpose of attacking the food train at dawn [c. 22 November 1189]. While he was engaged in this maneuver, as though divinely inspired, he commanded the *impedimenta,* the soldiers' attendants, and the remainder of the army to depart thence with us. Dawn had not yet smiled when the Germans who had learned the *prostrator*'s design from the Armenians inside the fortress of Prousenos (for the king's army was encamped there), more than five thousand men, all clad in full armor, set out posthaste from Philippopolis to attack us. They escaped the detection of our scouts and advance guards and did not encounter the *protostrator*'s picked troops. The *protostrator,* traversing the mountain approaches where there were villages still heavily stocked with provisions and taking cover in the hills, was not visible to the prey; the Germans, on the other hand, confidently traveled the route leading to the Roman camp over a smooth plain. Thus the enemy met no resistance.

[409] When they learned that the army's baggage was returning that very night and that the *protostrator* was rushing full speed against their compatriots who were transporting the provisions to the camp, without waiting for the command they spurred on their horses, hoping to find the Romans in search of their food supplies.

As they descended the hill on which the fortress of Prousenos was

located, and our men ascended, the two forces suddenly came upon one another. The Alans, led by Theodore, the son of Alexios Branas, were the first and the only ones to resist the Germans, and all fell within a short time; the Romans fled ignominiously with headlong speed, unable to bear looking the enemy straight in the face. The *protostrator* withdrew along another route and remained hidden from us until the third day, thrice-pleased to have barely escaped the hands of the enemy. He returned a thankful man, as one who had just put into port after a long voyage at sea, still spitting out the brine of battle and with the piercing shouts of the Germans who had attempted to take him captive still ringing in his ears. Many returned to the camp without horse and weapons, their mounts spent by the intense exertion of their flight.

We were separated from one another, Germans and Romans, by a distance of more than sixty stades; they were still standing their ground at Philippopolis while we had arrived at the outskirts of Ochrid and were catching our breath, concerned only with saving ourselves. I shall admit to something else: plundering our own province, we secured provisions for ourselves.

The news of these events scarcely moved the emperor to make any concessions. We came to him shortly afterwards and related everything in detail, adding that the Germans contended that nothing else could have convinced the emperor of the Romans to disregard the solemn oaths of the Western Christians except that he had concluded a peace with the ruler of the Saracens, and that, in accordance with their prevailing custom regarding friendship, they had both opened a vein on their chests and [410] offered to each other the blood flowing out therefrom to drink. Only thus were we able to overcome his opposition.

Reversing his original intentions, the emperor endeavored to expedite the king's passage to the East. When he saw that the king had again postponed his crossing until spring because of the arrival of winter (it was the month of November when these things took place), he reverted back to his original designs and wrote a letter in which he prophesied to the king, an activity not befitting an emperor, that he would be dead before the holy days of Easter.

I omit what was said between the emperor and myself, which was deserving more of condemnation than of praise, and say only that he was finally persuaded to allow the envoys to return to the king. When the latter saw them and learned that the emperor had not offered them seats but that they were made to stand before him in the same servile fashion as the Romans, and, furthermore, that they had not been considered worthy, as bishops and relatives of the king, of any other special benefit, he was vexed and cut to the quick. When our own envoys came to him, he compelled both them and their servants to sit beside him, forbidding even the cooks or grooms or bakers to stand to the side. When they protested that it was not right and proper that servants should sit with a mighty emperor (for it is sufficient that their lords should sit in council with him), he would not back down even a little from his purpose, and, against their will, he sat them down with their masters. He did this to mock the Romans and to show that there was no distinction among them in virtue and family, but just as the swineherds herd all the hogs into a sty

without separating the fat ones and allow them to mingle about, in like manner all the Romans stood together.

[411] Not long afterwards, the dearth of provisions compelled him to divide his army. He set out [5 November 1189] for Orestias and left his son and the bishops behind at Philippopolis, together with a sufficient number of troops, saying, "You must rest here until you have recovered from your paralyzed legs and weakened knees acquired by standing before the emperor of the Greeks."

When the winter had passed and the flowers gave forth their fragrance,[1143] the emperor and the king renewed their oaths [14 February 1190], and the king's toparchs and grandees gave their word of honor that the king would pass through Roman territory over the imperial road, without going through fields and vineyards, and that he would not turn aside either to the right or to the left until he had crossed over the Roman frontier. The emperor, on his part, delivered certain of his relatives as hostages. Inside the Great Church, five hundred notaries and courtiers bound themselves by oaths that the emperor would keep the treaty inviolate and provide the Germans with guides and provisions.

Then certain of the judges of the *velum,* who were to be sent to the king as hostages, disobeyed his command. Unable to resist the emperor and to remain safe at home, they entombed themselves in holes and corners of others' homes until the king had passed to the East. Furious, the emperor dispatched secretaries as hostages in lieu of the judges of the *velum.* The possessions and dwellings of those who defied him he handed over to his favorites, and he appointed other judges.[1144] Afterwards, he recognized that their action had been motivated, not by disobedience, but by legitimate fear. He then returned the properties to their owners and restored these men to their former judicial dignities. When the accords were concluded, the emperor sent the king four hundred pounds of silver coins and the celebrated thread interwoven with gold, and the king reciprocated with gifts of his own. Thereupon, a great many cavalry transports were brought to Kallioupolis [Gallipoli] because both had agreed that the king and all his troops should be ferried over in two crossings (for he was afraid lest the Romans break faith and attack the army on the opposite shore as they crossed over a few at a time); in this manner, he reached the East in no more than four days [22–25 March; Barbarossa followed on 28 March].

[412]

He approached Philadelphia [21 April 1190] but did not pass through the city; as the king departed thence, the pompous and insolent inhabitants made themselves ready for battle and attacked part of the army searching for plunder. However, their plans did not succeed; perceiving the Germans to be bronze statues or giants as they came near, they turned their charge into flight. As the Germans passed through the district called Aetos [Eagle], they camped at Laodikeia, in Phrygia [27 April 1190]. Here they were welcomed with such an unusual show of warmth and hospitality that they prayed that the Laodikeians might receive all good things from God. Of all, the king was the most grateful. He lifted his hands to heaven, raised his eyes upwards, and fell on his knees as he beseeched God the Father and Protector of all to send down upon them whatever was beneficial to life and salutary to the soul. If the land of the

Romans abounded in such Christians who welcomed the soldiers of Christ with such kindness, he added, they, for their part, would gladly give them the wealth they carried with them for the provisions that had been given to them in peace. In this wise, they would have crossed the Roman borders long before, their lances at rest in their sheaths, without tasting the blood of Christians.

As they traveled the inland road, they found that the Turks were not kindly disposed towards them; avoiding open battle, they robbed them however possible, despite the fact that the Turks had made a covenant with the Romans to allow them to pass through their province peacefully and to provide the travelers with everything they needed. But had the Germans themselves observed the treaties, no harm would have come to them. Discarding their empty hopes, they manfully prepared themselves [413] for inevitable battle. Around the fortress of Philomilion, the king engaged the sons of the sultan of Ikonion, whom they had removed from the throne and driven from Ikonion, transforming his former paternal good furtune into an ill-starred old age. He easily routed them and besieging Philomilion, set fire to it [1 May 1190]. Near Ginklarion he again carried away the victory [3 May 1190], and when the Turks occupied the mountain passes, keeping watch for the arrival of the Germans, the king, aware of the enemy's stratagem, encamped on level ground. At night he divided his troops into two divisions and charged the one to remain in their tents and the other, as soon as dawn broke, to act as though they were escaping by another route. The Turks, completely deceived, gleefully abandoned their posts on the high, rough ground and descended to the plain, where they heedlessly entered the German camp, all the while rejoicing at the ready windfall of abundant treasures about to fall into their hands; every barbarian is greedy of gain, and almost everything, or, rather, everything he does or says, is directed towards getting his hands on money. When the Germans who had taken flight returned, those in the tents courageously came out to meet them, and the Turks, surrounded, took the road leading to death.

The king was regarded with fear and his name noised abroad by the Eastern nations not only because of these two battles: he also subjected the Turks at Ikonion to the same reverses. The sultan, who had fled to Taxara [Koloneia], defended himself by saying that he knew nothing of his son's actions and that he was driven from the throne by one of them, Qutb al-Din.[1145] The Turks stole into the ditches of the gardens and the trenches which form a continuous line around Ikonion and surrounded [414] themselves with stone enclosures as a wall of defense, thinking with these to check the passage of the Germans into Ikonion, for they were all mighty archers and, assembled in one place, an easy match for men in heavy armor on horseback riding through rough terrain. But these tactics were also foiled. The Germans, who observed the Turks as they slipped behind the stone walls of the gardens and shot their arrows from there as though from a military emplacement, did the following: each knight lifted an armed foot soldier onto his horse, and setting them on top of the enclosures where the Turks were formed in close order, they left them to engage the enemy while they came to their aid by charging through the enemy's rank wherever possible. The majority of those wicked men were

destroyed miserably,[1146] while the others saved themselves by scattering. We were able to confirm the great number of the fallen by the testimonies of the enemy; a certain Ismaelite, who was present at this battle, on hastening to the emperor and taking an oath on his own religion, attested that he had paid two hundred silver staters to have removed the corpses of those slain in his garden.

The Germans, having taken Ikonion [18 May 1190], did not enter inside but encamped on the outskirts of the city, pitching their tents on the housetops. Seeking nothing more than the necessities of life, they prepared to move on.

It is said that during this expedition inland, a certain German, huge in size and invincible, was left far behind by his countrymen. As he made his way on foot and at a slow pace, leading his exhausted horse by the reins, more than fifty Ismaelites collected around him, all mighty men who had
[415] also distanced their own ranks. Positioning themselves in a circle around him, they shot their arrows, but he took cover under his wide shield[1147] and, confident in the imperviousness of his weapons, continued joyfully on his way, as unshaken by the adversary's missiles as though he were a promontory or jutting rock. Finally, one of them announced that he would surpass his companions in deeds of courage. He set aside his bow as useless, and, unsheathing his long sword, he gave his horse free rein and fell upon the German and engaged him in near-equal combat. He smote him as though he were a mountain ridge or statue of bronze; the latter, drawing his heavy, huge, strong[1148] sword with his stout and heroic hand, struck the horse across the front legs and cut them both off more easily than one cutting the grass of the field.[1149] The horse fell on its knees still holding the rider propped up in his saddle, whereupon the German stretched forth his arm and brought the sword down on the middle of his head. The force of the blow and the intensity of the German resulted in such a wondrous cut that the smitten man was cleft in twain, and the blow, which cut right through the padded saddle, pierced the horse's back. The remaining Turks, terrified at the sight, no longer had the boldness to challenge him to single combat. The German, confident as a lion in his own strength,[1150] did not hurry on his way but walked at a steady pace to join his countrymen in their camp late that evening.

They say that the Ismaelites suspected that the king might tarry in their province, since he had already overthrown them, and they simulated friendship with him, thinking to appease him, and gave him as hostages the sons of their mighty and powerful. He took these and a great number
[416] of guides with him when he left Ismaelite territory; when he reached Armenia[1151] [30 May 1190] a short time later, he put many to the sword and sent the rest back.

The Armenians received the king with honor. For many days, he remained among them and then set out for Antioch, ever acquiring fame for his sagacity and his invincible army and encountering no resistance along the way. But when he came to a certain river [Salef] (O circumstances unexpected and unhoped for; or, rather, O judgments of God, inaccessible to mankind!) he was drowned in the eddies of its waters [10 June 1190]. He was a man who deserved to enjoy a blessed and perpetual memory and justly to be deemed fortunate in his end by prudent men,

not only because he was wellborn and ruled over many nations as an heir of the third generation but also because his burning passion for Christ was greater than that of any other Christian monarch of his time. Setting aside fatherland, royal luxury and repose, the worldly happiness of enjoying the company of his loved ones at home, and his sumptuous way of life, he chose instead to suffer affliction with the Christians of Palestine for the name of Christ[1152] and due regard for his life-giving tomb. Thus he preferred a foreign land to his own and never slackened his rapid pace at the long distances, the grievous way,[1153] and the dangers posed by the foreign nations through which he had to pass. Neither did the scant water and the measured bread,[1154] which had to be purchased and which proved, in some places, to be noxious, deter him from his purpose, nor did the thronging of the children about him and the tearful embraces and last farewells confound or enfeeble his soul; following the example of the Apostle Paul, he did not count his life dear unto himself but pressed forward, even to die for the name of Christ.[1155] Thus the man's zeal was apostolic, his purpose dear to God, and his achievement beyond perfection. [417] Those who lift their minds to the higher life as loftily expressed in the Gospels and strive earnestly to attain it ignore mundane cares as so much refuse.[1156]

He, I am convinced of it, had a happy end. His son [Duke Frederick of Swabia] assumed his father's command and entered Antioch [21 June 1190]. From Antioch he advanced deeper into Coele Syria, recovered Laodikeia, which had rebelled and gone over to the Ismaelites, subdued Berytos [Beirut] without trouble, and subjugated many other Syrian cities which formerly had been subject to the Latins and then had gone over to the Saracens. But after he had come to Tyre and had besieged Ake, which was occupied by the Ismaelites, toiling long for the name of Christ, he ended his life at Ake [20 January 1191].[1157] The survivors of the army did not attempt to return overland, having experienced the perfidy of the foreign nations through which they had passed; boarding the round ships which had put in at Tyre, they returned safe to their families.

At this time [1189], the Saracens, who had occupied Palestine and sacked Jerusalem, were opposed by the Germans and also by the king of France [Philip II Augustus] and the ruler over the ax-bearing Germans[1158] who are now called the English [Richard I the Lionhearted]. These rulers collected a large number of ships from Sicily and the Italian mainland; loading them with grain and other provisions, they sailed to Tyre, which was used as an anchorage by those who had gathered together and as a base of operations in the war against the Saracens. But they too were unable to expel the Saracens from the holy city, and leaving their appointed task undone, they sailed back to their homelands [summer 1192].

The king of the English put out to sea, sailed to Cyprus, and seized [418] both the island and her tyrant, taking captive the inhuman and implacable destroyer, Isaakios Komnenos; at first the king put him in chains and shortly afterwards removed the accursed wretch and presented him to one of his English-speaking countrymen. Before he sailed on to Palestine, he left troops behind in Cyprus, which he had already claimed as his own; later he dispatched cargo ships to the island and received the necessities of life from there as tribute. And when he left Palestine, he gave Cyprus

[May 1192] to the king of Jerusalem [Guy de Lusignan] as though it were his own province, so that he might relax there during the cessation of hostilities and rule the Cypriots, who were attached by him to the Lord's sepulcher, and the island as joined to the borders of Palestine.[1159] And so in this fashion did these events take place.

Emperor Isaakios anchored the succession of his family on the three children begotten of his former marriages: two females and one male. He tonsured the older daughter a nun and at great expense converted the so-called house of Ioannitzēs into a nunnery (Empress Xenē wanted very much to do this after the death of her husband, Emperor Manuel) to cloister her within, setting her apart and consecrating her as a ewe lamb. His second daughter he sent to wed the son of Tancred [1193], the king of Sicily, who had succeeded William after his death; the latter, as we have related, was he who waged war against the Romans on both land and sea. He educated his son Alexios as heir to the throne, although he never imagined that his own life would come to an end so soon, nor did he suspect his own fall from power, forecasting without doubt that he would reign for thirty-two years as though he could forsee the divine will or that he himself could stake out the limits of life which God had put in his own power.[1160] [419]

It was not only Alexios Branas and Theodore [Mangaphas] the Lydian who lifted their heels against this emperor;[1161] but many others also conferred upon themselves the title of emperor. For example, a certain Alexios, who claimed to be the son of Manuel, emperor of the Romans, so excellently played his role in the drama and so brilliantly donned the mask of Emperor Alexios that he dyed his hair the same yellowish brown color and even affected the young emperor's stammer. The lad set out from Constantinople and was first seen in the cities along the Maeander [1189]. He took up quarters in a small town called Harmala, and there he was entertained as the guest of a certain Latin to whom he announced his identity (he said, in accordance with our brief account above, that when he was delivered over by Andronikos to be cast into the deep of the sea, the men who were commanded to carry out this deed took compassion on him because they had sworn allegiance to his father). Together they traveled to Ikonion, where the old sultan (his son Qutb al-Din had not yet removed him from power) looked upon him as the true son of Emperor Manuel and never addressed him or dealt with him as an outsider and an impostor. He would often rebuke the sultan; reminding him of the benefactions his alleged father Manuel had bestowed upon him, he called him an ingrate and reproached him for lack of human feeling should he not be moved to come to the aid of the unfortunate child of his friend. [420]

Moved to honor him both by his shamelessness and his resemblance [to his so-called father], the sultan gratified him with many gifts and gladdened him with great expectations. Once, when a Roman envoy in attendance listened to the young man exalting the eminence of his noble birth, the sultan asked whether he knew him to be Emperor Manuel's son. When he answered nothing more than that this son had truly perished and in vain did the lad Alexios fabricate such falsehoods, surfacing with the name of one seen lying dead in a watery grave, the youth, who boiled with rage and was hot with wrath, would have seized the envoy by [421]

the beard had not the latter, provoked to anger, stalwartly repulsed the false-Alexios. The sultan then admonished them for behaving ill and commanded them to remain calm.

Giving in to the youth's persistent entreaties, the Turkish ruler did not even then limit his excessive demands, but issuing a special letter of the sultan which the Turks called *mansur,* he allowed him to enlist with impunity as many of his subjects as he could. Alexios departed, and when he showed the letter to the Turks, he attracted the amir Arsan and many others who habitually plundered the Roman provinces. Within a short time, eight thousand troops[1162] chose to follow him to war against the cities along the Maeander. Some capitulated without a fight, while those that resisted were completely destroyed. He even laid waste the planted fields and, as a result, was called Crop-burner.

Many and more were sent to wage war against the lad, but they were unable to perform any dashing feat and returned without accomplishing anything, afraid lest they be betrayed by their Roman comrades, especially those who inclined towards the one who called himself the emperor's son and preferred him to the reigning Emperor, Isaakios. He was hailed by the common masses and the rural populace, adored, it seems, by word and name and on sight. Those who frequented the imperial court and knew for a certainty that the Emperor Manuel's son Alexios had long ago departed this life marveled at these developments; they knew the facts but indulged in speculations to their own pleasure.

[422] Among others, the emperor's brother Alexios, who reigned later, led an expedition. He did not engage Alexios in a single battle but encamped apart and at a distance in defense of the remaining territories that had not gone over to Alexios and checked the flow of defectors who would pass over to the resurrected Alexios. As the issue thus hung in doubt, and Alexios gained ground and waxed strong while the *sebastokrator* cowered and shunned face-to-face conflict, God, in a novel manner, terminated the civil war in a moment as only He knows how. After a drinking bout in Harmala, to which Alexios had returned, a certain priest cut Alexios's throat with his own sword, which was lying by his side [before 6 January 1193]. When his head was carried back, the *sebastokrator* Alexios gazed at it intently; picking it up frequently by the golden hair with a horse's spur, he commented, "It was not altogether out of ignorance that the cities followed this man."

In this way did this fellow receive his just dues for the crimes he wrongfully committed. When he armed Turks against Romans and inflamed those who came streaming in to him against his own countrymen, the wretch damaged the celebrated Church of Michael, the commander-in-chief of the divine and incorporeal hosts, in my city of Chonai; he defiled the all-hallowed tabernacle of God by entering with Turks, and before his very eyes the accursed man tolerated the destruction of the multicolored representations of Christ and the saints, the smashing by ax and stonecutter's tool of the holy pulpit, and the desecration and dashing to the earth of the all-hallowed table of offerings.[1163]

Not many days later, another impostor took the same name and falsely claimed the emperor as his father. He stole secretly into Paphlagonia, and certain provinces went over to him. Theodore Choumnos, *chartularios* of

the stables, was sent against him, defeated him in battle, and, taking him captive, killed him.

In addition, Basil Chotzas initiated a rebellion at Tarsia, near Nikomedia; his tyranny made strides for some time, but then he, too, was seized, blinded, and cast into prison.

Not only these but also others rebelled and so often that it is impossible to say how many times; springing up like giant Sown-men,[1164] and as hollow as blown bubbles, they would fall and burst. Isaakios Komnenos, Emperor Andronikos's nephew, escaped from prison and entered the Great Church, where he proceeded to incite the mob. When he was apprehended, he was suspended in the air and subjected to grievous afflictions to force him to reveal the names of his accomplices in his attempt to usurp the throne. His internal organs suffered damage and he died the next day.

Constantine Tatikios, who secretly set up a cabal of five hundred plotters and hid out in the City, thus escaping detection for a considerable time, was informed against, taken captive shortly afterwards, and his eyes were gouged out. And a certain ragged fellow, descended from the Komnenos family, who followed the same course as the others, was arrested and deprived of his sight.

The cause of these frequent rebellions was the feeble manner in which Isaakios governed the empire. Isaakios was absolutely convinced that he had received the throne from God, who alone watched over him. The emperor's indifference in directing the empire's affairs aroused the ambitions of power to open rebellion. Deceiving themselves, the majority of those who wished to reign often compelled those who gave ear to their appeals to tread the same path that Isaakios opened up straightway into a highway the evening that he killed Hagiochristophoritēs and hurried to the Great Church and reigned as emperor the next day. Because of their perverse judgment, they suffered grievously. In lieu of the purple robe [424] they donned the double cloak of shame[1165] and were sometimes subjected to dark Death.[1166]

For the divinity does not like to change and direct the course of human events by the very same means or methods; expressing variety in the management and administration of all things in this world, at different times and in different ways He disposes of powers and removes authorities, attending even to the slightest detail.[1167] And He delivers Pharaoh and his captains to the watery deep;[1168] He cuts off the head of another with a sword wielded by a woman fair-cheeked and white-armed;[1169] another is delivered into the hands of the enemy and dispatched. Then there is he who goes mad and is reckoned as one dead in mind; condemned in the end to oblivion, he is carried out of the palace with malignant joy and escorted to the grave, crying out in a feeble voice that he longed only for the light of day and laid no claim to the throne; he is left thus to perish and as the worst of men is deservedly allowed to take the road to his death.[1170] Many succumbed to a gentle death and crossed over to the other side as though they closed their eyes in sleep. Then there are those who, because a horse neighed, mounted the throne.[1171] Another, leaving behind plow and furrow, put on the *tebenna,*[1172] and a shepherd boy, taken from following the ewes great with young, was made

a God-anointed king.[1173] But why should one relate all or most of the situations which manifold providence creates and alters for the benefit of each man?

The emperor, who was prone to anger and imagined great things about himself, grievously afflicted many at the slightest provocation, at times on the basis of mere suspicion or the insinuation of certain men. He ordered the immediate arrest of Andronikos Komnenos (he was the son of Alexios, born of the *kaisar* Bryennios and Anna, the daughter of Alexios, the first of the Komnenoi to reign as emperor), the governor of Thessaloniki,
[425] accused of lusting after the throne and of conspiring with the former *sebastokrator* Alexios, Emperor Manuel's bastard son, who resided at Drama. The officials sent to perform this task met Andronikos, who was on his way back to the emperor. They did not carry out their orders, deeming it imperative not to scare away the prey as they came in sight so as to capture the quarry as in a weasel trap as he approached to enter Constantinople. Summoned before Emperor Isaakios, Andronikos was reproached for treachery. When he demanded the opportunity to refute the charges, Isaakios only pretended to agree to submit his case for adjudication. Andronikos was arrested without a trial and led away to prison, and shortly afterwards his eyes were gouged out.

Alexios, his alleged accomplice in this plot, was also apprehended and tonsured a monk under our supervision in one of the many soul-saving monasteries on Mount Papykios. Although there is much I could say about him, I will be mindful of brevity.

Not only was he tall and manly and extremely intelligent, bearing the exact features of his father, with strong arms topped by broad shoulders,[1174] but, above all, he was gentle and kind and affable. For these reasons, the much-enduring Andronikos, contemning his own daughter, betrothed her to the man, thus approving of the solemnization of an illicit marriage, if only to list him among his nearest relatives. He was more attached to him than to his own sons and gave thought to leaving him behind as his succes-
[426] sor.[1175] Later, he changed his mind and elected his son John instead, saying to those to whom he disclosed the secrets of [God's] purposes that the empire would not pass from *alpha* to *alpha* but would rather incline towards *iota,* and this according to divine plan. Once Andronikos changed his mind about Alexios, the ardor of his affection gradually cooled. No longer was Alexios's association desired as being of one mind with him, and he was treated with respect and honor only because he cohabited with his beloved daughter. After some time and for the reason recounted above, Andronikos also deprived him of his sight.[1176]

Afterwards, when he was recalled by Emperor Isaakios and was restored to the rank of *kaisar* from that of *sebastokrator,* he would retire from the palace whenever possible to seek privacy, but even in so doing he was unable to attain a life without grief.

Then the course of events took a turn for the worse. When he was about to be tonsured a monk against his will, he did not ask for a loaf of bread, a sponge, and a lyre as did a certain individual of old when he was sorely tried by a bitter and cruel fate:[1177] bread to restore the tone of his human frame, weakened by lack of food; the lyre to accompany him as he sang plaintively of his misfortunes; the sponge to wipe away the stream of

tears flowing from his eyes as though from a hollow rock.[1178] He bore his plight meekly, without grumbling against Providence or blaming the instability and fickleness of Fortune in human affairs, and he looked upon his confiscated possessions as though they belonged to another.

After we left Drama, we came to Mosynopolis and were about to ascend Papykios to perform the prescribed ritual for his initiation into the monastic life when, overwhelmed by emotion and unable to endure his inner anguish, he was wrapped in thought, and his face darkened. When I [427] pressed him and asked the cause of this sudden change, he said, "It is not the habit that I fear, my good friend (for what dread does the exchanging of colors hold?), but I am terrified by the vows that I must take with the habit and by the fact that whoever has put his hand to the plow, yet still looks back frantically is in no way fit for the kingdom of heaven."[1179]

Having said these and other things, for he was sententious, he donned the Christian habit against his will; heedless of the prayers and hymns, the long-haired Alexios was shorn of his locks and renamed Athanasios. One can only marvel at this event, since, I daresay, it did not take place fortuitously. Of all the monasteries on Papykios, he chose to reside in the one in which the former *protostrator* Alexios was shorn of his layman's locks when apprehended by Emperor Manuel for no evident reason whatsoever, as we recounted when discussing his reign[1180] (for he abounded in riches and was competent in giving counsel and accomplished in getting things done). It seems that this Alexios Komnenos was condemned to suffer that the son's teeth be set on edge because the father ate sour grapes.[1181]

Three months had not elapsed before the emperor recalled him, proving once again that he acted out of caprice and was subject to sudden changes like the backward flow of the straits at Aulis.[1182] He received Alexios as his table companion and honored him with long chine of meat as Agamemnon of old had honored Aias;[1183] and urging him freely to lay hold of the food spread out before them, he would say repeatedly, "Eat, O Abbot."

Thus did Isaakios dispose of Alexios and Andronikos. And when Con- [428] stantine Aspietēs was strongly exhorted to pursue the war against the Vlachs with the troops under his command and replied only that he could not bear that his soldiers should contend against both famine and the Vlachs, two evils that were difficult to withstand, and that it was necessary to pay them their annual wages, Isaakios was unable to contain his anger. Straightway he removed him from his command and deprived him of his sight because he suspected that he would stir up the army on the pretext of taking up their defense.

The son of Andronikos Komnenos, whose fate we have recently discussed[1184]—I know not whether he wished to fill up the measure of his father's revolt[1185] or whether he intended to come to his father's aid—entered the Great Church shortly after his father was blinded in an attempt to seize the throne and be acclaimed by the assembled populace. But the manner in which he had entered was unknown to those who had congregated in the temple, and he was subdued as a rebel and deprived of the light of his eyes. Although another should have been the last to be punished for seeking the throne by going into the temple, he was the seal

and the last of the rebels; henceforward, no one was to follow the same course.

As the affairs in the West had worsened and the Vlachs, together with the Cumans, made unremitting incursions, plundering and ravaging Roman lands, the emperor once again marched out against them [summer 1190 or 1191][1186] and came to Haimos, bypassing Anchialos. Since nothing noteworthy was accomplished by the emperor's arrival, he brought the expedition to a close after two months. He found the fortresses and citadels there more strongly fortified than before with newly built walls
[429] marked off at intervals by crowned towers. The defenders without set their feet as harts upon high places,[1187] and as wild goats that haunt precipices shunned hand-to-hand combat. The emperor suspected an inroad by the Cumans (for the time of year was favorable for their crossing) and ordered a hasty departure [after summer].

Instead of leaving by the way he had come, he searched for a shorter route. As he was making his way to Beroē by descending into the valleys, he lost the greater part of his army, and were it not for the fact that the Lord was with him, he, too, would be dwelling in Hades.[1188] In places the ground was so rough as to be almost impassable and to cross the mountain passes he had to squeeze his troops through holes and defiles where a mountain stream flowed. The vanguard was led by the *protostrator* Manuel Kamytzēs and Isaakios Komnenos, the son-in-law of the future emperor Alexios; the *Sebastokrator* John Doukas, the emperor's paternal uncle, commanded the rear guard. Emperor Isaakios and his brother, the *sebastokrator* Alexios, were in charge of the main body in the center which was preceded by the pack animals and followed by the camp attendants. The barbarians, positioned on both sides of this narrow pass, were clearly in a position to do harm at any time.[1189]

The vanguard did not encounter the Vlachs along the narrow pass and went through without resistance. The enemy deemed it more advantageous to allow the first troops to proceed through without bloodshed and by outflanking both ends to rise together against the center. Thus they could smash the main body, which included the emperor, his attendants, and those of his noble kinsmen who followed him. And they were not
[430] disappointed in their expectations. Once the emperor had advanced a good distance over this rugged ground and there was no possibility of escape, the barbarians attacked with a mighty din. The Roman infantry was not remiss, but hastened so as not to be surrounded; they rushed up the steep slope and, with great toil and danger, repulsed the barbarians as they descended the mountain ridges. But the Romans were hard pressed by the throng and sustained many casualties from the stones rolled down upon them, and they gave way to flight, but slowly, not headlong, and only briefly; as men of strange speech who are forever grasping, they swarmed and fell upon the army in disorder.

As a result of the confusion, each man attempted to save himself, but they were as sheep shut up in a pen; whomever the enemy overtook, as well as all captives, they slew. No one put up a fight or was able to do so, and as many pack animals were killed, they say, as were Roman soldiers trapped in the defile because of the crush. As though caught in a net, the emperor attempted again and again to repulse the barbarian attack, but

he could accomplish nothing, and he removed his helmet. At last, many of the mightiest warriors gathered around him, and thus he alone was able to escape while many perished. When he reached the regiments that had gone on ahead, he followed the example of David and offered up a thank-offering for his deliverance from danger to God, who overshadowed his head during this battle.[1190] The *sebastokrator* Doukas had seen that the way ahead was impassable, and had taken another route, thanks to a certain capable commander among his troops named Litoboj, whom he had lured away from the barbarian forces, and thus he came through the danger unscathed.

The emperor traveled by way of so-called Krenos and arrived safely at Beroē, where he met up with the troops who had gone on ahead unharmed. They had imagined that the worst had happened to him, for it [431] was rumored that he had perished with the rest of the troops. For a few days longer he remained in these parts to dispel the false rumor and then returned to the queen of cities. The ill-omened rumor that was being bruited about concerning the emperor was superseded by another announcement proclaiming him victor, to which the emperor, in the manner of the Carthaginian Hanno,[1191] gave wings and let fly over the cities. But neither did Hanno long delight in his collection of singing birds which had been taught one phrase by striplings who sat patiently beside them and continually recited, "Hanno is a god." After the birds had been released in all directions so that their song would be about him everywhere, they no longer sang that Hanno was a god but warbled the melodies of birds as before. Nor did the emperor long enjoy the song of joyous tidings, for the loss of so many men filled the cities with wailing and the countryside with impassioned dirges.

After entering the queen of cities, the emperor, stung bitterly by these events, knitted his brows. Heretofore, when he had gone out against the barbarians, he had presumptuously applied the words of the prophet to himself, "He shall go forth and *return* with gladness: for the mountains and the hills shall exult to welcome him with joy, and all the trees of the field shall applaud with their branches; instead of the bramble shall come up the cypress, and instead of the nettle shall come up the myrtle."[1192] Often he would reveal those things hidden in the innermost recesses of his heart. He did not speak of the sins which we have committed in common and the abandonment of us all to the judgment of God (for the ear of the Lord has become heavy and hears us not,[1193] and we have been [432] given over to be chastised by a people foolish and unwise[1194]), but instead Isaakios exacted retribution from those who followed Alexios Branas in rebellion,[1195] craving to deliver over the plunderers to such evils.

O the schemes and instructions of the Evil One which mislead some men to interpret these prophecies to mean that God delivers over to the barbarian nations, that rise up together in revolt, countless numbers of the pious in recompense for some fault of one of them, and allows these to be led away and killed as sheep for slaughter.[1196] For which much-weeping Jeremias has lamented in full measure the captives, the slain, and those removed to distant lands where the name of Christ is not invoked.[1197]

Isaakios expounded on these things in an extraordinary manner and

also made it clear that he would become the sole ruler, that he would suck the milk of the Gentiles,[1198] and that he would be the one to liberate Palestine and acquire the glory of Lebanon,[1199] slaughtering and plundering the Ismaelites beyond the Euphrates and sweeping away the barbarians round about. He added that the rulers under him would not be like those of today, but that they would acquire absolute power and eat the wealth of nations[1200] and drain the marrow,[1201] that they would be appointed to the very same authority and distinction as that of kings and governors.

It was said that Isaakios had appointed as instructor in all these things
[433] Patriarch Dositheos, who, like a moth, entered unseen and corrupted his nature, which was inclined toward novel tales, with vain babblings; in the manner that wet nurses lay new-born babes on their stomach to relax them, he made the emperor recline in order to enervate him with the enchantments of fabulous tales. He told him that Fate, without Isaakios lifting a hand, had decreed that all kingdoms should submit to him in the same way that the artists of old portrayed Timothy as he lay asleep while Fortune gathered cities in a fishnet to hand to him.[1202]

Even more astonishing was his express statement that Andronikos Komnenos, whom Isaakios had dethroned and delivered over to a grievous death, had been destined to reign over the Roman empire for nine years, but that God had contracted his nine-year reign to three because he was a malefactor; indeed, these six years were cast over the purple robe of Andronikos's reign like a tattered garment, and he was destined during these three years to be not at all good or temperate, nor was he in any way made glad by good deeds, so that his evildoing by necessity affected and disposed his nature. Whether these things have resurrected the rotted Destiny of old and prove the existence of Necessity, and whether they vindicate Andronikos of blame for his baneful rule, I leave to the speculation of those who wish to do so. Since the six years had passed, it was shown from the events themselves that it is not a matter of time but a peculiarity of the mind which prevents some from attaining that which they desire, for although Isaakios promised his subjects greater blessings in the years to come, he did nothing better than he had done in the past.

[434] Elated by their endless victories against the Romans, the Vlachs, who had captured splendid treasures and all kinds of armament from the Romans, were irresistible in their assaults. No longer did they only attack and plunder villages and fields; now they took up arms against lofty-towered cities. They sacked Anchialos, took Varna by force, and advanced on Triaditza, the ancient Sardica, where they razed the greater portion. They also emptied Stoumbion[1203] of its inhabitants, and at Niš, they carried away no small measure of men and animals.

Although the emperor was compassed about as a honeycomb by bees[1204] and had no one to come to the aid of those who were grievously afflicted, and in the end no one to provide assistance, he divided the army under several commanders. Thus he recovered Varna; Anchialos he fenced with towers and installed garrisons within. It does not appear that these successes were the result of imperial foresight, but these cities hereafter proved to be superior to the enemy.

Isaakos marched out towards Philippopolis at the time of the autumnal equinox [1191 or 1192],[1205] taking along the women of the court (for it was possible to do so), and checked the inroads of the Vlachs and Cumans. He also set out against the Župan[1206] of the Serbs for having ravaged the land and destroyed Skoplje. When the two armies clashed at the Morava River, the barbarians gave way and many, submerged in the waters and transfixed by spears, perished[1207] in the pursuit that followed. Bypassing Niš, he arrived at the Sava River, where he met with his father-in-law Béla, king of Hungary. After a stay of many days, he returned again to Philippopolis, avoiding the Haimos, and entered the megalopolis.

Isaakios wanted to change the administration of the province of Philippopolis because of the unending sufferings visited on the inhabitants. He dispatched his cousin Constantine[1208] and appointed him general and *dux* of the fleet. Although he was but a mere lad, high-spirited in the manner of lion cubs which, from the very moment of birth, show forth their pride, their shaggy manes, and their sharp claws, so he trained his troops to obey and fear him that they readily submitted to his orders and responded to a mere nod or thought. He commanded his troops, therefore, with a native cleverness. If, at times, because of his youthful impetuosity, he fell short of his responsibility, his experienced subordinate commanders would hold him in check, admonishing him not to overstep the rules of tactics. The rebel Vlachs cowered in fear of him and were more panic-stricken at the sight of him than of the emperor. Often when Peter and Asan went out with the intention of ravaging the lands around Philippopolis and Beroē, they did not escape Constantine's notice, and he pursued them, routing the battalions,[1209] so that they did not make as many sallies as before. [435]

But whereas Constantine should have pursued these successes for the benefit of the fatherland and its cities, he did just the opposite. Because he was young, he was elated at these minor achievements and became erratic in his behavior. He began to win over the commanders who were associated with him and those of the native troops he knew to be of noble birth and expert in military affairs. With some small support from these men in the achievement of his objective, he chose the imperial robe instead of that of the general and put on his feet the purple-dyed boots in readiness to take the throne by force. By way of letters he informed his wife's brother, the grand domestic of the West, Basil Vatatzēs, of his actions. But Vatatzēs did not praise Constantine's daring, or take heed of his puerile actions and the letters which he had presumptuously sent him at Adrianople. Instead, he mocked his untimely and foolish ambition and mourned him as though he had already perished—a fate which quickly ensued. [436]

Constantine set out from Philippopolis for Adrianople, intending to make his brother-in-law an accomplice in the deed against his will. Upon reaching Neoutzikon, as it is called (this is a place on the border of both provinces; I speak of Adrianople and Philippopolis) he was seized and given up to the emperor by those who had prodded him to rebel and had proclaimed him emperor. In defense of their actions, they told the emperor that they had sumbitted to and inclined towards the rebel only because at this time and in these circumstances there was nothing else

they could do but change sides and join him. (They saw that to oppose the dictates of Constantine would not have been without danger and physical harm to themselves, for he was irascible towards the generals who stood before him, and those who did not abide by his decisions suffered his bared sword.) By their present action, they pointed out, they had demonstrated to the emperor the proof of their loyalty. The emperor saw through the subterfuges and specious excuses of these untrustworthy men, but he praised their action, nonetheless, because it was advantageous to him; he did not openly punish any of the accomplices of Constantine, whom he blinded.

So greatly did the Vlachs rejoice, and Peter and Asan exult, over the fate of Constantine that they spoke of making Isaakios emperor over their own nation, for he could not have benefited the Vlachs more than by gouging out Constantine's eyes. This showed how clever they were in these matters, and they sneered at the progressive decline of Roman affairs as they succumbed more and more to an evil lot. They prayed that the Ange-
[437] los dynasty would be granted a reign of many years over the Roman empire and earnestly entreated the Divinity that, if it were possible, they should never see death[1210] or be removed from the throne. These accursed indulged in predicting future events, giving as their reason that as long as the Angeloi reigned, the successes of the Vlachs would increase and be magnified, that they would acquire foreign provinces and cities, and that rulers and princes would come forth from their loins.[1211] I know not whence and how they arrived at such elaborately worked-out conclusions.

The Vlachs, therefore, set out with a Cuman battalion to sack a fortress, plunder villages, or lay waste cities. They destroyed everything on the way, one time attacking Philippopolis, at another besieging Sardica, and at other times assaulting Adrianople. Although the Romans prosecuted the war slothfully, whenever they opposed or engaged the enemy in battle they afflicted them in good measure.

The emperor, like a runner on the long course or racing in the stadium, stopped running the course of excellent government right at the turning post. For he was unable to complete many circuits around the track of virtue; as soon as he began to tire, the intensity of his efforts flagged and his praiseworthy intention was wholly enervated. Transferring the bridle and reins of the empire from one official to another so that he might avoid the weighty responsibility of governing the state, he finally handed over the conduct and administration of all public affairs to his maternal uncle, Theodore Kastamonitēs.[1212]

This man, extremely skillful in wielding power and especially in the collection of public taxes, was also eloquent in speech. Promoted to logothete of the *sekreta,* he conducted the affairs of state as though he were emperor so that all ministers carried out his every order almost without question. Kastamonitēs, who suffered a disease in the joints of his legs,
[438] was often carried in to the emperor on a folding chair by two bearers who were like the handles of amphorae of wine; after discussing useful topics with the emperor or, rather, exploiting the state of Roman affairs, of which he rendered a brief account, he was carried out again. The people, the state senate, and the emperor's blood relations followed behind him in escort, and surrounding the chair as though it were a casket, they

bewailed not him but their own fortunes.[1213] Nothing was done without his knowledge, and no one in authority was allowed to sit down with Kastamonitēs, but must stand in his presence in a servile attitude. The emperor was not troubled in the least by all this. Seeing his own glory passing unpropitiously to another and his power being snatched from him, he perceived nothing improper whatsoever in this absurdity and gave his approval to these developments without any evident justification. When Kastamonitēs went in procession on horseback, Isaakios allowed him to have the imperial purple trappings and to wear the purple military cloak; he was allowed to sign the public decrees and rescripts in dye of the same color. The state of affairs had truly taken a strange turn, inconsonant with Nature herself, until a certain merciful disease that showed compassion for those who took no pity on themselves befell the man. Its spreading noxious matter affected the joints of his body and afflicted his reason even more strongly.

It was the fifteenth day of the month of August when Kastamonitēs, escorted with great festivity by a huge crowd of officials, visited the Monastery of Pantanassa by way of the agora to celebrate the rites of the death of the Mother of God and for the first time heard himself acclaimed despot and emperor, for this is how flatterers and wheedlers choose to address those who rule. It appeared the more perceptive of those who had assembled that the novelty of what he heard brought on an attack of epilepsy. A judge of the *velum,* who was standing nearby (I purposely omit his name), loosened his clothing and bound the calves of the logothete's legs with his waist belt in an attempt to stem the upward flow of [439] matter. While Kastamonitēs fell into a state of delirium, the judge of the *velum* became the butt of hearty laughter because his garments were undone, and he had shown himself to be so naive. Kastamonitēs briefly recovered from his cachexia and spent the rest of the day in better spirits, but then he fell ill once again, and a few days later he died. The disease had spread to other parts of the body, and his buttocks were covered with sores.

Next to beauty, ugliness appears to be even more conspicuous. Following Kastamonitēs' death, a youngster, who should have been studying with an elementary schoolmaster, writing tablet in hand, succeeded to the emperor's favor.

While the one departed this life from among us, a small boy [Constantine Mesopotamitēs] assumed the administration of public affairs less than a year after he had put down pen and ink; not only did he lead the emperor about in the manner of a leader whale[1214] but he also took charge of troop registers as though he had been trained from infancy to administer momentous affairs, or as if even before birth he had been entrusted with worldly concerns as was Sibyl, about whom it is said that as soon as she issued from her mother's womb she began to philosophize about the composition of the universe.[1215] He assumed far greater power than that of Kastamonitēs and deemed lawful whatever the emperor desired.

He was simply a bumblebee or a mosquito buzzing around the lion's [440] ear,[1216] or a black-skinned ant-man[1217] leading about the elephant, the most ponderous burden on earth,[1218] or a fine rope pulling a camel by the nose; one could say, and not without some elegance, that the thick earwax that

formed in the emperor's auditory canal blocked out the flow of sound from both sides, or that small is the side door, strait is the little gate, and narrow the way leading into the palace.[1219] The wide entrance gates, through which petitioners formerly visited the emperors, were tightly shut, and those who attempted to enter through them were like those foolish virgins, for there was no one to open to him who knocked.[1220] Should someone late in the day set eyes upon those who persisted in knocking at the closed gates, he would answer no question but instruct them to go to the side gate where they would find easy entrance if they put some money in the fold of their garment or in their double-folded mantle. This aged youth strove diligently to be loved beyond measure by the emperor and to be reckoned indispensable; he was sophistic in his character, quick in repartee, capricious, secretive, and crafty, as was evidenced by the growth of his eyebrows in a single line without separation.[1221] Moreover, his aptitude for trade and his insatia-
[441] ble gathering in of unjust gain endeared him to the emperor; he stealthily snatched up coins from all kinds of business dealings and set ambushes for those under investigation, and he also had a passion for round cakes, ravened for melons, and craved to taste all the delicious eatables of the earth.

Let the narrative return now from its digression to the track whence it had set out from the beginning. To make a long story short, the actions of this emperor during the time he remained in the queen of cities may be clearly articulated as follows. Daily he fared sumptuously and served up a Sybaritic table,[1222] tasting the most delectable sauces, heaping up the bread, and feasting on a lair of wild beasts, a sea of fish, and an ocean of deep-red wine.[1223] On alternate days, when he took pleasure in the baths, he smelled of sweet unguents and was sprinkled with oils of myrrh, and he surpassed the likeness of a temple[1224] with his fine, long robes[1225] and curled hair. The dandy strutted about like a peacock and never wore the same garment twice, coming forth daily from the palace like a bridegroom out of his bridal chamber[1226] or the sun rising out of a beauteous mere.[1227]

As he delighted in ribaldries and lewd songs and consorted with laughter-stirring dwarfs, he did not close the palace to knaves, mimes, and minstrels. But arm and arm with these must come drunken revel, followed by sexual wantonness and all else that corrupts the healthy and sound state of the empire. Once at dinner Isaakios said, "Bring me *salt.*" Standing nearby admiring the dance of the women made up of the emperor's concubines and kinswomen was Chalivourēs, the wittiest of the mimes, who retorted, "Let us first come to know these, O Emperor, and then command *others* to be brought in."[1228] At this, everyone, both men
[442] and women, burst into loud laughter; the emperor's face darkened and only when he had chastened the jester's freedom of speech was his anger curbed. In the country he chased after the delights of climate and location at the resorts and returned to the megalopolis only at intervals; from time to time he made his rare appearance like the bird called the phoenix.[1229]

Above all, he had a mad passion for raising massive buildings, and carried away by the magnitude of his duty, he pounced upon the City's beloved structures. Within both palace complexes[1230] he built the most splendid baths and apartments; along the Propontis he constructed ex-

travagant buildings, and, filling in the sea with earth, he formed islets. To erect a tower which, he contended, would defend the palace of Blachernai as well as serve as his residence, he razed the ancient churches that stood neglected in the eastern district and made a desolation[1231] of most of the outstanding dwellings of the queen of cities; there are those who pass by to this day and shed tears at the spectacle of the exposed foundations. He even leveled the magnificent building of the *genikon*. He also pulled down the renowned house of Mangana with no regard for the building's beauty or fear of the trophy-bearing martyr [St. George] to whom it was dedicated.

In his restoration of the Church of Michael, the commander-in-chief of the heavenly hosts, he brought to Anaplous the most beautiful polished marble slabs embroidered with multicolored veins, which covered the floors and overlaid the walls of the palace buildings. As many painted and mosaic images of the archangel, the works of ancient and marvelous hands, as were sheltered in the City or set up in villages and provinces as talismans, he gathered together in the same shrine. This emperor's zealous exertion to bring back from what today is called Monemvasia the image of Christ being led away to his crucifixion, an admirable work of art and beauty, was not the least of his mad passions: for he put all his hopes in this image until he took possession of it through deceit. This undisguised undertaking was not wholly without danger. He also transported there the broad and high bronze gates that formerly barred the entrance of the Great Palace and in our day secured the prison that took from them its name, Chalkē. He stripped bare the renowned church called Nea in the Great Palace[1232] of all its sacred furniture and holy vessels. As a result, he pridefully gave himself airs and plumed himself as though no other had ever built such marvelous works. He thought that removal was the same as augmentation, and transposition the same as addition, and he preferred the shadow-filled depiction of the good deed which paints the form of piety but sketchily or not at all; of a truth, he believed that the Divinity would be not angry but pleased should this temple be despoiled of its former splendor and left to become a nesting place for birds and the habitation of hedgehogs[1233] while another was consecrated with relics removed from their rightful place and magnificently embellished with ornaments taken from elsewhere. [443]

He was, to put it mildly, brazen enough to defile the sacred vessels which he snatched from the holy churches and used at his meals. When carousing, he would clasp the goblet-like votive offerings to God decorated with precious gems and made of refined gold that hung in the tombs of the emperors, and there were carried about exquisite, elegant pitchers for hand washing which the Levites [deacons] and priests use to cleanse themselves when they approach the Holy Mysteries. Removing the precious adornments from the holy crosses and the tablets of the undefiled sayings of Christ,[1234] he used these to make necklaces and collars, and at his pleasure shamelessly fastened these to his imperial robes.

Towards those who attempted to persuade him that such actions did not accord with a God-loving emperor upon whom piety had descended from his forebears, and that such deeds were clearly acts of sacrilege, he became indignant, irritated, and he rebuked them for being manifestly

[444] devoid of intelligence and woefully ignorant of the good. He contended that all things are permissible to reigning emperors and that between God and ruler in the government of earthly affairs there is nothing disparate or contrary which sets them at variance in the manner that affirmation is opposed to negation. To assure them that these actions were beyond reproach, he cited the example of Constantine, the most excellent and the very first of the Christian emperors, who fastened to his horse's bridle one of the nails by which the Lord of Glory[1235] was transfixed to the accursed tree[1236] and attached a second nail to his helmet.[1237] He intentionally ignored that the emperor and author of the faith[1238] did these things to demonstrate to the Hellenes, who looked upon the preaching as foolishness,[1239] that the Word of the Cross was the power of God.

Adulterating the silver, he minted debased coinage and gathered in revenues not altogether without reproach; he both increased the collection of public taxes and squandered the monies in riotous living. And he hawked the public offices as venders peddle their fruit. At times, however, in accordance with the apostolic injunction, he would send into the provinces without purse or scrip[1240] officials who, he knew, would dispense to the just man his portion and not be beguiled by gold; neither would they stash away the collections in their homes but would deposit the adjusted debt in the public treasury.

As none before him, he lavished gifts upon churches, shrines, oratories, and holy monasteries. Those edifices which in time had fallen into disrepair he restored, and those whose splendor had faded he embellished with adornments of mosaics and paintings. He had such faith in the Mother of God that he poured out his soul to her icons.[1241] The greater number of these he had overlaid with gold and adorned all around with precious gems and set them up as votive gifts to be venerated in those churches where the pious most often congregate.

[445] The house of the *sebastokrator* Isaakios, which was situated on the slope of the harbor of Sophiai, was made over into an inn. There, board and lodging were provided for a hundred men, and stables were built for the same number of pack animals; transients were daily taken in as guests and remained on for many days without paying any money. He converted into a hospital the imperial edifices which Emperor Andronikos had built near the Church of the Forty Martyrs. In addition, he purchased from its owner what is known as the House of the Grand Droungarios and likewise set it apart as a rest home for the infirm, sparing nothing that was needed for the recovery of the sick. And when the northern region of the City was destroyed by fire, he dispensed monetary relief to those who lost homes and possessions. During his reign he distributed five hundred pounds of gold to the citizens. With the arrival of Holy Week, during which the Passions suffered by the God-Man on our behalf are commemorated with reverence, he succored many widows for the loss of their husbands by bestowing benefactions upon them, and he provided virgins with the requisites for the nuptial torch, bridal chamber, and wedding song.[1242]

Not only did he lavish gifts upon individuals, households, and kinsmen, he was also a benefactor of whole cities by remitting taxes. In other words, he rejoiced in alms giving and was eager to expend the collected

revenues, using both hands to empty out what poured in, whence the idea of gathering in monies from sources which were not always justified slipped in secretly and surreptitiously stole into his mind. The majority, who did not suspect that the enormous expenditures approached prodigality, were assigned the task of contriving novel tax collections, kneading together the ill-gotten and illegal revenues with those justly collected like millet being planted in a cultivated orchard or the anemony with the rose. Although prone to anger, he was not devoid of a sympathetic nature, and often compassion moderated his wrath and his disposition was altered towards goodwill. Moved to pity by the misfortunes of men, he would measure out to each individual the mitigation of his sufferings.

Because he did these things and other such things which we have [446] passed over in our narration, he thought that his throne was more firmly established than the sun in the heavenly sphere,[1243] or that it was as the stem of a palm tree that grows green from the scent of water,[1244] or that like the towering cedar of Lebanon[1245] it would be preserved through the cycles of many long years. Another would have been suspicious, would have chosen and embraced the good part,[1246] not only giving the seven days their portion but also keeping the mystery of the eighth day before his eyes;[1247] and even though as lord he could have turned the scale both ways, he would ever be inclined towards the better part, swimming readily against the enemy but not sinking beneath the surface. But God did not wish this to be. Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or with whom has He taken counsel?[1248] The Divinity, having taken forethought for the man's removal, roused him to noble deeds and the highest zeal, and by endowing him with courage, made him beloved by the many even after his deposition from the throne.

Isaakios could not endure the raids of the Cumans and the pillaging of the Vlachs and decided to wage his own war against the adversary. And he was smitten by the debacle of Alexios Gidos and Basil Vatatzēs, the commanders of the eastern and western divisions, who, on engaging the enemy [1194] near the city built by Arkadios [Arkadiopolis],[1249] accomplished nothing useful. Moreover, Gidos fled in disarray, losing the better part of his army, while Vatatzēs perished along with his troops. Therefore, Roman troops were levied and placed on the military registers and fit mercenary troops were enlisted. Dispatching envoys to his father-in-law, the king of Hungary, Isaakios requested auxiliary forces; the king gladly consented to help and agreed to send troops by way of Vidin.[1250]

He collected a sufficient number of troops, supplied himself with fif- [447] teen hundred pounds of gold and more than six thousand pounds of silver, provided other useful supplies for the army and then departed from the queen of cities during the days of March [1195]. His trust he put in God, and he set his face against the enemy[1251] like a solid rock,[1252] making as a condition of his return the completion of his task; should it be fortunate, he would return, thanks to God, but should it be ill-fated (heaven forbid!) he would continue to rely upon the judgments of Him who uses the rod of sinners to chastise the lot of the righteous.[1253]

It was with such zeal that he set out to meet supreme danger; the hand which is stretched out over all things and turns the scale remained suspended on high; neither was the wrath of the Almighty turned aside,

since the Vlachs prevailed in all the battles they fought. Thus did the eye of the emperor look upon the provoking rebels, and the issue of rebellion was far removed from his mind. Because he who was to overthrow him from power was near at hand and related to him, he was overlooked, and since the stumbling block at his own hearth was no annoyance, he leaped over it. There is nothing novel in this, since the evils that sprout alongside or amidst the virtues the majority of us men neither choose to see nor are able to see as we should. I forebear to say that Nature has implanted within us a passion for our own. Thanks to the bonds of affection it yields to and shows weakness before their bad habits and at times is constrained
[448] to do the same for friends. Not easily controlled, it gives its ear to those who pour out a flood of words, as into a perforated cask, and recount the misfortunes we have endured.

The emperor was warned by many that his brother Alexios plotted against his throne and his life, but the latter concealed his hatred for his brother behind a screen of affection, and so Isaakios dismissed these reports as so much nonsense; he did not bring forth the Herakleian touchstone[1254] to investigate and examine the charges against his brother but bitterly accused those who made them of wanting to expunge his love for his brother, the love that was indelibly branded into the depths of his soul, inasmuch as Alexios was the only one to have remained unharmed by the destroyer Andronikos.

When Isaakios arrived at Rhaidestos[1255] beside the sea and celebrated the preeminent feast of our Lord's Resurrection, he sacrificed and ate the mystical *pascha* [2 April 1195].[1256] Here he met with Basilakios. The latter led a strange life and was believed by everyone to have the power to prophesy, to foresee the future, and the masses streamed towards him in the manner of worker ants moving in and out of an ant hill or of visitors to the oracles of Ammon and Amphiaraos in antiquity.[1257] But his predictions were never accurate: his words were erroneous, contradictory, and enigmatic. Although many of the things he contrived were laughable, he attracted nonetheless the cattleman, the plowman, and the rower. He would examine the breasts of women who came to him and scrutinize their ankles and make nonsensical observations and vague predictions.
[449] He did not reply to the majority of questions put to him by those who came, and his successes were achieved on false pretenses and by moving from place to place. Certain Greek women,[1258] his disciples and kinswomen, mad with passion and inebriated, would relate to those who drew near that the rites performed by Basilakios foretold the future, and they interpreted his silence as proof that he was a wise oracle. This man, therefore, appeared to many, as I have said, to be a prophet and diviner of future events. There were those women who asked indecent questions and wore immodest frocks to make sport of him, but the sober-minded held him to be a curiosity, a buffoon, and a prattling old man. And there were those, among whom I was included, who said that he possessed a spirit of divination.[1259]

When he appeared before the emperor, he neither heeded his great power nor replied to his salutation of "Hail, O Father Basilakios," or even greet him in return by silently nodding his head, but bounding about

hither and thither like some frisky colt and making frenzied gestures, he insulted those present, not even sparing the emperor. When at last he put an end to his fitful motions, he extended his hand in which he carried his staff and damaged the emperor's painted image set up on the wall of his private chapel, mutilating the eyes. Then he rushed forward and snatched the emperor's cap. These things then did Basilakios do. The emperor, who regarded the man as quite mad, removed himself thence. Although those who were assembled and had witnessed these events with their own eyes did not consider this to be an auspicious portent of things to come, others did not think that these omens augured a baneful outcome; moreover, the general opinion of Basilakios was reinforced, since it was, as I have stated, ambiguous and disputable in most cases. [450]

When Isaakios arrived at Kypsella, he divided his forces into companies while he awaited the arrival of the other troops. His brother, who over a long period of time had lay in wait to seize the throne, then brought to light those things that lay hidden in his heart and that secretly smoldered in his breast. The emperor was fond of the chase, and as he prepared to mount his horse [8 April 1195], he sent for his brother Alexios to join him and take delight with him in the grass green and flowery meadows in that place. Alexios, who was preparing to carry out the task at hand, declined the invitation on the pretence that he was ailing and being made ready to have a vein opened for bleeding.

So Isaakios set out without him and happily went on his way. When Alexios had observed that the emperor had advanced some three stades from the tent, he and his closest friends and fellow conspirators who had plotted with him to achieve his purpose entered the imperial pavilion. These were Theodore Branas, George Palaiologos,[1260] John Petraliphas,[1261] Constantine Raoul,[1262] Manuel Kantakouzenos,[1263] and many other perverse and weak-minded men, the emperor's kinsmen as well as a swarm of the common herd who for a long time had roamed gaping through the *sebastokrator*'s banqueting hall, rejoicing at the complete change about to take place in the government. As soon as they got wind of the revolution, all the divisions of the army defected, as did those who were inclined towards Isaakios, such as his attendants and domestics, and these were joined by those who had been raised to the dignity of senator. [451]

At first, the emperor could hear only unintelligible sounds, but soon he observed a huge throng running towards the imperial pavilion and heard his brother being acclaimed emperor. Shortly afterwards messengers told him of the shameless coup d'etat and he came to a halt, whereupon he made the sign of the cross over himself and cried out, "Be merciful to me, O Christ, my Emperor!" and invoked God many times to save him from this hour.[1264] Pulling out his pectoral icon of the Mother of God, he embraced it many times, all the while confessing his sins and promising to make amends, and in anguish of heart[1265] he prayed to escape the impending evils. As he saw that his appointed captors gave free rein to their horses in their determination to seize him, he took flight. At great risk he crossed the deep-eddying river[1266] [Maritza] which courses through the plain and then kept to the road, for he could find no clear avenue of escape. In his desire to avoid certain destruction, he

[452] determined to ride as fast as possible to elude the furious onrush of his followers, but when he reached Stageira, now called Makrē, he was apprehended by a certain Pantevgenos and turned over to his pursuers.

At the Monastery in Vera[1267] founded by Isaakios, the father of Emperor Andronikos, he looked upon the sun for the last time, and his eyes were soon gouged out. As to whether retribution was requited of him at this place by divine Nemesis, I leave for others to ponder. Providence, which administers everything for the best, desires that avengers treat their most despicable enemies with humaneness, since they must suspect that power is never permanent, that one political action which ungirds sovereignty often is reversed with a new throw of the dice.

After this calamity, no food was brought to Isaakios for many days. To alleviate his chastisement he was incarcerated temporarily within the palace and later transferred to the opposite shore of the Double Column, where he drained to the dregs the rustic life, living on wine and measured bread. His brother ascended the throne peacefully and without factional strife, and the two could be compared to the Dioskouroi who agreed to set and rise on alternate days in the firmament of the empire.[1268]

Isaakios reigned over the Romans for nine years and seven months. He had a ruddy complexion and red hair, was of average height and robust in body, and was not yet forty years old when dethroned.[1269]

VI. *The Reign of Alexios Angelos*

BOOK ONE

*I*N this manner, then, Isaakios Angelos lost his throne and was divested [453]
of power with ease. He was deprived of his sight by those whom he had imagined led him by the hand as though they were his own eyes, for what could be closer and more trustworthy than a brother, and he beloved? If water drowns us, then what shall we men drink? And if our limbs are armed against one another, how can they possibly work together so that we may live? But the healing art mixes from contrary bodies a salutary antidote; and some men have risen up against one another, disregarding the noble gifts of nature because of evil-mindedness and the love for greater glory. It is for this reason that the barbarian nations regard the Romans with contempt. This they reckoned to be the consequence of all the deplorable events which had gone before by which administrations were constantly overthrown and one emperor replaced by another. There were those who withdrew from close friendships and forswore their [454]
old associations; they would say, "If the brother is not safe, then what man is?"[1270] And whenever certain individuals revealed their secret intentions to others, the latter, citing the example of recent events, suspected that their intimacy was contrived.

Alexios, now on the throne, never realized that he had overthrown himself by deposing his brother. As soon as he had leaped onto the imperial seat by means of this headlong transgression, he searched after his brother's vestments and crown; donning these, he was proclaimed emperor and *autokrator* by all the military companies and members of the senate and immediately informed his wife and the officials of the City of what had come to pass.

Those who had helped him come to power he rewarded for their zealous support, and he flattered the entire population for going over to him so readily and avoiding political strife. Without rhyme or reason he began to hand out the monies amassed by Isaakios for military operations to satisfy the requests of one and all. When these were depleted because of his prodigal and disparate distribution, he granted small productive farmlands and public revenues to the petitioners. Once these were exhausted, he increased the illustrious dignities. He did not raise up someone held in high repute because of his learning or did he elevate a dignitary to the next successive grade, but he raised up and promoted everyone, both him who had received some dignity but briefly and him who had never been considered worthy even of the lowest rank, to the highest and supreme dignity. Thus the highest honor became dishonorable and the love of honor a thankless pursuit. Many equated promotion with demotion when later they were justly and deservedly promoted to

those dignities which others had received undeservedly, awarded the same honor and esteem as those who deserved the dignity but who were overlooked and reckoned as ignoble.

[455] Title to property was easily acquired; no matter what document was presented to the emperor, he signed it immediately, even though it contained solecisms and the petitioner proposed to sail on land and plow the sea, or to move the mountains[1271] into the depths of the sea,[1272] or, as the myth would have it, to pile Athos on Olympos.[1273]

Having thus accomplished all these things, or perhaps it would be more fitting to say, having contributed to their accomplishment, and compelled to comply to the time and the state of affairs, Alexios allowed the troops to disband and return to their homes, without regard for the attacks of the Vlachs and Cumans who carried off everything before them. He did not hasten to reach the City. As his brother had already been seized and blinded and there was nothing to fear, he proceeded at a slow pace, tarrying at the stages along the way.

The officials of the state had already declared for him, his entry had been made ready by his wife Euphrosynē, and at least a faction of the senate had happily accepted the outcome of events. When the citizens heard the proclamations, they engaged in no seditious act but remained calm from the beginning and applauded the news, neither remonstrating nor being inflamed by righteous indignation at being deprived by the troops of their customary right to elect the emperor.

As soon as Alexios's wife Euphrosynē had set out for the Great Palace, some troublemakers formed a cabal from among the artisans and the rabble. They rallied around a certain Alexios Kontostephanos, a star-
[456] gazer who had long been lying in wait for the throne, and proclaimed him emperor in the agora, crying out that they had had their fill of the Komnenoi and no longer wished to be ruled by them. When Empress Euphrosynē had entered the Great Palace at great risk, those members of distinguished families who had escorted her recklessly attacked Kontostephanos rather than with prudence. The vulgar city mob was dispersed, and Kontostephanos was apprehended and thrown into prison.

Once calm was restored among the City's populace, all those inside the church [Hagia Sophia] consented to the new tyranny, and one of the sacristans, bought off by a few coins (the agitators from the marketplace and several judges—whose names I cannot bring myself to mention—followed suit), ascended the holy pulpit and began to chant Alexios's acclamation without waiting for the chief shepherd's signal. But the latter, who resisted for a short time since the self-called [Alexios] had not made his appearance, changed his mind about the previous emperor [Isaakios]. When the patriarch weakened, there was no one left to offer resistance. All came together to the palace and deserted to the empress as though they were slaves; even before they saw the tyrant or knew exactly what had happened to the previous monarch, they prostrated themselves before the alleged emperor's wife and placed their heads under her feet as footstools, nuzzled their noses against her felt slipper like fawning puppies, and stood timidly at her side, bringing their feet together and joining their hands. Thus these stupid men were ruled by hearsay, while the wily empress, adapting easily to circumstances, gave fitting answers to

all queries and put the foolish Byzantines in a good humor, beguiling them with her fair words. Lying on their backs, in the manner of hogs, with their bellies stroked and their ears tickled by her affable greetings, they expressed no righteous anger whatsoever at what had taken place. In this manner was the way paved for Emperor Alexios's entry without bloodshed and with absolutely no one being deprived of his properties. [457]

After several days, Alexios himself entered Byzantion. As he sat freshly bathed on a gold-spangled couch at the outer Philopation, as it was called, he gladly admitted to his presence all those who approached him and showed no remorse for what he had done to his brother. Certain judges of the *velum,* who did not find the time opportune for flattery, indulged in ribaldry which drew derision down upon them. There were those who groaned at what they saw; they were astonished to see the imperial ornaments which Isaakios had had sewn for himself now worn by his brother. From this change in rule they augured the beginning of fresh calamities, recalling the deeds of Osiris and Typhon that afflicted Egypt.[1274]

When Alexios entered the celebrated Great Church of the Wisdom of God so that according to custom he might be anointed and invested with the insignia of sovereignty, the first thing he did was to sign the symbol of the faith in imperial ink. Afterwards he approached the so-called Beautiful Portals of the temple and remained there for some time, awaiting to receive the signal for the exact moment of his entrance [into the narthex] from the timekeepers in the Catechoumeneia above.[1275] When he had left the temple and was about to mount his horse (an Arabian stallion kept at rack and manger), which was led forward by the reins by the *protostrator* [Manuel Kamytzēs], an unusual and wondrous event took place. The horse, its eyes blood red and ears erect, snorted, kicked up its front hooves, repeatedly struck the ground, and bounded about spiritedly; driven wild with rage against him, it shunned Alexios as though it disdained to carry him on its back. Alexios made repeated attempts to mount the horse, but, kicking up its front hooves and wheeling about, it repulsed him. After much coaxing and stroking of its neck, it finally seemed to calm down, to cease making its proud gyrations and thrashing its legs in the air. The emperor leaped on it and grabbed the reins, but the horse, as though tricked into accepting the rider against its will, misbehaved as before, lifting up its legs and neighing loudly. Nor did it end its Bacchic frenzy until it had knocked the bejeweled crown from the emperor's head to the ground so that certain parts of it were shattered and had thrown him off like a ball as well. When another horse was brought forward and Alexios paraded with a broken crown, this was deemed an inauspicious portent of the future: that he would be unable to preserve the empire intact but would fall from his lofty throne and be ill-treated by his enemies. [458]

Accompanying the emperor in the procession on horseback were his two sons-in-law, Andronikos Kontostephanos and Isaakios Komnenos, and his paternal uncle, the aged John Doukas, who, during this triumphal procession, had the following unexpected event befall him. Without any visible cause, without anyone agitating the mule he was riding, the *sebastokrator*'s crown tumbled from the top of his head to the ground. When the spectators saw this, they shouted and then laughed when they ob- [459]

served his bald head which earlier had been concealed by the crown but now shined like a full moon. But Doukas turned necessity into an occasion for good cheer and high spirits (for one can hardly take umbrage at the fortuitous circumstance) and regarded the merriment of the many over this happenstance a pleasurable amusement. He rejoiced with them without the slightest show of indignation.

The emperor repudiated his patronymic of Angelos and chose that of Komnenos instead, either because he held the former in low esteem in comparison with the celebrated name of Komnenos, or because he wished to have his brother's surname disappear with him. Everyone supposed that once Alexios was proclaimed emperor and calm had been restored to the empire, he would appear in arms and keep the field and not shun the urgent business at hand. They thought that he would remedy previous failures to take action, and especially all those evils they had suffered at the hands of the barbarians because there was no one to oppose them or to show the slightest concern. He, however, did the exact opposite, and now that he had reached the highest goal which he had worked so hard to attain, he relaxed, deeming that he was given the throne not to exercise lawful dominion over men but to supply himself with lavish luxuries and pleasures.

Like a steersman who is compelled by the waves to let go of the rudder, he withdrew from the administration of public affairs and spent his time wearing golden ornaments and giving ear to, and granting, every petition of those who had helped raise him to power. With both hands he unsparingly poured out the monies that Isaakios had amassed, and they
[460] were scattered like heaps of chaff and blown away like summer dust[1276] to fill the slow bellies.[1277] To the difficulty of collecting revenues hereafter and to the loss that served no purpose, he gave no thought. Only later, when he had need of funds, did this emperor who was devoted to futile munificence censure himself for his prodigality.

This emperor's wife was very manly in spirit and boasted of a natural sophist tongue, eloquent and honeyed. Most adept at prognosticating the future, she knew how to manage the present according to her own will and pleasure, and in everything else she was a monstrous evil. I do not speak of the embellishments, and the squandering of the empire's substance in luxury, and the fact that, thanks to her happy nature, she was able to prevail over her husband to alter established conventions and devise new ones (these things, however, have no place in the history, and if they are improper for women, this is also true of empresses). By dishonoring the veil of modesty, she was hooted and whistled at and became a reproach to her husband. At first, everyone believed that he knew of her improprieties and was simply pretending to be ignorant of them, but from his actions later, when his wife's activities were disclosed, he clearly demonstrated that he was not ignorant of her effronteries. These things shall be revealed at the proper time by this history.[1278]

Because the empress had overstepped the bounds and held in contempt the conventions of former Roman empresses, the empire was divided into two dominions. It was not the emperor alone who issued commands as he chose; she gave orders with equal authority and often nullified the emperor's decrees, altering them to her liking. And when-

ever the emperor was about to receive in audience an important foreign embassy, two sumptuous thrones were set side by side. Sitting in council with the emperor, she presided dressed in splendid attire, her crown embellished with gems and translucent pearls and her neck adorned with costly small necklaces. At times they stood apart in other imperial buildings and appeared in turn, thus dividing their subjects between them. If, [461] at first, they made obeisance to the emperor, they would then move on to the empress and make an even greater prostration before her. Not a few of the emperor's blood relations, for whom the highest offices had been reserved, would draw nigh, and placing their shoulders like wooden beams under the splendid and lofty throne, elevated the empress.

Three months had not yet passed [before 8 July 1195] when the news arrived that a certain Alexios from Cilicia, who had assumed the name of emperor Manuel's son Alexios, had gone over to the satrap of the city of Ankara [Muhī al-Dīn Mas 'Udshāh][1279] and had been received as the true son of Emperor Manuel. Although this man knew that he would not accomplish his objective (for he knew that Emperor Alexios had been strangled by Andronikos, he deemed this would embroil the emperor of the Romans in troubles, for he would thus be pitted against insurrectionists. In this way, friendship with the Romans would become a salable commodity, and he would profit unjustly. Now that the false-Alexios was attacking the Roman towns that bordered Ankara, and prevailing against them because the Turks had sent reinforcements, a certain John Ionopolitēs,[1280] who had recently been honored by the emperor with the rank of *parakoimomenos,* was dispatched.

Since the eunuch achieved nothing in this matter, the emperor decided that it was necessary that he himself should venture out, in part to negotiate a truce with the Turk. With this accomplished, he could easily defeat the impostor, and once the latter was dead, he could then deal with the enemy. But the Turk took full advantage of the opportunity and refused to accept peace terms unless the emperor immediately granted him five hundred pounds of silver in minted coin and thereafter three hundred pounds of silver coins to be paid annually and forty vestments of silk thread supplied the emperor by Thebes of the Seven Gates.

At Melangeia, the emperor was proclaimed *autokrator* by the inhabi- [462] tants, but he did not find resolute support against the adversary Alexios. While they devoted themselves to Alexios as emperor of the Romans, they would not forsake the friendship of the false-Alexios; looking with favor on both parties, they vacillated in their sentiments without indicating which of the two they preferred. They gave everyone to understand that being uncommitted they would not announce themselves at once for either one; when the issue was decided they would join the victor. Even in their audiences with the emperor, they did not desist from extolling Alexios. They would often say, "You, too, would be delighted in the man if you saw him, O Despot and Emperor. His long, yellowish red hair is adorned as though with filings of gold. A man of goodly stature is he and such a horseman that he cannot be shaken, and it is as though he were fixed in the saddle."

When the emperor replied that Emperor Manuel's son was put to death long ago by Andronikos, that he who had now come forward was an

impostor unrelated to the Komnenos family, and even if one should concede that he were alive and that this aggressor were he, he, the emperor, would still have a better right to the throne as he held the scepter of the Roman empire in his hand, then the listeners interrupted, and using his own words to refute his arguments, they said, "Do you see, O Emperor, how you too have doubts about the youth's identity and how uncertain you are about his death? Be not angry then with those who take pity on the youth on whom the empire has devolved through three generations and who unjustly has been separated from both throne and country."

When the emperor saw that he could not prevail[1281] and that nothing was being gained by his presence, he went from one fortress to another. Some he won back from Alexios and others he put to the torch for having gone over to the rebel. Then, having spent two months on campaign, he decided to return and appointed Manuel Kantakouzenos to deal with the Cilician Alexios.

[463] Despite the fact that Alexios received ever-increasing assistance from the Turk, and levied tribute from all or nearly all of the fortresses around Ankara, he did not openly war with him. Over a long period of time, he would have been an evil beyond remedy for the Romans had not God taken pity on the fortunes of the Roman empire, appearing as a maker of things new. A certain individual who entered the fortress of Tzoungra[1282] put Alexios to the sword at night [c. 1197]. Thus did he vanish, rushing by with the speed of light only to be lost from sight, or like some violent wind that blows in from the Cilician promontory of Korykos and after battering a portion of the Roman land, quickly subsides, having dissipated its violence.

Close behind this evil [1195] there followed an even greater one, which appeared to have fallen but shot up like lethal hemlock. This was Isaakios Komnenos, whom I mentioned in my earlier books.[1283] Having become both master and destroyer of the island of Cyprus, he was taken captive by the king of England, who was sailing to Palestine across the sea, and presented to one of his compatriots as a slave who wants whipping. It was bruited about everywhere that the rogue suffered a most miserable death,[1284] but, as proved later, his demise was only a false rumor; freed from his fetters and released from prison, though this should not have taken place, he made his way quickly to Kaykhusraw, the ruler of the city

[464] of Ikonion, and welcomed by the latter as his guest, he rekindled his old passion for the throne. Emperor Alexios, encouraged by Empress Euphrosynē, who was closely related to Isaakios, dispatched many letters recalling him. He stubbornly refused and was vexed at the letters' contents, for he said that he had learned only how to rule, not how to be ruled; how to lead others, not how to obey others.

He wrote many letters to the leading men of Asia, proposing no forbidden action nor any seditious act against the established authorities but promising rewards to all those who obeyed him should he succeed in becoming emperor. But just as the goal that he pursued earlier had remained unattainable and in vain had he formed plots which God did not design, so now he was also guilty of futilely contriving to achieve the impossible. Neither did the Turk pay him heed as he wished (he wanted the Turk to follow him in campaign against the Romans with all his forces

and to execute all his commands), nor did any of those to whom he wrote in secret lend an attentive ear, but like asps they all stopped up their ears to his incantations.[1285]

Who, having pursued a bloodthirsty beast, does not see it a short time later springing and making a kill? Or who, having made friends with a venomous serpent, even becoming attached to it and nurturing it in his bosom, is not mortally wounded when it bites and disgorges its venom? However, Isaakios Komnenos gave up the ghost shortly thereafter and joined those other tyrants whom the hand of the Lord utterly destroyed,[1286] even though He does not usually immediately execute those salutary measures which He frequently innovates. It pleased Him to lay low the accursed wretch, not by natural death, but by poison given him by a certain cupbearer who was emboldened in this deed by huge bribes from his emperor.[1287] [465]

One of the many things Alexios attempted as emperor was to make peace with the Vlachs, and for this purpose he dispatched envoys to Peter and Asan [after 8 April 1195]. He did not, however, conclude a peace treaty as these men responded in immoderate terms and made peace proposals which the Romans found impossible and humiliating.

While the emperor was sojourning in the East, they attacked the Bulgarian themes around Serrai. They defeated the Roman troops encamped there and inflicted great injury on many others, and they took captive Alexios Aspietēs, commander of the Romans. They occupied many of the fortresses in those parts, and after strengthening and securing these, they returned home with plunder beyond measure.

To avoid another such disaster, the emperor dispatched his son-in-law, the *sebastokrator* Isaakios, with a considerable force. Some of the Vlachs advised Asan not to carry out any further violent attacks against the Romans and to be mindful of military stratagems (for they had heard that the emperor was skilled in warfare and much more capable than his brother). Asan replied arrogantly that one should not always pay heed to rumors. One should not accept the courage of a particular man as fact and cower before him; neither should one make light of another and dismiss him before one has experience of him because others have described him as a coward and a weakling, nor should one reject a rumor outright as worthless, especially when it is widely bruited about, for the actions of men who are calumniated or applauded are drawn by rumor as by a magnet. Moreover, the eye sits in judgment on what is reported, and thus the rumor will be accepted as true or, besmeared with myrrh, as false and let loose to fly elsewhere. [466]

> The ears do not know what is taking place, but when information enters them from the mouths of the people, they guard against the unfavorable reports which frequently assail them. The sure arbitrator of events is the eye, which is an undeceived witness of those things it observes; its certainty does not come from outside itself as does that of the ear, which must rely on hearsay.[1288]
>
> You should not be terrified because rumor proclaims the present emperor of the Romans a courageous man; rather, it is necessary to consider whether he is such as he is reputed to be. Let the man's former life be your guide and faultless instructor in this. Were you

more discerning, you would see that he has not distinguished himself in anything, or joined battle, or endangered himself on behalf of the Romans by campaigning and toiling alongside his brother as I myself have done by ever laying waste and overrunning the enemy's country, by winning victory after victory, and by piling up trophy upon trophy. Alexios did not obtain the purple robe and the imperial crown as a reward for his labors, but, as he was to demonstrate by his deeds, he laid hold of the scepter as a result of the tricks played by cruel Fortune. That this man, whom I have not observed in combat or harassing the lands of the Mysians by hand and speech and intent, might suddenly turn the tables, I have no way of knowing.

To illustrate, as far as possible, the facts about this man and the rest of his kinsmen, observe, suspended from my lance and blowing in the wind, the ribbons of diverse colors, if not of different webs. These have originated from the same cloth and a single weaver has woven them, yet because of their difference in color they appear to have had a different efficient cause. But this is not the case. The brothers Isaakios and Alexios, the first already deposed from the throne and the second who now dons the tebenna and wears the imperial crown, had the same father, slipped out of the same womb,
[467] were born in the same country, and shared everything in common, even though Alexios saw the light of day first. Thus it seems to me there is no difference between the two in warfare, as we shall come to know by experience.

It is necessary, I say, that we prosecute the war vigorously and with the same resolve as heretofore, knowing that as before we shall prevail even in the face of adverse fortune, not to say that the Romans shall suffer an ever worse fate thanks to their loss of morale; defeated by us many times, they were not able, even once, to retrieve their losses. Let me note also that they have drawn down upon their heads the wrath of God by deposing from his rightful dominion Isaakios, who had delivered them from grievous tyranny. Having thus armed themselves against the strong, they will soon be cut down by their enemies as breakers of treaties.

The barbarian, having raised the spirits of his men with such sentiments and bombast, invaded the provinces centered around the Strymon River and Amphipolis. When the *sebastokrator* Isaakios, who was young and excited over a recent setback of the Vlachs, heard that he had attacked Serrai, he rushed out against him on the basis of hearsay without first assessing the enemy's strength. The signal for battle was sounded by the trumpet, rousing the troops to arms, and he was the first to mount his war horse; putting on his armor in great haste, he rode out brandishing his lance at the enemy as though a deer hunt had been arranged for him or hunting games had been prepared somewhere nearby.

After traversing some thirty stades at full speed, the cavalry was worn out and useless when the attack came, and the exhausted, straggling infantry was unfit to take any action afterwards. When he approached the enemy's camp, Asan divided the greater number and the best of his
[468] troops into ambuscades. Isaakios, oblivious to this stratagem and trick, proceeded on in Bacchic frenzy, certain that he would defeat the enemy and put them to flight. When the ambushers attacked, therefore, he was trapped as in a hunter's net and lost many of his men; in the end he was

taken alive by the Cumans. Like a lion among cattle,[1289] the barbarian rushed upon the arriving Roman troops with utter impunity. Not one fought back, but one and all played the coward and streamed into the city of Serrai at full speed, that is, all those who had not been cut down by the sword during the encounter.

The Cuman who captured the *sebastokrator* concealed him in diverse ways so that he should remain undetected by Asan, for he entertained high hopes that he might get by the Vlachs and bring him to his own haunts, upon which the emperor would pay him a huge ransom. But when it was reported that the commander had been apprehended, a diligent search was conducted and he was brought before Asan.

This, then, was the outcome of these events. One of the captive priests, who had been carried off to the Haimos as a prisoner of war and knew the language of the Vlachs, begged Asan to release him and appealed to him to show him mercy. Asan, throwing his head back in denial, refused and said that it had never been his policy to set Romans free but to kill them; for this is also God's will, and he had let him live a long time. The priest, it is said, sighing deeply and with tears in his eyes, rejoined that neither would God be merciful to him, since he had not remembered to show mercy to a needy man[1290] who was near to God because he was a priest, that the end of Asan's life was close at hand, and that it would not come as a natural death in soft slumber but in the same manner that he was often accustomed to slaughter by the sword those [469] who were set before him.[1291] And the priest's prophecy did not miss its mark; shortly thereafter, when Asan arrived in Mysia, he was slain by one of his own kin [1196].

Asan was put to death in the following manner. A certain man of the same age and habits as he and on whom he looked with great favor (his name was Ivanko) had had clandestine sexual relations with the sister of Asan's wife. Inquiring into the circumstances of the liaison, Asan at first placed the blame on his wife and condemned her to death for covering up the affair. His wife remonstrated with him and managed to lull his murderous gaze and impulse, but later, when he was convinced that it was useless to rant against his wife and had learned all the particulars about this affair, he transferred his wrath from his wife to Ivanko. Outraged, he summoned the man at an untimely hour of the night, but Ivanko, because he realized the untimeliness of the request indicated there was cause and reason, deferred his arrival until the morrow. Asan could not tolerate such nonchalance as a matter of negligence and insisted, and Ivanko, eventually cognizant why he was being summoned, deliberated with his blood relations and friends as to what he should do. They advised him to gird on his long sword and come before Asan, concealing the sword under his outer garment. Should Asan upbraid him gently and moderate his violent and heated insults and whatever else, and as long as no injury was inflicted on his body as chastisement, then he should bravely endure the aggravation of his seizure and ask forgiveness, but should Asan unsheath his sword, then he should play the man and hasten to forestall his imminent doom and strike mortal blows, sending the shameless and [470] bloodthirsty Asan to the nether world. Ivanko followed their advice. The barbarian, however, had no intention of treating him with moderation.

At first sight of Ivanko, he went berserk and reached for his killer sword, but Ivanko struck him first in the groin and killed him. Ivanko escaped and immediately approached those who were privy to the deed. After he had informed them of the event, he realized, as did they, that the only course open to them was rebellion, since the brothers, kinsmen, and friends of the fallen man would never rest. And should they proceed according to their purpose and will, they would rule Mysia more justly and equitably than had Asan and would not govern everything by the sword as the fallen man had done. Whenever anger required it, they would act accordingly, but should their plans be upset and not proceed according to their desire, they would embark upon another course and turn to those who piloted the Roman ship of state to achieve their end.

As it was still night, they confirmed their decision and urged many others to assist them in their resolutions. Taking possession of Trnovo (this was the best fortified and most excellent of all the cities along the Haimos, encompassed by mighty walls, divided by a river stream, and built on a ridge of the mountain), they resisted the followers of Peter. At the crack of dawn the news of Asan's death was trumpeted from the top of the walls of Trnovo and to those outside and far away. But Peter did
[471] not find Ivanko's destruction easy while Ivanko was not able to beat off Peter. Thus Peter was compelled to bide his time, his one hope to overthrow his opponent Ivanko. Ivanko, for his part, recognized that he needed the assistance of the emperor to overcome his adversaries and that he must appeal to him. It was said that it was at the instigation of the *sebastokrator* Isaakios that Ivanko, who was encouraged in this by many promises, killed Asan, and that Ivanko was especially set on the wing by the pledge of marriage to Isaakios's own daughter Theodora.

But Isaakios gave up the ghost in prison without having effected the murder. Ivanko informed the emperor of the events and exhorted him to send someone with an army to receive Trnovo and to fight along side him to take all of Mysia. Had the Romans quickly performed a salutary deed, and had the emperor shown eagerness in immediately undertaking a surprise attack in response to his message, he would have occupied Trnovo and taken all of Mysia without trouble. The emperor, in his stupidity, withdrew once again within the palace like the caterpillar into its cocoon and dispatched the *protostrator* Manuel Kamytzēs, proclaiming him commander-in-chief. Kamytzēs set out from Philippopolis with his forces, but on reaching the borders of Mysia on tiptoe, he was unexpectedly compelled to turn back. The troops mutinied, saying, "Where are you taking us? Whom are we to engage in battle? Have we not traversed these mountain passes many times, and not only did we accomplish nothing worthwhile but we also very nearly perished, one and all. Turn back, therefore, turn back, and lead us back to our own land." Confounded by these and other groundless fears, they fled in disarray as though they were being pressed hard by an enemy discharging all kinds of missiles at their backs.

[472] Following this debacle, it was decided that a larger army be dispatched. The situation only worsened, since no one attempted to engage the barbarians in hand-to-hand combat in order to come to the assistance of Ivanko. Despairing and distressed over the affairs at Trnovo, for

Peter's followers were ever consolidating their position and his army ever grew in numbers, Ivanko departed and made his way to the emperor. Thus the rule of Mysia was fully transferred once again into the hands of Peter.

Even he, however, did not die a natural death. Shortly afterwards [1197], he was run through by the sword of one of his countrymen and died pitiably. The rule of the Vlachs now looked to Ioannitsa, the third brother.[1292] At that time Peter designated his brother Ioannitsa (who spent a considerable time among the Romans as a hostage as a result of Emperor Isaakios's second campaign against the Mysians but escaped to his own country) to assist him in his labors and share in his rule. Peter, whom none of us met, continued the deceased Asan's policy of plundering Roman lands, nor did Nature bestow upon him any sense of moderation towards our empire. So many great battles over so many years were brought to a successful issue by our adversaries that this evil forever troubled the waters of Roman fortunes. Not even a minor victory smiled upon the Romans, and there was not even an illusion of a trophy.

None of the high-throned bishops, who reaped the highest honors, or the thick-bearded monks, who pulled their woolen hoods down to their noses, pondered God's almost total abandonment of us. None preached the need to placate the Deity, nor did any who had the freedom to speak openly before the Roman emperor elaborate on the means of deliverance. It seemed that they all had become good-for-nothing,[1293] that they were unable to perceive what was happening and to oppose, the chastisements sent from God. The Hellenes, when informed by the seer Calchas as to the cause of the pestilence, did not ignore the need to cure the evil, even though Agamemnon, the foremost and mightiest of the host, might wax wroth.[1294] [473]

Ivanko made his way to the emperor and was warmly received; he proved to be useful to the Romans in many ways. He was tall in stature, very shrewd, in the prime of his physical vigor, and clearly cut a figure of a man of blood,[1295] quick to anger and opinionated; his association with the Romans did nothing to temper or moderate his disposition. The emperor, who deemed the man worthy of the marriage proposals made him, put off the wedding rites until the appropriate time (for the bride was still a child mouthing baby talk) and enrolled him among his very powerful kinsmen. He deprived him of none of the privileges of the court and bestowed great wealth upon him. Ivanko, seeing that his betrothed, the emperor's daughter's child, was a minor, gazed fixedly at the rose-colored beauty of her mother Anna, who was as yet a widow, and fancying a superior marriage, he said, "Why do you give me a suckling kid to cover when I am in need of a full grown goat?"[1296] This man labored primarily in the regions around Philippopolis and served the Romans as a precious bulwark against his own countrymen, who, with the support of the Cumans, would march out ravaging everything in their way [1197–1200]. Sometimes he campaigned with the emperor and proved to be especially effective. Who is able to count the number and cite the times of the onslaughts of the Cumans and the Vlachs throughout the year and the unholy deeds they performed? The devastation of the lands towards the Haimos and the despoiling of the inscribed monuments and pillars of

Macedonia and Thrace give a more accurate picture of the damage wrought than any detailed historical account.

[474] Not only did the barbarians to the north, who waged war against us and whom we found hard to face, have the upper hand, but in the East the Roman territories were exposed to destruction by the Turks. The emperor, who refused to make peace with the Turkish ruler of Ankara in Galatia [Muhyi al-Din], partly because there was nothing to be gained from friendship with him, since he was in no position to injure the Romans, and partly because Alexios was niggardly about the money which the Turk demanded in order to keep the peace, spent a year and six months at odds with him [July 1195 to December 1196]. As a result, the Cilician Alexios, strengthened by the dynast of Ankara, accomplished all that we have recounted; the city of Dadibra fell and submitted to the Turks.

The Turk set out with all his forces, pitched his camp around this city, where he remained and laid siege. Time wore on, but the barbarian swore not to lift the siege until Dadibra surrendered. The siege stretched into four months, with no help from any quarter for the Dadibrenians. Through emissaries the emperor urged them to resist bravely, promising to fight along with them, but as he would always change his mind when he was on the verge of setting out, their adjoining neighbors, the Paphlagonians, did not dare to draw near and come to their aid. Then the besieged despaired of all succor. They were particularly distressed by famine and utterly ruined by the engines that discharged their stones from the hills outside into the middle of the city, demolishing the dwellings, hurling lime, and letting fly whatever else was deleterious for man; these shattered the water receptacles and ruined everything drinkable which stood and did not run.

Not long afterwards, an imperial auxiliary force commanded by three youths (Theodore Branas, Andronikos Katakalon, and Theodore Kazanēs) arrived and encamped on Mount Babas. As soon as the Turks learned of this, they lay in ambush. Just before dawn, they attacked and pressed upon the fleeing Romans. They slew some and captured others alive, among whom were two of the commanders. The Turk led them around in a circle, with their hands tied behind their backs, and exhibited them to the defenders on the walls. He exhorted the defenders to hand over to him the helm of government while the city was not yet submerged

[475] by the waves of warfare; absolutely no hope remained that the city could be saved, or that he would depart unless he took possession of the city.

Their spirit broken by such spectacles and threats, the Dadibrenians turned to disadvantageous treaties dictated by the acute anxiety of the times and consented to abandon the city completely. Everyone was to depart unharmed, together with his nearest and dearest and his possessions, free to go wherever he liked, since the barbarian would allow no one to stay behind. He would not agree in any way whatsoever that they should pay him tribute. When these conditions were confirmed by oath, the Turk took possession of the city and gave it to his people to inhabit; the citizens left and dispersed throughout other provinces and cities. Many constructed wooden huts near their native city with the permission of the Turk and remained behind, putting on the yoke of slavery because

the sweetness of their cherished city could not be wiped from their memory.[1297] Thus did the city of Dadibra meet its end. Shortly afterwards, the emperor made peace with the Turk [December 1196] and gladly paid the tribute that had been demanded before the fall of Dadibra as though he could quickly rub the disgrace of those times from his eyes.[1298]

The Roman empire had not yet spat out this brine and begun to lift up its head and enjoy a respite when it was buffeted by worse tidings; the future was to prove even more calamitous than the present, for if the partial loss of freedom was distressing, the attacks of the Western nations allowed us to envision the oppressive slavery that was to be imposed on our entire race.

Henry,[1299] the ruler of the Germans, was the son of Frederick, who, as was recounted in the history of the reign of Emperor Isaakios Angelos,[1300] died on his way to Palestine while bathing for the last time in a river's stream. He took hold of his father's kingdom, and after bringing Sicily to terms [autumn 1194] and subjugating Italy, he turned his attention to the Romans, for he was unnaturally fond of revolutionary movements and an intractable evildoer. He forthwith lay in wait for the opportunity to attack the Romans, but not without hesitation, as he was daunted by the difficulty of the undertaking: the brave deeds performed by the Romans [476] against the Sicilians when they had invaded our lands were still fresh in his mind, and he was no less restrained in his purpose by the pope of elder Rome [Celestine III].

Therefore, he dispatched envoys[1301] to Emperor Isaakios [February 1196] (for Isaakios had not yet been banished from the throne) and lodged complaints with the intent of creating an unjustifiable breach. As present ruler of Sicily, he laid claim to all the Roman provinces between Epidamnos and the celebrated city of Thessaloniki, which had recently bowed under the yoke of the Sicilian army by force of arms; its defeat and rout were due to Roman deceit—Henry was not the least of all those who spin pleasant fables. He enumerated the afflictions endured by his father, not only his recent troubles but also those with which he had had to contend over a long period of time because he had been removed from elder Rome, thanks to the cunning Emperor Manuel, and expelled from Italy as well. Unabashedly recalling events of the distant past, he demanded that the Romans purchase peace at a huge price or prepare to meet him it battle at once. In addition, he wanted to be designated lord of lords and proclaimed king of kings[1302] and insisted on succor for his compatriots in Palestine with the dispatch of naval forces. The emperor replied in writing and sent a distinguished envoy; two envoys arrived in turn [before Christmas 1196], one of whom had bushy eyebrows and was remarkable for having been given the responsibility for the king's education as a child. Their negotiations centered around the payment of huge sums of money, false pretensions and boasts, and lists of their countrymen's glories with which they hoped to intimidate their audience.

Because the emperor whose reign we are now recounting could not [477] dismiss the envoys empty-handed, he consented to pay money in return for peace, something which had never been done up to this time. Alexios, intent on extolling the wealth of the Roman empire, undertook no task suited to the times but did that which was neither worthy of respect nor

seemly and which appeared almost ridiculous in the eyes of the Romans. On the feast of Christ's Nativity [25 December 1196], he donned his imperial robe set with precious stones and commanded the rest to put on their garments with the broad purple stripe and interwoven with gold. So astonished were the Germans by what they saw that their smoldering desire was kindled into a flame by the splendid attire of the Romans, and they longed the sooner to conquer the Greeks, whom they thought cowardly in warfare and devoted to servile luxuries. To the Romans who stood among them urging them to gaze upon the full bloom of the precious stones with which the emperor was adorned like a meadow, to pluck the delights of springtime in the middle of winter and enjoy a feast for the eyes, they responded, "The Germans have neither need of such spectacles, nor do they wish to become worshipers of ornaments and garments secured by brooches suited only for women whose painted faces, headdresses, and glittering earrings are especially pleasing to men." To frighten the Romans they said, "The time has now come to take off effeminate garments and brooches and to put on iron instead of gold." Should the embassy fail in its purpose and the Romans not agree to the terms of their lord and emperor, then they would have to stand in battle against men who are not adorned by precious stones like meadows in bloom, and who do not swell in pride like beads of pearls shimmering in the moonlight; neither are they like the intoxicating amethysts, nor are they colored in purple and gold like the proud Median bird [the peacock], but being the foster sons of Ares, their eyes are inflamed by the fire of wrath[1303] like the rays of gemstones, and the clotted beads of sweat from
[478] their day-long toil outshine the pearls in the beauty of their adornment. In return for peace, the Germans demanded the payment of five thousand pounds of gold.

Spent by these negotiations, the emperor dispatched as his envoy to the king Eumathios Philokalēs, the eparch of the City [beginning of 1197], the wealthiest in the empire. Philokalēs willingly accepted the role of envoy and asked the emperor that with the insignia of eparch he also be granted those of envoy. The emperor was pleased to provide whatever traveling supplies he requested, but he must set out for the proposed journey at his own expense. Thus he stood out as an odd and eccentric envoy; not only was he not held in esteem compared with former envoys but he also drew derision down upon himself because of the strangeness of his dress.

Since the monies to be paid in exchange for peace came to about sixteen hundredweight of gold, Philokalēs waited in expectation of the gold's arrival in Sicily, where he met with the king. The emperor contended that he was in need of money and taxed the provinces, imposing the so-called *Alamanikon* [the German tax] for the first time. Convening the full number of citizens, the senate, and the clergy, as well as all those divided into different trades and professions, he demanded that contributions be made and that everyone pay down a portion of his property. But he soon saw that he was accomplishing nothing and that his words were only empty talk. The majority deemed these burdensome and unwonted injunctions to be wholly intolerable and became clamorous and seditious. The emperor, blamed by some for squandering the public wealth and

distributing the provinces to his kinsmen, all of whom were worthless and benighted,[1304] quickly discarded his proposal, as much as saying that it was not he who had introduced the scheme. Devising another plan, he claimed all the gold and silver votive offerings outside the sanctuary, as [479] well as those that were not used to receive the Divine Body and Blood of Christ. When many recoiled from this, saying that he wished to defile the sacred, he resolved to rob the deaf and dumb tombs of the emperors, since they had no one to take up their cause. The tombs were opened, and they were stripped of every precious ornament. The only things left of those Roman emperors of old who boasted of glorious deeds were their coats of stone,[1305] those cold and last garments. Even the sepulcher of Constantine the Great would not have been spared, and the thieves would have stolen the splendid cover interwoven with gold which lay over it had they not been stopped by imperial decree. Collecting thence more than seventy hundredweight [seven thousand pounds] of silver and an amount of gold, the emperor consigned them to the smelting furnace as though they were profane matter. Two men from the imperial court who had been entrusted with the collection of these precious metals died shortly afterwards: one was consumed by a burning fever and the other, swelling up like a wineskin, succumbed to dropsy.

As for what followed—but who can worthily speak of the mighty deeds of the Lord or who shall cause His praises to be heard?[1306] News of the death of the king of Germany arrived before the dispatch of the monies [28 September 1197]. His death was received with great satisfaction by the Romans, and the Western nations were thrice-pleased, especially those that he had won over by force rather than by persuasion and those he was preparing to attack. He was ever racked by cares and opposed to all pleasures in his desire to establish a monarchy and become lord of the nations round about. Reflecting on the Antonines and the Augusti Cae- [480] sars, he aspired to extend his rule as far as theirs and all but recited the words attributed to Alexander, "All things here and there are mine."[1307] Wan and solemn in aspect, he partook of nourishment only late in the day; to those who argued that it was his duty to take food to avoid cachexia, he replied that for a private citizen any time is suitable for eating, especially that which is accustomed, but as for a careworn emperor, if he wishes not to give a lie to his appellation of beloved, evening is time enough for indulging the body.

The death of the king of Germany, therefore, was, as I have said,[1308] prayed for by all the nations and more so by the Sicilians because when their island fell he inflicted a host of evils on them which cannot be easily set down in writing. They endured slaughter, suffered the confiscation of their monies, underwent the misfortune of banishment from their country, and became subject to such excruciating tortures that death was preferable to life; in addition, many Sicilian cities were razed to the ground and important fortresses were demolished. To make sure that the Sicilians should never again long for freedom and rebel, Henry dashed their every fair hope, that which reposes in money, or chariots, or horses,[1309] and that which trusts in well-fortified city walls, in brave men, and in strong defenses.

Henry, who lived in dread of the future and was unable to stave off the

present, was plotted against by certain men but bested them. He did not avenge himself by putting them to the sword; rather, he first tortured
[481] them in many ways and then most pitiably took their lives. One he lowered into a cauldron of boiling water, placed in a basket like wheat, and then sent him on to his family; another he cast into a fire heated seven times more than usual;[1310] a third he placed in a sack and sent down into the deep. The initiator of the conspiracy, who was also chosen leader, he condemned to a much more violent punishment; ordering a crown made of copper with diagonal holes of equal size along the rim, he placed it with his hands on the rebel. He affixed the diadem with four huge pegs driven right through into the head, and as he walked away he said, "O man, you have the crown which you wanted; I begrudge you not. Enjoy that which you so eagerly sought." The man reeled from dizziness and fell on his face and died soon afterwards, the thread of his life snapped by this pitiable crown.

At the fall of Sicily, Emperor Isaakios's daughter Irene was taken captive along with others [29 December 1194]. She was given in marriage to Philip [25 May 1197], the king of Germany's brother, born of the seed of fornication, after she had lost the husband of her virginity [Roger, d. 24 December 1193], who ruled Sicily as tyrant after the death of his father Tancred [20 February 1194].[1311]

Although freed by the will of God from this great evil from which the whole of the Roman empire waited to suffer the worst horrors, another evil injurious to the public weal rolled in on the waves of the sea. A
[482] certain Genoese by the name of Gafforio constructed biremes and triremes and fenced himself about with round ships. With these he plundered the coastal cities and the islands which rise up in the Aegean Sea. He attacked Atramyttion as well and carried away booty and gathered riches beyond measure. At last the Romans, who were slow to deliberate on these matters, awakened as from a deep slumber and sent John Steirionēs [Giovanni Stirione] against Gafforio with thirty ships. A native of Calabria, he was once a pirate, indeed the very worst of pirates; in return for lavish gifts, he had gone over to Emperor Isaakios and had benefited the Romans many times in naval battles. But when he sailed against Gafforio, he suffered an unexpected misfortune; having taken great care to outmaneuver his adversary, who commanded a larger force, he became the victim of the stratagem he had contrived from the very beginning. Gafforio stole upon the Roman ships as they were riding at anchor off Sestos at about midday. He found them emptied of their crews and seized them all, together with their arms and every living thing on board. From this time on, he attacked the islands with impunity, plundered the towns along the coast, and demanded and collected tribute as he pleased.

The emperor, who was confounded by these events, decided that it was necessary to come to terms with Gafforio. He dispatched some of Gafforio's Genoese friends (he had often put in at Byzantion for trade purposes and was fined money for the damages he inflicted by the *dux* of the fleet, Michael Stryphnos[1312]) and initiated peace talks. He also made preparations for war, fitting out other triremes and again turning them over to Steirionēs. He and Gafforio came to an agreement that the em-

peror would send six hundredweight of gold to Gafforio and apportion enough land to support seven hundred of his countrymen as men-at-arms; Gafforio, in turn, would submit to the emperor and obey his every command. While the peace was still in doubt, Steirionēs, following the emperor's instructions, appeared unexpectedly before the enemy with his [483] Pisan force. Engaging Gafforio in battle, he overpowered and killed him and seized his ships with the exception of four, one of which carried his nephew.[1313]

Once these evils were overcome, an upheaval in the palace greatly tarnished the emperor's government and brought long-lasting confusion. In describing these events, I shall first go back to the beginning in an attempt to clarify that which followed.

Emperor Alexios, as I briefly have remarked,[1314] before coming to power was deemed by most not a pacific man but a most bellicose one; hence everyone expected that he would stretch forth his lance against the enemies of the Romans and not be altogether tolerant towards his subjects. But once he became emperor, he appeared a different person to all, and by his actions he proved them all to be talking at random.

To make a long story short, lest I be guilty of saying too much and thus exposing my history to censure, as soon as he began his reign, he proclaimed that the ministries were not to be auctioned off for money but would be awarded only according to merit. This notion was indeed most notable and admirable, the groundwork and base and foundation of an auspicious reign; even if one chooses to find parallels, neither in the distant past nor in recent times could one find such an example as in our own days. All the emperor's relatives were avaricious and grasping, and the frequent turnover of officials taught them nothing else but eagerly to steal and loot, to purloin the public taxes, and to amass great wealth. The petitioners who came to them because of their influence with the emperor they despoiled, and the monies collected, huge sums that surpassed any private fortune, they appropriated for themselves.

As a result of these conditions, Alexios failed in all else, more so than any other emperor, and the ministries went from bad to worse; once again they were offered for sale to those who wanted to buy them. Anyone who so wished could become governor of a province and receive the [484] highest Roman dignity. Not only were the baseborn, the vulgar, the moneychangers, and the linen merchants honored as *sebastoi,* but Cumans and Syrians found that they were able to pay money for the dignity of *sebastos,* which was held in contempt by those who had served previous emperors.

The primary cause of all this, as I have said, was the light-mindedness of the emperor and his ineptness in governing the affairs of state; of no less importance was the greed of those around him and the insatiable, unquenchable, desire of some to amass money by which the affairs of state became the sport of the women's apartments and the emperor's near male relations. Alexios knew no more, in fact, of what was going on in the Roman empire than did the inhabitants of *ultima* Thule.[1315] The pilot of the ship of state, therefore, was ill-spoken of by all, and the officers he stationed in command at the bow and the crew were subjected to the most abominable curses.

The empress deemed the situation to be intolerable, and as nothing could escape her inquisitiveness and her love for money, she decided she could not voluntarily keep quiet for long; either the appointments to office were not to be sold by the command of her husband or the monies collected must be stored in the imperial treasury. First of all, the empress appointed as her minister, Constantine Mesopotamitēs; it was he who exercised the highest authority under Isaakios Angelos, as we have recounted in the chapters dealing with his reign.[1316] Later, Alexios achieved a reconciliation with Mesopotamitēs, who, before Alexios came to power, looked upon him with disaffection and who continued to turn his face from him even after he ascended the throne because he had instigated the Romans to rebel against the present state of affairs and progressively and ceaselessly had confounded and thrown everything into confusion.

As the administration of public affairs again devolved upon Mesopotamitēs, the authority of others was extinguished and the light of domination of those attached to the emperor was dimmed. He, who formerly was looked down upon as refuse by the emperor, was now deemed to be incomparable, the horn of plenty,[1317] the mixing bowl of many virtues, or
[485] all the herbage of Job's field.[1318] He knew how to accommodate himself to every situation; light was shed from his eyes, and life-giving air poured into his nostrils; he was the genuine pearl of Peroz[1319] ever hanging from the emperor's ears, considered worth the entire realm, a veritable Artemon the notorious,[1320] Argos the many-eyed, and Briareus the hundred-handed.[1321]

Others bore this unexpected turn of events grievously, especially those who had fallen from power and whose light, like that of glowworms, turns dim at the break of day. The empress's blood relations, Andronikos Kontostephanos, who was married to her daughter Irene, and her brother Basil Kamateros,[1322] were choked with rage. Disregarding the stone that had been cast against them then, and which lay as a stumbling stone[1323] (I speak of Constantine Mesopotamitēs), they directed their efforts and vented all their wrath against the empress who had discharged it and sought an opportunity to quench their thirst for revenge.

After giving considerable thought to what should be done, after carefully deliberating and plotting, they approached the emperor, who was about to set out for the western regions. On this day, they met with him and said, "Although nature recognizes kinship as being more honorable and deserving of affection, we wish to be, and to be known as, the emperor's friends or as Alexios's friends, rather than as Euphrosynē's friends. For the common salvation of all men, that is, the salvation of the empire, and for our own good, it is necessary that you suffer no harm from human hand; should anything unexpected happen to you, we shall fall with you and suffer the same calamities, deprived of all the things with which we were furnished during your reign."

Thus prefacing their remarks and dexterously tuning the strings of the lyre of speech, they gave the finishing argument of their harangue like some melody that would drive the emperor out of his mind and change
[486] his appearance into that of a madman, even more than the musical airs of Timotheos which inspired Alexander of old when he was preparing for war.[1324] They asserted,

> Your wife, O Despot, with unveiled hand perpetrates the most loathsome acts, and as she betrays you, her husband, in the marriage bed as a wanton, we fear lest she soon instigate rebellion. The confidant with whom she rejoices licentiously to lie, she has likely chosen to become emperor and is bent upon achieving this end. It is necessary, therefore, that she be deprived of all power and divested of her great wealth. Her lover, whom you have officially adopted and whom, in transgression of the law, she has made her stud, must be removed forthwith, without delay, in order to bring an end to this defilement. The punishment of your iniquitous wife should be delayed until the time that, with God's help, you have concluded your present business and have returned to Constantinople.

Having thus spoken and offered their counsel, they were listened to as the dearest of friends and as though they were a rare and welcome treasure. The emperor, greatly troubled[1325] that such should be his reward for the benefactions bestowed on Vatatzēs, immediately dispatched one of his bodyguards, by the name of Bastralitēs, and put Vatatzēs to death. Vatatzēs was residing in the regions of Bithynia that still contended against Alexios the Cilician. When Bastralitēs arrived there, he led Vatatzēs away from the camp so that no one should hear and reveal the secret orders he had brought from the emperor. Then he unsheathed his sword, and his assistants made ready to commit murder; the youth was thereupon dismembered like a fatted calf. All the troops were grieved and sorely vexed by this deed, especially those before whose very eyes the act was perpetrated. Bastralitēs placed Vatatzēs head in a pouch and returned well-girded to the emperor. When the head was thrown at his feet, the emperor kicked it, and, gazing at it for a considerable length of time, he then addressed it in terms wholly unfit to be included in this history.[1326]

Following this episode, the emperor continued on his way and set out [487]
for Kypsella [February or July 1197][1327] to bring deliverance to the Thracian cities which were ravaged by the Vlachs and Cumans; moreover, he proposed to seize Chrysos [Dobromir] or at least to check his furtive incursions and his despoiling of the lands round about Serrai.

This Chrysos, a Vlach by birth and short in stature, had not conspired with Peter and Asan in their rebellion against the Romans since, as an ally of the Romans, he was expected to take up arms against them with the five hundred countrymen under his command. Not long afterwards, he was seized for leaning towards his fellow Vlachs; ever pressing ahead and canvassing to become ruler, he was put in prison. When he was released and sent by the emperor to defend Strummitsa,[1328] he betrayed his hopes, and in taking up his own cause he, too, became an inexorable evil for the neighboring Romans.[1329]

The emperor therefore moved rapidly against him and assembled a considerable army at Kypsella, but he shrank from his objective in his desire to return home; in vain he had gathered the troops and for naught had he made his way to Kypsella. He left the western regions to fend for themselves and suffer as before, while he returned to Byzantion having spent less than two months in the field.

At first he quartered in the palace at Aphameia, and afterwards moved

into the Philopation. Empress Euphrosynē, collecting her wits, grasped the meaning of the accusations made against her and feared her husband. She stretched out her hands to all with a piteous and subdued expression, entreating those who had the emperor's confidence to succor her and to speak loudly in her defense not only because she ran the risk of being expelled in disgrace from the palace but also because it was quite obvious that her very life was in danger. The majority took pity on her. One party urged the emperor to pay no heed to the charges leveled against his wife and furthermore calumniated her accusers, calling them prickly in man-
[488] ner, stitchers of falsehood, crooked in speech, and even captious and querulous; another group counseled him with great forethought what to do so that later he not be found taking back the wife whom he had put away now as an adulteress; thus bringing down dishonor upon himself, he would become the subject of common gossip, comparable to those animals which brandish the weapons on their foreheads but when provoked do not gore their rivals who are covering their females before their very eyes.

Later, when he entered the palace of Blachernai, he did not at once vent his wrath, but as he admitted his wife for one last time to take dinner with him, his inner agitation showed in his angry countenance and in the manner in which he turned his eyes away from her; inflamed by the fire of anger,[1330] yet not consumed by it, or burning secretly within and extinguishing the flame without being detected, he never again consorted with her or dined with her. She, in turn, demanded to be placed on trial for the charges made against her, asserting that she was willing to suffer whatever judgment was made against her. She entreated the emperor to disregard the ingenious inventiveness of her accusers and his kinship with them and to give heed to the accuracy and truth of the matter. He did not follow any such course of action but instead subjected certain of the female chamberlains to torture. Ascertaining from the eunuchs of the bedchamber precise details of the affair, he commanded some days later that she be removed from the palace and divested of her imperial garment and splendid robe. She was led out of the palace through a little-known descending passageway dressed in a common frock, the kind worn by women who spin for daily hire, escorted by two barbarian handmaids who spoke broken Greek. Thrown into a two-oared fishing boat, she was taken to a certain convent, built near the mouth of the Pontos, named Nematarea.[1331]

After the empress was disposed of in this manner, her accusers experienced some discomfort, for in their too forceful attempt to neutralize the empress, they had vilified her before the emperor; it was not their wish to expel her entirely from the throne or completely to undermine its very
[489] foundations. They had never expected the emperor to act so drastically against her, looking to his softheartedness and his ability to remain cool-headed. They who brought shame upon their family were grieved, although they were not as distressed as they should have been; and the reproaches and taunts cast upon them by the populace pressed hard upon them.

Six months had elapsed [October 1197 to March 1198], and the empress Euphrosynē remained banished from the palace. She would have

been ignored until the very end had not they who had wounded her also healed her, but not in the manner that Achilles healed Telephos;[1332] instead, the universal hatred against them for having brought disgrace to her who had honored them impelled them to find a way in which she could be restored. While all the emperor's kinsmen were of one mind and persisted in their efforts to topple Constantine Mesopotamitēs from the tightrope he walked, Euphrosynē was reinstated forthwith and became more powerful than ever. She did not openly express her exceeding wrath against her adversaries, neither did she lay snares for the sake of revenge, nor was she so possessed by anger that like Medea[1333] she was goaded to Bacchic frenzy against them. She tamed her husband like some wild animal, and since it was a long time since he had shown her any affection, nor had he gone to bed with her, she cleverly insinuated herself into his good graces, choosing to wheedle him with cunning. In this way, she took over almost the complete administration of the empire. Such then was the outcome of these events.[1334]

Constantine Mesopotamitēs (for more must be said about the Proteus of our times, this extremely wily and versatile man) put on airs and walked mincingly upon the empress's return. It was for this reason, I think, that he believed that he could do anything with the emperor and forthwith rejected the honor of being promoted to the office of keeper of the inkstand as being both inadequate to his station and too small to contain the magnitude of his power. He preferred instead to be ordained from lector to deacon, as he was unable to endure that anything, even holy orders, should be outside his reach. His request was immediately granted. The emperor himself went down to the celebrated church in Blachernai, and as soon as the patriarch arrived, he promoted Mesopotamitēs from lector to deacon, and he was granted the preeminent standing and degree in rank. Having accomplished this, he assumed a posture of [490] one in decline and never again appeared at the palace or served the emperor in any capacity whatsoever; the canons do not allow priests to be both consecrated to God and involved in secular affairs in any way, for both are distinct and can never coalesce because to serve God and mammon is a contradiction.[1335] But the emperor clung to him like ivy. With his hands around a tome which he displayed forthwith, he compelled Patriarch Xiphilinos to allow Mesopotamitēs to serve both God and emperor, church and palace, without suffering the penalty for violating those canons which sharply discipline this double life [before 7 July 1198]. This, too, was done, and shortly afterwards he was appointed archbishop of the most splendid city of Thessaloniki.

Perhaps the man would not have been cast aside as undeserving of the glory he boasted, nor would he have been partly to blame for the tribulations he suffered later, had he departed decisively from the palace and finally put a limit to his ambition and restraint to his meddlesomeness. His raging and insatiable lust for the most varied and highest honors repelled him from the more humble of these. Providence, which directs human affairs, made an example of his exceeding exaltation and abysmal abasement, for having ascended to the heavens, he fell into the depths,[1336] toppled by the counter-winds of Fortune. He deemed any situation intolerable except that in which he held the church in his left hand and

grasped the palace with his right, and he seized control of both institutions and bound them together like a cornerstone joining two intersecting walls. Thus he remained unalterably fixed to his original design. So that nothing would be accomplished without his advice, he inserted his brothers into the government like wedges or hoops, or he hung them like earrings on both the emperor's ears so that should he ever be attending a church synod nothing should be done or said without his knowledge and no one, unbeknownst to him, should insinuate himself into his place. He
[491] stayed in Thessaloniki only so long as it took him to be installed on the throne and returned to Byzantion on the wing, neither looking back nor stopping off in the country round about;[1337] in this way he was able to oversee and manipulate everything. Indeed, as the emperor was preparing to set out anew against Chrysos, he advised him how to conduct his campaign against the rebel, thus clearly mapping out the tactics to be employed as a function of the royal priesthood.[1338]

Consequently, just as when the states of the body, as the author of Kos[1339] affirms, advance to the highest point, they are wont to move downwards, unable to remain stationary because of their perpetual movement; so the very same fate befell Mesopotamitēs. In his perpetual striving for advancement and in that he knew no surfeit in his quest for glory, he was like the mosquito of the fable that escaped detection when engaging the lion in battle[1340] but was caught in the delicate spider's web; he canceled out every honor which earlier he had eagerly pursued, according to the psalm of David, "bowing down and falling when he had mastered the poor in knowledge."[1341] All those onto whose heads he had leaped like the flea of the comedy[1342] and whose face he had come near to slapping as though they were slaves formed a party of no small numbers and assembled publicly. Collecting certain odious accusations against him like so much muck, they approached the emperor. When they found him yielding and easily led to hatred by their every word, they attacked Mesopotamitēs fiercely. Thereafter he was expelled from the palace like a well-rounded missile propelled from a mighty siege engine, and he was also banished from the high priesthood [1198?]. A certain pot-bellied man was unanimously elected as speaker, I speak of the *dux* of the fleet, Michael Stryphnos, Mesopotamitēs' major political opponent, who, beyond all men, was greedy of gain and appropriated and eagerly gulped down the public revenues.

This, however, was not so very terrible, although it was appalling that without due examination and as a result of unjust accusations, Mesopotamitēs was toppled from the high priesthood. Wholly unpardonable, it
[492] exposed the extreme stupidity of those responsible. Since it was necessary to elect another archbishop of Thessaloniki, it was proposed that the case for the deposition of Mesopotamitēs be tried in absentia. The patriarch assembled certain bishops as judges and sat in council with as many of these as were frivolous and in hot pursuit of the emperor's favor. Because the arguments that were presented in favor of unfrocking the prelate seemed to be feeble and unsubstantial, the patriarch added to the act of deposition some charges which presumed Mesopotamitēs guilty, and thus the man was divested of all liturgical privileges. The patriarch's motiva-

tion is not clear; he may have yielded to imperial command, or his critical judgment may have been dulled by his hatred of Mesopotamitēs, or, again, some other reason may have prevented him from performing his duty. He deposited the decree with the *chartophylax* and thereafter delivered over a copy to Chrysanthos, who was entrusted with the helm of Thessaloniki. These men should have hidden their faces for what they had done, but instead some exulted as though the fall of the hostile nations had been accomplished, or the elusive wild animal, which desolated cities and killed their inhabitants and changed its color like the so-called Libyan beasts, had been subdued,[1343] or the serpent which Job could not snare[1344] had been hooked, or the gluttonous ant-lion had perished,[1345] or the many-tassled and frightful aegis[1346] had been hurled by them into the nether abyss and torn asunder.[1347]

Thus were Constantine Mesopotamitēs and his two brothers expelled from the administration of public affairs and replaced by another who was not wanting in a thorough understanding of government and was gracious in manner, most polished in speech, and prolix in the use of the rhetorical period; this was Theodore Eirenikos, who presented himself as being suitable to all. A second individual assisted him in his tasks. He was considerably fond of money and suffered a continual cough. Both men were in charge of public matters. They did not consider the fall of Mesopotamitēs a laughing matter but were ever vigilant, and suspecting the emperor's fickleness, they did not carry themselves upright and unswerving as do those unshaken knights against both the fallen and the standing but prevailed by intrigue, by which they ever restrained and [493] inhibited their own power and neglected many things which needed to be done because they feared the consequences.[1348]

In this way, the third year of the reign of the emperor of the Romans, Alexios Komnenos, ended [8 April 1197 to 7 April 1198]. What followed was no different from what went before. The way of life remained ever the same—listless and spiritless.

The peace treaties that the emperor had negotiated with the Turkish ruler of Ikonion were ignored and violated. Kaykhusraw (for this was the barbarian's name) seized two Arabian stallions which were being sent to the emperor by the sultan of Alexandria in Egypt [al-ᶜAzīz ᶜUthman].[1349] When one of these dislocated its knee as it was let loose to run, Kaykhusraw dispatched an embassy to the emperor asking his forbearance for having taken possession of them and adding that because of the injury of the one, he refrained from sending the other; at any event, the emperor should not take offense at the actions of a friend and he would not for long be deprived of the horses. Thus he delivered a specious defense of what he had done. The emperor neither praised magnanimity nor turned necessity into generosity, nor put in his mind that the times, stifling in all things, ever opposed him as a grievous adversary. To the contrary, he roared with anger like a holm oak suddenly bursting into flame.[1350] He did not, however, undertake any brave action in order to harass the Turk but rather waged war against himself and showed his sword, which hitherto had been concealed. He ordered the Roman and Turkish merchants who had come to Byzantion from Ikonion cast into prison and confiscated

[494] their possessions. He did not appropriate their merchandise and pack animals for himself, as was fitting, nor did he leave them to their owners, but they were all scattered among others and vanished from sight.

When the barbarian had heard about the incident, he renounced none of his zeal, nor did he look to dispatch a second embassy. He took up arms against the Romans and fell without warning on the towns of Karia and Tantalos along the Maeander, where he enslaved all those in the prime of life. Plundering many other cities, he pressed on to Antiocheia in Phrygia.[1351]

He would very soon have emptied out this city as he had done earlier with Karia and Tantalos had he not been checked in his thirst for booty by an unexpected occurrence, not as the result of any human forethought, but either by accident or by an act of God. During the night he rose up and marched out with all his might against Antiocheia so as to attack and lay siege to the city at daybreak. It so happened that on that day a certain man of power, rank, and influence in the city was celebrating his daughter's nuptial festivities. There was, as is customary in such celebrations, the din of revelers and the tinkling of cymbals[1352] throughout the night, and the beating of kettledrums, dancers kicking their legs to and fro, and choirs of women singing suitable wedding songs. As Kaykhusraw neared the city, the sound of the musical instruments fell upon his ears and he heard the harmonious union of the singers' voices, but he did not divine what was actually going on. To him, these sounds appeared to be signals of men prepared for battle who had been forewarned of his attack, and so he departed thence and went to Lampē.

At Lampē he appointed officials to register the captives, asking each one his native city and his name; he asked who his captor was, whether he had lost any of his substance, and whether a son or daughter or spouse
[495] had been concealed by the Turks. Completing the survey, he returned everything to the Romans, grouped according to class and kinship, and continued on his way. The throng of those taken into slavery was numbered at five thousand persons. The barbarian took pains that the captives should not lack the necessaries of life, and providing them with bread, he did not ignore the pernicious cold of the season [winter 1198–99]; taking up a two-edged ax, he himself split into billets an old tree nearby which had fallen long ago. To those Turks who came running to see the spectacle, he suggested that they do likewise, explaining the reason for the labor and adding, moreover, that it was for their own good. The Turks were permitted to leave the camp at any time to cut wood, for there was no one to deter them, but the captive Romans were not allowed to do so, being kept under guard so that they would not think of escaping and thus avoid being put in chains as suspect runaways.

When the Turk came to Philomilion with his horde of captives, he assigned them to unwalled villages and apportioned fertile lands for cultivation; he then provided grain and seed for the sowing of crops. Indeed, he filled them with high hopes, assuring them that once he and the emperor were reconciled and had renewed the former treaties, their reward would be their return home. Should the emperor decide on another course of action, they would remain tribute-free for five whole years, relieved of all tax collectors; afterwards, he would impose upon them a

light tax which would never exceed the limit, as is customary among the Romans, nor would it be increased many times. Giving orders to this effect, he returned to Ikonion. His humane pronouncement had two effects: it did not permit any of the captives to remember their homeland and it also attracted to Philomilion many who had not fallen into the Turks' hands but who had heard of what the Turk had done for their kinsmen and countrymen.

Thus it was that among the Romans of our generation, the love of many waxed cold, not because the godly man had failed[1353] and the verities had diminished[1354] but because iniquity abounded. As a result, they preferred to settle among the barbarians rather than in the Hellenic cities and gladly quit their homelands. The frequent tyrannies frustrated prudent conduct on the part of the people, and the majority, stripped bare by the rapine, took no thought of behaving with moderation towards their fellow countrymen. [496]

What, then, was the response of the emperor to these events? He dispatched Andronikos Doukas [beginning of 1199], a youth with the first down upon his lips, to engage the Turk in battle. After a long delay, he mounted an attack against the Turks with the troops under his command, but, after conducting nocturnal assaults against the shepherds and herdsmen of a certain amir Arsan, he returned shortly afterwards.

The emperor, who found it as difficult to drag himself away from the luxuriant localities of the Propontis as though they were the lands of the lotus and the Sirens, arrived at Nicaea and Prusa. His intention was not to mete out in turn or to requite of the Turks what they had meted out and requited of us[1355] but to insure that they should not ill-treat the cities and countryside by inciting the regions of Bathos[1356] in which many Turks were encamped. He remained but one month in these parts and then hastened back to Byzantion.

With the coming of spring [1199], the armed forces were assembled again, but the levying of troops did not take place with any sense of urgency or great haste because the army, exhausted from many and frequent mobilizations throughout the year, wanted to bring an end to these consecutive musters and desired to remain at home. They were assembled to fight with superhuman might and either to best the enemy or to die with glory on behalf of their homelands. And so the armed forces were gathered into one camp at Kypsella.

The emperor, acting on his own initiative, displayed courage, as our history shall now recount. Periodically, the joints of his body would become inflamed and his feet would secrete virulent matter that gave rise to excruciating pains. The festering disease resulted in immobility and the violent rush of fevers. One day, shutting the doors to his bedchamber and disclosing his intentions to none but his chamberlains, he applied burning cautery irons to his legs, and pressing the cauterizing apparatus deep, he counteracted the pain caused by the burning chiefly by holding forth with abusive repudiations of the physicians, asserting that they treated only in cathartics and knew of no remedy for the sick except purgatives. When the inflammation caused by the burns and the severe pain became more acute, the physicians were summoned, not one by one, but all together; moreover, the emperor's kinsmen became alarmed lest the downward [497]

flow of the secretion to his feet be checked and deflected to some mortal part of the body, sweeping him suddenly to his death, and the rule then be transferred to another.

The medical attendants decided to administer purgatives to him to ease the flow and excess of matter, and the medicines, mixed almost day by day, proved effective. Empress Euphrosynē was anxious about her husband's health. With her close friends she took counsel over hidden portents and disclosed the secrets hidden in her breast pertaining to the successor to the throne, so that he should not be hostile and hateful towards her but well pleased. The emperor had no son to succeed him, only two daughters who had been but recently widowed. The older, Irene, had lost her husband, Andronikos Kontostephanos, to a gentle death, while the younger, Anna, who surpassed her sister in beauty, had lived in wedlock with Isaakios Komnenos, who died in Mysia in chains, as we have stated earlier.[1357] Various choices were proposed and votes taken
[498] on possible future emperors, all with the purpose of benefiting their promoters; no thought whatsoever was given as to who would be a worthy emperor of the Romans and an excellent administrator of public affairs, and so infants at the breast and wrapped in swaddling clothes were picked by the dolts to rule. From among the nobility and the wealthy who coveted the throne for themselves, the *protostrator* Manuel Kamytzēs opposed his maternal uncle, the *sebastokrator* John; the latter, in turn, turned his face against his nephew. Since the emperor's three brothers had been blinded by Andronikos, as was John Kantakouzenos, the husband of their sister Irene, their sons were enlisted to seek the crown. These men, who but yesterday and even earlier chewed chestnuts and still munched on Pontic salted meat, yearned for the throne and openly made attempts to secure it, and looked with covetous eyes upon it, dealing with as many pimps and matchmakers as could be bought with filthy lucre and were slaves to their own bellies; and the proposal made in common was far worse than that made by the individual.

O throne of the Romans, how celebrated and envied by all nations! Majesty adored, what violators have you endured! The insolent men that have risen up against you! The lovers that have gone mad over you! The admirers you have embraced! The wooers to whom you have given yourself and showered with caresses and bound with the wreath and crowned with the diadem, and on whom you have tied the crimson buskins! Your sufferings are more heartrending than those of Penelope. In no way do you differ from a queen all-blessed, nobly beautiful, shapely, and comely, who is seized by the hands of shameless lovers whom the prudent deem worthless. Unaware of her majesty and disrespectful of her grandeur,
[499] they ignore her nobility and drag her away in lust, carrying her off to be ravished in an unlawful bed.

O, what shameless acts you have endured and witnessed! Celebrated and renowned, you have taken on a harlot's face.[1358] Gone is your simple beauty, the modesty of your manner, and your temperate and chaste mode of life. Your face is heavily made up with cosmetics and paints, and you have been gotten ready for wanton pleasures and made over for licentious behavior. They who have violated you have transformed your once beautiful, admirable, and lovely form to that of a courtesan. When

shall you lay aside this deformed beauty of your form, the unshapeliness of your figure, the affected look and gait? Who shall extricate you from the tyrannical embraces forced upon you and restore you to your former chaste behavior? But now we are in danger of turning pity into laughter, for it is not fitting that we should see you suffering such misfortunes, and we cannot bear that you should abide in such disgraceful conduct. But so be it!

The emperor, who was not fully recovered from his illness and could not stand on his feet, marched out to Kypsella, having made all necessary preparations for war. While he was still ailing, the Cumans with a division of Vlachs crossed the Istros. They attacked the Thracian towns around Mesenē and Tzouroulos and at the first assault plundered them of whatever had remained to them on the annual feast of George, the Martyr of Christ [23 April 1199].

The barbarian plan (as it became known) was to reach Kouperion (it is situated on the borders of Tzouroulos, and it was here at that time that the feast and festival of the saint took place), and the signal was given to the guides. When the fog lifted at early dawn, the majority of the barbarians burst forth on the road before them and swept through other towns until they had descended to Rhaidestos on the coast. Another division fell upon Kouperion, but it was unable to make an attack upon the church and the houses around it. The faithful who had assembled to celebrate the martyr's rites deemed it necessary that they act first rather than wait to suffer injury. They gathered the wagons and fencing them around the church, repulsed the initial charge of the barbarians; moreover, they were unscathed by the Cumans, who were turned away from conducting siege operations by the fortifications of towns and cities; as in their first charge, they stirred up everything under foot like a whirlwind and then withdrew to their own homes. Those faithful who were left behind at the church moved out in the hope of making it safely to the city of Tzouroulos, but they were taken captive *en masse* by the Cumans before they were able to reach the walls. [500]

None of these had experienced the evil of captivity with the exception of that wearer of rags, that scoundrel from the Monastery of Antigonos, who had come to tax the festival. He failed to disclose the contents of the letter dispatched by Theodore Branas, the governor of those regions, which prohibited the tumultuous concourse of large numbers of people at Kouperion and announced the incursions of the Cumans, offering the choice to those assembled of either obeying these directives and remaining safe from harm or of disobeying them and being killed. Now this man, who had completely renounced the things of the world and had utterly abjured all things mundane, he who had voluntarily donned the threadbare habit in imitation of Christ, was fearful lest a copper coin escape him should the people disperse; so he stuffed the letter in his bosom and consigned it to the darkness of his black robes. To those assembled, he foretold as though he were more than a prophet that they would be submitted to none of the unpleasantness which rumors, often prevailing over the truth, announce indiscriminately; but his intention, since he was an extremely shrewd man of commerce, was monetary gain.

Thus the Cumans, having taken huge spoils, withdrew, pursued by the [501]

Roman troops who were defending Vizyē and who had been informed that the Cumans were on their way back. When the two armies clashed our troops prevailed. The Cumans suffered much slaughter and were put to flight, and the majority of the captives were set free; but this accomplishment was short-lived. The innate, insane, and immutable greed of the Romans for things wholly improper spoiled the victory. While they were busy eagerly snatching and carrying off the booty taken by the Cumans from the Roman towns, the fleeing enemy escaped; then, turning around, they drove back their pursuers.[1359]

BOOK TWO

The following events also took place at this time. Setting out from [502]
Kypsella, the emperor came to Thessaloniki and then marched out against Chrysos. The latter had occupied Strummitsa, where he took possession of a certain fortress called Prosakos,[1360] and made it into a tyrant's dwelling for himself, strenthening in diverse ways the walls which Nature from the beginning had generously provided and fashioned; these are abrupt and cloven cliffs which abut upon one another, reached by a single narrow, steep, precipitous ascent, and the remaining circumference of the cliffs are sheer and inaccessible. The deep-eddying Axios River, winding around, provides an even more uncommon defense. Afterwards Art, rivaling Nature, made them very nearly impregnable: provided with a solid wall along the inside of the ascent, a formidable rampart was erected.

In the past the Romans had neglected the fortification of Prosakos, and since they were no longer troubled by the Bulgarians, they abandoned it. By making additions to Prosakos, Chrysos had a dwelling place which could not be taken by the Romans. He placed stone-throwing engines round about and collected weapons and food supplies, and flocks [503]
of sheep and herds of cattle were put to graze along the mountain ridges. It is not easy to define the perimeter of the fortress, for it spreads out in width and length, extending into the rain forests and thickly wooded places. Only one indispensable and essential advantage was lacking: not a single drop of water trickles there, nor are there wells, making necessary the descent to the river to draw water in pitchers. In possession of such a fortification, Chrysos was not at all disturbed by the fact that the emperor was marching against him but made preparations to oppose him.

Those Romans who were experienced in warfare—indeed, if there were any such left at that time—and who were informed of the features of the land, deemed it necessary, and advised the emperor accordingly, to bypass Prosakos and to attack the remaining towns and villages obedient to Chrysos; only after subduing these should he advance against Prosakos. Thus the morale of the troops would be high because they would first destroy those places that were easy to overcome and come into possession of booty. Chrysos, on the other hand, constrained by compelling circumstances, might alter his plans to the advantage of the Romans by surrendering or by despairing of his situation. They argued that on the first assault against the impregnable fortifications and attempt to scale the precipitous mountains—even if such were not futile—they could envision bloody sweat, great suffering, and the decapitated heads of fighting men.

These were the recommendations on the one side. The castrated chamberlains fiercely opposed them; they were led by George Oinaiotēs and the retinue of beardless striplings. These most clever and long-time attendants of the emperor persuaded him to lead the army straight to Prosakos, to carry the war to Chrysos, and to brandish the spear, asserting: [504]

Should he [Chrysos] be taken captive, then none will resist us in the future. Moreover, what prevents us from attacking the most vital area straightway instead of engaging the enemy periodically and seasonally? Why should anyone tolerate tarrying for long in these barbaric and disagreeable lands for no gain or only some small advantage at a season [summer 1197[1361]] when the Propontis is heavily laden with figs, melons, and other fruits of the earth which, planted by the hand of God in paradise,[1362] are now beginning to ripen. Would that we were standing on the plain of Rhegion[1363] gazing out over Aphameia and hailing holy Constantinople, sailing out to the luxuriant districts along the Pontos where the gentle, cool, life-giving north breeze ever blows, where newly caught fish jump about and dolphins playfully leap in all directions, where the delights of bathing beckon everywhere and the lapping of silver waves invigorate the spectator, where twittering swallows cast their spells, where warbling nightingales provide a feast for the ears of those who wander about hither and yon, and all manner of birds chirp here and there in the thickets and pipe their melodies on the wing.

The emperor rode full speed towards Prosakos to turn their reasoning into reality. Along the way several fortifications were razed, piles of fruit and wheat fields were burned to ashes, and the Turks who were sent to the emperor as allies by the satrap of the city of Ankara took Vlachs captive by the spear. Those who were sound of doctrine and devoted to the Orthodox faith earnestly entreated the emperor not to allow the Turks to transfer to their own country people who worship the same God we profess, so that by being compelled to abjure their faith, they should anger the Divinity against those who gave them up. They asked instead that the Vlach captives be given to the Romans to be their servants and that the Turks who had taken them prisoners should be favored with other imperial pledges of friendship, but the emperor rejected their counsel outright.

[505] After Alexios had arrived at Prosakos and had set up camp, he decided to make an attempt on the fortress at once. The deeds performed by the Romans at that time were indeed worthy of gifts of honor and wonder: they fought beyond all expectation. They who were armed with shields and bare swords and they who bore bows and arrows scrambled up the steep slopes around the fortress, and, drawing near, they smote the defenders on the walls and in the citadel. After much toil and slaughter, they drove the barbarians back from the advanced fortification which had recently been constructed as an outpost to protect the gates in this section. There were those who scaled the steep slopes nimble-footed as wild goats in an attempt to penetrate the walls and rush the citadel.

Just when they thought that they had accomplished a salutary and mighty deed, having chased the defenders from the walls and shut them inside, they realized that they had labored in vain; when they called for mattocks in order to pull down the walls, there was no one to furnish the required tool. But they persisted in this labor, grumbling against the officers in charge of the imperial tools. Using their hands and swords as crowbars,[1364] they detached the stones from their joints; then, leaping up, they pulled down the bulwark. Later, but too late, for the work was

under way and they were being harried by the enemy attacking them from above, the official in charge of the tools, a eunuch, arrived carrying mattocks bound together by a rope. The scoundrel should have been drowned forthwith or made to pay miserably for his actions as a brief respite for those who had suffered from combat as well as thirst and suffocation caused by the sun's burning heat, but he prudishly rebuked them and with a loud smacking of the lips pretended to be vexed and [506] quelled the resolve of these courageous men. Next they asked for ladders to scale the walls, but again there were none to be found. At this, they could no longer continue to toil without any hope of success, and they unwillingly departed.

As the Vlach defenders of the walls later verified, there was no question that the fortress would have fallen and Chrysos would have been taken prisoner (this deed would have been auspicious for the Romans, and much trouble would have been avoided thereafter) had the tools for the demolition of the wall been ready beforehand and supplied when needed. Now this was the consequence of the negligence of duty or perhaps God himself (may God be merciful to us if in foolishness we question his judgments), displeased[1365] with the men of those days, opposed their feats in battle.

Thus did the Romans contend hotly on that day, and thus did they disperse. On the next day they marched out for a second encounter and found the enemy fighting with high spirits and boasting because of yesterday's encounter. The barbarians' stone-throwing engines killed not a few, discharging the stones from on high with great success. The man responsible for discharging the stone missiles, turning round the withe and aiming the sling, was an excellent engineer; once he had served the Romans for pay, but when his salary was not forthcoming, he returned to Chrysos. The troops were battered not only by the rounded stones [507] hurled from the stone-throwing engines but also by the stones rolled down upon them from above. Often the large stones that did not hit their mark nonetheless killed those in whose vicinity they fell. Dashed against the rocky peaks below, the stones were shattered by the force of the discharged missiles, and the many fragments that scattered in all directions were a death-dealing evil.

Under the cover of night, the barbarians came out from behind the walls and destroyed the siege engines that the Romans had positioned on the hills, and the terrified troops on night watch fled straight to the tent of the *protovestiarios* John. Bewildered by the tumult, he leaped from his bed just as he was, and swooning and quivering from fear, he took to flight. The enemy divided among themselves the contents of the tent in which were found the frog green buskins of the *protovestiarios* and spent the whole night mocking and laughing at the debacle of the Romans. Moreover, the din made by letting down hollow, drum-like wine jars bound by willow twigs confounded the troops who did not know what was happening because of the darkness.

The emperor despaired of achieving his purpose and, not at all disposed to tarry in these parts any longer, sued for peace. He ceded Prosakos, Strummitsa, and the lands round about to Chrysos, and although the latter did not lack a wife, he agreed to give him one of his kinswomen in

marriage. Upon entering Byzantion he divorced the *protostrator*'s [Kamytzēs] daughter from her husband and sent her to Chrysos, appointing the *sebastos* Constantine Radenos to escort the bride. When the marriage rites had been celebrated and the nuptial banquet was served, Chrysos drank neat wine and gorged himself with food; his bride, respecting the code of behavior for newlyweds, ate abstemiously of the dishes set before her. Commanded by the groom to partake of the food with him,
[508] she did not comply immediately and drove her husband into a fury. For some time, he muttered to himself in his barbaric tongue and remained angry and later remarked with contempt in the Hellenic language, "Do not eat or drink."[1366]

At that time [late 1197 and 1198 (1199?)[1367]] an onslaught of Cumans mightier and more dreadful than ever before took place. Dividing their forces into four armies, the Cumans overran all of Macedonia, attacking well-fortified cities and ascending mountain peaks; in searching Mount Ganos, they despoiled many monasteries and killed monks, for none dared to raise a hand against them out of fear of the enemy's superiority in numbers, and they preferred to save their own skins.

The emperor, who saw that his young and beautiful daughters eagerly desired a second marriage, carefully selected their future husbands, choosing rulers of nations who professed the Christian faith and whom he feared as enemies. Later he changed his mind and married them to Romans, joining Irene in marriage to Alexios Palaiologos after he had first divorced his lawful wife, a beautiful woman descended from a noble family, and uniting Anna in wedlock to Theodore Laskaris, a daring youth and fierce warrior.

These unions took place at the approach of Shrove Sunday [1199 (February 1200?),[1368]] and while the father-in-law and emperor was not disposed to spend his leisure time at the horse races, the newlyweds insisted on seeing such spectacles. To please both himself and his sons-in-law, the emperor did not come to the Great Palace, nor did he go to the stadium, but instead ordered the racing chariots brought to the palace in Blachernai, where he improvised a theater. The bellows of the pipe organs were positioned as turning points in the courtyard, and a eunuch played the role of eparch of the queen of cities; I intentionally omit his name, but he was exceedingly wealthy, administered the highest offices, and was a member of the imperial court. Girding himself with a wickerwork (which in common speech is called wooden ass) covered with a horsecloth made from one piece and adorned with figures and shot with gold, he entered
[509] the improvised theater. It was quite a sight to see him as both magnificent horseman and neighing and prancing horse, obedient to the rein; shortly afterwards, he dropped the role of mounted eparch and took up that of *mapparius*.[1369] And they who put on the gymnastic contest were not the vulgar and baseborn, mind you, but youths of noble family growing their first beard. Only the emperor and empress and their distinguished relations and most trusted attendants viewed this comic play-acting; entrance was barred to all others. When the time arrived for the gymnastic contest of running the double-course race, the eunuch who played the role of *mapparius* took his position in the center, uncovered his arms, and putting on a round silver headdress, thrice summoned the lads to get set for

the race. A certain noble youth, notable for the lofty rank he held, stood behind the eunuch, and whenever the latter bent over and gave the signal for the race to begin, he would kick him so hard with the flat of his foot on the buttocks that the noise could be heard everywhere.

These boyish games were not yet finished when dreadful news brought an end to the amusements: Ivanko had rebelled at Philippopolis. As we stated above,[1370] he was renamed Alexios and became the emperor's grandson-in-law. Taking upon himself more power than was fitting, he was appointed general and received the command over the very troops which were set over against his own countrymen, the Vlachs, in the province of Philippopolis. Indeed, when he made his appearance as master of the territories in those parts, he did as he willed, for since he was flexible and energetic, he was capable of accomplishing any task to which he put his heart and mind. He trained his countrymen under his command in warfare, enriching them with gifts and strengthening them with armaments; the mountains opposite Haimos were fortified and became almost unassailable.

The emperor was lavish in his praise when he learned of these things. [510] In his great regard for Alexios, he indulged him with many bounteous gifts, and he gladly heard him[1371] and readily granted his requests. When the emperor's counselors observed the man's actions, they declared them to be excellent and well done but added that in truth his intention was not to benefit the Romans. For this reason, they advised the emperor to dismiss Alexios from his command. It is not feasible that a barbarian who but short while ago was a mighty adversary of the Romans should suddenly reverse himself, that in all innocence he would build new fortresses and towns on advantageous sites and increase the numbers of his own countrymen in the army while diminishing those of the Romans. He would have been an intractable foe had not the idea been sowed in his mind to establish his own tyranny, for, as some men do not like to express their thoughts by ways of the lips' portals, their actions often speak louder than words in disclosing the secrets of the mind.

But these wise opinions were directed to ears that heard not, for the emperor, assuming his granddaughter's wedding to be a pledge of loyalty, deemed Alexios to be completely trustworthy and innocuous, beguiled, I believe, by the maleficent power which ever led the Roman state to her ruin. Not long afterwards, that which was feared became reality. Dumbfounded by the news, the emperor did not know what to do because the evil had erupted unexpectedly. Seeing how difficult it would be to levy [511] troops, he immediately dispatched a certain eunuch,[1372] his most trusted friend, to the rebel Alexios [c. March 1199 (1200?)] to remind him of their compacts, so that nothing unpleasant should befall him. Although Alexios was unworthy of those hopes which the emperor had held, the emperor did not despair of the rebel changing his mind. The next day, the emperor's newly married sons-in-law marched out together with his near friends and kinsmen.

When the wicked eunuch reached Alexios, he did nothing to effect the purpose of his mission but by his presence encouraged him in the task at hand. He warned him of the imminent arrival of the Romans who had set out against him and instructed him to avoid the plains and take to the

mountains where he and his troops, consisting of his fellow countrymen who had joined him in his rebellion, would be safe. The troops under the command of the emperor's sons-in-law and of the *protostrator* Manuel Kamytzēs pursued the rebel energetically with admirable eagerness, and everyone wished to play the leading role. However, they lost the opportunity for victory because the prey was frightened away, and they relaxed their effort.

The more impetuous felt that they should pursue Alexios in the mountains to which he had escaped; the more cautious were not at all eager to grope for the track of an eagle flying over crags and mountains, or to
[512] search after the creeping of a serpent on a rock,[1373] or to enrage a ferocious wild boar into combat and thus expose the breast to be gored; nor were they eager to surround the fortresses which Alexios had restored and erected and to make them obedient to the emperor. This latter counsel being determined as the better, they made an assault upon the fortress built by Alexios at the foot of the mountain at a place called Kritzimos.[1374] The Romans labored mightily and competed with one another in daring, and not a few nobles were lost while bringing the scaling ladders to the walls, the foremost among whom was George Palaiologos. Finally destroying the fortification, they subjugated other adjacent small towns; some were subjugated with blood, while others capitulated.

Alexios, who was ingenious and prolific in deeds of war, demonstrated in his campaigns against the Romans his complete command of military tactics; at the last he resorted to the following most clever stratagem and overpowered the *protostrator*. He hit upon the idea of transferring large herds from the summits to the plain; these he delivered together with a contingent of Roman captives, to his fellow countrymen in the vicinity of the Haimos with instructions to bring them to Ioannitsa, the governor of Zagora, as his share of the spoils and as a reward for having allied himself with Alexios and having made covenants[1375] against the Romans. Then he entrapped the Romans by lying in ambush. He knew well the greed and rapacity of the men, aware of the fact that when the Romans chance upon a windfall, they will lay down their lives for it at once, with no concern for their own safety. And indeed, shortly afterwards, he had the Romans doing exactly what he had turned over in his mind. As soon as the *protostrator* heard what was happening, he set out from Batrachokas-
[513] tron, where he had pitched camp, and came to Baktounion. Taken in by appearances and oblivious to Alexios's ruse, he allowed his troops to plunder everything in sight while he walked about, observing what was taking place. Emerging from the ambushes, Alexios encircled the *protostrator*, and, spreading his troops like a dragnet or seine, he killed the commander's companions and took him alive. The rebel's stratagem completely unnerved the remaining Roman troops, and the rebel forces were elated.

The Romans, no longer effective, did not have the boldness to oppose Alexios in doubtful combat but preferred to stay close to Philippopolis lest Alexios bring this city also to terms. As was to be expected, he made himself master of all the small towns and fortresses which had been raised on the heights of the mountain passes over against the Haimos, situated on equally rough terrain, nor did he leave behind the others to remain as

they were but incited to rebellion against the Romans all those towns and fortresses leading down to Mosynopolis, and reaching as far as Xantheia, and stretching out towards Mount Pangaios, and up to Abdera. Furthermore, he subjugated the theme of Smolena and spread over the neighboring lands like a contagious disease, removing Romans and killing them and receiving ransom for others; his own countrymen who willingly sided with him, he allowed to remain on their lands.

Ever extending his sway, he was far worse than earlier rebels, and he was driven to such cruelty, which most barbarians deem to be manliness, that while carousing, he ordered the Romans taken in battle torn limb from limb. The emperor, as his actions demonstrated, reckoned the *protostrator*'s capture a godsend, a delightful and excellent piece of good luck. Making a diligent search of all his assets, he laid his hands on the [514] man's immense riches that befitted a monarch; he also sentenced his wife and son to prison, on what grounds I know not. As spring was coming to a close, he set out for Kypsella [before 21 June 1200].[1376]

At this time the doctrine on the Holy Sacraments was brought to light and divided the Christian flock into opposing factions; and those things which merited both honor and silence were loudly contemned in the agora and on the crossroads by anyone who wished to do so. After George Xiphilinos, who governed the church for seven years [10 September 1191 to 7 July 1198], John Kamateros ascended the patriarchal throne;[1377] he deemed it necessary to cut down root and branch the doctrine which first sprang up and was whispered about in the days of Xiphilinos, to subject to anathema its author, the false monk Sikiditēs, as an heresiarch who introduced novel doctrines, and to prevail upon the others to remain silent following his own example, contending that the mystery remains a mystery. Sikiditēs resorted to dialectical tricks and strained proofs, relying on strange and unseemly arguments introduced from outside. Moreover, he composed catechetical sermons on the occasion of the commencement of Lent in order to salve in their struggle those who have undertaken the spiritual battle, making mention in turn of the doctrine. In this he discussed certain opinions of his own but committed the arguments of his adversaries to silence in order, I believe, to avoid their refutation; in attacking the doctrine, he accused them of certain ideas of which they were entirely ignorant or had never conceived.

The point at issue was whether the Sacred Body of Christ taken in [515] communion is incorruptible, as it was after the Passion and Resurrection, or whether it is corruptible, as it was before the Passion. They who contended that it was incorruptible cited the great theologian Cyril, according to whom the partaking of the Sacred Mysteries [Holy Communion] is a confession and remembrance of the death and resurrection of the Lord for our sakes, that whoever receives but a portion takes in whole Him who was handled by Thomas[1378] and that, according to John of the Golden Tongue [Chrysostom], He is eaten as He was after the Resurrection,[1379] and they put forward the words of Eutychios, the light of [516] the Church:[1380]

> One receives the whole of the Sacred Body and Precious Blood of the Lord, even though one partakes of but a portion of them. He

is divided indivisibly in all because of the mingling,[1381] in the same manner that a seal stamps its impressions and configuration on receptive substances and remains the same after the imprint has been made, neither diminished nor altered by the stamped objects, even though they should be more in number; so does the sound of the voice, emitted and projected through the air, remain whole in its utterance and is carried intact through the air to the hearing of all, and none of those who hear it perceives more or less than any other, for it stays indivisible and whole for all, even though the hearers should be ten thousand or more in number; furthermore it has a substantiality of its own for the sound of the voice is nothing else but air in vibration. Let no one have any doubt that the Incorruptible, Immortal, Sacred, and Life-giving Blood and Body of the Lord after the Mystic Sacrifice and the Holy Resurrection, which is eaten in the antitypes[1382] by way of the Divine Liturgy, are not only less diminished than the aforementioned examples in imparting their vital forces but are found whole in all.

While the one faction put forward these arguments and introduced the testimony of a large number of the doctors of the Church, the other faction contended that the consecrated elements of Body and Blood[1383] were not a confession in the resurrection but only a sacrifice; consequently the Body was corruptible, lacking both mind and soul, and the communicant did not receive the whole Christ but only a portion, since he partakes of only a portion. "For if," they asserted, "the Body were immortal, having mind and soul, and it would be impalpable and invisi-
[517] ble, incapable of being chewed and ground by the teeth, nor would it be able to endure being divided,"[1384] for it appears that they denied the resurrection of the Body; they contended (as if they knew) that after the resurrection we will neither be subject to touch and sight nor have human form, but that we will flit about like incorporeal shadows,[1385] maintaining that the Lord's entrance through shut doors[1386] was no miracle but only that which is natural and fitting to those who have risen from the dead. One can find no such thing, however, in the Scriptures, and this doctrine was the shameful and unattested revilement of a certain few who maintained that only after the union and communion [of the Body and Blood], the Lord's human nature[1387] became incorruptible and divine, and for this reason they believed that that which was received in Holy Communion[1388] became incorruptible.[1389]

[518] The emperor, having sided with the better opinion [May 1200], arrived, as I have said, at Kypsella. With the troops that had assembled there, he went up to Orestias. After a goodly number of days, he was overcome by a sense of helplessness, for he realized that the rebel was unconquerable and his own army, terrified at the mere mention of the enemy, was opposed to giving battle. The majority of the populace deemed he would take hurried flight. They thought that his very presence was a cause for disgrace, since he had accomplished nothing useful whatsoever and his reluctance to give battle only encouraged the barbarian to be overbold. Clucking and cringing because of the harsh and difficult circumstances of the times, he dispatched his most trusted envoys[1390] to Alexios, inviting him to make peace. He gave thought as to how to slay

him in some way by treachery without at all giving up the idea of joining battle.

The emperor and his troops made their way to the province of Philippopolis and encamped around the fortress of Stenimachos,[1391] wherein many of the barbarians had taken refuge. Laying siege with his forces, he took it by storm and enslaved those within. The rebel refused to meet with the emperor, nor would he agree to any peace terms unless the emperor first gave up all claim to the provinces and cities which he had subdued and sent to him his promised bride Theodora, together with the insignia of office.

After the treaties and sworn compacts had at last been negotiated [519] [c. July 1200] according to the demands of Alexios, the emperor devised a scheme which I do not know if it be fitting to generals and emperors, since they, above all others, are required to keep their oaths. To lure Alexios, he dispatched his eldest son-in-law Alexios with imperial instructions, and after the execution of the sworn compacts, as I have said, he had him seized and put in chains. Henceforth, the emperor prevailed without any trouble over the cities and fortresses once ruled by Alexios, and he put to flight his brother Mitos. Having accomplished these things, he returned to Byzantion.[1392]

He found his wife Euphrosynē in no way content with keeping within doors but playing the man against seditionists and demagogues and unraveling the machinations woven by a certain Kontostephanos like the threads of Penelope.[1393] These things would not have been held in contempt, nor would they have excited wonderment from afar, had they been bound by limitations, but the empress's mad delusions and excessive zeal led her to believe that by inquiring diligently into the future, she could vitiate and dispel impending misfortunes even as the sun dissolves black clouds. In her predictions of things to come, she devoted herself to unspeakable rituals and divinations and practised many abominable rites. She went so far as to cut off the snout of the bronze Kalydonian boar which stands in the Hippodrome with its back bristling and advances with projecting tusks against a lion, and she conceived of having the back of the gloriously triumphant Herakles, Lysimachos's[1394] most beautiful work, in which the hero holds his head in his hand and bewails his fate while a lions's skin is spread out over a basket, lacerated by repeated flogging.

O Herakles, brave and great-hearted hero, the absurdity and folly of [520] those things dared against you! Did a Eurystheus ever propose such a task for you?[1395] Did an Omphale, inflamer of amours and lascivious wench, treat you so disdainfully?[1396]

In addition to these shameful deeds, she removed the limbs from other statues and beheaded some with hammer blows. What did the City's populace not utter in disgust over these improprieties, and with what reproaches did they not dress down her who brought these to pass? Some of the vulgar populace trained those birds which mimic human speech, whose mouths are muzzled by nature so as not to sing, to repeat in the common speech this moral in the lanes and crossroads, "O strumpet, a fair price if you please!"[1397] The empress wore on her hand leather fitted around the fingers and shot through with gold, on which she held a bird trained to hunt game; going out for the chase, she clucked and shouted

out commands and was followed by a considerable number of those who attend to and care after such things.

Not long afterwards, Kaykhusraw appeared before the emperor wearing a Persian conical cap on his head[1398] and dressed in raiment adorned with gold. But before continuing the history from this point, I shall first discuss the Turk's lineage.

To the Ikonian Kilij Arslan, who in former years was a most formidable foe of Emperor Manuel and was crowned with victory in battle, were given many sons. To Masᶜūd [Muhyī al-Dīn] he allotted Amaseia and Ankara, prosperous Pontic cities; Qutb al-Dīn governed Melitenē
[521] and Koloneia together with Kaisareia; Rukn al-Dīn was given Aminsos, Dokeia,[1399] and other coastal cities to rule. This Kaykhusraw ruled Ikonion, Lykaonia, and Pamplylia and governed all the land stretching to Kotyaeion.

When Qutb al-Dīn departed this life, Rukn al-Dīn, who held sway over Dokeia, and Masᶜūd, the ruler of Ankara, contended hotly over this satrapy. Rukn al-Dīn, who was more clever by nature and exulted exceedingly in warfare, outdistanced his brother and rival and carried off the victory. Since Masᶜūd submitted and agreed to a covenant of friendship, the more powerful Rukn al-Dīn took possession of only a portion of Masᶜūd's toparchy and allowed him to govern there as before. He was especially maddened, however, by Kaykhusraw and suffered a burning passion for Ikonion, the paternal seat of government; he also loathed him for having a Christian mother. Through envoys, he advised Kaykhusraw to withdraw from Ikonion and remove himself from all power if he wished to perform a good service and spare the cities and the individuals and nations therein from the horrors of war. Thus did the barbarian boast, unsurpassed in his arrogance, his eyebrows raised above the clouds in scorn, as he poured out and scattered his deadly venom in many directions.

A truce was proclaimed and Kaykhusraw came to the emperor, emulating the example of his father who had also wronged his kinsmen and been wronged by them after the death of his father Masᶜūd,[1400] for he had regarded Emperor Manuel as a sacred anchor and a firm hand capable of supporting him. But Kaykhusraw's hopes were not realized, for he met with a response that was less than anticipated. He received but few favors
[522] and these, to say the least, insufficient to what he had in mind; finding no support in his opposition to his brother, he returned home.

He had barely made his entrance into Ikonion when Rukn al-Dīn launched an attack against him. He was ejected from the throne and fled as a fugitive to Leon of Armenia.[1401] His reception was not cold but cordial and pleasant, even though they had many times gone to war against one another, for men like to deem worthy of compassion not only their kinsmen and coreligionists but also foreigners who, although having shown themselves oftimes to be adversaries, approach and fall at their feet. However, Leon absolutely refused to undertake his defense and restore him to his former dominion, contending that he had made peace with Rukn al-Dīn and that such assistance could only lead to bloodshed.

For these reasons, Kaykhusraw made his way back to the emperor, imagining that he would assuredly receive his help in recovering his

throne. But among the Romans, he failed once again and was not accorded the least treatment befitting his noble birth.[1402]

The following year [1 September 1200 to 31 August 1201?], when the Vlachs, joined by the Cumans, ravaged the best lands of the province, they returned unscathed. Indeed, they would have reached the very land gates of the queen of cities in their onslaught had not the most Christian nation of the Rhōs [Russians] and their chiefs been moved to attack of their own volition, giving way to the entreaties of their own chief shepherd.[1403] They displayed admirable zeal in their concern over the fortunes of the Romans, as they were unable to endure their frequent abductions throughout the year and their being delivered over to non-Christian barbarian nations. Whence Roman, the ruler of Galicia[1404] [523] quickly collected a large and gallant army and hastened against the Cumans; overrunning their land with great ease, he wasted and destroyed it. These kind deeds he performed often to the glory and greatness of the unblemished faith of the Christians, the smallest part of which, like the mustard seed, can remove and transport mountains.[1405] Thus he put an end to the Cuman raids and awarded a respite from their tribulations to the utterly ruined Romans to whom he and his army appeared as an unexpected succor, an incalculable host of shield-fellows, and a phalanx, collected by God, so to speak, to a nation sharing the same faith.

The same year, however, was not to leave these Tauro-Scythians without factional strife, as both Roman and Rurik, the prince of Kiev, reddened their swords with the slaughter of their fellow countrymen. Roman, strong of body and mighty with his hands, carried away the victory and laid low many of the Cumans who had joined Rurik in battle, constituting a powerful and valiant phalanx around him.

But this too must not pass unrecorded. There was a certain money-changer, Kalomodios by name. He was laden with much money, and, greedy of gain, he often set forth on long and arduous journeys[1406] for purposes of trade. A skinflint[1407] who slept with his wallet and placed everything second to making money, he often provided the gold-hunting emperors with the occasion to view him as the richest of men and as Alkinoos's orchard, where, in but a moment, not pear bore pear and fig yielded fig but gold brought forth gold and silver produced silver.[1408] He was undisguisedly the tree of knowledge planted in the City's agora and lanes as though in the garden of Eden.[1409]

Just as long ago the fruit's full bloom enslaved our first ancestors,[1410] so [524] did the gold's gleam tempt the emperor's financial officers to gather it in. But as soon as they laid hands on Kalomodios, they stirred up the City to sedition as though they had suffered a worse calamity than our first parents. They who plucked and ate of the fruit and did not confine their gluttony to sight only were justly punished, while they who were too late even to gaze upon the wealth searched in vain with mouths agape and suffered the thirst of Tantalos. In possession of the fount, they could not drink therefrom, but rushing often to draw water, they found it disappearing from their very hands. When the vulgar masses learned of Kalomodios's arrest that evening and discovered the reasons, they gathered in groups at dawn and entered the temple of God, where they beheld the chief high priest (this was John Kamateros). They surrounded him and

threatened to tear him asunder and cast him headfirst from the altar unless he dispatched letters to the emperor and played upon them like a panpipe, calling back Kalomodios to them like a lost sheep[1411] that had strayed from the flock. The patriarch barely managed to calm the clamorous populace by his eloquence; speaking brilliantly, with passionate gestures, he restored to them the man they sought as though he were a lamb but without his being fleeced of his gold by his wolf-like jailers, nor was a hair of his head harmed.

Thus this episode passed without bloodshed; beginning on a tragic and ominous note, it concluded in tumultuous comic sport and laughter mingled with tears.[1412] Not many days later, there erupted another evil which
[525] did result in the shedding of blood. A certain John, surnamed Lagos, who had received an appointment from the emperor to command the Praetorian prison, wished to obtain monies for himself and his officers from this post. (Alas! How terribly sordid the thought, for the convention of historical writing does not permit saying more.) To appropriate the alms of the lovers of God, at night he released from prison the most notorious thieves, still fettered in chains, and these furtively ransacked the houses and brought him the stolen goods. From the booty he distributed the prize of impiety to those lying in wait at night and the rest he offered to those to whom it was not proper to do so; completely faithless to God in his cowardly actions, he played the role of the faithful servant.[1413] Many accused him before the emperor of performing unholy deeds, but although he promised to amend his ways, he put it off as though he were unable to do so. In the same way, Lagos, who did not cower because of his shameless actions but wielded unaccountable power, performed his godless deeds with impunity.

It so happened that after one of these low fellows was seized, struck many lashes on the back, and condemned to have his hair cropped, the more hotheaded elements of the City and the victim's fellow artisans were fired to rebellion. Confusion befell the City, and no small number of artisans who gathered at the praetorium were eager to catch Lagos, but he disappeared quicker than a hare in flight.[1414] The populace fled together and hastened to enter the Great Church and proclaim another emperor. But the temple had been occupied in advance by the emperor's ax-bearing guard, and the crowds could only stay on at the praetorium and shout abuses against the emperor. The latter, who was not present in the City but was encamped somewhere near Chrysopolis, dispatched a company of his bodyguard to occupy the praetorium. The eparch of the City, Constantine Tornikēs, also arrived there. The throng, infuriated by the mere sight of them, turned the eparch to flight by pelting him with stones and expelled the bodyguard. Breaking open the gates of the praetorium, they gave the prisoners license to loot the Christian church located there, and they destroyed the synagogue of the Saracens[1415] to its
[526] very foundations. Without reason, they marched on the so-called Chalkē prison and perpetrated the same deeds there. With the arrival of imperial troops led by one of the emperor's sons-in-law (this was Alexios Palaiologos), they were held in check but did not withdraw altogether; at first unarmed and then with a few armed men alongside them, the mob engaged the troops clad in full armor, choosing to die without achieving any

deed worthy of glory. There were those who appeared atop the roofs and flung down tiles and some threw stones as large as their hands could hold; others discharged arrows against the imperial ranks. Throughout the entire day their wrath was unabated, and they withdrew only towards evening. On the morrow they uttered not a sound, nor did they come running to fight a second battle.[1416]

As soon as this evil had passed, a member of the Komnenos family, John by name, rebelled against the emperor [31 July 1200 (1201?)];[1417] potbellied and with a body shaped like a barrel, he was nicknamed "the Fat." Without warning he slipped into the Great Church and placed on his head one of the small crowns which hung suspended all around the altar. He was joined by those who had sworn to support his cause (they were many and almost all were of noble blood), and when no small number of the masses who had learned what was afoot came running, they gained easy entrance into the palace. As he sat on a golden throne, John promoted certain of his followers to the highest offices, and the mob and some of the rebels poured through the agorae and the streets and reached the shore, where they proclaimed him emperor of the Romans and pulled down the magnificent dwellings there.

At nightfall, John neglected to set a guard over the palace as was necessary, nor did he restore the overthrown gates. Since no one had opposed him, he behaved as though he were safely ensconced; overcome by thirst because he was so corpulent, he emptied out whole jars of [527] water, spouting like a dolphin, and boiled off the drops of perspiration that gushed forth as from a spring and evaporated from the heat. His troops went to the splendid Hippodrome but lounged about without any purpose, and at sundown the mobs dispersed like flocks of birds in their desire to rise up early so that they could come running together to once again fall upon the magnificent dwellings and search out their contents. The emperor gathered together his kinsmen and veteran troops and dispatched them early in the morning to attack John. Not even through the early dawn was the City's throng content to remain at rest; most were anxious to band together about the tyrant at the first break of day to assist him in his task and to fight against the imperial troops in many ways.

One group boarded ships and put in at the Monastery of Hodegoi, where they came to grips with the emperor's bodyguards; no armed men were able to pass through the center of the City. In the theater, they clashed abruptly with John's partisans, whom they dispersed easily, and with the greatest of ease they attacked and killed John, inflicting blows all over his body as if he were a fatted beast. His severed head was first brought to the emperor, and then, still grinning horribly and spurting out blood, it was suspended from the arch of the agora in full view of the public. The remainder of his body was lifted onto a bier and set out in the open at the southern gate of the Blachernai palace. From below the palatial suite of rooms that overlooked the gate, the emperor could be seen looking down upon the corpse swollen larger than a mammoth bull, [528] taking delight in the spectacle and exulting in his achievement. Afterwards, the body was removed and exposed as food for dogs[1418] and birds, an act deemed brutal and inhuman by all. John's fellow conspirators, who

had been seized and subjected to torture in order to ascertain the names of their accomplices, were sent off to prison in chains.

Such things and the following as well, this emperor wrought.[1419] Delivering over six triremes to a certain man whose name was Constantine and surname Frangopoulos, he sent him to the Euxine Pontos, ostensibly to investigate the cargo of a certain ship which had shipwrecked somewhere near Kerasous[1420] while navigating the Phasis River[1421] down to Byzantion; in actuality he was to attack the merchantmen that sailed down to the city of Aminsos and plunder their wares. According to the imperial command, as he made his way up the Euxine, he spared not a single ship but despoiled all merchantmen, as many as were making for Byzantion laden with wares, as well as those that had discharged their cargoes and were on their way back after taking on fresh merchandise. He returned two months later having put certain merchants, whose monies he appropriated, to the sword; these he cast into the deep, and others he dismissed more naked than a pestle. The latter made their way into the City, where they appeared before the palace and entered the holy temples holding burning tapers. They entreated the emperor to help them recover the losses they had unjustly suffered, but once he had sold their merchandise and deposited the revenues in his treasury, they could not move him to compassion.

The Ikonion merchants applied for help to Rukn al-Dīn, who then dispatched envoys to the emperor and demanded the return of their monies; negotiations for a peace treaty were also undertaken at this time. Resting his hope on a lie and attempting to obscure the obvious, the emperor condemned Frangopoulos as having acted contrary to his wishes
[529] and renounced all the wicked acts that he had committed. When the accord was concluded [August 1200], Rukn al-Dīn received fifty minae of silver as compensation for the merchants' losses in addition to the annual tribute. Some days later, the emperor was caught red-handed conspiring against the life of Rukn al-Dīn: he induced a certain Assassin with promises of a huge reward, foolishly, since this was a precarious friendship, and, handing him a letter written in red ink, sent him forth to kill Rukn al-Dīn. But the Assassin was taken captive, and when he disclosed the letter and the plot, the peace treaty was broken; as a result, the Turks once again carried out many attacks against the Eastern cities.[1422]

A certain Michael,[1423] the self-willed, bastard son of John the *sebastokrator,* dispatched as the tax collector for the province of Mylassa, rebelled against the emperor [summer 1200]. Defeated in battle, he took flight and sought refuge with Rukn al-Dīn, who, because he hated the emperor, most gladly welcomed him. With Rukn al-Dīn's troops, Michael ravaged the cities along the Maeander in many ways, showing himself to be worse than the foreigners and a more pitiless murderer.

It was the Komnenos family that was the major cause of the destruction of the empire; because of their ambitions and their rebellions, she suffered the subjugation of provinces and cities and finally fell to her knees. These Komnenoi, who sojourned among the barbarian nations hostile to the Romans, were the utter ruin of their country, and whenever they attempted to seize and hold sway over our public affairs, they were the most inept, unfit, and stupid of men.

In response to Michael's rebellion, Alexios marched out to the eastern provinces in the leaf-shedding month [November 1200]. On his return, he stopped off at the Pythia[1424] to bathe in the hot waters. When he had had enough of bathing tubs and bowls of wine, he thought to extend his voyage at sea, for the pleasures of land and sea competed before the emperor, each in its turn prevailing and winning the splendid crown of victory. Alexios then boarded a flagship, which sailed straightway [530] through the nearby islets that gird Constantinople and around the Astakenos Gulf.[1425] At this time, a violent storm blew up suddenly, swelling the waves. The ship was lifted upright, bow over stern, and all but sank as water poured in from both sides. The sailors, thrown into confusion, dripped with sweat, and the passengers shouted for help and invoked God, and there was the sound of wailing and piercing screams. With the emperor were sailing all of his friends, both male and female; the desire of all was only to set foot on dry land. At great risk, the ship managed to round Prinkipos and, when the waves subsided, sailed down to Chalcedon. There the company recovered from their vertigo, and spitting out the brine and consigning to the deep of oblivion the vicissitudes and terrors of their plight, they crossed over to the Great Palace, celebrating horse races and entertaining the populace with spectacles.

At the conclusion of these events, the emperor wished to go directly to Blachernai, but because the season was unsuitable (for the emperors up to our times scrutinize the position of the stars before they take a single step), he remained in the Great Palace through the first week of Lent [11–18 February 1201] against his wishes. Since the sixth day [17 February] was not unpropitious for a change of residence, especially if he departed in the morning twilight, he decided to arrive at Blachernai in the dark, before the sun had begun to cast its rays. The trireme rode at anchor off the shore of the palace, and all the emperor's kinsmen assembled at his side with lights to sail in company with him. Now God demonstrated that he is the Lord of seasons and years[1426] and that he guides the steps of some or trips them up: the floor before the emperor's bed collapsed without visible cause and opened into a yawning chasm. Contrary to all expectations, the emperor was delivered from the danger, but one of his sons-in-law, Alexios Palaiologos, and many others fell through the opening and suffered grievous injury to their legs. A certain eunuch was killed as he fell to the very bottom of the gaping hole. What were the emperor's thoughts about these events, I have no way of knowing. What occurred immediately afterwards [531] [spring 1201], I will now record.

This emperor's third daughter was named Evdokia. While her father wandered among the Ismaelites and roamed Palestine to escape Andronikos, Isaakios, her father's brother, gave her in marriage [1185–87] to one of the sons of Stefan Nemanja,[1427] the ruler of the Serbs. Stefan Nemanja remained in power for only a short time and then ascended Mount Papykios and embraced monastic life [1196]; his son Stefan presented Evdokia as joint heir to the paternal satrapy and succeeded after many years in fathering children with her.

But time, the transformer and perpetual engenderer of dissimilarities, sundered them from their former unity and like-mindedness and did not allow their oneness to remain unsullied until their last breath, that which

prudent couples deem to be the fullness of human happiness. Stefan accused his wife of itching from scabby incontinence, while she charged him with being drunk from the appearance of the morning star, with not drinking water from his own water jars, and with gorging himself on bread eaten in secret.[1428] As the dissension continued to grow apace in this manner, Stefan conceived a monstrous and most barbarous action which he pursued with a vengeance; fabricating the story (or he may have been telling the truth) that Evdokia was caught in the act of adultery, he stripped her of her woman's robe, leaving her with only her undergarment, which was cut round about so that it barely covered her private parts and dismissed her thus in disgrace to go forth as a wanton [after June 1198].

Vukan, Stefan's brother, opposed this indecent, relentless, and excessively repellent act and reproached his brother for his inhuman behavior. He pleaded with him to temper his wrath in view of Evdokia's illustrious
[532] lineage and to take pity on himself lest he become notorious for his shameful deeds. But he could not deter Stefan from his unbending, implacable resolve, and, deeming Evdokia worthy of a proper and safe return, he delivered her to an escort to conduct her to Dyrrachium in a fitting manner. When Evdokia's father learned what had happened, he dispatched a two-headed throne, necklaces, and splendid imperial garments and welcomed his daughter.[1429]

Nemanja's sons did not continue to the end in brotherly love; warring against one another, they joined the chorus of others who, as we stated but a short while ago, ignore nature because of their lust for power and the stupidity of their ways. The victorious Vukan expelled Stefan from both throne and country [April 1202 to summer 1203]. When fratricide spread as a pattern, model, and general law from the queen of cities to the far corners of the earth, not only Turks, Russians, Serbs, and afterwards Hungarians [1203] but also the remaining rulers of barbarian nations filled their countries with seditions and murders, drawing their swords against their own kinsmen.

During these years [1201–2], Ioannitsa marched out from Mysia with a very large and well-armed force; laying siege to Konstantia, he easily took this eminent city in the district of the Rhodopē. He razed the city's walls and departed to encamp near Varna, which he besieged fiercely on the sixth day of the Lord's Passions [23 March 1201]. The majority of the defenders were mighty warriors, and these, aided by Latin troops, defended the city tenaciously. In response, Ioannitsa constructed a four-sided siege engine as long as the fosse's width and as high as the city's wall and set it on wheels, positioning it next to the fosse. Later, when it was overturned, it spanned both sides; thus, Ioannitsa's troops used one and the same siege engine both as a bridge across the fosse and as a
[533] scaling ladder that reached the city's height. In this way, Varna was taken in three days. Ioannitsa neither respected the solemnity of the day (for it was the most blessed Sabbath on which Christ slept in the tomb) nor reverenced the name of Christian, to which he only paid lip service. Driven by bloodthirsty demons, he pushed all those he took captive alive into the fosse, and, filling it level with earth, he made of it a common burial place. When he had demolished the walls of the city, he returned

to Mysia, having honored the first and chief day of the week with such offerings to the dead and most loathsome rites.[1430]

At the same time, the following events were taking their course. The *protostrator* Manuel Kamytzēs, who had long been confined in prison in Mysia [since 1200], begged his cousin the emperor to pay his ransom out of his own substance. He was a captive of the barbarians and should not be overlooked as though he were a criminal. But he could not sway the emperor in his letters. Despairing, he appealed to his son-in-law Chrysos and beseeched him to ransom him. Once his petitions were consummated, he left Mysia for Prosakos. He did not desist once he arrived there from importuning the emperor to pay Chrysos the ransom money, which amounted to two hundred pounds of gold, contending that much more had been confiscated, in addition to the silver and gold vessels, the silken yarn, and splendid garments about which he had preened himself as the richest of men. Alexios placed his relationship with the *protostrator* on one scale of balance and his wealth on the other and weighed both; he found that the second was by far the heavier in the fall of the scale pan; whence he paid no heed whatsoever to Kamytzēs' petitions.

In desperation Kamytzēs, together with Chrysos, decided to attack the Roman themes that bordered Prosakos. They conquered Pelagonia with ease and effortlessly subdued Prilep, and they meddled in the affairs of the following: they incited revolts in distant places; they penetrated Thessalian Tempē[1431] and took possession of the plains; they created disturbances in Hellas and made the Peloponnesos unstable. [534]

Then a second rebel rose up like the mythical giant from among the Sown-men: a certain John whose surname was Spyridonakis, a Cypriot by race, plain in appearance and of average height, squint-eyed, a craftsman by trade, a rustic in station, and this emperor's attendant, who, thanks to unreasonable promotions and preferments, was appointed keeper of the private fisc. Afterwards appointed governor of Smolena, he observed the meanness of mind and brazenness of him who sent him; elated by the security of his province, he became the emperor's despair, a second obstacle, a Satan, a thorn, and an unforeseen circumstance of the worst kind.

The emperor was afflicted by a third evil, the chronic disease which had spread to the joints of his body, and thus, like Epimetheus, he was dangerously exposed to both enemies. He jumped about and thrashed his legs as though he were held fast by the throat, all this because he had not ransomed his cousin and, to his own reproach, had installed Spyridonakis, that worthless scoundrel among men, as governor of so many strongly fortified cities.

Dividing the assembled troops into two forces, he committed one to the command of his son-in-law, Alexios Palaiologos, whom he sent in pursuit of the manikin Spyridonakis, and dispatched the other to John Ionopolitēs to oppose the *protostrator*. The emperor's valiant brother-in-law, Alexios, prevailed against Spyridonakis with little trouble and forced the pigmy-like humunculus to flee to Mysia. The *protostrator*'s rebellion continued for some time, but it also had an auspicious conclusion. With guile, the emperor resorted to various ruses in dealing with Chrysos; in particular, he sent from Byzantion Theodora, his daughter's daughter, [535]

whom he had betrothed to Ivanko, and gave her in marriage to Chrysos. By such tricks he regained Pelagonia and Prilep and caused Kamytzēs to withdraw from Thessaly, partly because he was defeated in battle and partly because he decided to flee. Finally, Alexios forced him out of Stanon, to which he had escaped as an impregnable refuge. Aglow with such successes, he imagined that he would be invincible for a long time to come and thus was free to remain at home, and he returned to Byzantion. At this time [spring 1202], he took Strummitsa, using guile to surround Chrysos, and concluded a peace treaty with Ioannitsa.[1432]

Up to now, the course of our history has been smooth and easily traversed, but from this point on I do not know how to continue. What judgment is reasonable for him who must relate in detail the common calamities which this queen of cities endured during the reign of the terrestrial angels?[1433] I would that I might worthily and fully recount the most oppressive and grievous of all evils. But, since this is impossible, I shall abbreviate the narration in the hope that it will be of greater profit to posterity because moderation has been exercised in reporting the sufferings, thereby mitigating excessive grief.

[536] Emperor Alexios had deposed his brother Isaakios from the throne; it is necessary that we do not lose sight of his incarceration altogether. Alexios, unmindful of the indelible disasters suffered by the masses (nor does Vengeance sleep forever, but takes delight in the chronic changes [in government] and eagerly pursues those who perform lawless acts, pouncing swiftly and noiselessly), provided his brother, who was confined at the Double Column which stands on the shore near the straits, with a comfortable existence, and no one was denounced for sailing across to him. Anyone who wished to do so, and especially from among the race of the Latins, sailed up to Issakios. Made privy to secret designs aimed at opposing and overthrowing Alexios, he posted letters to his daughter Irene, who shared the marriage bed with Philip, king of the Germans at that time, and urged that he be avenged as a father; and replies winged their way thence, advising him what to do.

Later, the emperor released Issakios's son, Alexios, from prison and allowed him to move about freely. When he was about to march out against the *protostrator* and had taken up quarters at Damokraneia[1434] [c. September 1201], he took Alexios along as a companion in travel. The latter, presumably following his father's instructions, negotiated his escape with a certain Pisan, the captain of a huge round ship. The Pisan waited for the opportune moment to put out to sea without delay, concealing his tracks in the teeming waves.[1435] As soon as the weather was

[537] favorable for sailing, the ship unfurled her sails and, borne along by a fair breeze, ran ashore on Avlonia on the Hellespont, where its small boat put in at Athyras to pick up Alexios. To escape detection, it was filled with a load of sand to be used as ballast in the ship, which supposedly had been emptied of its wares. Alexios arrived from Damokraneia, entered the boat, and was transferred to the ship. When his escape became known, the emperor dispatched men to seach through the ship, but they failed to capture Alexios; by clipping his hair round about and donning Latin raiment, he was able to mingle with the throng and escape the notice of his pursuers. When he reached Sicily, his presence was made

known to his sister, who dispatched a considerable bodyguard. She embraced her brother and beseeched her husband Philip to do his utmost to succor her father, who had been deprived of both sight and power by his kinsmen, and to help her brother, who was homeless and without a country and wandered about like the planets, taking with him no more than his body.[1436]

Besides these events, others come to mind which must not be overlooked. The Angelos brothers were guilty of poor administration of state affairs in other ways as well, as we have already recounted;[1437] particularly obsessed with the love of money, they were not content with enriching themselves from legitimate sources of revenue, nor did they hold on to the wealth they amassed but poured it out with both hands on the excessive indulgence of the body and costly ornamentation. Moreover, they enriched courtesans and kinsmen who were utterly useless to the state. Not only did they glean and fleece the Roman cities, inventing novel taxes, but they also taxed the members of the Latin nations in their midst. Often disregarding the treaties made with the Venetians, they mulcted them of monies, levied taxes on their ships, and raised the Pisans against [538] them. One could see both nations joining in battle, at times inside the City, and at times on the open sea, with one side prevailing and then the other, each taking turns pursuing the other and being plundered.

The Venetians, who recalled their ancient treaties with the Romans, could not endure seeing the friendship pledged to them being awarded to the Pisans. It was evident that they were gradually turning against the Romans, waiting for the opportune moment to even the score. Moreover, Alexios, in his niggardliness, refused to give them the two hundred pounds of gold still owed them from the fifteen hundred pounds which Emperor Manuel had agreed to repay the Venetians for the monies he had confiscated when he had arrested them.[1438]

The doge of Venice, Enrico Dandolo,[1439] was not the least of horrors; a man maimed in sight and along in years, a creature most treacherous and extremely jealous of the Romans, a sly cheat who called himself wiser than the wise and madly thirsting after glory as no other, he preferred death to allowing the Romans to escape the penalty for their insulting treatment of his nation. And all the while he pondered on how many evils the Venetians associated with the rule of the Angelos brothers [Isaakios II and Alexios III], and of Andronikos before them, and prior to him of Manuel, who held sway over the Roman empire. Realizing that should he work some treachery against the Romans with his fellow countrymen alone he would bring disaster down upon his own head, he schemed to include other accomplices, to share his secret designs with those whom he knew nursed an implacable hatred against the Romans and who looked with an envious and avaricious eye on their goods.[1440] The opportunity arose as if by chance when certain wellborn toparchs were eager to set out for Palestine; he met with them to arrange a joint action and won them over as confederates in the military operation against the Romans. These were Marquis Boniface of Montferrat, Count Baldwin of Flanders, Count Hugh of Saint Pol, [539] Count Louis of Blois,[1441] and many other bold warriors who were as tall as their lances were long.

Within three full years [actually April 1201–July 1202] one hundred

and ten horse-carrying dromons and sixty long ships were built in Venice, and more than seventy huge round ships were assembled (one much larger in size than the others was called *Kosmos* [*Mundus*]). One thousand cavalry clad in full armor and thirty thousand bucklers divided mostly into heavy-armed foot soldiers, especially those called crossbowmen, were commanded to board them.[1442]

Once the fleet was ready to put out to sea, evil was heaped upon evil, and wave after wave rolled in upon the Romans, for Alexios, the son of Isaakios Angelos, was supplied with letters from the pope of elder Rome [Innocent III][1443] and Philip, king of Germany,[1444] that pledged their profound gratitude to these piratical gangs if they would welcome Alexios and restore him to his paternal throne. Later, when Alexios appeared, and most willingly, before the fleet,[1445] his presence was thought to provide not only an opportune camouflage for sailing out to plunder the Romans but also a specious reason for sating the Venetians' avaricious and money-loving temperament. As they were all-cunning in their ways and troublemakers, they laid hold of Alexios, who was juvenile in mind rather than in age, and prevailed upon him to agree under oath to demands which were impossible to fulfill. The lad consented to their re-
[540] quests for seas of money and, in addition, agreed to assist them against the Saracens with heavy-armed Roman troops and fifty triremes. What was even worse and most reprehensible, he abjured his faith and embraced that of the Latins and agreed to the innovation of the papal privileges and to the altering of the ancient customs of the Romans.

Releasing the stern cables [2–8 October 1202], the fleet sailed down to Zara and laid siege to the city [11–24 November 1202][1446] for supposedly violating ancient treaties, following the instructions of Dandolo, doge of Venice. The Roman emperor Alexios, who had received information over a long period of time as to the movements of the Latins, was disposed to do nothing better on behalf of the Romans; his excessive slothfulness was equal to his stupidity in neglecting what was necessary for the common welfare. When it was proposed that he make provisions for an abundance of weapons, undertake the preparation of suitable war engines, and, above all, begin the construction of warships, it was as though his advisors were talking to a corpse. He indulged in after-dinner repartee and in willful neglect of the reports on the Latins; he busied himself with building lavish bathhouses, leveling hills to plant vineyards, and filling in ravines, wasting his time in these and other such activities. Those who wanted to cut timber for ships were threatened with the gravest danger by the eunuchs who guarded the thickly wooded mountains, that were reserved for the imperial hunts, as if they were sacred groves, gardens, so to speak, planted by God. [1447] And instead of rebuking these foolish men,
[541] the emperor, taken in by their prattle, gave his approval.

After the Latins had conquered Zara, they landed at Epidamnos, and their fellow passenger Alexios was proclaimed emperor by the Epidamnites. When [Emperor] Alexios was convinced of the certainty of the report of these events, he was like the proverbial angler, who, on being smitten, recovered his senses.[1448] Accordingly, he began to repair the rotting and worm-eaten small skiffs, barely twenty in number, and mak-

ing the rounds of the City's walls, he ordered the dwellings outside pulled down.

The Venetian fleet set out from Epidamnos and put in at Kerkyra, where they delayed their voyage for twenty days [4–24 May 1203]. When they realized that the citadel was unassailable, they unfurled their sails and made for Constantinople,[1449] for the Westerners had long known that the Roman emperors concerned themselves with nothing else but carousing and drunkenness,[1450] with making Byzantis another Sybaris celebrated for its voluptuousness.[1451] After an exceptionally fair voyage (for the breezes out of the deep, ever gentle and swelling the sails, wafted their ships on their way), they appeared before the City while scarcely anyone took notice. They put in at Chalcedon (which lies on the opposite side of [542] the straits from Peraia, to the east and a little below the Double Column); first came the transports propelled with oars, and shortly afterwards the warships arrived under sail and rode at anchor at a distance beyond an arrow's shot from the land. The dromons touched at Skoutarion.[1452]

The Romans who appeared on the nearby hills and stood along the shore discharged missiles against the warships, but to no avail, since most of these were unable to cover the distance and fell into the sea. Another contingent kept watch to the north around Damatrys[1453] to check the charges of the Latin knights. But again, nothing useful was accomplished: they made no attempt to attack the enemy forces, and when the latter charged them, they rose up and scattered.

Not many days had elapsed before the Latins, realizing that there was no one to oppose them on land, came ashore. The cavalry moved out a short distance from the sea, and the long ships, dromons, and round warships[1454] moved inside the bay. Both the land and sea forces mounted a joint attack against the fortress, to which the Romans customarily fastened the heavy iron chain whenever an attack by enemy ships threatened, and forthwith they assailed the fortification. It was a sight to behold the defenders fleeing after a brief resistance. Some were slain or taken alive, [543] and others slid down the chain as though it were a rope and boarded the Roman triremes, while many others lost their grip and fell headlong into the deep. Afterwards, the chain was broken,[1455] and the entire fleet streamed through. As for our triremes, some were overpowered on the spot, and those forced to shore suffered damage after they were emptied of their men. The evil took many forms, such as has never entered the heart of man.[1456] It was the month of July of the year 6711 [5–6 July 1203].

After a brief respite to lay down strategy [6–9 July 1203], the Latins—those in the long ships as well as the horse, together with the foot soldiers who preceded them—appeared [10–11 July 1203] before Kosmidion,[1457] where they met some slight resistance from the Romans around the bridge located nearby and around the place called Trypetos Lithos [Pierced Stone].[1458] The warships, long ships, and dromons put in nearby, and the army pitched a camp divided in part into trenches and wooden palisades around a hill from which the buildings of the Blachernai palace complex that faced west were visible. At the foot of this hill there lies an

open courtyard that extends southwards to the wall erected by Emperor Manuel to safeguard the palace and touches the sea in the direction of the north wind. The defenders on the wall could see the raised tents and could almost converse with those within who faced Gyrolimnē.[1459]

[544] The Latins were separated from us, not by palisade and camp, but by the City's walls. Emperor Alexios had long before set his heart on flight, and fully determined to do so, he bore no arms whatsoever, nor was he seen to offer resistance to the enemy without, but instead sat back as a spectator of the events taking place and ascended to the lofty "apartments of the Empress of the Germans," as they are called. His close friends and kinsmen assembled a cavalry force and a small contingent of infantry and sallied forth at intervals to show that the City was not wholly desolate of manpower. On the spur of the moment, both sides mounted special cavalry charges many times during the day, and knight competed with horseman in the throwing of the javelin with the excitement and zeal wrought by bravery; in these actions our deeds were not ignoble. Moreover, the infantry forces sallied forth into the open courtyard which we have mentioned and attacked the enemy. The imperial palace was damaged by stone-throwing engines, and at times the stone weights discharged from the walls of the City struck down the adversaries.

On the seventeenth day of the month of July, the enemy's land and sea forces resolved to fight even more boldly to achieve their end, or else, failing in this, to come to terms; the combatants were utterly beguiled by both rumors that were fluttering about. Bringing up their warships, the Latin naval forces positioned them opposite Petria.[1460] The ships were covered with ox hides to make them impervious to fire, and the halyards were fashioned into scaling ladders with rungs made of line and lowered and again raised high by cables bound to the masts. When

[545] the land forces had strengthened the wall-storming battering ram and deployed crossbowmen in many places, the signal was given to commence hostilities. The horrendous battle that followed was fraught with groanings on all sides. The heavy-armed troops who surrounded the battering ram broke through the wall and gained access to a passageway within which led down to the sea to a place called the Emperor's Gangway, although they were bravely repulsed by the Roman allies, the Pisans and the ax-bearing barbarians, and the majority returned wounded. When those in the ships approached the walls, using the light boats, they cast anchors onto the shore from the scaling ladders, raising the ladders, which were suspended from the stern cables, over many sections of the walls. They then engaged the defenders on the towers and easily routed them, since they were fighting from a higher vantage point and discharging their missiles from above.

The enemy troops who occupied the section of the wall set fire to the adjoining houses, dispersing the dwellers in many directions. It was a piteous spectacle to behold that day, one that required rivers of tears to counterbalance the fire's extensive damage: everything, from the hill of Blachernai to the Monastery of Evergetēs, was burned to ashes, and the fire's rush reached the district called Deuteron [Second].[1461]

When Alexios saw the pitiable plight of the queen of cities and the affliction of the people, he at last took up arms. And he saw the masses

bristling with anger, heaping abuse upon him, and hurling insults against him, for by choosing to remain safe inside the palace and resolving to offer no assistance to the defiled City, he had emboldened the enemy even more. In allowing the conflict to reach the walls (a thing which until now had never happened), it was as though he had not realized that forethought is superior to afterthought, that it is better to anticipate the enemy than to be anticipated by him, that the body does not recover its health by succumbing to an excessively grievous illness. Alexios marched out from the palace, followed by many horsemen and a highborn infantry regiment from among the flower of the City that had hastened to join him, and when the opponent's land forces suddenly beheld this huge array, they shuddered. Indeed, a work of deliverance would have been wrought had the emperor's troops moved in one body against the enemy, but now the nagging idea of flight and the faintheartedness of those about him thwarted Alexios from what needed to be done. To the joy of the Romans, he drew up the troops in battle array and moved out, ostensibly to oppose the Latins, but he returned in utter disgrace, having only made the enemy more haughty and insolent. In their arrogance the Latins pursued the routed Romans on their flight back and brandished their spears. [546]

Alexios entered the palace and made ready his escape. It was as though he had labored hard to make a miserable corpse of the City, to bring her to utter ruin in defiance of her destiny, and he hastened along her destruction. He communicated his scheme to several of his female chamberlains and relatives and to Irene, from among his daughters, and collected one thousand pounds of gold and other imperial ornaments made of precious gems and translucent pearls. He then set out about the first watch of the night [17–18 July 1203] and rode on to Develton,[1462] where he had made preparations for his arrival. This miserable wretch among men was neither softened by the affection of children nor constrained by his wife's love, nor was he moved by such a great city, nor did he, because of his love for his life and his cowardice, give thought to anything else save his own salvation, and even this was doubtful, since he had to quit so many provinces and cities and all his kin.[1463] [547]

Alexios reigned for eight years, three months, and ten days. In matters of warfare, he was as described, and neither was he wholly polished in the administration of public affairs (I do not mean to say that he was altogether inclined to neglect his duties). He did not, however, merit scorn in other areas. He surpassed all others in the mildness of his manner; neither was he inaccessible, nor did he repel anyone with a ferocious mien and supercilious glare and by snarling, but anyone who wished to do so could approach and petition him, and, sometimes, one could contradict him without placing restrictions on oneself in speech. He shunned, moreover, those who slandered one another as well as the flatterers. Conscience-stricken because he had acted lawlessly against his brother, he feared his fate and dreaded avenging Justice who unceasingly surveys the affairs of mortals; as a result, he suffered heartfelt contrition. Troubled in spirit,[1464] he was distraught and distressed and aggrieved. If it be exceedingly difficult for emperors not to cut down the ears of corn which overtop the rest,[1465] and not to leap brutally upon those who have of- [548]

fended them, then one could see that Alexios was rich in such virtue. He did not drive a stake into the eyes to implant darkness or prune the limbs of the body as though they were grapevines, to become a butcher of men. As long as he wore the gloom-stained purple, no woman put on black, mourning a husband whom black Death[1466] had enfolded. Neither did fire flash from his eyes like rays from gems, nor did he abuse others with insults so that teardrops the size of round pearls should fall.

VII. *The Second Reign of Isaakios Angelos, Together with His Son Alexios*

THUS Alexios, driven away by no one, rode on to Develton. It is [549]
grievous for a wife and beloved consort to do harm instead of providing assistance, according to the maxim of an emperor who suffered greatly because of the advice of a female chamberlain.[1467] But being a womanish man, it was a troublous matter and the worst thing possible, for what order given by him, even though leading to grief and extreme danger, would not command obedience? This indeed clashed with the interests of the Romans who were ill-fated to have effete and dissolute emperors who pursued a life of pleasure. Deeming it difficult to overpower necessity, they found their fear for their own lives altogether intolerable.

But Alexios traveled the road he had chosen; the people in the palace of Blachernai viewed Alexios's escape as exceedingly insufferable and were thrown into a state of confusion and consternation because of the impending disaster, for they believed that there was nothing and no one to put off and check the Latins who were encamped nearby from making an imminent armed assault against the City and penetrating inside the walls. Supposing Alexios's kinsmen and his close friends, and even Em- [550]
press Euphrosynē, to be guilty of treason, they did not offer them the throne; but because they could not resist the savage sweep of events, they turned to Isaakios, Alexios's brother, and they who were being buffeted by tempestuous waves saw in him who was incarcerated within the palace their last hope. When the eunuch Constantine [Philoxenitēs], the minister of the imperial treasuries, had assembled the ax-bearers and discussed with them what needed to be done and was assured of the support of a faction that agreed that Isaakios should quickly assume the reins of empire, he had Empress Euphrosynē seized, her relations were taken prisoners, and Isaakios proclaimed emperor [17–18 July 1203]. He who had been blinded was ordained to oversee all things and was led by the hand to ascend the imperial throne.

Isaakios immediately dispatched messengers to his son Alexios and to the chiefs of the Latin host [18 July 1203] to inform them of the flight of his brother and emperor. They, however, made no changes in their expectations of the City; neither would they send Isaakios's son to him as requested by his father before Isaakios agreed to fulfill all the promises Alexios had made them.[1468] These were, as related earlier, that none of the extravagant pledges to provide the Latins with glory and gain was to be held back. Doing everything to insure against failure in ascending the

paternal throne, Alexios, a witless lad ignorant of affairs of state, neither comprehended any of the issues at stake nor reflected for a moment on
[551] the Roman-hating temperament of the Latins. Having purchased his entrance into the City by the overturn of the imperial majesty, he was deemed worthy to sit on the throne with his father as co-emperor. The entire citizenry, therefore, ran in a body to the palace in order to behold the son with his father and to pay homage to both.

Not many days later [between 19 July and 1 August 1203], the Latin chiefs presented themselves at the palace together with their distinguished nobility.[1469] Benches were set before them, and they all sat in council with the emperors, hearing themselves acclaimed as benefactors and saviors and receiving every other noble appelation for having honored the power-loving Alexios in his childish actions, and, moreover, for coming to his and his father's aid in their time of adversity. In addition, they enjoyed every kindness and courtesy. Amusements and dainties were contrived for them, for Isaakios, taking possession of what little was in the imperial treasury and taking into custody Empress Euphrosynē and her kinsmen, whom he robbed with both hands, lavishly bestowed the monies on the Latins.

But since the recipients considered the sum to be but a drop (for no nation loves money more than this race nor is there any more ravenous and anxious to run to a banquet) and were ever thirsting after libations as copious as the Tyrrhenian Sea, in utter violation of the law, he touched the untouchable, whence, I think, the Roman state was totally subverted and disappeared. Because money was lacking, he raided the sacred
[552] temples. It was a sight to behold: the holy icons of Christ consigned to the flames after being hacked to pieces with axes and cast down, their adornments carelessly and unsparingly removed by force, and the revered and all-hallowed vessels seized from the churches with utter indifference and melted down and given over to the enemy troops as common silver and gold. The emperor himself was in no way incensed by this raging madness against the saints, and no one protested out of reverence. In our silence, not to say callousness, we differed in no way from those madmen, and because we were responsible, we both suffered and beheld the most calamitous of evils.

The city rabble, not proceeding of its own accord on a laudable course of action, or following the advice of others to do what was best, since the enemy had already poured over the Roman provinces, senselessly razed and reduced to ashes the dwellings of the Western nations situated near the sea, making no distinction between friend and foe. Not only were the Amalfitans, who had been nurtured in Roman customs, disgusted by this wickedness and recklessness but so also the Pisans who had chosen to make Constantinople their home. As soon as Emperor Alexios was seen to flee, these nations fed on high hopes that mitigated much of their grief. By taking flight and being succeeded as emperor by Isaakios, Alexios reconciled the Pisans with the Venetians, having contrived even this against us; sailing across the Peraia where the enemy was encamped, they shared tent and table with their former adversaries, and with one mind they agreed on all things.[1470]

[553] On the nineteenth day of the month of August in the sixth indication

of the year 6711 [1203],[1471] certain Frenchmen (of old they were called Flemings), Pisans, and Venetians sailed with a company of men across the straits, confident that the monies of the Saracens were a windfall and treasure trove waiting to be taken. This evil battalion put into the City on fishing boats (for there was no one whatsoever to resist their sailing in and out of the City) and without warning fell upon the synagogue of the Agarenes called Mitaton in popular speech; with drawn swords they plundered its possessions.[1472] As these outrages were being committed senselessly and beyond every expectation, the Saracens defended themselves by grabbing whatever weapon was at hand; aroused by the tumult, the Romans came running to their assistance. Not as many arrived as should have, but soon, after fighting on the side of these men, the Latins were compelled to withdraw. The latter abandoned hope of resisting with weapons and learned from experience the use of fire; they proposed to resort to fire as the most effective defense and the quickest course of action to subdue the City.

And, indeed, after taking up positions in a goodly number of locations, they set fire to the buildings. The flames rose unbelievably high above the ground throughout that night, the next day, and the following evening as they spread everywhere. It was a novel sight, defying the power of description. While in the past many conflagrations had taken place in the City—no one could cite how many and of what sort they had been—the fires ignited at this time proved all the others to be but sparks. The flames [554] divided, took many different directions and then came together again, meandering like a river of fire. Porticoes collapsed, the elegant structures of the agorae toppled, and huge columns went up in smoke like so much brushwood. Nothing could stand before those flames. Even more extraordinary was the fact that burning embers detached themselves from this roaring and raging fire and consumed buildings at a great distance. Shooting out at intervals, the embers darted through the sky, leaving a region untouched by the blaze, and then destroying it when they turned back and fell upon it. The fire, advancing for the most part in a straight course driven by a north wind, was soon observed to turn aside as though fanned by a south wind, to move aslant, turning this way and that way as it unexpectedly charred and burned everything. Even the Great Church was endangered. Indeed, all the buildings lying in the direction of the Arch of the Milion and adjoining the gallery of Makron, and the structure also called The Synods[1473] came crashing to the ground, for neither the baked brick nor the deep set foundations could withstand the heat, and everything within was consumed like candlewicks.

The first kindling of the fire, therefore, began at the synagogue of the Saracens (the latter is situated in the direction of the northern section of the City sloping toward the sea next to the church built in the name of Hagia Eirenē, and, spreading breadthwise to the east, it abated at the Great Church; in the west it extended to the district called Perama, and thereafter it burst forth, enveloping the breadth of the City, and expended its fury at the City's southern walls. The most extraordinary thing of all was that the fire, advancing gradually and leaping over the walls, so to speak, ravaged the dwellings beyond, and flying embers burned a ship sailing by. The so-called Porticoes of Domninos were also reduced to [555]

ashes, as well as the two covered streets originating at the Milion, one of which extended to the Philadelphion.[1474] The Forum of Constantine and everything between the northern and southern extremities were similarly destroyed. Not even the Hippodrome was spared, but the whole section towards the demes as well as everything leading down to [the harbor of] Sophia was engulfed in flames which extended to Bukanon and thence to all structures adjacent to the district of Eleutherios.[1475]

The flames, encompassing the City from sea to sea[1476] and dividing it as by a great chasm or a river of fire flowing through her midst, made it perilous for loved ones to join one another unless they crossed over in boats. The majority of the City's inhabitants were stripped then of their possessions as the flames reached out to those who were taken by surprise; those who had transferred their goods to other places of shelter also failed to salvage them. The fire, taking a winding course and moving in zigzag paths and branching off in many directions and returning to its starting point, destroyed the goods that had been moved. Woe is me! How great was the loss of those magnificent, most beautiful palaces[1477] filled with every kind of delight, abounding in riches, and envied by all.

In the face of these most horrendous events, both Emperor Isaakios and his son Alexios were not in the least appalled. They prayed for the end of all things, these firebrands of the country, flaming in visage, thus personifying the incendiary angel of evil.[1478] Even before the conflagration
[556] had completely abated, a collection of sacred treasures again was made, more exhaustive than before, and melted down. The Latin host used the gold and silver provided them for their bodily needs as though they were profane metals and offered to sell them to whoever wished to buy. Considering themselves to be guiltless (for they were not ignorant whence came the monies awarded them), since they were only receiving what was owed them, they brought down the wrath of God on the Romans who prize their private possessions while defiling what belongs to God.

Since there was need for Alexios to receive assistance from the Latin forces as well (for his uncle, the former Emperor Alexios, having left Develton, occupied Adrianople, and delivered over the empire which he had repudiated to those who lusted insanely for power, neither desired nor dared to attempt to recover his throne), he induced Marquis Boniface to accompany him as his fellow general, but only after agreeing to pay sixteen hundredweight of gold.[1479] Marching out against [his uncle] Alexios [19 August 1203], he compelled him to flee more rapidly and much farther than before. He went the round of the Thracian cities, subjugating and then gleaning them (for his troops yearned to draw water often from the golden streams, and like those bitten by a venomous serpent whose poison causes intense thirst, they drank but could not be sated), and moving down as far as Kypsella, he returned to the palace [11 November 1203]; all the conspirators who had cooperated with his uncle Alexios in the blinding and removal of his father from the throne were hanged.

Isaakios impatiently awaited the opportunity to vent the rancor which had long smoldered in his breast against those who had treated him so
[557] abominably; and he did not cease speaking ill of his son, especially since he observed his own authority gradually slipping away from him and passing over to his son. He choked with rage at the transposition of

names in the public acclamations; his son, taking precedence, was hailed with loud shouts which resounded through the palace while he followed, like an echo, the more spirited filial acclamations. Unable to influence events in any way, he mumbled under his breath; revealing the secrets of the innermost recesses of his heart, he defamed his son, contending that his usefulness was spent, that he was not at all trained in self-control, that his character had been formed by the worst habits, and that he kept company with depraved men whom he smote on the buttocks and was struck by them in return.

Not in vain or without cause did Isaakios inveigh against his son, for the latter committed many more outrageous offenses and sullied the majestic, all-glorious name of the Roman empire. With a few of his followers, he crossed over to the tents of the barbarians, where he engaged in drinking bouts and passed the day playing at dice. His playfellows, removing the gold-inlaid and bejeweled diadem from his head, put it on their own, and placed on Alexios a shaggy woolen headdress of Latin wool-spinning provenance.[1480]

Not only was Alexios deemed an abomination by sensible Romans for passing his time with the Latin nobles in such activities, but also his father, Isaakios, was no less despised as he busied himself with portentous delusions and unceasingly heeded the divinations and oracles more ineffable than those of his first reign. If he imagined himself to be sole [558] ruler as before, he also shamelessly contended that he would unite the East with the West, girding himself with universal rule. He expected that at that time he would rub the blindness from his eyes, shed the disease of gout like the snake's slough, and be utterly transformed into a godlike man. Therefore, the most cursed of the monks (who let their beards grow full like a deep cornfield, these God-haters who, to their shame, don the habit dear to God and chase after royal banquets where they gulp down fresh and fat dishes) joined in establishing him by word as sole ruler as they dined with him and were served wine of a fine bouquet, unmixed with water. At times they embraced his gnarled hands, and, touching them to his eyes, they prophesied that these would be restored and strengthened as never before. He was, so to speak, utterly delighted by such sayings and leaped with joy at these ribald jests as though they were infallible prophecies.

The devotees of astrology were also admitted to his presence and he submitted to their counsels. He resorted to other measures, such as removing from its pedestal in the Hippodrome the Kalydonian boar, bristling up the flowing hair on its back, and placing it in the Great Palace in the belief that he could thus forestall the onrush of the swinish and reckless populace of the city.[1481]

The wine-bibbing portion of the vulgar masses smashed the statue of Athena that stood on a pedestal in the Forum of Constantine, for it appeared to the foolish rabble that she was beckoning on the Western armies.[1482] She rose to a standing height of thirty feet and wore a garment made of bronze, as was the entire figure. The robe reached down to her feet and fell into folds in many places so that no part of the body which Nature has ordained to be clothed should be exposed. A military girdle tightly cinctured her waist. Covering her prominent breasts and shoulders [559]

was an upper garment of goatskin embellished with the Gorgon's head [the aegis]. Her long bare neck was an irresistible delight to behold. The bronze was so transformed by its convincing portrayal of the goddess in all her parts that her lips gave the appearance that, should one stop to listen, one would hear a gentle voice. The veins were represented dilated as though fluid were flowing through their twisted ways to wherever needed throughout the whole body, which, though lifeless, appeared to partake of the full bloom of life. And the eyes were filled with deep yearning. On her head was set a helmet with horsehair crest, and terribly did it nod from above.[1483] Her braided hair tied in the back was a feast for the eyes, while the locks, falling loosely over the forehead, set off the braided tresses. Her left hand tucked up the folds of her dress while she pointed her right hand toward the south; her head was also gently turned southward, and her eyes also gazed in the same direction. Whence they who were wholly ignorant of the orientation of the points of the compass contended that the statue was looking toward the west and with her hand was beckoning the Western armies, thus erring in their judgment and misapprehending what they beheld.

As the result of such misconceptions, they shattered the statue of Athena, or, rather, guilty of ever-worsening conduct and taking up arms against themselves, they discarded the patroness of manliness and wisdom even though she was but a symbol of these. The emperors busied themselves in no more important task than the collection of monies as there was no satiating the recipients: the more they were given, the greater was
[560] their gold lust. There were citizens, indeed, who were in travail over the collection of taxes. As this was not proceeding equably (for the disgruntled populace, like a vast and boundless sea lashed by a wind, were seething with insurrection), they put an end to this scheme and milked by selection those who were reputed to be very rich, not as required to make butter,[1484] but in order to appease the ravenous hunger of the Latins. The heavy golden movables of the Great Church, together with the silver lamps, were removed and consigned to the flames, and simply thrown to the dogs for meat,[1485] and there was an unholy mingling of the profane with the sacred.

Nothing, however, was accomplished by these lawless measures. The exactors of money, who delighted in the simplemindedness of the Romans and mocked the stupidity of the emperors, wished to relieve them of some of their precious possessions and to compel others to carry these off, while others were to come forward to lead them to gold and some were to prepare to receive the spoils, and to do this without stopping. The chiefs of the hosts appeared in turn before the luxurious estates around the megalopolis, the holy temples along the Propontis, and the most splendid imperial edifices, where they took up arms one after the other, stripped them of everything within, and put these buildings to the torch. Not a single structure was spared by these barbarians who were borne by the Fates and hated the beautiful.[1486]

They sailed many times over to the shores of the City [December 1203 to January 1204] and gave battle.[1487] Victory smiled in turn upon the Romans and did not favor the enemy with invincibility on all sides. Whence the City's populace, acquitting themselves like men, pressed the

emperor to take part with the troops in the struggle against the adversaries, as they were patriots, unless indeed he was siding with the Romans with his lips only and had inclined his heart to the Latins.[1488] The promises made proved to be ineffectual; Alexios could not bring himself to take up arms against the Latins, thinking this to be unnatural and inexpedient, and his father, Issaakios, encouraged him to ignore the idle talk of the vulgar populace and to bestow the highest honors on those who had restored him to his country. Those who were left of the imperial family concurred in these views, a matter of companions pleasing their comrade Alexios.[1489] Some who associated with the Latins as comrades ignored the citizens' deliberations as old wives' gossip, being quicker to avoid battle with the Latins than an army of deer with a roaring lion. [561]

Of all men, only Alexios Doukas (who, because his eyebrows were joined together and hung over his eyes, was called Mourtzouphlos as an adolescent by his companions), contriving to win the throne and the citizens' favor, dared to give battle against the Latins. Displaying his valor beyond a doubt, he engaged the enemy at the site called Trypetos Lithos and round about the arch leading thither [7 January 1204].[1490] None of our own commanders who were present made any attempt whatsoever to come to his assistance because they were forbidden to do so by the emperor. Alexios Doukas's mount stumbled and slipped to its knees, and the entire enemy force would have fallen on the polemarch had not a band of youthful archers from the City who happened to be present stoutly defended him.

The City populace, finding no fellow combatant and ally to draw the sword against the Latins, began to rise up in rebellion and, like a boiling kettle, to blow off steam of abuse against the emperors, and their long suppressed and hidden sentiment surfaced to the light of day. It was the twenty-fifth day of the month of January in the seventh indiction of the year 6712 [25 January 1204] when a great and tumultuous concourse of people gathered in the Great Church; the senate, the assembly of bishops, and the venerable clergy were compelled to convene thither and deliberate together as to who should succeed as emperor. We were entreated earnestly to speak spontaneously on this matter, to the effect that an attack be launched forthwith against the emperors and another elected to the throne. But we made no attempt to nominate a candidate before the assembly, for we realized full well that whoever was proposed for election would be led out the very next day like a sheep led to slaughter, and that the chiefs of the Latin hosts would wrap their arms around Alexios and defend him. The multitude, simpleminded and volatile, asserted that they no longer wished to be ruled by the Angelos family, and that the assembly would not disband unless an emperor to their liking were first chosen. [562]

Knowing through bitter experience the obstinacy of men, we kept our silence, and in our unhappiness we let many tears flow down our cheeks, foreseeing what the future likely held in store for us. They anxiously groped for a successor to the throne, and on impulse proposed as emperor now this scion of the nobility and now that one. Tiring finally of the rabble-rousers and demagogues among them, they exhorted several members of our rank to put on the crown. Alas and alack! What could have

been more heartrending and grievous than the trial of that time, or more absurd and mindless than the fatuity of those assembled? "Thou hast raiment; be thou our ruler,"[1491] was all that was required. It was only on the third day that, seizing a certain youth whose name was Nicholas and surname Kannavos, they anointed him emperor against his will [27 January 1204].[1492]

When Emperor Alexios heard of these events (for Isaakios lay breathing his last, the extensive predictions of sole rule having proved false, dissolving like the dream of feverish sleep), he summoned Marquis Boniface to examine with him the present circumstances, and they both con-
[563] cluded that it was necessary to bring Latin forces into the palace to expel the new emperor and the populace who had elected him in assembly.

As soon as these deliberations were detected, Doukas seized the opportunity to begin the rebellion over which he had travailed. Taking along many of his kinsmen, he won over the eunuch in charge of the imperial treasuries, a worthless fellow who succumbed to the preferment of dignities and was unable to resist the temptation of unjust gain. Assembling the ax-bearers, he told them about the emperor's intention and convinced them to consider taking as the right action that which was desirable and pleasing to the Romans. In consequence, the emperor's overthrow was acted out in this wise.[1493]

Doukas visited the emperor in the dead of night [27–28 January 1204] (he was more easily recognized than anyone else, as he had been honored with the dignity of *protovestiarios* and wore on his feet buskins that differed in color from most). Swayed by passion, he announced to the emperor that his blood relations as well as a host of nameless men, but above all the barbarian contingent armed with axes, were standing at the doors after making furious assaults, eager to tear him to pieces with their hands because it was obvious that he was of one mind with the Latins and was dependent on their friendship. Terrified and taken aback by this news, he pleaded to be spared this fate. Doukas threw an ample robe over the emperor which covered his body down to his feet and escorted him out through a little-known postern into the pavilion within the palace complex, ostensibly to save him.

The emperor, shortly after these things had taken place in this wise, expressed profound gratitude and softly chanted the verse of David directly applicable to Doukas, "For in the day of mine afflictions he hid me in his tabernacle: he sheltered me in the secret of his tabernacle."[1494] He followed with other verses from the psalms of David: "His lips are deceitful in his heart, and evil has he spoken in his heart,"[1495] and "To me they spoke peaceably but imagined deceits in their anger."[1496] With his legs secured by irons, he was cast into the most horrible of all prisons and thus
[564] "made darkness his secret place"[1497] as Doukas decked himself with the imperial insignia [28 January 1204].

Following these events, one faction assembled before Doukas and saluted him as emperor with the customary acclamations: another sided with Kannavos, who had remained in the temple; he was a man who was gentle by nature, of keen intelligence, and versed in generalship and war and its business. Inasmuch as the worst elements prevail among the Constantinopolitans (for truth is dearer to me than my compatriots), Doukas

grew stronger and increased in power, while Kannavos's splendor grew dim like a waning moon. Not long afterwards, he was overpowered by Doukas's armed troops and thrown into prison, receiving no assistance from his subjects, all of whom had dispersed immediately following Doukas's proclamation [2 or 6 February 1204].[1498]

Twice Doukas offered Alexios the cup that quenches life; but when the lad proved more vigorous than the poison, secretly taking antidotes, Doukas cut the thread of his life by having him strangled, squeezing out his soul, so to speak, through the straight and narrow way, and sprang the trap[1499] leading to hell. He had reigned six months and eight days.

VIII. *The Reign of Alexios Doukas, Also Called Mourtzouphlos*

ONCE Doukas had clearly won the throne by a cast of the die, he [565]
longed painfully for changes in the affairs of the state and thought to stir up everything. He was extremely clever by nature and arrogant in his manner, and he believed dissembling to be the mark of shrewdness. He shirked the role of benefactor in all things for as long as the cycle of Meton,[1500] saying that he did not deem it prudent in an emperor to allow things to happen on their own and in a haphazard fashion, but that his actions should be characterized by protracted circumspection. He was impelled toward such judgment of his own accord, contending that nothing that needed to be done escaped him, that he had well in hand all issues. Following him about as his assistant was the feeble shadow of his father-in-law Philokalēs, and in order to place him at the head of the senate, he dismissed me as logothete of the *sekreta,* without even the benefit of a specious excuse, and promoted him in my place. This man, wholly unprepared to make himself known and precariously exceeding propriety because of inordinate ambition, did not sit together with men of high rank. Some he fooled by affecting the gout, as if his brain had flowed down into his feet[1501] with the disease, and so, with his wits wandering, he neglected his duties.

Because the emperor Doukas found the imperial treasury neither full [566]
nor half-full, but completely emptied out, he reaped where he sowed not and gathered where he had not strawed,[1502] grievously afflicting those who were formerly girded with the highest offices under the Angelos family, who were elevated as *sebastokrators* and *kaisars* to exalted dignities, and their confiscated monies he applied to public needs.

In rashly resisting the Latins, he surpassed all others; he shored up the City's sea walls with beams, provided the land walls with fortifications, and rekindled the army's courage with his own example. Moreover, clasping sword in hand and armed with a bronze mace, he would beat back the enemy's sallies, and when they made sporadic sorties in search of provisions, he would appear suddenly before them of his own free will.

Such deeds endeared him to the citizens, although he was extremely distrustful of, and uncompromising towards, his blood relations; nurtured in stupidity and reared in softness, spurning uplifting austerity and prudent behavior even as sick bodies avoid medical treatment, they exalted themselves and were hardened. They turned away from Doukas's rebuke and indignation (for he had by nature a hoarse but resounding bass voice) as they would from the taste of raw octopus, or a meal of hellebore, or a drink of bull's blood, and they deemed his destruction a matter of divine retribution.

[567] Therefore, when Baldwin, count of Flanders, ravaged the lands around Phileas and collected tribute thence, the emperor marched against him. As the Romans were moving out and the enemy troops returning from their battle array, they met in close combat. The Romans were paralyzed by fear and took to impetuous flight; the emperor, left all alone, very nearly perished, and the icon of the Mother of God, which the Roman emperors reckon as their fellow general, was taken by the enemy.[1503]

Not only were these events dreadful, but those that followed were much worse than expected and most calamitous. In the larger ships frightful scaling ladders were once again fabricated and all manner of siege engines were constructed. Banners were flown on top, and huge rewards were offered those who would ascend to give battle.

A measure of the horrors was about to begin, others were already under way, and still others were to follow; the deliberations on amity were disregarded, wholly ignored. Certain wicked Telchines[1504] frequently confounded the negotiations. The doge of Venice, Enrico Dandolo, electing to discuss peace terms with the emperor, boarded a trireme and put in at Kosmidion. As soon as the emperor arrived there on horseback, they exchanged views on the peace, paying no heed to anyone else. The demands made by the doge and the remaining chiefs were for the immediate payment of five thousand pounds of gold[1505] and certain other conditions which were both galling and unacceptable to those who have tasted freedom and are accustomed to give, not take, commands. These demands
[568] were deemed to be heavy Laconian lashes[1506] to those for whom the danger of captivity was imminent and universal destruction had erupted, while the doge loudly again declared what had been stated earlier, that the conditions were quite tolerable and not at all burdensome. As the conditions for peace were being negotiated, Latin cavalry forces, suddenly appearing from above, gave free rein to their horses and charged the emperor, who wheeled his horse around, barely escaping the danger, while some of his companions were taken captive. Their inordinate hatred for us and our excessive disagreement with them allowed for no humane feeling between us.

Thereupon [8 April 1204], the enemy's largest ships, carrying the scaling ladders that had been readied and as many of the siege engines as had been prepared, moved out from the shore, and, like the tilting beam of a scale's balance, they sailed over to the walls to take up positions at sufficient intervals from one another. They occupied the region extending in a line from the Monastery of Evergetēs to the palace in Blachernai, which had been set on fire, the buildings within razed to the ground, thus stripping it of every pleasant spectacle. Observing these maneuvers, Doukas prepared to resist the enemy. He issued instructions for the imperial pavilion to be set up on the hill of the Pentapoptēs monastery whence the warships were visible and the actions of those on board were in full view.

As dawn broke on the ninth day of the month of April in the seventh indiction of the year 6712 [9 April 1204], the warships and dromons
[569] approached the walls, and certain courageous warriors climbed the scaling ladders and discharged all manner of missiles against the towers' defenders. All through the day, a battle fraught with groanings was waged. The Romans had the upper hand: both the ships carrying the

scaling ladders and the dromons transporting the horses were repulsed from the walls they had attacked without success, and many were killed by the stones thrown from the City's engines.

The enemy ceased all hostilities through the next day and the day after, which was the Lord's day [Sunday, 10–11 April 1204]; on the third day, the twelfth day of the month of April, Monday of the sixth week of the Great Lent, they again sailed towards the City and put in along the shore. By midday our forces prevailed, even though the fighting was more intense and furious than on the preceding Friday. Since it was necessary for the queen of cities to put on the slave's yoke, God allowed our jaws to be constrained with bit and curb[1507] because all of us, both priest and people,[1508] had turned away from him like a stiff-necked and unbridled horse. Two men on one of the scaling ladders nearest the Petria Gate, which was raised with great difficulty opposite the emperor, trusting themselves to fortune, were the first from among their comrades to leap down onto the tower facing them. When they drove off in alarm the Roman auxiliaries on watch, they waved their hands from above as a sign of joy and courage to embolden their countrymen. While they were jumping onto the tower, a knight by the name of Peter entered through the gate situated there. He was deemed most capable of driving in rout all the battalions,[1509] for he was nearly nine fathoms tall[1510] and wore on his head a helmet fashioned in the shape of a towered city. The noblemen [570] about the emperor and the rest of the troops were unable to gaze upon the front of the helm[1511] of a single knight so terrible in form and spectacular in size and took to their customary flight as the efficacious medicine of salvation. Thus, by uniting and fusing into one craven soul, the cowardly thousands, who had the advantage of a high hill, were chased by one man[1512] from the fortifications they were meant to defend. When they reached the Golden Gate of the Land walls, they pulled down the newbuilt wall there, ran forth, and dispersed, deservedly taking the road to perdition and utter destruction. The enemy, now that there was no one to raise a hand against them, ran everywhere and drew the sword against every age and sex. Each did not join with the next man to form a coherent battle array, but all poured out and scattered, since everyone was terrified of them.

That evening the enemy set fire to the eastern sections of the City not far from the Monastery of Evergetēs; from there the flames spread to those areas that slope down to the sea and terminate in the vicinity of the Droungarios Gate. After despoiling the emperor's pavilion and taking the palace in Blachernai by assault without difficulty, they set up their general headquarters at the Pantepoptēs monastery. The emperor went hither and yon through the City's narrow streets, attempting to rally and mobilize the populace who wandered aimlessly about. Neither were they convinced by his exhortations nor did they yield to his blandishments, but the fiercely shaken aegis filled all with despair.[1513]

To continue with the remaining portions of my narrative, the day [571] waned and night came on, and each and every citizen busied himself with removing and burying his possessions. Some chose to leave the City, and whoever was able hastened to save himself.

When Doukas saw that he could prevail nothing,[1514] he was fearful

lest he be apprehended and put into the jaws of the Latins as their dinner or dessert, and he entered the Great Palace. He put on board a small fishing boat the Empress Euphrosynē, Emperor Alexios's wife, and her daughters, one of whom he loved passionately [Evdokia] (for he had frequently engaged in sexual intercourse from the first appearance of hair on his cheek, and he was a proven lecher in bed, having put away two wedded wives[1515]) and sailed away from the City [night of 12–13 April 1204], having reigned two months and sixteen days.

When the emperor had fled in this manner, a pair of youths sober and most skillful in matters of warfare, these being Doukas[1516] and Laskaris,[1517] bearing the same name as the first emperor of our faith [Constantine], contested the captaincy of a tempest-tossed ship, for they viewed the great and celebrated Roman empire as Fortune's prize, depending upon the chance move of a chessman. They entered the Great Church, evenly matched, competing against each other and being compared one with the other, neither one having more or less to offer than the other, and they were deemed equal in the balance because there was no one to examine them and pass judgment.

[572] Receiving the supreme office by lot, Laskaris refused the imperial insignia; escorted by the patriarch to the Milion, he continuously exhorted the assembled populace, cajoling them to put up a resistance. He pressed those who lift from the shoulder and brandish the deadly iron ax, sending them off to the imminent struggle, reminding them that they should not fear destruction any less than the Romans should the Roman empire fall to another nation: no longer would they be paid the ample wages of mercenaries or receive the far-famed gifts of honor of the imperial guard, and their pay in the future would be counted at a hair's worth.[1518] Thus did Laskaris, but not a single person from the populace responded to his blandishments. The ax-bearers agreed to fight for wages, deceitfully and cunningly exploiting the height of the danger for monetary gain, and when the Latin battalions clad in full armor made their appearance, they took flight to save themselves [early morning of 13 April 1204].

The enemy, who had expected otherwise, found no one openly venturing into battle or taking up arms to resist; they saw that the way was open before them and everything there for the taking. The narrow streets were clear and the crossroads unobstructed, safe from attack, and advantageous to the enemy. The populace, moved by the hope of propitiating them, had turned out to greet them with crosses and venerable icons of Christ as was customary during festivals of solemn processions. But their disposition was not at all affected by what they saw, nor did their lips break into the slightest smile, nor did the unexpected spectacle transform their grim and frenzied glance and fury into a semblance of cheerfulness. Instead, they plundered with impunity and stripped their victims shame-

[573] lessly, beginning with their carts. Not only did they rob them of their substance but also the articles consecrated to God; the rest fortified themselves all around with defensive weapons as their horses were roused at the sound of the war trumpet.[1519]

What then should I recount first and what last[1520] of those things dared at that time by these murderous men? O, the shameful dashing to earth

of the venerable icons and the flinging of the relics of the saints, who had suffered for Christ's sake, into defiled places! How horrible it was to see the Divine Body and Blood of Christ poured out and thrown to the ground! These forerunners of Antichrist, chief agents and harbingers of his anticipated ungodly deeds, seized as plunder the precious chalices and patens; some they smashed, taking possession of the ornaments embellishing them, and they set the remaining vessels on their tables to serve as bread dishes and wine goblets. Just as happened long ago, Christ was now disrobed and mocked, his garments were parted, and lots were cast for them by this race; and although his side was not pierced by the lance, yet once more streams of Divine Blood poured to the earth.[1521]

The report of the impious acts perpetrated in the Great Church are unwelcome to the ears. The table of sacrifice, fashioned from every kind of precious material and fused by fire into one whole—blended together into a perfection of one multicolored thing of beauty, truly extraordinary and admired by all nations—was broken into pieces and divided among the despoilers, as was the lot of all the sacred church treasures, countless in number and unsurpassed in beauty. They found it fitting to bring out as so much booty the all-hallowed vessels and furnishings which had been wrought with incomparable elegance and craftsmanship from rare materials. In addition, in order to remove the pure silver which overlay the railing of the bema, the wondrous pulpit and the gates, as well as that which covered a great many other adornments, all of which were plated with gold, they led to the very sanctuary of the temple itself mules and [574] asses with packsaddles; some of these, unable to keep their feet on the smoothly polished marble floors, slipped and were pierced by knives so that the excrement from the bowels and the spilled blood defiled the sacred floor. Moreover, a certain silly woman laden with sins, an attendant of the Erinyes, the handmaid of demons, the workshop of unspeakable spells and reprehensible charms, waxing wanton against Christ,[1522] sat upon the synthronon[1523] and intoned a song, and then whirled about and kicked up her heels in dance.

It was not that these crimes were committed in this fashion while others were not, or that some acts were more heinous than others, but that the most wicked and impious deeds were perpetrated by all with one accord. Did these madmen, raging thus against the sacred, spare pious matrons and girls of marriageable age or those maidens who, having chosen a life of chastity, were consecrated to God? Above all, it was a difficult and arduous task to mollify the barbarians with entreaties and to dispose them kindly towards us, as they were highly irascible and bilious and unwilling to listen to anything. Everything incited their anger, and they were thought fools and became a laughingstock. He who spoke freely and openly was rebuked, and often the dagger would be drawn against him who expressed a small difference of opinion or who hesitated to carry out their wishes.

The whole head was in pain.[1524] There were lamentations and cries of woe and weeping in the narrow ways, wailing at the crossroads, moaning in the temples, outcries of men, screams of women, the taking of captives, and the dragging about, tearing in pieces, and raping of bodies heretofore sound and whole. They who were bashful of their sex were led [575]

about naked, they who were venerable in their old age uttered plaintive cries, and the wealthy were despoiled of their riches. Thus it was in the squares, thus it was on the corners, thus it was in the temples, thus it was in the hiding places; for there was no place that could escape detection or that could offer asylum to those who came streaming in.

O Christ our Emperor, what tribulation and distress of men at that time! The roaring of the sea, the darkening and dimming of the sun, the turning of the moon into blood, the displacement of the stars—did they not foretell in this way the last evils?[1525] Indeed, we have seen the abomination of desolation stand in the holy place,[1526] rounding off meretricious and petty speeches and other things which were moving definitely, if not altogether, contrariwise to those things deemed by Christians as holy and ennobling the word of faith.

Such then, to make a long story short, were the outrageous crimes committed by the Western armies against the inheritance of Christ. Without showing any feelings of humanity whatsoever, they exacted from all their money and chattel, dwellings and clothing, leaving to them nothing of all their goods. Thus behaved the brazen neck, the haughty spirit, the high brow, the ever-shaved and youthful cheek, the bloodthirsty right hand, the wrathful nostril, the disdainful eye, the insatiable jaw, the hateful heart, the piercing and running speech practically dancing over the lips. More to blame were the learned and wise among men, they who were faithful to their oaths, who loved the truth and hated evil, who were both more pious and just and scrupulous in keeping the commandments of Christ than we "Greeks."[1527] Even more culpable were those who had raised the cross to their shoulders, who had time and again sworn by it and the sayings of the Lord to cross over Christian lands without bloodletting, neither turning aside to the right nor inclining to the left, and to take up arms against the Saracens and to stain red their swords in their blood; they who had sacked Jerusalem, and had taken an oath not to marry or to have sexual intercourse with women as long as they carried the cross on their shoulders, and who were consecrated to God and commissioned to follow in his footsteps.

[576] In truth, they were exposed as frauds. Seeking to avenge the Holy Sepulcher, they raged openly against Christ and sinned by overturning the Cross with the cross they bore on their backs, not even shuddering to trample on it for the sake of a little gold and silver. By grasping pearls, they rejected Christ, the pearl of great price, scattering among the most accursed of brutes the All-Hallowed One.[1528] The sons of Ismael did not behave in this way, for when the Latins overpowered Sion the Latins showed no compassion or kindness to their race. Neither did the Ismaelites neigh after Latin women,[1529] nor did they turn the cenotaph of Christ into a common burial place of the fallen, nor did they transform the entranceway of the life-bringing tomb into a passageway leading down into Hades, nor did they replace the Resurrection with the Fall. Rather, they allowed everyone to depart in exchange for the payment of a few gold coins; they took only the ransom money and left to the people all their possessions, even though these numbered more than the grains of sand.[1530] Thus the enemies of Christ dealt magnanimously with the Latin

infidels, inflicting upon them neither sword, nor fire, nor hunger, nor persecution, nor nakedness, nor bruises, nor constraints. How differently, as we have briefly recounted, the Latins treated us who love Christ and are their fellow believers, guiltless of any wrong against them.

O City, City, eye of all cities, universal boast, supramundane wonder, wet nurse of churches, leader of the faith, guide of Orthodoxy, beloved topic of orations, the abode of every good thing! O City, that hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury![1531] O City, consumed by a fire far more drastic than the fire which of old fell upon the Pentapolis![1532] "What shall I testify to thee? What shall I compare to thee? The cup of thy destruction is magnified," says Jeremias, who was given to tears as he lamented over ancient Sion.[1533] What malevolent powers have desired to have you and taken you to be sifted?[1534] What jealous and relentless avenging demons have made a riotous assault upon you in wild revel? If these implacable and crazed suitors neither fashioned a bridal chamber for thee, nor lit a nuptial torch for thee, did they not, however, ignite the [577] coals of destruction?

O prolific City, once garbed in royal silk and purple and now filthy and squalid and heir to many evils, having need of true children! O City, formerly enthroned on high, striding far and wide,[1535] magnificent in comeliness and more becoming in stature;[1536] now thy luxurious garments and elegant royal veils are rent and torn; thy flashing eye has grown dark, and thou art like unto an aged furnace woman[1537] all covered with soot, and thy formerly glistening and delightful countenance is now furrowed by loose wrinkles. I shall forego describing those who set words to the music of the lyre and sang of thy calamities and, drunk with wine, turned thy tragedy into a comedy, making a profession out of the farcical recitation of thine afflictions: blows struck with the fist and the foot, bruises, moreover, and black eyes inflicted upon thee every hour of the day; for by God's will thou hast provoked to jealousy the foolish nations, or rather, those people who are not truly nations[1538] but obscure and scattered tribes, and if thou didst not give birth to the majority of them, thou didst, however, raise them up and provide them with the fat of wheat.[1539]

"Who shall save thee? Or who shall comfort thee?[1540] Or who shall turn back to inquire after thy welfare?"[1541] Thus spake the much-wailing Jeremias. Who shall dress in thy former raiment? When shall thou hear those divinely inspired words: "Awake, awake, stand up, O City, that hast drunk the cup of my fury and the cup of calamity.[1542] Put on thy strength, put on thy glory.[1543] Shake off the dust and arise. Put off the [578] band of thy neck.[1544] Enlarge the place of thy tent, and of thy curtains.[1545] Fear not because thou hast been put to shame, neither be confounded because thou wast reproached,[1546] and all that go by the way have clapped their hands at thee; they have hissed and shaken their *heads* and have said, "This is the city, the crown of glory and of joy of all the earth,"[1547] and, "How does the city that was filled with people sit as a *widow,* and how has she, princess among provinces, become tributary?"[1548] For thy God has said, "For a little while I left thee, but with great mercy will I have *compassion* upon thee. In a little wrath I turned away my face, but with everlasting mercy will I have compassion upon thee."[1549] Perhaps,

thou shalt sing out to God with David, "O Lord, according to the multitude of my griefs within my heart, thy consolations have gladdened my soul."[1550]

Who shall be set over thee as another Moses to renew all things, or who shall restore thee as another Zorobabel? When shall the time come for thee to gather thy children from the four winds to which we have scattered,[1551] even as hens which love their chicks gather them under their wings.[1552] And now we cannot freely gaze upon thee, face to face, nor joyously cling to thee as to a mother and openly pour out for thee a libation of tears as many as the eyes wish or can, but flying cautiously around thee like sparrows whose mother and source of nourishment has been taken captive and whose nest has been scattered to the winds, we emit piteous and mournful cries; expelled far from thy nesting places, hungry and thirsty, shivering in squalor, often close shorn because of lice, our souls wasting away because of our afflictions, we are no longer able to find the way back to our homes in the City, but roam far and wide like fickle migratory birds and the planets. In other words, although we are
[579] apart, we are united to thee, and being separated, we are intertwined like those who are joined together in spirit even though removed in body, and suffer, moreover, the same anguish as experienced by some animals when beholding their own kind ensnared by hunters and confined within a glass cage. Those animals, gazing upon the sight of their fellow beast, visible in the clarity and brightness of the vessel, are wholly unable to come into physical contact with it. For this reason they vainly circle the receptacle in dismay, bewildered by the captive beast's countenance so dramatically altered from its former appearance. And we likewise wish to cast our eyes upon thee and to draw near, for we have been altogether deprived of clasping thee wholeheartedly to our breast and of boldly embracing thee as in former times, kept asunder by the barbarian forces as though by a solid body much more impervious than glass.

"Why hast thou smitten us, Lord, and there is no healing for us?"[1553] We know, O Lord, our sins, and the iniquities of our fathers. Refrain out of mercy, destroy not the throne of thy glory.[1554] Chasten us, O Lord, *that our soul may not be removed from thee,* but with judgment and not in wrath, lest thou make us few. Pour out thy wrath upon the families that have not called upon thy name.[1555] Lord, thou art our Father; we are clay, *and thou our potter,* and we are all the work of thine hands.[1556] Behold, and look on our reproaches. Our inheritance has been turned away to aliens, our houses to strangers.[1557] Turn us, O Lord, to thee, and we shall be turned.[1558] Most useful and timely are these scriptural verses in describing similar calamities.

But now even my power of speech fails me, like a body which, united to the soul as her attendant, succumbs and dies together with thee, O nurturer of the word! One ought to dedicate to thee copious lamentations with
[580] muted tears and stifled groaning and refrain from continuing the sequence of this history. For in a land long alienated from letters and completely barbarized, who dares sing out the Muses' melodies?[1559] Nor should I be singing out the accomplishments of the barbarians, nor passing on to posterity military actions in which Hellenes were not victorious. For if Hippocrates of Kos, who was promised huge sums of money by the king

of the Persians to visit the cities under his rule in order to tend to those who were sorely afflicted with disease, absolutely refused to give ear to the summons and allowed the barbarians to go to ruin,[1560] how then can I devote the very best thing and the most beautiful invention of the Hellenes—history—to the recounting of barbarian deeds against Hellenes?

But let these, like the incendiary of the temple of Artemis in Ephesos,[1561] be gone out of sight and out of hearing,[1562] not even meriting a greeting from us until the iniquity has passed away [1563] and God be entreated concerning his servants.[1564] For it cannot be that our God shall forget forever,[1565] nor shall he in anger shut up his tender mercies[1566] and be well pleased no more,[1567] but he both wounds and heals, kills and restores to life.[1568] If he does send the teeth of wild beasts with the rage of serpents creeping on the ground,[1569] he also breaks the jaw teeth of the lions and crushes the dragon's head.[1570] If he breaks the reed, he also rebukes the wild beasts of the reed.[1571] If some glory lies in chariots and [581]
some in horses,[1572] yet a horse is vain for safety,[1573] and neither is he well pleased with the legs of a man.[1574] If he shows his own people hard things and gives them to drink the wine of astonishment,[1575] he also prepares a table in the presence of them that afflict us and offers the cup of gladness which brings cheer like the best wine.[1576] If he gathers the scourgers from the ends of the earth and from them that are on the sea afar off,[1577] and cries out through the great preacher and prophet, "Giants are coming to fulfill my wrath, rejoicing at the same time and *dancing;* for they are blessed and I bring them,"[1578] he inflicts upon them even more violent blows and flogs the worst among them with afflictions, showing no partiality whatsoever. He either uses these as instruments for the ruin of cities and to effect public calamities and as pitiless executioners of men, or, as the physician of souls, he uses the majority of them in nursing the sick and as healing remedies whose nature is evident to the wise. The nurses either perished with the patient, or, once the sick recovered, they withered away for lack of something to do; and the curative medications that healed the infirmity were excreted together.

I affirm that what is needed is not a writing of divorcement given us by God, nor should we consider the ensuing horrors a grafting of the barbarians as a wild olive tree into our good olive tree.[1579] What is needed is a small chastening[1580] which God knows how to lay on, in which excess is foregone and all things are not permitted to the tempters, but those who are sorely tried are spared. Indeed, if in their actions they [the Latins] did [582]
not know the limits of wickedness and were impiously arrogant towards him from whom they received the power to flog, like Nabouzardan, the captain of the guard, they consigned the city of God to the flames and carried away the liturgical vessels as booty,[1581] and like Baltasar who reveled in these vessels,[1582] profaned the altars and mocked the Holy Mysteries; the suffering [Roman] on the other hand, accusing himself at the beginning of his defense,[1583] fervently called upon God to be his comforter.

In expectation of God's love for mankind, we ought to sing out with David, "Remember us, O Lord, with the favor thou hast to thy people; visit us with thy salvation that we may behold the good of thine elect, that we may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that we may glory

with thine inheritance,"[1584] knowing full well that in the end the ungodly shall be overlooked and flogged, and that for those who hope in the Lord their chastisement shall be accompanied by the call to repentance and consolation.

IX. *The Events Which Befell the Romans Following the Fall of Constantinople, by the Same Choniatēs*

SOLON, the best of the Athenians, viewed the revolution of Peisistratos as deluded and frequently lectured the Athenians in an attempt to quench the tyranny. He realized full well that it is easier to eradicate an emerging evil in the very beginning and thus prevent its taking root than to cut it away and destroy it after it has grown and become strong. When no one paid heed and he was unable to convince anyone, he carried weapons in his arms and deposited them at the entranceways in the hope that in this way he would arouse and incite certain of the citizens to emulate him in his zeal. As no one was prompted to do so, or even joined in urging the tyrant's overthrow, he is reported to have said, "I have defended the fatherland as best I could," and thereafter he held his peace, composing poems and taunting the Athenians for their irresolution. One of these writings, which has not been swept away by the flow of time, reads as follows: [583] [584]

> If you now suffer, do not blame the Powers,
> For they are good, and all the fault was ours.
> All the strongholds you put into his hands,
> And now his slaves must do what he commands.[1585]

If Solon, the scion of Kodros,[1586] whose reputation for wisdom has spread almost to the four corners of the earth, put the assembly to shame by word and deed, he did so in vain. The same would have been true had a member of our own generation attempted to come to the aid of the state whose emperors, from the beginning, were nurtured in indolence, who snored in slumber more sweet than Endymion's and came ever earlier to dinner; so secluded were they from state affairs that they were wholly given over to such trivialities as demanding flowers in wintertime and fruit in the spring. The citizens, on the other hand, were concerned only with the business of commerce and driving a trade; they neither rose from their beds at the sound of the war trumpets nor were they awakened by the singing of birds, but slept soundly without any knowledge of warfare.

While the majestic Solon composed poems and upbraided those who had erred, it seems that the assembly of the Athenians, with itching ears,[1587] acquiesced to the edifying arguments advanced by the best men. It is possible to reproach docile men in other ways, by mixing the sweet with the bitter. And memory, like a fan that kindles the surviving embers [585]

of the good fire buried in the soul into a bright flame, cautions against committing the same error in similar circumstances. As for us, the inhabitants of Constantinople, as well as for those in the provinces, the reproaches were bruises in themselves. The horror of pierced ears had not entered the minds of the masses, nor had they been cognizant of the goddess of freedom, the Paphian [Aphrodite], just as those who have never tasted of honey can never know honey's sweetness.

But since our times are in variance with the age of Solon, let us overlook the ox-goads of reproach, for they will contribute only to the majority being unequally yoked together (for they are like dangerous bulls whose horns are bound with hay),[1588] and let us continue with the subsequent events of our history. If we refuse[1589] to sing the deeds of the barbarians, yet [God] will take the wise in their own cleverness;[1590] he will often cause the proud to fall and fill their faces with dishonor[1591] and deliver them to nations more barbarous than themselves, to their ruin. It behooves us not to remain silent to the very end but to cite the written word in testimony of the wonderful works[1592] of God, who says, "I live forever and will render vengeance to mine enemies and utter destruction to them that hate me."[1593] And again he says to Abraham, "And the nation, whomsoever they shall serve, I will judge."[1594]

Thus it was that Constantine's fair city, the common delight and boast of all nations, was laid waste by fire and blackened by soot, taken and emptied of all wealth, public and private, as well as that which was consecrated to God by the scattered nations of the West. Feeble and
[586] unspeakable, these assembled to undertake a voyage of piracy, and their pretext to backwater against us, like a painted mask concealing their true motives, was to avenge Isaakios Angelos; as their best and most precious cargo they carried the son he had unfortunately begotten to the ruin of our country. The supine and stay-at-home ministers of the Roman empire ushered in the pirates as judges to condemn and punish us.

As for the fate which befell the queen of cities, neither celestial nor terrestrial sign was given, as happened often in the past, portending the calamities of mankind and the pernicious attacks of evils. Bloody raindrops did not pour down from heaven,[1595] nor did the harvest turn blood red, nor did fiery stones fall out of the sky, nor was anything new observed; but many-legged and many-handed[1596] Justice appeared without the sound of footfall or handclap as a zealous avenger, fell silently and inaudibly upon the City, and made of us the most ill-starred of men.

On that day on which the City fell [13 April 1204], the despoilers took up quarters in the houses spread out in all directions, seized everything inside as plunder, and interrogated their owners as to the whereabouts of their hidden treasures, beating some, holding gentle converse with many, and using threats against all. Taking possession of these things, they put them on display, both those furnishings that were in plain view and which were brought forward by their owners and those valuables which they
[587] found themselves after prolonged searching. They spared nothing and shared none of the belongings with their owners, nor were they willing to share food and house with them; and because they showed them utter disdain and refused to mingle with them, taking them captive while heaping abuse upon them and casting them out, the chiefs decided to allow

those who so desired to depart from the City. Gathered into groups, they went forth wrapped in tatters, wasted away from fasting, ashen in complexion, their visages corpse-like, and their eyes bloodshot, shedding more blood than tears. Some made their possessions the subject of lamentation, while others said nothing as though the loss of their belongings were a matter of no distress whatsoever; some bemoaned the abduction and deflowering of a beautiful young daughter of marriageable age or bewailed the loss of a spouse, while others moaned some other calamity as they made their way.

My own situation in the course of events was as follows. On that truly hateful day of evil name, many of my close friends flocked to my house whose entranceway, dark and difficult to approach, was covered by a low portico; our residence in the district of Sphorakion,[1597] incomparable in beauty and immense in size, was destroyed by the second fire. It was, moreover, convenient from here to enter the Great Church, as it was situated near the temple precincts. But there was no place left unsearched by the troops, nor could any sacred place offer asylum and protect the refugee from harm. No matter in what direction one fled, one was dragged away by the enemy and carried off to a location of their own choosing. Beholding these lawless acts visited upon us in these present circumstances, we pursued that which was expedient.

There was a certain acquaintance of mine who shared my hearth with [588] me, a Venetian by birth,[1598] who was deemed worthy of protection, and with him, his household and wife were preserved from physical harm. He proved to be helpful to us in those troubled times. Putting on his armor and transforming himself from merchant to soldier, he pretended to be a companion in arms and, speaking to them in their own barbaric tongue, claimed that he had occupied the dwelling first. Thus he beat off the despoilers to a man. But they continued to pour in in large numbers, and he despaired of opposing them, especially the French, who were not like the others in temperament or physique and boasted that the only thing they feared was heaven. As it was impossible for him to fall upon them, he enjoined us to depart so that we men should not be put in chains because of our money, and the women should not be violated and wantonly raped.

This good and former household servant and client now became our brave helpmate, providing us protection in these anxious times. After he had taken us to another house where Venetian acquaintances of ours resided, we left a short time later, dragged away by the hand as though we had been allotted to him as captives of his spear, and downcast and ill-clad we were sent on our way.

Because this part of the City had fallen to the French, we became immigrants once again. When our servants dispersed in all directions, inhumanly abandoning us, we were compelled to carry on our shoulders the children who could not yet walk and to hold in our arms a male infant at breast, and thus to make our way through the streets.

Having remained in the City for five days after her fall, we departed [589] [17 April 1204]. The day was Saturday, and what had taken place was not, I believe, an event without meaning, a fortuitous circumstance or a coincidence, but the will of God. It was a stormy and wintry day, and my

wife was approaching the throes of childbirth, so that Christ's prophecy, "Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day," and "Woe unto them that are with child in those days!"[1599] appeared to have been spoken for us, and to have been wholly fulfilled. Numerous friends and relatives and a multitude of others, on seeing us, came running to escort us on our way, and we were like a throng of ants passing through the streets. The troops who came out to meet us could not be called armed for battle, for although their long swords hung down alongside their horses, and they bore daggers in their sword belts, some were loaded down with spoils and others searched the captives who were passing through to see if they had wrapped a splendid garment inside a torn tunic or hidden silver or gold in their bosoms. Still others looked with steadfast and fixed gaze upon those women who were of extraordinary beauty with intent to seize them forthwith and ravish them. Fearing for the women, we put them in the middle as though in a sheepfold and instructed the young girls to rub their faces with mud to conceal the blush of their cheeks so that they should not, like a beacon's fire in the night, signal wayfarers who would first become spectators, then admirers, and finally rapists, viewing their own pleasure as guiltless. We lifted our hands in supplication to God, smote upon our breasts[1600] with contrite hearts, and bathed our eyes in tears and prayed that we all, both men and women, should escape those savage beasts of prey unharmed. It was necessary that we pass through the Golden Gate.

[590] As we came to the Church of the Noble Martyr Mokios, a lecherous and unholy barbarian, like a wolf pursuing a lamb, snatched from our midst a fair-tressed maiden, the young daughter of a judge. Before this most piteous spectacle our entire company shouted out in alarm. The girl's father, afflicted by old age and sickness, stumbled, fell into a mudhole, and lay on his side wailing and wallowing in the mire; turning to me in utter helplessness and calling me by name, he entreated that I do everything possible to free his daughter. I immediately turned back and set out after the abductor, following his tracks; in tears I cried out against the abduction, and with gestures of supplication I prevailed upon those passing troops who were not wholly ignorant of our language to come to my aid, and I even held on to some with my hand. In this way I succeeded in moving some to pity and convinced them to go in pursuit of that shameless fleshpot.

I went on ahead and the others followed. When we arrived at the lodgings of this lover of women, he sent the girl inside and stood at the gateway to repulse his opponents. Pointing my finger at him, I said, "This is he to whose wrongdoing the light of day bears witness, and who disregards the commands of your wellborn chiefs. You have decreed and have sworn the most awesome oaths to refrain from intercourse with, and, if possible, from even casting an adulterous eye on, married women, maidens who have never known any man, and nuns consecrated to God. This man has flouted your injunctions before many witnesses and was not afraid to bray like a salacious ass at the sight of chaste maidens. Defend, therefore, those who are protected by your laws and who have been put in our charge; be softened by these tears which God does accept and which nature has channeled into our eyes so as to arouse pity for one

another. If you have fathered sons and daughters, we entreat you, by your wives and beloved children, to extend a hand to your suppliants, and above all, by the God-receiving tomb that received God and by the precepts of Christ which enjoin upon all those who have been called by him in common to do unto men whatsoever they would that they should do to them."[1601] [591]

With such arguments, I aroused the sympathies of these men, and they insisted on the girl's release. At first, the barbarian showed contempt, as he was held captive by the two most tyrannical of passions, lust and wrath. When he saw, however, that the men were bristled with anger and proposed to hang him from a stake as an unjust and shameless man, and that their threats came not from their lips only but from their hearts as well, he yielded reluctantly and surrendered the girl. The father rejoiced at the sight of his daughter, shedding tears as libations to God for having saved her from this union without marriage crowns and bridal songs. Then he rose to his feet and continued on the way with us.[1602]

As we left the City behind, others returned, thanks to God, and loudly bewailed their misfortunes, but I threw myself, just as I was, on the ground and reproached the walls both because they alone were insensible, neither shedding tears nor lying in ruins upon the earth, and because they still stood upright. "If those things for whose protection you were erected no longer exist, being utterly destroyed by fire and war, for what purpose do you still stand? And what will you protect hereafter unless you strive to bring destruction to the enemy in the day of wrath,[1603] when the Lord shall rise up to strike terribly[1604] those who have dealt with us in such fashion, riding perhaps on the West, according to David's prophecy?[1605] "O imperial City," I cried out,

> City fortified,[1606] City of the great king,[1607] tabernacle of the most High,[1608] praise and song of his servants and beloved refuge for strangers, queen of the queens of cities, song of songs and splendor of splendors, and the rarest vision of the rare wonders of the world, who is it that has torn us away from thee like darling children from [592] their adoring mother? What shall become of us? Whither shall we go? What consolation shall we find in our nakedness, torn from thy bosom as from a mother's womb? When shall we look upon thee, not as thou now art, a plain of desolation[1609] and a valley of weeping,[1610] trampled by armies and despised and rejected, but exalted and restored, revered by those who humbled thee and provoked thee, and once again sucking the milk of the Gentiles and eating the wealth of kings?[1611] When shall we doff these shriveled and tattered rags which, like fig leaves and garments of skins,[1612] suffice not to cover the whole body and which the foreigners, as treacherous as the serpent, forced upon us with attendant evils and injuries?
>
> Do thou propitiate God, O holiest of cities! Bring forward, on thy behalf, the temples, the martyrs' relics, these debacles, the magnitude of the trials and tribulations suffered by thee in full measure, consigned to the flames by impious men. For he says, "Call upon me in the day of *thine* afflictions and I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify me."[1613]
>
> Shall I ever more look upon thee,[1614] O holiest and greatest of all

temples, O terrestrial heaven, O throne of God's glory,[1615] O thou chariot of the cherubim,[1616] O thou second firmament proclaiming the work of God's hands,[1617] a work singular and wondrous and a gladness resounding through the whole earth? And who shall answer[1618] but he alone who, having been made trial of in his own Passion, knows how to succor those who are sorely tried, he who delivers the poor man from the hands of his oppressors and the poor man and the needy from his despoilers,[1619] and as the creator of all things ever changes them for the better?

[593] Emptying out the vexations overflowing from our souls in this fashion, we went forth weeping and casting lamentations like seeds.[1620] And if we shall surely come with exultation bringing the sheaves of a more propitious change, this is the gift of God who comforts the fainthearted and clothes them with the robe of salvation and the garment of joy.[1621]

The ecumenical chief shepherd[1622] preceded us, bearing neither scrip nor gold about his loins, without staff or sandals, and wearing but a single coat, a perfect evangelical apostle,[1623] or rather, a true imitator of Christ, except that he departed from our New Sion riding on a lowly ass and had no intention of celebrating a triumph on that site.[1624]

At this time we terminated our journey at Selymbria and rested from our wandering. Our households were unharmed, thanks be to God's lavish generosity towards us and his perfect gift of everlasting remembrance.[1625] We were not subjected to the rack and the constriction of strung bones about the temples as were many of our contemporaries in order to squeeze money from them, and we were nourished by God who alone provides food to all in good season and a sumptuous feast for the young ravens who call upon him,[1626] and who, furthermore, magnificently clothes the lilies of the field which neither spin nor sow.[1627]

The rustics and baseborn greatly taunted those of us from Byzantion. They foolishly called the misery of our poverty and nakedness the equality of civic rights, for they had not as yet been chastened by the evils at hand. Many seized upon lawlessness and said, "Blessed be the Lord, for
[594] we have become rich,"[1628] and they paid very little for the possessions of their countrymen which were offered for sale. They had not as yet received the beef-eating Latins into their homes and thus did not know that they pour out their wine both unmixed and pure in the same way that they pour out their unmitigated gall, and that they treat the Romans with arrogance and contempt.

Such was the fate that befell us and those of our station, as well as those who had participated in rhetorical studies with us. The vulgar members of this wicked company engaged in profit making and again profaned the sacred by buying up those things being sold by the Latins and trafficking in them as though they were common silver, as if the fact that they had been removed from the churches made them no longer sacred to God. The enemy reveled in licentious and wanton behavior, and, resorting to indecent actions, they ridiculed Roman customs. They dressed themselves in the broad-bordered robes, not because of need but for the purpose of mockery, and roamed the streets. They covered the heads of their mounts with head veils of the finest linen and tied the white linen bands which hang down the back around their snouts and rode hither and

thither through the City. Others, holding reed pens and inkwells, pretended to be writing in books, mocking us as secretaries. The majority lifted onto their horses the women they had taken by force, some of whom were dressed in flowing robes and were not adorned with wigs[1629] but had their hair plaited behind into a single braid; the drum-shaped women's hats and the headbands of curly white hair the barbarians put on their horses. Carousing and drinking unmixed wine all day long, some gorged themselves on delicacies, while others ate of their native food: chine of oxen cooked in cauldrons, chunks of pickled hog boiled with ground beans, and a pungent garlic sauce mixed with other seasonings. When the spoils were divided among them, they made no distinction between profane and sacred furnishings and vessels but they used everything equally for their bodily needs, paying no heed whatsoever to God [595] and Themis [Divine Justice]. They desecrated the sacred images of Christ and the saints by sitting upon them and using them as footstools. When they began to cast lots for the cities and provinces [end of September 1204], it was a marvel to behold and witness over a period of time the unsurpassed loss of all sense by these deluded men, or perhaps it would be more fitting to speak of their derangement. As though they had already been installed as kings of kings and held the whole terrestrial globe in their hands, they commissioned tax assessors to register the taxable Roman lands, wishing first to ascertain their annual revenues before apportioning these by lot, and the principalities and powers[1630] enjoyed by other nations and kings they divided up forthwith. Even Alexandria, wealthy among cities, situated near the Nile, was subject to the draw of the lot, as were Libya and the lands extending from Libya to Numidia and Cadiz, including both Parthians and Persians, the eastern Iberians, the lands of Assyria and Hyrcania, and all the lands divided by the waters of the largest rivers. Not even the northern regions were exempted from the casting of lots, but these too were apportioned. One congratulated himself on his good fortune and praised the cities which he was allotted as abounding in horses and overflowing with tax revenues, while another plumed himself at winning other goods of fortune and never ceased expressing his wonderment. Some wrangled over the cities that were allotted and exchanged cities and territories among themselves. Certain others, who had high hopes of having Ikonion assigned to them by lot, contended hotly.

They sent gates of the City to their fellow countrymen in Syria, as well as pieces of the chain that had been stretched across the harbor blocking its entrance, and they dispatched messengers everywhere to announce the City's fall [February 1205].

When it was time to anoint an emperor, they assembled in the Great [596] Church of the Apostles of Christ [9 May 1204], where they deliberated on what should be done. At first, according to an ancestral custom, they considered arranging four chalices in a row, one of which would contain the Bloodless Sacrifice; these would then be given to the priests, who, at the calling of each candidate's name for the throne, would take up one of the cups and bring it to him. He would be selected before the others to whose lot fell the chalice that held the Sacred Body and Blood of Christ.

However, it was the opinion of Dandolo, doge of Venice, that the

selection should be left to a vote. The five noblest candidates from among the French and Lombard nations were chosen, and likewise five from among the Venetians. The vote of the majority prevailed, and the lot of empire fell to Baldwin, count of Flanders, but it was common knowledge that Dandolo had manipulated the outcome through fraud and deceit.

Since he himself was maimed of sight and for this reason was excluded from the list of imperial candidates, Dandolo wanted the empire to be administered by someone who would be complaisant in his ways, and not too ambitious in his determination to rule. His greatest concern was that the future emperor's allotted lands be extremely remote from the borders of Venice, so that should emperor and Venetians ever have a falling out, the emperor would not be able to summon his greater forces from nearby and easily penetrate Venice's borders, overrunning and plundering these with impunity; he knew that Marquis Boniface, who came from Lom-
[597] bardy, had the power to do all these things. Lombardy lies on the seaboard, and one can easily sail thence to the Roman empire. Since Lombardy borders on Venice, it could easily inflict grievous injuries on the Venetians. Thus, Dandolo was motivated by such thoughts which were not wholly unreasonable, and those things which the many with sight could not clearly perceive, he who was sightless discerned through the eyes of his mind and foiled Marquis Boniface. With the joint support of the Venetians and the French, he chose Baldwin, knowing that he came from lower France, and that the borders of France and Venice were as far removed from one another as Venice was distant from the Roman empire. Baldwin, moreover, accorded Dandolo absolute deference and behaved towards him as towards a father. He did not have long experience in affairs of state, for which reason Dandolo distrusted the marquis. Baldwin was not yet thirty-two years old.[1631]

He was, furthermore, devout in his duties to God, and was reported to be temperate in his personal conduct; for as long as he was separated from his dear wife, he never so much as cast a glance at another woman. In singing the praises of God and in the face of every distress, he was unwavering. Most important, twice a week in the evening he had a herald proclaim that no one who slept within the palace was to have sexual intercourse with any woman who was not his legal wife.

After he had become emperor [16 May 1204], Baldwin marched out to the western regions [summer 1204]. He did not intend to subjugate them (for he thought that everything was there for the taking, asserting in a
[598] high-spirited manner that verged on boasting, "Give me a place to stand and I shall move the earth with my spear"[1632]) but to pass through them as through friendly provinces and to be proclaimed emperor of the Romans by all. Consequently, he did not deign to receive certain Romans who represented both the military and the civil bureaucracy. He resolved to do the same with the other commanders and counts of the army; the Latins, who appropriated and claimed valor as their very own as an innate and inborn habit of life, could not tolerate that the martial deeds of other nations should be compared with theirs. And of the related virtues, not one of the Graces or Muses was ever entertained as a guest by these barbarians. I believe, moreover, that they were savage by nature and that their wrath ran ahead of reason.

As he passed through the Thracian cities, Baldwin installed a garrison at Orestias as well as at Didymoteichon and Philippopolis. When he arrived at Xantheia, the troops there laid an ambush under the command of a certain Senachereim [governor of Nikopolis in Epiros] and made a sneak attack against his forces. But they showed themselves briefly and then took cover, returning as cowards whence they had marched out so bold of heart. Thus, Baldwin advanced without opposition to the metropolis of the Thessalonians. Marquis Boniface followed, bringing with him Maria the Hungarian, who had been married to Isaakios Angelos and who, after the latter's death and the fall of the City, became Boniface's wife according to the law.

While Baldwin was encamped at Mosynopolis, the marquis was informed by a goodly number that Baldwin had no intention whatsoever of giving up his claim of the celebrated city of Thessaloniki as he had agreed, and that for this reason he was advancing in great haste to enter and occupy the city. For a long while Boniface appeared dumbfounded as [599]
though he had been struck by a thunderbolt. Seemingly despondent, he turned back, calling Baldwin more deceitful than the Greeks, perfidious by nature, and more capricious than [the throw of] potsherd and dice.[1633] He took possession of Didymoteichon, fortifying it in all kinds of ways, and devastated the Thracian cities, with the exception of Orestias (he bypassed this city mainly because it was defended by Baldwin's heavy-armed troops). Then he made an assessment of the taxes and gathered the Romans together. Invoking the awesome and most sacred name of God, he called him to witness his renunciation of the treaties and former accord with his fellow countrymen and his determination to go over to the Romans. After declaring these things on oath, he contrived another scheme to win their acceptance: he proclaimed the firstborn son (Manuel)[1634] of his wife Maria emperor of the Romans, and, ceding to him the form, name, and mask by way of pretext, he won over the Romans by scores. The marquis labored diligently on such measures, but not for the sake of truth, as later events were to disclose.

As Baldwin approached Thessaloniki, the entire populace streamed out and with loud, clear shouts joyously surrendered themselves and their city to him. They made a special plea that Baldwin not set foot in the city nor allow his troops to move inside, for they feared that the troops might ignore his orders and despoil the city, since they did not serve under one commander but were gathered together by many captains and subject to many leaders. Baldwin yielded to these reasonable petitions, but he was well aware that the angry retreat of the marquis did not augur well. Moreover, informed by many of the marquis's actions, he paid heed to the Thessalonians and delivered to them a letter written in red ink, confirming the city in all her customary privileges.

After encamping outside the walls for some days and showing himself [600]
to be of a kind and reasonable temper, he returned to Byzantion. He had received a message enjoining him to do so from Dandolo, the doge of Venice, and those counts who had remained behind in Constantinople. With Baldwin's return, the marquis was also summoned back, being visited by a certain Geoffrey,[1635] one of the most powerful figures among the Latin hosts (the man's rank was that of marshal, which in the Hellenic

tongue is equivalent to *protostrator*), who gave him assurances that nothing unpleasant would befall him on his arrival. Boniface met with Baldwin and made peace with him, whereupon he withdrew from Didymoteichon. Next, he went down to Thessaloniki, where he was warmly welcomed by all. He entered without resistance, acquiescing for the time being and concealing his intentions behind the cunning of his ways and the duplicity of his speech. But he did not keep up the pretense for very long, for he was like the weasel convicted by the suet it had stolen.[1636] Learning that the Thessalonians were thriving and rich in material possessions, he mulcted them of their monies; then he confiscated the most splendid dwellings from their owners and distributed these among his knights.

Leaving his wife Maria and a division of his army behind in Thessaloniki, he marched out in quest of the cities which lie in the vicinity of Serrai, border on Verroia, and extend to Tempē of Thessaly. After subju-
[601] gating these, he unexpectedly decided to assault Larissa, to march through Hellas, and subdue the Peloponnesos, ever deeming his conquests to be of small account and eager to push forward because of the simplicity of the Romans. He was accompanied by certain Romans, especially men of noble birth who, by deceit and cunning, decoyed the provinces and smoothed the rough ways, ostensibly in the name of Maria's firstborn son (attired in imperial vestments and acclaimed in procession, he was warmly received by the Macedonians, the Thessalians, and all the lands reaching down to Hellas, as was the case earlier with the Thracians); in truth, these men were precursors of the marquis and the Latins who proposed what course of action shoul be taken and were but panderers of their country.

Without a stroke of the sword, the marquis was declared the master of the most powerful provinces and of the largest cities, whose populations were much larger than his own troops, if one reckoned the number of cities and manpower. As for Baldwin, after he had arrived in Byzantion, he resolved that he should not remain inactive nor should the troops under his command stay at home, absenting themselves from battle without purpose, but that they should be transported to Asia, where they would make an attempt on the cities. He was provoked to this action by the Latins of the Hellespont whose city was called Pegai and by the Trojan Armenians;[1637] the latter would not let up, even for a moment, from urging Baldwin and the other counts to cross the straits and take the Eastern cities as a ready windfall.

During the leaf-shedding month [11 November 1204], Baldwin's brother Henry and Peter of Bracieux, a man of heroic strength, came to Kallipolis on the coast and sailed over to the East. After Henry had joined forces
[602] with the Armenians of Troy and scraped together auxiliary troops, he ravaged and maltreated those cities which did not come to terms with him. He occupied Mount Ida and then passed through her defiles and advanced to Atramyttion [taken in February 1205].

Peter of Bracieux left the town of Pegai and set out on the road to Lopadion [1 November 1204]. A large Roman force under Theodore Laskaris engaged him near the town of Poimanenon[1638] [6 December 1204], but they could not withstand the charge of the Latins and took to

flight. Meeting no resistance, Peter continued on to Lopadion, and as he was welcomed by the entire populace holding crosses and the Holy Gospels, the inhabitants of Lopadion were left unharmed. All the cities which resolved not to do battle with the Latins were treated in the same way, even though it was an evil thing to serve a Latin whose speech differed from that of the Hellenes, who was money-loving by nature, with an undiscriminating eye, an insatiable belly, a wrathful and violent soul, and a hand forever reaching out for the sword.

The Latins were eager to make trial of the inhabitants of the city of Prusa and to take their measure because the Prusaeans paid them no heed; the latter, having prepared sufficient provisions for a long siege, were confident that because of its site Prusa could never be taken by force, for it was built on a hill and was encompassed by a strong wall. The Latins marched out from Lopadion and came to Prusa. They took up positions along the south wall, where Mount Olympos recedes a short [603] distance from the city and the rocky hill which holds the city in its grasp completes the encirclement of the site. They pressed the defenders, demanding admittance into the city so that later they would not suffer when the city should fall into Latin hands and the walls should be demolished by the siege engines. But the defenders took no thought of surrender, and, indeed, some made a bold sortie, striking down many nobles with their arrows. Since it did not appear possible to storm the walls, and especially because of the injuries inflicted at the first assault, the Latins departed forthwith.

The Prusaeans, emboldened even more by the departure of the Latins, pursued them in large numbers. Others followed suit and occupied the commanding heights above the pass through which the enemy had to travel. Not a few defected from the Latins and followed the example of those who opposed them; they took up arms against the Latins and slew many of them [19 March 1205]. Thus they prevailed over the Latins time and again, and there was great slaughter, especially at the town of Kaisareia.

Proposing to accomplish identical results in battle, Theodore [Mangaphas] the Philadelphian marched against Henry, who was sojourning in the vicinity of Atramyttion. At first, he took Henry by surprise, causing him great consternation because of his large forces. Henry, convinced that he had to make a desperate attempt, drew up his cavalry in battle array, and raising their lances, they awaited the Roman attack. But be- [604] cause the Romans were reluctant to undertake the initiative for battle and looked upon the enemy troops as though they were a flaming red dragon coiled to strike, their weapons bristling like horny scales and both their wings opening up like a gaping mouth, they were listless and sluggish in repulsing the cavalry charges. At a given signal, Henry leaped ahead of the others and rode his horse through the center of their ranks, while his cavalry, couching their lances and raising the war cry as is their custom, scattered the Romans and pressed upon them as they retreated. Large numbers of Romans were cut down, and all because at the first charge of the Latins and the lowering of their lances, their horsemen fled at full speed, abandoning the infantry to slaughter and captivity.

Thus did events in Asia take their course. The marquis, conducted

through Thessalian Tempē by Roman guides, led his force quickly through the lowlands, so that by occupying the plains of Larissa, he escaped the notice of the Roman sentinels who kept diligent watch over the hilltops and mountain passes which lead down from every side to the narrowest part of the Peneios River, where the bubbling waters made a great rushing noise and the banks reverberated from the din.[1639] At the foot of the mountains, the Latins cleared a narrow, rugged footpath, barely wide enough to hold four men-at-arms, which led down to a narrow space beneath rocky cliffs and the river's torrent. From Larissa, the marquis continued his advance,
[605] and there was none who dared resist him. It was only after some time that Leon Sgouros[1640] laid an ambush around Thermopylae, but he executed no brave deed and was terrified at the mere sight of the Latin knights, and so he fled to Akrocorinth.[1641]

This Sgouros, born in Nauplion, who for some time prevailed over his countrymen by force rather than by persuasion, filled up the measure of his father[1642] and administered his inheritance with bloodshed. Because of the vicissitudes in the fortunes of the state and the factiousness of the times, his importance became inflated, and from a man of no consequence he became exalted like mountain streams swollen by rainstorms and waves lifted up by violent winds. Argos, the pasture land of horses,[1643] he took by treachery [1202] and next despoiled Corinth [1203]. Never ceasing from pillaging, he afterwards assaulted Athens with warships while his troops crossed the Isthmus, in the hope that he might take the acropolis with ease or set up siege engines to terrify the defenders into surrendering without a fight. He pondered over and rashly conceived of schemes he could not effect [summer 1204].

Michael, the chief shepherd of Athens (he was my brother, yes my very own; I take pride in our consanguinity and I rejoice over my kinship with the man, even though I am far removed from him in virtue and learning), knew that his allotted portion depended upon his own counsels and prayers. On observing Sgouros setting up a military encampment, he decided to approach him out of his love for God and, if possible, to convince him to withdraw, for Sgouros was not unfamiliar to him and
[606] would often come to him to discuss matters. As though standing on the ramparts of the city, he shot arrows of exhortation, and with his pastoral sling he hurled missiles of divinely inspired words. By thus discharging spiritual threats as though from siege engines, he attempted to break down Sgouros's resolve, saying that it was not fitting for one who was called a Christian and was reckoned among the Romans to advance in battle against Romans unless he confirmed that he was a Christian with his lips only, and though he dressed as did the Romans and spoke the same language, in his heart he was far removed from those who call themselves Christians.[1644] What cause did he have against the Athenians that he should make war upon Attica? The excuse for leading an army against his neighbors, the Argives, was that they shared the same borders, just as he had recently blamed the Corinthians for the frequent plots laid against him by the chief shepherd of Corinth when he beheld a Roman army making an assault upon Nauplion and warships sailing into her harbor. But the Athenians and he, so far removed geographically, had no conflict of interests. The actions of the city's priest could not be

construed to be anything but God-loving and spiritual, and if Sgouros did not spurn to call him father and shepherd and would cull always the words from his tongue as though reaching after a sweet honeycomb, the archbishop would inscribe him among his spiritual children.

Using such weapons, Michael appealed to the man to withdraw. But Sgouros did not hide the threat of force and urged everyone to acknowledge that advantage dictates the use of might, as was demonstrated by the worst possible evils suffered by the crowning glory of all cities. A certain youth demanded that Sgouros be delivered over for execution; anyone else would gladly have given him up even without being asked, [607] judging Sgouros to be an impious seed and the cause of the destruction of many, guilty of inflicting the worst of every kind of injury possible against his own country by hand and design. But Michael, in the spirit of the Gospel,[1645] enrolled this persecutor, violator, and plotter against the suffering Church and spiritual nurse,[1646] who often took up arms against him, among his beloved flock and treated him with honor, overlooking his faults as one who was under his protection.

Michael was unable to persuade with his sage counsels this savage beast, who, he observed, behaved like the deaf asp which willingly stops up its ears so as not to hear,[1647] and Sgouros discharged missiles of every kind onto the acropolis. Beseeching God that every horror might be visited upon this unholy man who was the cause of burgeoning evils, Michael set up engines of war atop the walls to oppose him, and he also placed upon the walls whatever weapons could be discharged by hand.

And what if he did not succeed in frightening off the enemy, this man who abounded in all wisdom and surpassed all others in every kind of intellectual pursuit, profane as well as sacred studies? Had he so wished, he could have called down fire to rain upon the wicked[1648] or wasps to attack the encamped army,[1649] and whatever other pestilence he would have asked of God, he would have received;[1650] nor would the Divinity have delayed[1651] had those hands been raised and had those lips spoken in prayer to God. But he who restrained the sons of thunder[1652] from calling down fire from heaven by saying, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of,"[1653] deterred Michael from conceiving or doing any such thing.

Confronted by such an adversary, a skilled tactician, a man of great [608] learning and unrivaled in virtue, the enemy Sgouros despaired; realizing that it was of no avail to butt his head against the rocky slopes of the acropolis, he vented his wrath against the city whose acropolis he could not subdue. He put the houses to the torch and carried off those animals suitable for the yoke and as food. Departing thence some days later, he assaulted Thebes of the seven gates,[1654] and after taking the city at first assault, he eagerly pushed ahead.

Next he passed through Thermopylae and descended to Oeta,[1655] and then came to Larissa, where he met Emperor Alexios [III] (the latter, rushing down the hillsides from the north in flight from the queen of cities, entered Thessalian Tempē); here Sgouros became the husband of his daughter Evdokia. Formerly she had been married to Stefan, the ruler of the Serbs, who ruthlessly put her away. She returned to Byzantion where, later, after the City's fall and her return from there, she was married to Alexios Doukas, surnamed Mourtzouphlos, the last to wield

the scepter over the Romans. But this Doukas did not live in wedlock with Evdokia until he was old, advanced in years;[1656] her father Alexios, for what cause I know not, took the man captive by deceit [summer 1204] and perversely maimed the pupils of his eyes. A wanderer himself, he despised the wanderer; a deserter from the throne, he opposed him who was cast down therefrom.

Not long after his blinding [end of November 1204], Doukas fell into the hands of the Latins[1657] and was returned to Byzantion, where he was brought to trial for having seized his lord and emperor and put him to
[609] death by strangulation. His defense was that he looked upon the emperor as a traitor to his country who justly deserved his punishment, not only he alone for the crimes he had committed but others as well, as many partisans and kinsmen who had joined him. But no heed was paid to the words he had spoken, and the Latins refused to lend an attentive ear to the further arguments of this anguished man who was then condemned to an unprecedented and most violent death: placing him atop the lofty column standing in the Forum of the Bull, the Latins cast him down; falling feet first and then tumbling headlong, he shortly crashed aslant and died a most pitiable death.

Sgouros, who had been united in wedlock to Evdokia at the time the marquis was advancing through Hellas, stood guard, as was mentioned earlier,[1658] over the marshes at Thermopylae, the lofty and shadowy mountain[1659] that projected overhead, and those defiles above and behind which blocked the way into Hellas. The inhabitants of those parts submitted to the marquis readily in the base and despicable spirit which is ever disposed to side with the more powerful, and this despite the fact that he led an army of no great numbers whose troops did not share the same views; recruited from many cities, they disagreed in most things. As the marquis led the army into Boiotia, he was enthusiastically received by the Cadmeans [Thebans] as though he were returning home after a long absence. Pushing ahead, he occupied Attica and installed a garrison on the acropolis. The presiding bishop of the city, as he had done earlier with Sgouros, had hoped to persuade the marquis to withdraw, but he judged that this was not the time to offer resistance, inasmuch as the queen of cities had fallen and the shadow of the Latin lance was cast over
[610] both the western and eastern parts of the Roman empire, and he surrendered the fortress without bloodshed [spring 1205]. Finally, Euboia, who could look to no brave deed to preserve her freedom, also stretched forth her hand, and because the ebb and flow of the strait quickened its pace, a pontoon bridge was laid to allow the troops to cross the Evripos safely. Euboia also overlooked a fortress built at the strait which had troops ensconced within in order to stem, I presume, the capricious schemes of the Euboians and to hold in check the fickleness of their behavior.

But what can I say? The barbarians have outdistanced my narration, flying faster than the quill of my history, and there is no adversary to repulse them. Despoiling Thebes, subduing Athens, and trampling on Euboia, they proceeded on their way. More like winged and aerial creatures rather than land forces, flying ahead of my history, they advanced towards the Isthmus and defeated the Roman troops that kept watch

there; made their way to Corinth, located near the Isthmus, a city rich of old; proceeded to Argos; timidly circumvented the Laconians; and next attacked Achaia, whence they made an assault on Methonē [Modon] and fell upon Pylos, Nestor's homeland.[1660] I suspect that as they stood on the banks of the Alpheios to draw water and bathe themselves, they recalled the delightful tale of old; and on learning that this was the river that had bathed Arethusa with his love, and which feeds the Sicilian spring and waters Italian youths, they were anxious lest the river, by overtaking them, write on water the brave deeds they wrought against the Hellenes and send a clear message by way of Alpheios to their kinsmen at home.[1661]

O Alpheios, Hellenic river, thou potable stream flowing through brine, thou astonishing tale, kindler of love, herald not the misfortunes of the Hellenes to the barbarians in Sicily so that they may dance and sing [611] paeans and even greater numbers of the enemy may come swooping down. Tarry a while; the battle is undecided,[1662] human affairs are determined by the throw of the dice, and victory shifts from man to man.[1663] Neither were Alexander's successes wholly without obstacles, nor Caesar's fortune absolutely infallible. Indeed, the same was true of Arethusa, who could not escape the brine's amorous embraces and passionate waters. So be it!

Sgouros, who was perplexed by these events and beheld Argos occupied and the neighboring cities taken, was holed up in Akrocorinth like a shaggy beast, or a creeping serpent coiled up in its lair. Akrocorinth was the acropolis of the ancient city of Corinth; situated atop a steep mountain, it was difficult to take by assault. The marquis, beaten off from Akrocorinth, saw that the passage to Nauplion would not be easy because of the formidable fortifications and the strength of the defenders, and thus he proposed to spend some time in these parts. He erected a fortress opposite Akrocorinth, even though it was evident to him that the site invited attack.

Both the Asian and the western territories have all together submitted [612] servilely within a year's time to the Latin nations (for Baldwin, anointed emperor, was already poising his spear against Nicaea and Prusa) had not the Lord who brings the counsels of the nations to nought,[1664] and scatters the nations that wish for wars,[1665] received and protected us as we were about to perish. The fugitive emperor came before the marquis and exchanged the imperial insignia for a ration of bread and an allowance of wine and was sent with his wife Euphrosynē to spend his days at a place named for his fate (the place was called Halmyros [The Place of Bitterness]).

The Romans who had escaped with the emperor (most were of noble birth and not without renown in warfare and boasted the cities in Thrace as their homelands) wanted to join the marquis and serve him with all their might, but he replied that he had no need of Roman soldiers and, so saying, dismissed them. Afterwards, they appealed to Baldwin to accept their services. But once again [beginning of February 1205] baying the moon, so to speak, they approached Ioannitsa, who had been born and bred on Mount Haimos and had very nearly destroyed and ruined all the western provinces, crushing them in battle and thus leaving them exposed

to Cuman onslaughts, and grinding them down with diverse afflictions. He received them gladly, for he looked askance at the Latins' arrogant bearing and with distrust regarded their lance as a flaming sword,[1666] for

[613] when he had dispatched envoys on a mission of friendship, he had been instructed to address the Latins in his letters, not as an emperor greets his friends, but as a servant his masters, in this way being demoted to his former station. Otherwise they would bear arms against him and ravage Mysia, denying him its fruits, since he had rebelled against his Roman lords.

Ioannitsa charged the Romans who had come to him to return to their homelands and to inflict every possible injury on the Latins in methodical military operations until he should be able to deal more effectively with them. They returned to their homes, and, with the help of the Vlachs, they incited the Thracian and Macedonian cities to revolt. Most of the Latins who were allotted the cities were put to death, and the rest returned to Byzantion as fugitives. Those in Didymoteichon were slain, while those in Orestias were expelled.

Against all expectations, this action liberated the East from the Latins, who then returned to the wars in the West. It chastened them, and, for a brief spell, it also humbled the Latins who occupied Hellas and the Peloponnesos.

The sequence of events was as follows. The Romans took possession of Adrianople and Didymoteichon and remained in place, with no little help from the Vlachs; Ioannitsa, leading his own troops and his Cuman allies, who were nearly equal in number, hastened to effect a plan whereby he would escape the notice of the Latins.

[614] As soon as Emperor Baldwin was informed of the rebellion of the Romans [23 February 1205], together with the other three chiefs (for [Hugh] the count of Saint Paul [Pol] was taken by death [1 March 1205] and buried at the Monastery of Mangana in the tomb of the Augusta Skleraina,[1667] he quickly dispatched an army to punish the cities in revolt. Therefore, Vizyē and Tzouroulos returned and made their submission as before. They found Arkadiopolis evacuated by her wealthy and illustrious residents. The Romans, whose native town this was, were joined by their allies and made their approach at night. Fully armed, they at first rested and then deployed themselves along the walls to keep watch. At daybreak, the Latins reconnoitered the Romans and concluded that they were not arrayed for battle, were not employing military stratagems, and were poorly armed, decided to marshal their forces and lead them out to battle. The Romans faced them with courage as they approached the wall (for they mistook the caution of the Latins for cowardice), and the Latins poured out of the gates and engaged them in battle. The Romans put up a brief resistance and then turned in flight. On that day, a piteous, most lamentable spectacle took place. No one was spared, and the sword was wielded against one and all; they watered the earth with blood, and none of the fallen was granted the last honors paid to the dead. These then were the achievements of the army which had sallied forth. It dared not advance further because the Romans and the Vlachs, with a Cuman contingent, either roamed about or flocked to Adrianople as a safe refuge.

Following the Fall of Constantinople

In the month of March [1205], Emperor Baldwin, Count Louis of Blois, and the doge of Venice, Enrico Dandolo, each at the head of his own troops, marched out. They arrived at Adrianople [29 March 1205] and pitched camp nearby so as not to be within missile range. On the morrow they moved their forces up to the wall and positioned their siege engines. For many days they accomplished nothing more than shooting and being shot at because the walls were so sturdy. Then they stealthily sapped the foundations in an attempt to weaken the walls; with the help of many hands, they dug a tunnel as far as possible, removed the soil unnoticed, and shored up the mine with dry timbers. The Romans, however, offset their labors by contriving whatever means were necessary to deliver the city. [615]

Not too many days had elapsed before Ioannitsa sent out a Cuman contingent with orders to attack the sheep and horses that fed on the herbage around the camp, wishing to learn by this tactic the enemy's plans and troop dispositions [13 April 1205]. At first sight of the Cumans, the Latins eagerly took to their horses and lances. They charged full force, whereas the Cumans wheeled around in full retreat and shot their arrows from behind without interrupting their headlong flight. The Latins pressed on in hot pursuit of the enemy, and if they achieved nothing it was because they were chasing winged and light-armed men. Thus ended the events of that day.

Ioannitsa lay in ambush in the defiles with his own troops, deploying his men along the ravines and hilltops so that the enemy would not easily detect his presence [14 April 1205]. He sent out a large number of troops from the Cuman contingent under the command of Kotzas. They were to ride once more against the Latin camp and repeat their earlier performance, and to return by the same route they had taken before. The Latins, beholding the Cumans a second time, at once took to arms, and, brandishing their spears more vigorously than before, they extended their pursuit even further. The Cumans, for the most part, shot but a few arrows behind them; lightly armed and riding swifter mounts, they easily led on the Latins, who were completely unaware of where they were going and rode into the very places where the snares and ambuscades had been laid. [616]

The Latins, exhausted from the exertion of the chase, with horses thoroughly spent, were ensnared by the unwearied Cuman troops, cut off, and encircled. Overpowered by the multitude of Cumans in hand-to-hand combat, they were thrown from their horses. One was surrounded by many:.the throats of the stiff-necked were exposed to the scimitar or to the noose, and many of their horses were mutilated. As the Cumans fell upon them like a never-ending black cloud, they could not disentangle themselves from the horses or find any means of escape. So fell the flower of the Latin host and those who were far-famed for their prowess with the lance. Count Louis of Blois also fell, and Baldwin was taken alive and led captive to Mysia, whence he was conducted to Trnovo, where he was cast into prison and bands were clamped upon his neck.[1668]

When that most ancient and pernicious evil and chief cause of the horrors that befell the Romans, Dandolo, the doge of Venice, who brought up the rear, learned of the army's defeat from those who fled, he forthwith drew in his reins and rode back to the camp.[1669] [617]

As night had fallen (for the battle had taken place towards evening), he ordered lights brought to the tents and large numbers of torches set up so that it would not appear that the entire army had been crushed or that they were afraid to give battle. In the middle of the night he set out for maritime Rhaidestos, where he met with Henry, Baldwin's brother, who had just arrived from Atramyttion with the Armenians of Troy with whom he had been campaigning and then returned to Byzantion; because of the many parasangs he had covered during his flight on horseback, he suffered a rupture in which his intestines herniated into the scrotal sac, which became greatly swollen.

The unsheathing of the sword by the Latins against them and the plundering of their possessions were still fresh before the eyes of the Romans who had remained in Constantinople, their teeth chattering from fear;[1670] they suffered these things for no good reason following Baldwin's departure from the City on the twenty-fifth day of March of the eighth indiction in the year 6713 [1205]. As we were still sojourning in Selymbria, we expected to succumb to the very worst of evils, since we had in full view the slaughter of the neighboring Daonites[1671] and also witnessed close at hand the butchers who entered Selymbria with swords drawn and looted our bundles and rags.

The queen of cities fell to the Latins on the twelfth day of the month of April of the seventh indiction in the year 6712 [1204]; the Latins were defeated by the Cumans on the fifteenth day of the same month of the eighth indiction [actually 14 April 1205].[1672]

[618] But what events followed? The Romans were dealt another grievous and calamitous blow. Ioannitsa the Mysian, a proven enemy and avenger[1673] of the Romans, gave over for plunder to the Cumans those towns near Byzantion which were tributaries of the Latins. And it was a strange and uncommon evil to behold, surpassing any of the plagues sent by God. Two races ravaged the same land and nation, attacking sometimes singly and sometimes side by side. In their assaults, the Cumans plundered everything before them, and certain captives who were of exceptional beauty they flogged and sacrificed to their demons by hanging them. The Latins, on the other hand, cut to the heart because of the revolt of the Romans and their defeats at the hands of the Cumans slew the Romans no less. There was no place of salvation or redemption,[1674] and the mainland was wracked by countless evils and ruined beyond ruination. Vessels with one squad of rowers were fitted out with Latin contingents; putting out to sea, they subjected all ships, no matter whence they came, to the evils of looting and piracy.

Ioannitsa remained but briefly in the Thracian cities, and then departed for Thessaloniki [after Pentecost, 29 May 1205] to bring order to the state of affairs in those parts and to convince the cities to defect from the Latins and submit to him. He engaged in battle the Latins stationed at Serrai, and after the spilling of streams of blood, he emerged victorious over them. However, the Latins, because of their rigid discipline in battle and their readiness to meet Ioannitsa with their own charge, laid low many of his men. Not long afterwards, the defeated Latin forces fled to

[619] the city of Serrai but did not manage to shut the gates behind them before the Vlachs and Romans, in hot pursuit, rushed with them inside the walls.

And thus the city fell. The city was afterwards put to the torch and the walls razed, while those who were seized were led into captivity in chains. As many of the Latin host who had no part in the battle, some saved themselves as best they could, while others occupied the citadel and remained within.

The following day, Ioannitsa surrounded the citadel and proclaimed by herald to the Latins who had taken refuge within that if they chose to surrender the fortress, their lives would be spared. The defenders gave no thought to surrendering because they expected help to be forthcoming from the marquis. Meanwhile Ioannitsa prepared scaling ladders and set up a huge siege engine on the crest of a hill opposite the citadel to pound the walls. The citadel's defenders spread out and extended their defences along the walls and continued their resistance. Seeing that Ioannitsa had cut off the citadel as though with a wall of circumvallation constituted by all his troops, and that he had closed off every exit to them so that none could steal his way on foot to the marquis, the defenders wanted to surrender the citadel, provided they were given a pledge of safe-conduct and allowed to leave with their arms and horses. When Ioannitsa refused to give ear to such articles of agreement, they requested that for their return home they be provided with guides up to the borders of Hungary. When oaths were exchanged to this effect, Ioannitsa occupied the citadel and the Latins were given safe-conduct.[1675]

What of the events pertaining to their leader, the marquis? These must not be passed over and left unrecorded. While he was still busy dealing with the affairs of the Peloponnesos and contending with Sgouros, he received letters from his wife informing him that the Thessalonians had rebelled, and that being expelled from the city, she had taken refuge within the acropolis which lay under siege for many days. The city was occupied by a certain Vlach named Etzyismenos, who kept watch over Prosakos and the neighboring territories subject to Ioannitsa.

When the marquis learned of these things, he realized that help had to [620]
be provided as soon as possible and hastened his return. Before reaching Thessaloniki, however, he was met by messengers who informed him of the defeat and flight of the enemy and the return of tranquility to the city. Rejoicing over the news and showing off before his kinsmen, he pulled in his reins and rode off straightway in the direction of Skoplje to avenge himself against Ioannitsa for the injuries he had sustained. But before he was able to undertake his longed-for revenge, another messenger arrived, announcing the death of the Count of Blois and Baldwin's capture. Reverting to his original course, the marquis entered Thessaloniki. There he ascertained that all the information contained in the letters was true and gleaned whatever still stood of the city's cornfields that had been harvested during the battle which took place before his arrival. Mulcting the citizens of their goods, he left them as naked as a pestle, and from among the popular masses and the clergy, some he killed and some he hanged.[1676] The wretched emperor Alexios and his wife Euphrosynē were sent across the sea to the ruler of the Germans.[1677] Alas and alack! Such a novel and extraordinary thing was unheard-of among the Romans, and such a spectacle had never been seen before!

The marquis heard that Ioannitsa had attacked Serrai, and on being

informed that the battle had not yet been concluded, he dispatched troops to assist his compatriots in Serrai. On their way, they learned of the outcome, but in no wise put an end to their expedition, as they had already exposed themselves to danger, even though they knew full well that before long the enemy would be upon them. When the Latins engaged the enemy in combat, they suffered a crushing defeat and were routed. The Cumans attacked them time and again and fell upon them from every direction; it was like seeing swarms of bees pouring out of their beehives and wasps flying out of clefts by the wayside.[1678] Bested in these two battles, the marquis shut himself up in Thessaloniki, while Ioannitsa was completely free to march out to Verroia and occupy all the remaining cities that had submitted to the marquis.

[621] When the Latins in the City were informed of these adversities, they deliberated as to what should be done together with Henry, Emperor Baldwin's brother, and Marino, doge of Venice.[1679] Dandolo was dead [end of May 1205]. They were all of the opinion that they should go on campaign and lead their forces against those Thracian cities which had defected from the Latins while the fervor of the many was still ardent and Ioannitsa was at variance with the Romans; since he was threatened with other conflicts, he provided them with every opportunity. Dispatching a division of their army which they called *rotta,* they gave them unconditional authority to deal with the rebellious cities as they liked. Consequently, as this contingent advanced, it did not refrain from any pernicious and unholy deed. The Venetians launched long ships and attacked and plundered the Eastern coastal regions; at Panion and Kallioupolis, they perpetrated the worst possible crimes, wholly alien to Christian usages. These horrors were manifold, most grievous and unbearable to the Romans who suffered them.

Henry also marched out [after Pentecost 29 May 1205]. Bypassing Arkadiopolis, inhabitable only by the winds, he forced his way into Apros and behaved savagely towards the inhabitants, giving them over to slaughter as though the slain were sheep or cattle, and not Christians who had submitted to the Vlachs by force, rather than by persuasion, and as though they had gone over to him against their will. Many were bound with ropes and led through villages and towns as captives; collecting ransom money, they paid their captors. Those who had been dragged away into captivity and had succumbed to physical illness or exhaustion because of the long trek were released from their neck bonds but were not allowed to die a natural death in peace; they were either decapitated or run through with the sword.

[622] Arriving at Orestias, Henry encamped nearby [beginning of June 1205], where his men put up a palisade and dug a deep trench (for they thought that their labors would result in the taking of the city as the prize of contest). He gave notice to the city's inhabitants that he would not return home unless they agreed to come to terms or he prevailed over them by the law of warfare. At the mere mention of treaties, the inhabitants responded in vexation that henceforth Romans would never trust in oaths sworn to by Latins because the Latins were absolutely untrustworthy in the assurances they gave and treated those who went over to them

with brutality; the Romans had come to know them to be most merciless to captives of war.

At this answer, Henry began operations. He found the city encompassed by a double fosse, dug wide and deep. Attached to the tops of the towers were wooden scaffolds that rose high into the air and were protected by coverings made of prepared hides and skins to ward off fiery missiles, serving as a bulwark for those fighting from them. Atop the wooden towers poles were fixed from which incendiary materials were poured down, causing widespread destruction. In certain places along the scaffoldings, compartments had been constructed as resting places for the warriors, allowing them to go inside and to observe from the benches the depths below and to inspect the schools of fishes. From some of the platforms, stones were suspended from chains, dropped by cranes, pulled up again, and diverted where most needed; there were, moreover, fourteen stone-throwing engines positioned on the towers.

Henry and his troops were resolved to take possession of the outer fosse by military action, and, after the second was filled in, to move the siege engines up to the walls. After the first fosse was taken, the second [623] was filled in, but only with great difficulty; bodiless heads and headless bodies of the fallen on both sides were used in large part to fill the empty space of the fosse. When, finally, after much bloodshed, it was covered over, they moved the tower-like scaling ladders to the walls. One of the ladders positioned on the fosse sank because the newly poured fill was still soft and loose; another was moved directly opposite the wall, but before the drawbridge could be let down, it was struck and shattered by the heavy stones suspended from the poles atop the towers and by the missiles discharged from the stone-throwing engines, and rendered useless. Indeed, many who were fighting from it were grievously injured, one of whom, Peter of Bracieux, celebrated among the Latins as the strongest and bravest of them all, had his skull crushed by a stone.[1680] Thus did the resolutions of the Latins collapse on that day.

On the next day, the towers were again moved up to the walls on either side of the city, and the best fighting men from among the troops climbed up inside. As soon as the city's defenders saw the engine of war approaching the towers and the strong-built bridge touching upon the walls so as to allow the assigned troops to cross over, they threw open the gates, sallied out with their weapons and combustibles, and ignited a huge fire, and a battle fiercer than the first was fought. But once again they were forced to withdraw without success and looked upon their siege engines going up in flames before them. The Vlach and Cuman troops outside the city compassed the palisade and would allow no provisions to enter the encampment.

Overcome by their helplessness and deeply discouraged, they sent word to Byzantion requesting that fresh troops come to their assistance. The troops marched out under compulsion, rather than from zeal, threatened with the ban of excommunication and anathema, should they refuse to do so, by Cardinal Martin and Thomas [Morosini],[1681] patriarch of Constantinople, who had but recently arrived from Venice. The latter wore his native dress: it was embroidered and woven so as to fit tightly

about the body but slack at the chest and wrists; his beard was shaved smoother than if removed by a depilatory, so that the surface of his cheeks gave no indication whatsoever of the first appearance of hair but looked like a field stripped of crops.

[624] Before reinforcements could arrive, the troops were sickened by the dead lying in the tents and by the unaccustomed food. Setting out at night [end of July 1205], they made their way back and bivouacked in the fields outside Pamphylon, where they rested from their futile and protracted labors. They were not alone, however, in suffering such evils; nearly all those who were bold enough in joining forces and banding together to march out of the City perished when they fell in with the combined Vlach and Cuman divisions.

To construct other engines of war, they collected masts from the two-master ships of the maritime cities, and when this supply was depleted, they cut down what they needed from the mountains of the Propontis; as taskmaster they sent thither Count Conon of Béthune.[1682] When they had made a sufficient number of siege engines and had covered them with a great deal of iron against the threat of fire, they set out once again to give battle.

Bypassing Orestias, which they knew from bitter experience could not be taken, they decided to assault Didymoteichon. Encamped outside the city, they steeled themselves with manly courage to lay siege to the citadel on the morrow and made ready to bring up the siege engines to destroy it. But before the sun had set over this feverish activity of the Latins, the sky was covered with clouds, and as a result of a providential torrential downpour that deluged the region behind Didymoteichon, the Evros [Maritsa] River which flowed past the citadel became swollen from the heavy rains. From a small river transformed into a great one, it flooded the plains; suddenly swamping the Latin encampment, it swept away weapons and engines of war, carried off war-horses, and compelled men to swim the waters of Acheron.[1683] The horror continued although the sun was no longer shining, even into the night, and the greater part of the army perished. Those Latins who were terrified by this extraordinary event turned reflective. No longer men of blood,[1684] they chose to withdraw and advised the others to do likewise. The remainder of the troops, deeming the catastrophe a miracle, quickly withdrew. Some returned with Henry to Constantinople [c. 1 October 1205], while the rest were ordered to keep watch over those cities, both inland and maritime, which had submitted to the Latins.

[625] But the sufferings did not end here, nor did the fortunes of the Romans take a turn for the better. The Latin contempt for, and suspicion of, the Romans, as well as their undiminished arrogance, prevailed as before. The punishments they could not inflict upon the rebels against whom they had often sharpened their lances they perpetrated against those who were in their power, and they gnashed their teeth on them.[1685] The indifference of the Romans in the East for their suffering compatriots, and their total neglect and obliviousness, were intolerable; they provided, moreover, neither monetary nor military assistance to the western cities.

The Latins withdrew from Asia and ravaged Thrace, which alone risked everything to win freedom for the Romans. The Romans in the

East, unexpectedly escaping danger, neither were motivated by any good purpose, nor did they seek to preserve and protect themselves and their fellow countrymen. Being of corrupt mind, they did not perform their duties[1686] or display any feeling whatsoever. They divided instead into parties and factions, fomented the cities, took up arms against one another, and ignored the bonds of kinship. Tribe fought tribe, Israel opposed Judah, as was lamented in olden times by the prophet; some accepted this one as their emperor, and others were inclined towards another, so that the majority denounced this as a curse and overindulgence and the cause of alienation among countrymen. If at times they met in friendship, they were never able to agree, neither did they propose, by exhorting one another to fight side by side, to relieve the Western cities. Intent on electing emperors, some, like flocks of birds, started up and flew away in one body to this one, while others chose thorny brambles to rule.[1687] And once again Polyarchy spread over the East, a three-headed monster constituted of the stupid.[1688] [626]

Manuel Mavrozomēs insinuated himself into favor with Kaykhusraw, to whom not long before he had given his own daughter in marriage, and who had recently regained the throne of Ikonion [1205],[1689] from which he had previously been deposed. With his help, he contrived all kinds of plots to gain the title of emperor. Marching out with Turks, he plundered and laid waste the land watered by the Maeander River.

Theodore Laskaris, the scion of a most distinguished family and prominent because he was connected by marriage with the imperial family, overthrew Mavrozomēs, put on the red buskins, and was proclaimed emperor of the Romans by all the eastern cities [summer 1205].

David Komnenos enlisted Paphlagonians and the inhabitants of Pontic Herakleia and hired as mercenaries a division of Iberians who lived on the banks of the Phasis River. With these he subjugated towns and cities, and exalting his own brother whose name was Alexios, he became his forerunner and herald. He was to spend his time in the regions of Trebizond, and, like the proverbial Hylas,[1690] his name was invoked but he was never seen.

When this David approached Nikomedia by dispatching a force under the command of a mere lad, Synadenos by name, Laskaris collected his troops and marched out against him. Giving the impression that he was taking the beaten and level path but circumventing it instead, he took another which was rough and scarcely passable and fell upon Synadenos undetected. Having outgeneraled the youth in this manner, he took him captive, scattered his troops, and prevailed on David to proceed no farther than Pontic Herakleia.

Not long afterwards, he engaged Mavrozomēs in battle and put him to flight. He inflicted a crushing defeat on the Turks; some he slew, and others he took captive, among whom were the commanders of the army and those of noble birth.

This then was the course of events in the East. Ioannitsa the Mysian [627] marched against Philippopolis, took the city by assault, and, having plundered it, he razed it to the ground and condemned many of the inhabitants to be cut down by the sword [beginning of summer 1205]. In the past, when he had attempted to ensnare the city and had lain in wait

to capture her, he had become exceedingly wrathful against the inhabitants for refusing to submit to him and recognize him as emperor, for turning away from him as a man of blood.[1691] His savage spirit was provoked to even greater fury when they installed Alexios Aspietēs in the city and submitted to him as their ruler. When Ioannitsa attacked, they repelled him from many places with their arms.

This city would have remained unscathed had she conducted her own affairs by peacefully submitting to the Latins and by not opposing Ioannitsa the Mysian in any way. Now the child followed the fate of her mother; just as the queen of cities was made vulnerable and an easy prey, so was Philippopolis exposed to the worst evils, given over to pillage and the edge of the sword,[1692] pulled down and leveled with the ground, a conspicuous ruin. All eyes were turned on one spectacle alone: Aspietēs was suspended by his feet and securely fastened to an upright stake by the tendons of his ankles, which had been pierced.[1693]

During these events, the partisans of Aspietēs who had raised him to the heights of empire did not escape the notice of Ioannitsa; afraid lest they be punished as renegades, they quickly withdrew. Some went over to Theodore Laskaris, who held sway over the eastern cities, while others flocked to Orestias or entered Didymoteichon and made peace with the Latins. Dispatching messengers, they asked Theodore Branas to become their general [before September 1206].

[628] Soon thereafter Ioannitsa proceeded to Mysia, where he put his affairs in good order and subjected the rebels to harsh punishments and novel methods of execution. With a wrathful and murderous look and hateful aspect, he decided to march against the Romans, complaining that he could no longer tolerate their cunning ways, their perfidious character, and their fickleness, that they often changed their minds in the very same hour. In anger, he dispatched Cuman troops [c. 15 January 1206] who rivaled the bees [flying in throngs] over the flowers of spring.[1694]

Certain of these troops, more numerous than an army of ants about the sacred threshing floors,[1695] laid siege to Adrianople; others, moved on Rousion, where they were drawn into battle by heavy-armed Latins lying in wait. The latter were the fiercest warriors, superior to all others, tall in stature, admirable in their exercises in warfare, and commanded by a certain Thierry,[1696] an illustrious nobleman. They hastened with their arms as quickly as possible to where the scouts had informed them the Cumans were encamped. The Cumans, anticipating the attack against them, covertly took up their position in the vicinity of Rousion; as they watched the Latins ascend, they became terrified by the unexpected spectacle and imagined that they would have no success against such a multitude. A close engagement was fought, and both sides rivaled one another in brave deeds, but, in the end, despite their many feats, the Latins were slain almost to a man.

When this battle was thus concluded, myriads of other bellicose Cu-
[629] man divisions easily marched against Apros and without striking a blow captured and occupied the whole city. They razed the city, slew some of the inhabitants, and led the rest away, with their hands bound behind their backs, as booty to be sold. Victorious, they consigned many to the flames, for in truth, they showed no humanity in their victories.

Following this fierce encounter, they marched on to maritime Rhedaistos and caused Theodore Branas, who commanded the Latins dispatched to Orestias, to flee with his troops even before their arrival. They stormed the city and sold the inhabitants into slavery. Taught by the Vlachs to nurse an undying hatred against us and to transmit it from generation to generation, they leveled the city.[1697] With undiminished fervor, they moved on to Perinthos, and from there to Daonion, where, as no one raised a hand against the boldness of their venture, they took captives of all ages and pulled down the walls.[1698]

Not only did they deal with the maritime regions in this way, thanks to the military skills and brave actions of the Cumans and the Vlach troops who accompanied them, and who chose to undermine the walls of cities with spades and shovels, but they also forced the inland regions to endure the same or worst evils without any prospect of salvation, for those who unexpectedly have the good fortune to be raised from slavery to freedom aspire ever afterwards to the greatest things and make no mention of ever suffering misfortune again; they refer for the most part to present successes and victories and completely forget their former condition; rejoicing in present circumstances, they mock others.

For these reasons, Arkadiopolis, Mesenē, and Tzouroulos endured the worst horrors, and the fields and villages and all else that formerly came under the jurisdiction of these cities, as well as the lands that stretched to the queen of all cities, surrendered into Cuman hands.

The inhabitants of the town of Athyras, moreover, were overtaken by utter destruction. At first, they came to terms with the Cumans as to [630] tribute, and the Cuman officials came and collected the gold coins. Towards evening, some troops from the Latin division serving under Branas at Rhedaistos came thither of their own accord and were gladly received by the inhabitants of Athyras, who thought that the Latins would stay on with them and attack the Cumans. Around the first watch of the night, however, the Latins departed, hoping to escape the notice of the Cumans, to bypass them with all speed. But they failed in their purpose because other Cuman divisions riding on ahead fell upon them at Rhegion, and the lives of all were soon endangered. In the middle of the night, when the Latins had departed, the Cumans were secretly pulled up over the wall by their countrymen who were collecting the tribute. After taking possession of the gates, with drawn swords and a terrifying war cry they fell upon the inhabitants; most of these were fast asleep, and so escape was no easy matter.

That night a deed was performed that called forth rivers of ever-flowing tears: men and women alike were either slain or led away into captivity; even infants at the breast were not spared, but they were cut down like the fresh green grass and the fragile flower by these merciless men who did not know that he who gives vent to wrath beyond victory and the conquest of the enemy wrongs nature and violates the law of common humanity. Even more lamentable was the fact that the implacable enemy, who had occupied the littoral beforehand, either ran through with the sword those who fled there, or forced them back, or drove them into the deep, where they drowned. A few made it to the ships and were saved, while others failed to scale the ladder and slipped down

to the oar-boxes and into the sea. So great and diverse was the horror! And the victims were almost utterly destroyed!

The barbarians advanced in rank and column to sweep everything before them, and like a whirlwind, or rather like a fire burning wood, they destroyed everything in their path.[1699] They missed nothing and
[631] plundered everything. Of the many large cities, only Vizyē and Selymbria were not pillaged and razed by the Cumans. Surrounded by strong walls and strengthened by the site on which they were located, these cities alone escaped utter destruction; and besides, the Latins kept watch over them.[1700]

The Italians reacted despicably to these events and turned Constantinople into a fold where they watched over all the useful belongings of the besieged; deploying themselves along the land walls, they allowed those Romans who wished to do so to depart. The enemy, tarrying in the villages near the City, frequently approached the walls to wage battle; at times, a few penetrated inside by way of the so-called gate of Saint Romanos to show off their bravery, or rather their good luck, which followed them in these actions. After killing the gates' defenders, they quickly withdrew and returned to their own country with all their forces, leading back their captives as though they were herds of cattle and driving flocks and beasts of burden as numerous as the stars.

Later, Ioannitsa marched out with a large and mighty force [end of
[632] February 1206] to set for himself as the greatest and most important task the conquest of Adrianople and the destruction of Didymoteichon. He deemed these cities the prize of all-out warfare, and he decided that if he could thus cause the Romans to withdraw from Thrace, he could leave the land fit to be inhabited only by wild beasts. When he pitched camp near Didymoteichon [beginning of June 1206], he observed that the higher ground was rugged and that it would be difficult to occupy, and thus he attempted to divert the Evros River which wound about the fortress and provided water for the inhabitants by way of little-known descending pathways. His engines of war battered the wall in those sections which he conjectured to be most vulnerable and where the sound of the heavy stone missiles, flying through the air, could not be heard beforehand.

To placate Ioannitsa from afar, the inhabitants put forth false statements, and specious propositions, and cunning exhortation; standing on the battlements, they proclaimed him their emperor, and consented to pay tribute, and eagerly agreed to do whatever he commanded—with the exception of receiving him into the city. Carried away by passion and wrath, Ioannitsa rejected their proposals and insisted that the defenders surrender the fortress, for only then would he make peace. Otherwise, he would continue his attack, bring down the battlements with the rushing force and the magnitude of the discharged stones, smash the corners of the towers, and demolish their bastions. The defenders set up railed fences and wattled barriers; they spread newly flayed fleeces over the walls so that the missiles discharged by the engines of war would be enveloped by their folds and glance off. Finally, Ioannitsa brought a halt
[633] to the hostilities, and the defenders, conducting themselves deceitfully with propitiatory gestures and fitting words, pretended to offer their sub-

mission. Ioannitsa ordered the nobles of his army to dismount. Fenced on all sides by their weapons, they were to take up positions at the broken sections of the wall, or he placed them at the scaling devices and deployed the remainder of his troops in diverse places. Then the defenders, removing the mask of cringing suppliants, came furiously forward, as the enemy defended themselves with every means at their disposal. They knew that their salvation lay in the walls and deemed nothing mightier than necessity, and they were commanded by desperation and wrath; they gave no less than they received, with deeds of daring and courage.

After wasting considerable time at this siege, the barbarian returned to Mysia [before 28 June 1206], his ambition thoroughly quenched by failure, like a flame deprived of fuel. He was intimidated by a report relayed from person to person that the Latin host, the nursling of war, was on the way to help the defenders.[1701]

At that time, Patriarch John Kamateros died a gentle death,[1702] ending his days as a vagabond and exile in Didymoteichon [26 June 1206].

The Italians eagerly pricked up their ears on receiving the invitation from the Romans to come to Orestias and Didymoteichon, for they believed it signaled the normalization of relations which had first been sundered by these cities when they rebelled. Setting out from Constantinople [c. 10 June 1206], the Italians encamped at Athyras on the first day and on the following day entered Selymbria. Here they remained several days to take on supplies and then came to Adrianople [28 June 1206].

Such was the destruction wreaked then by the Cumans and Vlachs in [634] their attacks, the likes of which ear hath not heard, nor eye seen, neither have entered into the heart of any man.[1703] Cities that were formerly very great and celebrated, towns of ten thousand inhabitants, fields well worth looking at, beautifully planted meadows, blooming gardens bearing goodly fruit and watered by ever-flowing streams, high-roofed dwellings decorated with diverse colors admired as superb works of art, the manifold delights of bathhouses, vines laden with fruit, wheat-covered fields, and countless other things which the seasons put forth and which adorn civilized life and make the earth a delightful and much wished-for place, crowned with pleasures of every kind—all these were reft of humanity, made habitable only for hedgehogs and wild beasts. Should anyone happen upon this scene, he would say, as he wailed aloud, shedding tears and sprinkling himself with ashes, that he viewed the destruction of everything; or, should there be another creation when God should call forth the herb of grass-bearing seed according to its kind and according to its likeness[1704] from the earth's womb, there would be absolutely no one to enjoy these things.

Wherefore I have enriched my tongue with the ample and lavish enumeration of such evils; why with loud voice have I transmitted these writings to those afar?

O wretched author that I am, to be the keeper of such evils, and now to grace with the written word the misfortunes of my family and countrymen! Who can bear to contemplate such trophies raised by the enemy? In olden times, the victors in battle were motivated by fellow feeling and chose not to nurse hatreds forever; hence, they erected trophies of wood and small stones that would stand but a short while and then crumble, for [635]

they were memorials, not of friendship, but of the embers of hatred and the shedding of blood. Nowadays, as evidence of their victories, the barbarians to whom we have been delivered over by God for chastisement have invented the razing of cities and total ruin. They are not content until they reach the pinnacle of enormities and sate themselves in blood lust. They grouped certain Roman captives together with their fellow countrymen who had either died a natural death or who had lost their lives in battle and buried them alive, seated on their swift ponies, with their horn-tipped bows and two-edged swords, and there was none to ransom them or to rescue them. Thus they do not shrink from perpetrating deeds contrary to nature.

Withdrawing for these reasons from Selymbria, we returned to Constantinople, where we remained for six months before we sailed to the East to avoid looking upon the Latins and their driveling. Wherefore, we dwell as strangers alongside Lake Askania, in Nicaea, the chief city of the province of Bithynia and the first of all the eastern cities under Roman dominion, proud in the underlying strength of her walls. But our change of residence did nothing to improve our circumstances; once again we are deluged by sorrow, and we manage thanks only to God, since the negligible assistance we are fortunate enough to receive from the hands of men is begrudgingly bestowed, for they are not cheerful givers,[1705] and, one can say, they are inimical to sharing. We are nourished by a little bread and sometimes by a measure of wine, we are surfeited with the calamities of our countrymen as well as of our own, and we are offered the joyless cup of afflictions. Like a line stretching out into infinity, all that was oppressive, horrible, heartrending, soul-destroying, wholly devastating, and utterly desolating in full measure they brought to the Roman nation. To proceed with the sequence of my narrative, Ioannitsa the Mysian did not let up for a moment from his task of destroying root and branch and laying waste the Macedonian and Thracian towns, which he turned into a desolate wilderness.[1706] And those who would not submit to the Latins at their mere command and were not frightened by the shadow of death cast by the long lances were ravaged by the Latin host no less than by the Vlachs, Bulgarians, and Cumans. For this reason, Ioannitsa, unable to tolerate the compact of friendship with the Latins entered into by Adrianople, which he viewed as being solely directed at his own de-
[636] struction, marched against this city with large numbers of Cumans [beginning of spring 1207]. He invested the city and, after pitching camp, battered the walls with siege engines and continued the operations through the night. When the blows of the discharged missiles brought the walls crashing to earth, the helpless inhabitants within had no recourse left except to tear their cheeks[1707] and to pull out their hair, to fast and weep, and to lift up their hands in supplication to God and the Holy Mother of God who gave birth to him. But as God is wont to oppose the proud and to shed his grace on the humble,[1708] to reward those who call upon his holy name[1709] for a way out of their distress, he did not turn his back on their invocations. Although the enemy were certain that the city had already fallen into their hands, and that all that was left for them to do was to offer up sacrifices of entry and to drum upon the armor stripped from the vanquished, the defenders one after another stood side by side,

to protect the demolished sections of the wall. Some made a wall of dry wood and bundles of shavings and whatever else was suitable for kindling a fire and then awaited the enemy's assault, holding burning torches in their hands so that they could quickly ignite that wooden wall. This they did when the enemy pressed on in the expectation of taking the city, unaware of the wooden bulwark and the deep canal excavated in the ground behind it. These then were the actions the besieged took, deemed to be great but small when compared to that which God performed afterwards. A fog rose up from the rivers and flowed by the city to cover the enemy troops like the darkness that may be felt;[1710] and so, rising up, the enemy departed from there [c. May 1207] and fled to their own country, deeming this event an awesome sign from God, who manifestly came to the aid of the defenders. Ioannitsa, about whom we have said much, raised the siege for the time being,[1711] but he continued despoiling and pillaging the provinces, imagining that the utter destruction of the Romans would provide him with security while deterring the Latin expedition against the Mysians, and believing that he would be regarded with fear and deserving of friendship rather than enmity. Not long afterwards, he appeared on the rugged lands of Mosynopolis and devastated the region. When Marquis Boniface proposed to come to the aid of those suffering grievously, a fierce battle ensued. As the victory inclined towards Ioannitsa, the marquis was felled by an arrow [4 September 1207], to the delight of all Romans[1712]—this surly man was fond of gold, pertinacious, opinionated, a monster who preyed on Romans. To the Thessalonians the arrow was the answer to a prayer and truly believed to be wrought, if not discharged, by the hand of the Almighty. Had the marquis survived and his days not been shortened,[1713] there would now be no smoke leaping up[1714] from the famous city of the Thessalians. Thus he was an unbearable and inappeasable evil. Having received the long prayed-for gaping wound, he was sent on his way to Hades by the Romans with malignant glee. With Maria the Hungarian succeeding to the regency by reason of being queen mother,[1715] the cities ruled by her enjoyed a respite from the frequent gleanings and the many reapings throughout the year.[1716]

It was during the days of Easter of the current ninth indiction of the year 6714 [Easter, 2 April 1206] when these pitiable events took place, exceeding the horror of anything ever heard or seen before. The entire region raided by the Cuman horde was filled with threnodies, and the dirge and the cry of woe and the weeping drowned out the joyous paschal hymns. While the faithful chanted of the emptying of the tombs, of the overthrow of Hades and the raising up of the dead, the cities, one and all, sank beneath the deep of the earth[1717] into the gloomy and frightful abodes of Hades. What mortal could shed enough tears and adequately mourn the abductions, the pillaging, the casting of infants into the crossroads, and the running through of the aged with the sword? [637]

Before this Cuman incursion through the Thracian plains, armies of jackdaws from the north and ravens from the south came together in the same place, as the result of fate and not by chance; they clashed, and the ravens prevailed, putting the phalanxes of the jackdaws from the south to flight.

It was not only the Thracian provinces that the demon reduced to such wretchedness, but the sea also burst forth, wreaking havoc, and a roiling storm of pernicious evils and calamitous tempests were whipped up; neither did the western provinces suffer any the less. As though they were their patrimonial properties, a band from Champagne[1718] and a small company of Latins divided among themselves Athens, Thebes, Euboia, and the lands about Methonē and Patras. Their former lords were content to submit in disgrace and revilement without feeling any pricking of heart or quitting themselves like men for their own sake and that of their children; neither were they impelled of their own accord by a spirit of freedom, nor did they show any such resolve later. There were those who were consumed by burning ambition against the interest of their own country, servile men corrupted by wantonness and other senseless actions who took possession of precipitous fortifications and fortresses and well-walled cities. There they established wretched tyrannies, and, whereas their duty was to take up arms against the Latins, they set their faces against one another and surprisingly made peace with the Latins.

[638] Leon Sgouros ruled over Corinth and Nauplion, as I have previously stated;[1719] Leon Chamaretos, holding sway over the vale of Lakedaimon,[1720] was tyrant over the Laconians. Aitolia and the lands adjacent to Nikopolis, as well as those extending to Epidamnos, were in the possession of Michael, the bastard son of the *sebastokrator,* John Doukas. Marquis Boniface, whose seat was in Thessaloniki, had subject to him the entire coastal region extending down to Halmyros,[1721] and he ruled over the plains of Larissa and was allotted a share of whatever taxes were collected from Hellas and the Peloponnesos. Yet another man occupied the highlands above Thessaly which now are called Great Vlachia and ruled over the inhabitants there.

The western provinces were divided into so many tyrannies; what good was not absent, and what evil was not present? Confiscation of monies, deportations of the native-born, and massacres and flights abounded, with countless other horrors, most of which inflicted by the Roman tyrants, first among whom was Leon Sgouros, who did not even spare the land of his birth by performing any benefaction on her behalf. Sgouros made peace with Nicholas, the chief shepherd of the metropolis of Corinth, and put an end to their former discords. He invited the man to be his counselor, but he associated with him in body only, while in his heart he was as hostile as before; later, he gouged out his eyes and cast him down from the acropolis.

In the East, meanwhile, the Prusaeans and Nicaeans, the dance- and song-loving Lydians, Smyrna and Ephesos, and the lands lying between them acknowledged Theodore Laskaris as emperor. The latter built a fleet of warships with which he subdued most of the islands. Making peace with Kaykhusraw [before March 1206], the sultan of Ikonion, he assigned a part of his dominion to the sultan's father-in-law, Manuel Mavrozomēs. This portion included my own homeland, Chonai, whence I, the author Niketas, derive, as well as neighboring Phrygian Laodikeia and the lands through which the Maeander wends to discharge its waters into the sea. David and Alexios, begotten of the son of the Roman tyrant

 [639] Andronikos (Manuel was his name), ruled respectively over Herakleia on

the Pontos and Paphlagonia and Oinaion, the city of Sinope, and Trebizond.[1722] Aldebrandinus, an Italian by birth who was strictly raised according to Roman traditions, governed Attaleia,[1723] while another held sway over the island of Rhodes.[1724]

These rulers should have united in their efforts and taken precautions to preserve their portion of the fatherland from further afflictions and to recover the conquered cities, but they lost control of themselves in their mad thirst for fame and desire to be named tyrants, and so they took up arms against one another. Because of the dissensions and divisions among themselves, the Romans at the first assault awarded the enemy the scepter and their submission,[1725] or, as one might say, the victor's prize of armor and trophy of war. Every one of the troops campaigning against the Romans could have recited the pertinent scriptural verses, "I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoils; I will sate my soul, I will kill with my sword, my hand shall have dominion."[1726]

Many, therefore, would collect a modest fleet, hire a few knights as mercenaries, and put in at the islands, as there was no one to come to their aid. Whence certain Genoese pirates, the scum and abortions of mankind who excelled in nothing and were inferior in everything, who inflicted misery and mischief everywhere, provisioned five merchant ships, and fitted out twenty-four triremes, with which they sailed to Crete.[1727] Pretending to be merchants, and then mounting an attack on the enemy, they easily overpowered the entire island.

Then Kaykhusraw, the ruler of Ikonion, advanced with an army against Attaleia [spring 1206], imagining that he would take the city without a blow since she was incapable of saving herself. Aldebrandinus, the city's ruler, and his chief ministers, informed of Kaykhusraw's impending attack, dispatched envoys to Cyprus and received from there an auxiliary force of infantry numbering two hundred Latins. When the battle was at [640] hand and the Turkish forces had surrounded the city, the Latin troops closed ranks, and, taking the Turks by surprise, they came to the defense of the Attaleians. So terrified were the barbarians that many of the troops were slain, and Kaykhusraw retreated, having besieged Attaleia no more than sixteen days.

Theodore Laskaris collected an army to fight David in the Pontos. He forced his way into Plousias, a city of archers and warriors, and nullified her friendship with David, and he would have taken Herakleia and forced David to take flight, had not the Latins encamped at Nikomedia provided assistance to David, who had made peace with them, thus placing Laskaris in a precarious position. On the one hand, zeal and daring incited him against the Latins, while on the other, he drew back from the task at hand. At one moment he was of the opinion that he should enter Herakleia and occupy the city, and then he thought that he should take the opposite course; it was as though both options were being anxiously weighed in the balance. Deeming it more expedient, rather than more daring, to quicken his pace against David's champions, he resumed his march. When the Latins were informed of his approach, they were unwilling to risk a fight at close quarters and so withdrew during the night and entered Byzantion.

While David was pondering these events, he was unexpectedly pre-

served from danger which crept alongside him, no further removed than is the knee from the shank, and once again he took firm possession of Herakleia. Rewarding his Latin allies in Byzantion, he welcomed the landing of provision ships carrying cured pork and requested that they come to his aid a second time. Furthermore, he entreated those who had submitted to Laskaris by way of letters and solemn treaties to join forces with him, and he requested that the lands under his rule agree to an alliance with the Latins. Successful in winning them over, he was informed that Laskaris had departed from Nicaea for Prusa [autumn 1206]; David also went forth from Herakleia, exulting in the allied forces which

[641] had recently been sent to him from Byzantion.[1728] He carried out combined military maneuvers, crossed the Sangarios River, and ravaged the towns subject to Laskaris. He left there several days later. Some of the hostages received from Plousias he put in chains for defecting to Laskaris. The Italians, some three hundred in number, prepared to advance farther and moved out of the valleys into the highlands. At Tracheiai, which is near Nikomedia, Andronikos Gidos unexpectedly fell upon them, and after a close struggle, during which the fortunes of battle often changed sides, the Latins were defeated. The Latins were taken captive by those who stood guard along the mountains or fell into ambushes which were so prepared that not even a torchbearer slipped through their hands to report the disaster to David.[1729]

Peter of Bracieux, whom we mentioned earlier[1730] (he was a man of extraordinary physical size who was admired for his desperate courage), was intent on being admitted into the city of Pegai [after 5 November 1206], contending that the city was lawfully his since, from the outset, when the Latins entered upon the war against the Romans in the East, he had been appointed to govern there.[1731] Once before he had openly attempted to enter the city, but repelled by the partisans of Laskaris within, he had thought it best to desist from his purpose. Now he chose to lie in wait, since it was evident that he could not carry the city by force. Inveigling and covertly corrupting certain Pegaïtes, he introduced into Pegai a few of his own men, who were placed in the care of Sthlavos Varenos and his fellow conspirators. Finally, Peter, watching for the right time, slipped into Pegai and attacked by night. He repulsed his adversaries without any difficulty and took possession of the entire city.

[642] While these events were taking place, the Latin conquerors of Adrianople first bivouacked around the city and set up a marketplace outside [28 June 1206]; afterwards, in alliance with the Romans, they made the rounds of certain cities harried by the Cumans and restored order as best they could before arriving at the borders of the Rhodopē mountain range. When they met no resistance whatsoever and their adversary did not even show himself, they entered the fortress of Stenimachos [14 July 1206] and removed thence their compatriots, the remnants of those who formerly governed Philippopolis, and returned to Orestias. They entrusted a troop division to Theodore Branas and left him behind in command of the place. Then they returned to Byzantion and anointed as emperor Henry [20 August 1206], the brother of Baldwin, the first Latin emperor of Constantinople. For one year and four months there was no emperor to

administer the affairs of state, and they would not consent to the anointing of any of Baldwin's kinsmen until his death had been verified.[1732]

Let the Romans hear these things, they who anoint, they who deliberate on who shall depose the anointed with all speed. Justly were our men of arms reported by all nations to be matricidal vipers, a nation that has lost counsel,[1733] spotted children,[1734] and lawless offspring.[1735]

Baldwin's death took place in the following manner. Captured in the Cuman War and put in chains, as I have recounted, he was confined for a long time in Trnovo. When Aspietēs defected and was joined by his companions and partisans, Ioannitsa seethed with anger against the Latins, and his wrath grew in intensity, nearly driving him to distraction. Removing Baldwin from prison, he gave orders that his legs be summarily chopped off[1736] at the knees and his arms at the elbows before being cast headlong into a ravine. For three days Baldwin lay as food for the birds before his life ended miserably.

It was not only Baldwin whom Ioannitsa so brutally deprived of life; he [643]
also inflicted pitiable deaths on the Romans he had imprisoned, refusing to heed cry or supplication. Among the latter was the logothete of the *dromos*, Constantine Tornikēs, who, after the fall of the City, was forced to serve Emperor Baldwin. Escaping the peril of battle during which he was taken captive by the Cumans, he afterwards hastened to Ioannitsa, imagining that he would have the greatest influence on him as in the past when he had frequently visited him as Roman envoy; instead, he was greeted by sword thrusts all over his body, and after his murder he was deprived of funeral rites.

The Latins resolved to overturn the celebrated ancient palladia of the City stationed along the wall and fosse to ward off the enemy who arrayed phalanxes and set up ambushes against her, especially those which had been set up against their race. Among the statuary made in the image of men and fashioned of bronze, which had earlier been removed from their pedestals and cast into the flames, they carefully examined the front left hoof of the brazen horse which stood on a four-sided white marble base in the Forum of the Bull; on its back it carried a hero of great strength and whose comeliness was well worth seeing. The horse was no less a wonder because of the perfection of its art; it was depicted without trappings, snorting and leaping with its ears pricked up as though at the sound of the war trumpet. Some claimed that the horse was Pegasos and its rider Bellerophontes; others contended that it was Joshua, the son of Nave [Nun], mounted on the horse, and that this was evident from the composition of the figure which extended his right hand in the direction of the chariot-driving sun and the moon's course to stay them in their procession[1737] and held a bronze globe in the palm of his left hand. Overturning the sole of the horse's hoof with hammers, they found lying underneath the image of a man pierced through with a nail and wholly covered by lead, whom the majority conjectured to be of the Bulgar race or to represent a Latin, as was broadcasted by all in the past.[1738] And this too was cast into the smelting furnace of the assayers of silver. [644]
The Latins did not do these things from any sense of cowardice as one who held them in disdain might charge; taking every possibility into ac-

count lest they be unseated from the City which they had mounted, they did not choose to overlook these artless rumors which were commonly reported and not without cause. Linking conjecture to design, they justified their not leaving these reports unexamined, while refraining from none of their actions.

Who does not know that once the Latins tread upon province and city they lay hold of these as though they were their own property? Clutching these fast, they are troubled by no difficulty sufficient to make them forget their families at home as though they no longer existed. They acted contrariwise to our people who gave to any who liked their very last garments[1739] and who, having left behind their native lands, gladly shook off the dust under their feet,[1740] not as disciples preaching the gospel, but as unfit and most base warriors, more cowardly than women in battle, and who at the sight of the enemy truly suffered that which is described by Homer:

> For the color of the coward changeth ever to another hue,
> nor is the spirit in his breast stayed that he should abide steadfast,
> but he shifteth from knee to knee and resteth on every foot,
> and his heart beats loudly in his breast
> as he bodeth death, and the teeth chatter in his mouth.[1741]

Should one carefully scrutinize our own men, one could not but marvel at them! If, as time went by, they could achieve nothing for themselves without the toil of war, they would always make concessions to the enemy and appease them; towards their own countrymen they behaved shamelessly, audaciously, and willfully and ascribed the fall to us members of the senate; they did not even fear the all-seeing eye of Justice, having betrayed both the City and us, nor did they blush at the excess of their lie. That which was deserving of tears was the fact that these men, insensible to suffering and misfortune, not only did not wish to see the restoration of the City, since they had acquired more properties than they had ever owned in the past, but also blamed God for his sluggishness in not having treated the
[645] City and us more severely in the past and for delaying destruction until now because of his forbearance and love for mankind. They should have commiserated with us over our vicissitudes, deprived of City, home, and means of livelihood, we who were known to be celebrated in the past for abundance of wealth and the splendor of political office. They led us about in ridicule and scourged us with words of reviling, something we had hoped never to see permitted by the authorities.

In truth, shunning the paths of such men, and seeking, like Bellerophontes of old, the Elysian Fields,[1742] or Jeremias's distant lodging place in the wilderness,[1743] we had not at all set foot on the eastern provinces. We had never become troublesome to others; rather, we placed our high hopes only in God the Father, the provider of food for all mankind, who fed one hundred men through Elissaie [Elisha] with a few cakes of figs and barley loaves,[1744] who later fed thousands of the hungry with even fewer loaves, and who caused the initiated symposiarchs to collect more food from the fragments that remained than was at first brought forth, having followed an extraordinary miracle with an even more wondrous

one.[1745] We were like unto them, however, only in that we were crowded together; for this reason, we chose to reside, as though we were captives, in Nicaea on Lake Askania, the chief city of the province of Bithynia, and huddled about the churches where we were looked down upon as aliens.

But what need is there for me to trouble my history with such accounts, to depict all that had happened to the Romans as a cup of unmingled wine[1746] or a wine cup filled with the wine's dregs? Let the narrative take us back once again to the turning post so that we may continue with our history.

The course of events was as follows. Emperor Henry was informed by his compatriots [22 August 1206] who had been left behind in Orestias that the Cuman and Vlach armies were once again on the move and had razed Didymoteichon to the ground, and that their aim was to take [646] Adrianople by way of corruption. Unafraid of the enemy hordes, and discounting the former misfortunes of war, he had the boldness to undertake another campaign, for he longed to rescue his fellow countrymen fighting with Branas and to come to the aid of the Roman survivors who had taken refuge in the towns not far from the City. At the outskirts of Adrianople he made a reconnaisance of the Vlachs, who lost heart at the sight of the Latins. These numbered no more divisions than before; neither were they reinforced by stouter men, nor had they lost their usual rash and bellicose nature because of their mishaps. Advancing as far as Krenos and Beroē, the emperor passed through Agathopolis, encamped at Anchialos, and performed many deeds, among which was the seizing of monies, men, and herds of cattle; without sustaining any serious losses himself, he returned unscathed to Constantinople [5 November 1206].[1747]

X. *Of the Same Blessed Niketas Choniatēs, from His History of Constantinople*

So that our sorrows may not become more acute by protracting our history, we shall pass on from the former to a brief account of the latter. [647]

Soon after our empire had fallen to the lot of the French and the high priesthood had similarly been allotted to the Venetians because of the judgments known to the Lord,[1748] the maker and pilot of this terrestrial ship, there arrived from Venice as patriarch of Constantinople [end of July 1204] a certain Thomas by name. He was of middle age and fatter than a hog raised in a pit; his face was clean-shaven, as is the case with the rest of his race, and his chest was plucked smoother than pitchplaster; he wore a ring on his hand, and sometimes he wore leather coverings which were fitted to his fingers. His clerical assistants and attendants at the holy altar were seen to be identical in everything with their primate, in dress and regimen and in the cropping of the beard.[1749]

Exhibiting from the very outset, as they say, their innate love of gold, the plunderers of the queen city conceived a novel way to enrich themselves while escaping everyone's notice. They broke open the sepulchers of the emperors which were located within the Heroon[1750] erected next to the great temple of the Disciples of Christ [Holy Apostles] and plundered them all in the night, taking with utter lawlessness whatever gold ornament, or round pearls, or radiant, precious, and incorruptible gems that were still preserved within. Finding that the corpse of Emperor Justinian [648] had not decomposed through the long centuries, they looked upon the spectacle as a miracle, but this in no way prevented them from keeping their hands off the tomb's valuables. In other words, the Western nations spared neither the living nor the dead, but beginning with God and his servants, they displayed complete indifference and irreverence to all.

Not long afterwards, they pulled down the ciborium[1751] of the Great Church that weighed many tens of thousands of pounds of the purest silver and was thickly overlaid with gold.

Because they were in want of money (for the barbarians are unable to sate their love of riches), they covetously eyed the bronze statues and consigned these to the flames. The brazen Hera standing in the Forum of Constantine was cast into a smelting furnace and minted into coins;[1752] her head could barely be carted off to the Great Palace by four yokes of oxen. Paris Alexander, standing with Aphrodite and handing to her the golden apple of Discord, was thrown down from his pedestal and cast on top of Hera.

Who, having laid his eyes on the four-sided bronze mechanical device rising up to a height nearly equal to that of the tallest columns which have been set up in many places throughout the City, did not wonder at the intricacy of its ornamentation? Every melodious bird, warbling its spring-time tunes, was carved upon it; the tasks of husbandmen, the pipes and milk pails, and the bleating sheep and bounding lambs were depicted. The wide-spread sea and schools of fish were to be seen, some caught and others shown breaking out of the nets to swim free again in the deep. There were the Erotes, shown in pairs and groups of three; innocent of clothing but armed with apples, they shook with sweet laughter as they threw these or were pelted by them. This four-sided monument terminated in a point like a pyramid, and above was suspended a female figure which turned with the first blowings of the wind, whence it was called Anemodoulion [Wind Servant].[1753]

[649] Nonetheless, they gave over this most beautiful work to the smelters, as well as an equestrian statue of heroic form and admirable size that stood on the trapezium-shaped base in the Forum of the Bull. Some maintained that it was of Joshua, son of Nave, conjecturing that his hand was pointed towards the sun as it sank in the west, commanding it to stand still upon Gabaon.[1754] The majority were of the opinion that it was Bellerophontes, born and bred in the Peloponnesos, mounted on Pegasos; the horse was unbridled, as was Pegasos, who, according to tradition, ran freely over the plains,[1755] spurning every rider, for he could both fly through the air and race over the land.[1756] But there was an ancient tradition which came down to us and which was in the mouths of all, that under this horse's front left hoof there was buried the image of a man which, as it had been handed down to some, was of a certain Venetian; others claimed that it was of a member of some other Western nation not allied with the Romans, or that it was of a Bulgarian. As the attempt was often made to secure the hoof, the statue beneath was completely covered over and hidden from sight. When the horse was broken into pieces and committed to the flames, together with the rider, the statue was found buried beneath the horse's hoof; it was dressed in the kind of cloak that is woven from sheep's wool. Showing little concern over what was said about it, the Latins cast it also into the fir.[1757]

These barbarians, haters of the beautiful, did not allow the statues standing in the Hippodrome and other marvelous works of art to escape destruction, but all were made into coins. Thus great things were exchanged for small ones, those works fashioned at hugh expense were converted into worthless copper coins.

Also overturned was Herakles, mighty in his mightiness,[1758] begotten in a triple night and placed in a basket for his crib; the lion's skin which was thrown over him[1759] looked terrifying even in bronze, almost as though it might give out a roar and frighten the helpless populace standing nearby. Herakles sat without quiver on his back, or bow in his hands, or the club

[650] before him, but with his right foot as well as his right hand extended as far as possible. He rested his left elbow on his left leg bent at the knee; deeply despondent and bewailing his misfortunes, he held his inclined head at rest in his palm, vexed by the labors which Eurystheus had

designated, not out of urgency, but from envy, puffed up by the excess of fate. He was thick in the chest and broad in the shoulders, with curly hair; fat in the buttocks, strong in the arms, he was an incomparable masterpiece fashioned from first to last by the hands of Lysimachos[1760] and portrayed in the magnitude which the artist must have attributed to the real Herakles; the statue was so large that it took a cord the size of a man's belt to go round the thumb, and the shin was the size of a man. They who separated manliness from the correspondent virtues and claimed it for themselves did not allow this magnificent Herakles to remain intact, and they were responsible for much more destruction.

Together with Herakles they pulled down the ass, heavy-laden and braying as it moved along, and the ass driver following behind. These figures had been set up by Caesar Augustus at Actium (which is Nikopolis in Hellas) because when going out at night to reconnoiter Antony's troops, he met up with a man driving an ass, and on inquiring who he was and where he was going, he was told, "I am Nikon and my ass is Nikandros, and I am proceeding to the camp of Caesar."[1761]

Nor, of a truth, did they keep their hands off the hyena and the she-wolf which had suckled Romulus and Romos [Remus]; for a few copper coins they delivered over the nation's ancient and venerable monuments and cast these into the smelting furnace. This was also the fate of the man wrestling with a lion, and of the Nile horse whose posterior terminated in a spiniferous and scaly tail, and of the elephant waving its proboscis. They did the same to the Sphinxes that are comely women in the front and horrible beasts in their hind parts, that move on foot in a most bizarre manner and are nimbly borne aloft on their wings, rivaling the great-winged birds; and [the same] to the unbridled, snorting horse with ears erect, playful and docile as it pranced; and to the ancient Skylla [651] depicted leaning forward as she leaped into Odysseus' ships and devoured many of his companions: in female form down to the waist, huge-breasted and full of savagery, and below the waist divided into beasts of prey.[1762]

There was set up in the Hippodrome a bronze eagle, the novel device of Apollonios of Tyana, a brilliant instrument of his magic. Once, while visiting among the Byzantines, he was entreated to bring them relief from the snake bites that plagued them.[1763] Resorting to those lewd rituals whose celebrants are the demons and all those who pay special honor to their secret rites, he set up on a column an eagle, the sight of which gave pleasure to onlookers and persuaded any who delighted in its aspect to stay on like those held spellbound by the sound of the Sirens' song. His wings were aflap as though attempting flight, while a coiled snake clutched in his claws prevented its being carried aloft by striking out at the winged extremities of his body. But the venomous creature accomplished nothing, for, transfixed by the sharp claws, its attack was smothered, and it appeared to be drowsy rather than ready to give battle to the bird by clinging to his wings. While the snake breathed its last and expired with its venom unspent, the eagle exulted and, all but screeching out his victory song, hastened to lift up the serpent and bore it aloft to leave no doubt as to the outcome by the flashing of his eyes and the serpent's mortification. It was said that the very sight of the snake uncoiled and incapable of delivering a

deadly bite frightened away, by its example, the remaining serpents in Byzantion, convincing them to curl up and fill their holes. This eagle's likeness was remarkable, not only because of what we have said but also because the twelve segments marked off in lines along the wings most clearly showed the hour of the day to those who looked upon it with understanding when the sun's rays were not obscured by clouds.

[652] What of the white-armed, beautiful-ankled, and long-necked Helen, who mustered the entire host of the Hellenes and overthrew Troy, whence she sailed to the Nile and, after a long absence, returned to the abodes of the Laconians? Was she able to placate the implacable? Was she able to soften those men whose hearts were made of iron? On the contrary! She who had enslaved every onlooker with her beauty was wholly unable to achieve this, even though she was appareled ornately; though fashioned of bronze, she appeared as fresh as the morning dew, anointed with the moistness of erotic love on her garment, veil, diadem, and braid of hair. Her vesture was finer than spider webs, and the veil was cunningly wrought in its place; the diadem of gold and precious stones which bound the forehead was radiant, and the braid of hair that extended down to her knees, flowing down and blowing in the breeze, was bound tightly in the back with a hair band. The lips were like flower cups, slightly parted as though she were about to speak; the graceful smile, at once greeting the spectator, filled him with delight; her flashing eyes, her arched eyebrows, and the shapeliness of the rest of her body were such that they cannot be described in words and depicted for future generations.

O Helen, Tyndareus's daughter, the very essence of loveliness, offshoot of Erotes, ward of Aphrodite, nature's most perfect gift, contested prize of Trojans and Hellenes, where is your drug granted you by Thon's wife which banishes pain and sorrow and brings forgetfulness of every ill?[1764] Where are your irresistible love charms? Why did you not make use of these now as you did long ago? But I suspect that the Fates had foreordained that you should succumb to the flame's fervor so that your image should no longer enflame spectators with sexual passions. It was said that these Aeneadae condemned you to the flames as retribution for Troy's having been laid waste by the firebrand because of your scandalous amours.[1765] But the gold-madness of these men does not allow me to conceive and utter such a thing, for that madness was the reason why rare and excellent works of art everywhere were given over to total destruction. Nor can I speak of their frequent selling and sending away of their women for a few coins while they attended the gambling tables and were engrossed at draughts all day long, or, being eager to engage, not in acts of prudent courage, but in irrational and mad assaults against one

[653] another, they donned the arms of Ares and set up as the prize of victory all their belongings, even their wedded wives,[1766] because of whom they heard themselves called fathers of children, and even that great treasure which others find difficult to sacrifice—the soul, for whose salvation men are eager to do anything. After all, how could one expect to find among these unlettered barbarians who are wholly ignorant of their ABCs, the ability to read and knowledge of those epic verses sung of you:

Small blame that Trojans and well-greaved Achaeans
should for such a woman long time suffer woes;
wondrously like is she to the immortal goddesses to look upon.[1767]

The following should also be recounted. There was set up on a pedestal a woman youthful in form and appearance and in the prime of life, her hair bound in the back and curled along both sides of the forehead; she was not raised up out of reach but could be touched by those who put out their hands. The right hand of this figure, with no underlying support, held in its palm a man mounted on a horse which was poised on one leg more easily than another would have clasped a wine cup. The rider was robust in body and encased in a coat of mail, with greaves on both legs, and he fiercely breathed out war; while the horse pricked up its ears as though in response to the war trumpet. With neck held high, it was fierce in countenance, the eyes betraying its eagerness to charge forth; the legs were raised high in the air, exhibiting warlike agitation.[1768]

Next to this figure, very close to the eastern turn of the four-horse chariot course called Rousion [Red], statues of charioteers were set up with inscriptions of their chariot-driving skill; by the mere disposition of their hands, they exhorted the charioteers, as they approached the turning post, not to relax the reins but to hold the horses in check and to use the goad continuously and more forcefully, so that, as they wheeled round the turning post in close quarters, they should compel their rival, even though his horses were faster and he a skilled competitor, to drive on the outside of the turn and come in last.

The following should certainly be included even though it was never my intention to describe everything. A delight to behold and almost more wondrous in craftsmanship than all the others was the brazen animal standing on a stone pedestal. It did not portray an unambiguous bull for it [654]
was short-tailed and neither had a thick throat such as the Egyptian bulls [hippopotami] have, nor was it equipped with cloven hooves. In its jaws it throttled another animal whose body was covered all over with scales so prickly that even in bronze it caused pain to him who touched them. This animal, clenched in the bull's mouth, appeared to some to be a basilisk[1769] and to others an asp; not a few conjectured that the one was a Nile bull and the other a crocodile.

I shall not concern myself with the diversity of opinions; I shall speak only of the unique struggle as the two beasts contended against one another, each suffering terribly from the wounds inflicted by the other, killing and being killed, holding fast and being held fast, winning and being overthrown by the other. For the so-called basilisk had covered the bull with bites, from the head to the soles of the hoofs; the whole body of the bull was discolored and had turned greener than frog-color as the deadly venom penetrated throughout the animal's system. As a result, the bull collapsed to its knees, and, as its vital life force faded, the eye's light was extinguished. It gave the spectators the impression that it would have fallen over long ago had not the legs supported it in an upright position. As for the basilisk, which barely struggled with its hindmost parts, it was held fast in the bull's jaws. With the bull's mouth agape, it was being

strangled by the compression of the grinder teeth of the bull. It seemed to be straining in its attempt to break through the barrier of teeth[1770] in order to escape and slip through the gaping mouth, but it could not because that part of the body which follows immediately after the shoulders and the front legs and all those parts of the body joined to the tail were held secure in the distended mouth, impaled in the jaws.

In this manner, each was killed by the other. Common to both was the contest, common the defense, co-equal the victory, and death the fellow contestant. This mutual destruction and killing has persuaded me to say that these death-dealing evils, ruinous to men, not only are portrayed in images and not only happen to the bravest of beasts but frequently occur among the nations, such as those which have marched against us Romans, killing and being killed, perishing by the power of Christ who scatters
[655] those nations which wish for wars,[1771] and who does not rejoice in bloodshed, and who causes the just man to tread on the asp and the basilisk and to trample under foot the lion and the dragon.[1772]

Notes to Translation

1. See Genesis 3.19.
2. Psalm 68:29.
3. See 1 Corinthians 15.52.
4. Tithonos was the brother of Priam, husband of Eos (Dawn), and father of Memnon (*Iliad* 11.1, 20.237). Eos asked Zeus to grant Tithonos immortality but forgot to ask for eternal youth as well.
5. W. R. Paton, trans., *The Greek Anthology,* Loeb Classical Edition (London, 1916–18); Agathias, *Anthologia Palatina* 5.289.1, vol. 1, pp. 280–281; Lucilius, *Anthologia Palatina* 11.69, vol. 4, pp. 104–105.
6. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 13.
7. Euripides, *Orestes* 397.
8. Anna Komnenē, *Alexiade,* ed. B. Leib, with French translation (Budé), 3 vols. (Paris, 1937–45); English translations: E. A. S. Dawes (London, 1928); E. R. A. Sewter (Harmondsworth, 1969). Also Michael Glykas, *Annales,* ed. I. Bekker, CSHB (London, 1836) and John Zonaras, *Epitome historiarum,* ed. M. Pinder and M. Büttner-Wobst, 3 vols., CSHB (1841–97); edition L. Dindorf, 6 vols. (Leipzig, 1868–75).
9. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 14.
10. See Genesis 35.11.
11. The *kaisar* Nikephoros Bryennios was the grandson of the *dux* of Dyrrachium, Nikephoros Bryennios, who was a rival claimant to the throne with Alexios I Komnenos. He wrote an inferior history of his times that broke off in the middle of the reign of Nikephoros III Botaneiatēs (1078–1081): *Commentarii,* ed. A. Meineke, CSHB (1836); French translation and notes by H. Grégoire, *B* 22 (1953): 469–530; 25–27 (1957): 881–926.
12. This monastery was located in the district called Mangana (the Arsenal). Although the evidence is not conclusive, the Church of Saint George of Mangana was built by Emperor Constantine Monomachos (1042–55) by the sea near the Monastery of Christ Philanthropos. See Mathews, *BCI,* 220.
13. See Herodotus 1.205.
14. Irene Doukaina was the granddaughter of the *kaisar* John Doukas, brother of Emperor Constantine X Doukas (1059–67). See J. M. Hussey, "The Later Macedonians, the Commeni and the Angeli 1025–1204," in *CMH,* vol. 4, pp. 208–211; Polemis, *Doukai,* 70–74.
15. *Iliad,* 9.14.
16. See Zonaras 18.28 sq.; Anna Komnenē 15.11, 17.
17. Alexios I Komnenos reigned from 1 April 1081 to 15 August 1118.
18. The location of the Monastery of Christ Philanthropos has been identified as the monument some 60 meters from a *hagiasma* (fount of holy water) to the south in the sea wall. The existing façade of the substructure should be attributed, however, not to Alexios I Komnenos, but to Irene, daughter of Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos, shortly after 1308. See Mathews, *BCI,* 200.
19. See *Odyssey* 5.432–34.

20. See *Iliad*, 2.213.
21. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 14, 45, 47, 82–83, 90; see also Moravcsik, *Byz*, vol. 2, pp. 70–71.
22. Nicaea fell on 19 June 1097.
23. Psalm 17.35.
24. Before 15 August 1119.
25. Philopation, located outside the land walls in the vicinity of Blachernai, was used either for horse racing or polo. See Guilland, *ETCB*, vol. 1, pp. 167, 546; vol. 2, p. 72.
26. This, I believe, is the sense of Choniatēs' words. He is referring evidently to *penis captivus*, a condition in which from deep vaginismus the corona of the full introduced penis is encircled, and attempts to withdraw the penis cause great pain.
27. A.D. 1119. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 14–15.
28. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, p. 234, n. 3.
29. *Iliad* 10.509; *Odyssey* 3.142.
30. Niketas calls Constantinople Byzantion, Byzantis, queen of cities, the imperial city, the City, the fair city of Constantine, and the megalopolis.
31. *Iliad*, 4.342, 12.316.
32. Modern Uluborlu. See Kinammos, *DJMC*, 15.
33. See Kinammos, *DJMC*, 15.
34. Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 15.
35. 15 August 1122–14 August 1123, or 9 September 1121–8 August 1122.
36. Niketas uses the name Scythians here while meaning the Turkic Patzinaks who had occupied much of the Ukraine, Moldavia, and Wallachia since the 10th century. Defeated by Alexios I Komnenos in 1091, their regions were subsequently occupied by the Cumans or Polovtzi, who had cooperated with the emperor. Later, the author continues to use the name Scythians for the Cumans. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, p. 16 and p. 234, n. 6.
37. 1087–91. See Anna Komnenē 7.9 sqq.
38. See Luke 24.49.
39. See Exodus 17.11 sqq.
40. The Varangian Guard at this time was largely made up of Anglo-Saxons. See Ki mos, *DJMC*, p. 16 and p. 234, n. 7.
41. *To hamaxobion*, i.e., nomads who live in wagons.
42. Zevgminon is modern Zemun or Semlin. For these events see Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 17
43. Álmos was the brother of the king of Hungary, Kálmán (1095–1116), and the son of King Géza I (1074–77) and Synadenē, the niece of Emperor Nikephoros Botaneiatēs (1078–81). He was, therefore, the uncle of King István II (1116–31), and not his brother as stated by Niketas. Álmos had served as prince and governor of Croatia and was later removed by Kálmán and blinded, together with his son Béla. Álmos died in 1129 and his son, the blind Béla, succeeded István to the throne as Béla II (1131–41). For these events see Urbanksy, *BDF*, 28–29, 38–40, 45–47.
44. Chramon is modern Nova Palanka. See Urbansky, *BDF*, 46.
45. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 18–19.
46. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, p. 20 and p. 235, n. 14. The Persarmenians are the Danishmendids, and Kastamon (Kastra Komnenōn), the modern Kastamonu, was the Turkish capital in Paphlagonia.
47. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 20.
48. See the *Kontakion* of the Akathistos Hymn.
49. Actually about a year and a half later.
50. Danishmend reigned from 1095 to 1104. Niketas means his son Ghazi III, who died i September or October 1134. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, p. 235, n. 15.
51. Masʿūd I (1116–55); Muhammad, a Danishmendid (1134/35–1140). See Cahen, *PT*, 95–96.
52. The Rhyndakos is the modern Orhaneli River. For these events see Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 20–21.
53. Gangra is modern Çankiri.
54. For these events see Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 20–21.
55. Levon or Leon I (1129–1137/38; d. 1141 in Constantinople) was the grandson of the founder of the Rubenid dynasty of Little or Cilician Armenia. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 21–23, 25.
56. Seleukeia is modern Silifkē.
57. This took place after the emperor had taken Anazarba and visited Antioch. See *NH*, 31.
58. See Psalm 57.5 sq.
59. See Lucianus, *Adversus Indoctum* 28; Zenobius 1.46.
60. Niketas uses the name Telchin.
61. See *Iliad* 6.117 sq.

62. Anazarba or ʿAin Zarbâ, which is south of Sis in Cilician Armenia, was surrendered after 17 days of fighting in July 1137. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 22–23.
63. The district between Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon.
64. Raymond of Poitier, prince of Antioch (1136–49). He was the grandfather of Alexios II, son of Manuel I Komnenos and Maria of Antioch, the daughter of Raymond and Constance.
65. Raymond II, son of Pons, count of Tripoli (1137–52).
66. The offspring of Hagar, Abraham's concubine, i.e., the Muslim Arabs and Turks. For these events see Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 23–24.
67. Joscelyn II of Courtenay, count of Edessa (1131–50; d. 1153).
68. Hieropolis on the Euphrates.
69. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 24–25.
70. Shaizar, modern Saijar and ancient Larissa, lies in the valley of the Orontes. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 24–25; Robert L. Nicholson, "The Growth of the Latin States, 1118–1144," in *HC,* vol. 1, p. 40.
71. See *Iliad* 2.362–363.
72. The Kelts were Normans and Frenchmen.
73. Niketas uses the term *lychnitēs lithos,* a name for Parian marble quarried by lamplight. See Pliny, *Historia Naturalis* 36.14.
74. The reference is to the crushing defeat of the Byzantines at Manzikert on 19 August 1071. See Michael Attaleiatēs 151.8 sqq.; Nikephoros Bryennios 40.15 sqq.
75. Sawâr ibn Aitekîn or possibly Zengi, *atabeg* of Mosul and Aleppo (Halep) (1128–46).
76. The modern Sakarya River.
77. The modern Ulubad.
78. See *Iliad* 9.537.
79. Before the Seljuk occupation of Asia Minor after 1071, the Byzantine empire was divided into themes, or military provinces.
80. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 51. For the Gabras family see Claude Cahen, "Une Famille byzantine au service des Seldjuqides d'Asie Mineure," in *Polychronion; Festschrift Franz Dölger zum 75. Geburtstag,* ed. Peter Wirth (Heidelberg, 1966), 145–149; Bryer, "Gabrades," 179–180; Vryonis, *DMH,* 230–232.
81. Kintē or Kundu was east of Neokaisareia in Asia Minor. See Chalandon, *JCMC,* p. 178 and n. 1.
82. Modern Niksar, a Pontic city; see Vryonis, *DMH,* map opposite p. 14 (Kc).
83. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 25–26.
84. When Phaëton plunged to his death from the sun chariot, his sisters, the Heliades, the daughters of Helios, the Sun, mourned him and turned into poplars, and their tears were transformed into amber.
85. The modern Turkish port of Antalya.
86. Lake Pousgousē Beyşehir Gölü. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* p. 236, n. 23.
87. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 26.
88. Alexios, John II's oldest son, was born in 1106 and died on 2 August 1142 in Attalia; he was crowned co-emperor in 1122 and was married to Dobrodjeja, a Russian princess. His mosaic portrait may be seen in the south gallery of Hagia Sophia. Andronikos, the second son, died while escorting his brother's corpse to Constantinople. The third brother, Isaakios, had the sorry task of escorting both corpses to the capital. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* p. 27 and p. 236, nn. 25, 27. See esp. Chalandon, *JCMC,* 12–14, 182–183.
89. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 26.
90. Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 27–31.
91. The *ekdora* is the peeled outer layer of skin.
92. The Asklepiadai are the disciples of Asklepios, i.e., physicians.
93 For a surprisingly different view based on several contemporary chronicles attributing John II's death to murder at the hands of his Latin mercenaries who favored his Latinophile son Manuel, see R. Browning, "The Death of John II Comnenus," *B* 31 (1961): 229–235. In his later work, *The Byzantine Empire* (New York, 1980), 125, Professor Browning concludes: "There are enough unsolved problems about the death of John II to lend some plausibility to the view that he was the victim of a plot in which Manuel was involved. But we shall never know with certainty."
94. Leo VI the Wise, PG 107, 1132B.2.
95. *Ibid.,* 1129B.4.
96. I.e., eagles.
97. See Ephesians 2.11 sqq.
98. See Psalm 23.3.
99. See 1 Kings 4.11 sqq.
100. See Psalm 125.3.
101. See John 6.39, 17.12.

102. See Matthew 25.14 sqq.
103. See Psalm 9.2.
104. 1 Kings 23.16.
105. Psalm 67.31.
106. See Psalm 78.6; Philippians 2.9.
107. See *Iliad* 1.231.
108. Psalm 124.4–5.
109. See Genesis 21.
110. Genesis 25.26.
111. Exodus 4.14–16.
112. Psalm 151.1; see 1 Kings 16.1–13.
113. 1 Kings 16.7.
114. See Psalm 146.6.
115. Romans 2.11.
116. Psalm 77.72.
117. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 27.
118. Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 30.
119. The two ways one reached office in ancient Greece.
120. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 30–31. The paludamentum was the general's cloak.
121. The great triple church dedicated to Christ Pantokrator (the All-Ruler) that stands on the fourth hill of Constantinople is the most important as well as the largest of the Middle Byzantine monuments of the capital, and served as the burial place of the Komnenian dynasty. This complex was built by Emperor John II Komnenos between 1118, the year of his accession, and 1136, when he issued the monastery's *Typikon,* or regulations. The Church of Christ Pantokrator is the double-narthexed south church; the north church was dedicated to the Mother of God, the Merciful, where the famous icon of the *Hodegetria* was brought from the imperial palace to be venerated on Fridays by the pious. The central church, dedicated to St. Michael, was the Heroon, or mausoleum; today it is used as a mosque. The tomb of Manuel I stood at the entranceway leading from the south church. See Mathews, *BCI,* 71–72, and the series of photographs of the surviving structures, 73–101.
122. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 35.
123. The modern Turkish Jeyhan. Mopsuestia is medieval Mamistra and modern Turkish Misis.
124. In 969 the Byzantines regained Antioch from the Arabs, but in 1085 the Turks took the city from the Armenian Philaretos, Byzantine governor under Romanos IV Diogenes; after the ill-fated Romanos's defeat, deposition, and execution, he established himself as independent governor. When the First Crusade took Antioch in 1098, the Norman Bohemond became master of the Principality of Antioch but refused to acknowledge Byzantine overlordship according to previous agreements with Alexios I. In 1138 John II managed to impose his sovereignty over the Antiochenes but only temporarily. The latter demanded that Manuel depart from their territory, and Manuel rebutted them with a threat. Manuel remained in Cilicia thirty days after his father's death. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* pp. 32–33 and p. 237, n. 1.
125. A certain Nikephoros Dasiotēs commanded the ship that carried Conrad III, the German emperor (1138–52), to the Holy Land. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 71.
126. Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 38–39. Prakana lay west of Seleukeia in Cilicia Tracheia. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* p. 238, n. 15.
127. Leon Stypēs (May 1134–January 1143).
128. Michael II Kurkuas, the Oxeitēs (July 1143–March 1146). The island of Oxeia is the modern Turkish Sivri Ada. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 34.
129. Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 34.
130. Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 37.
131. Actually, John and Andronikos Kontostephanos were the brothers of Stephanos, husband of Manuel I's sister, Anna. Kinnamos says that Stephanos was disparagingly called Kontostephanos (Short-Stephen) because he was short in stature. Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 79.
132. Prosouch, or Borsuq, was a Turk in the service of the emperor. See Moravcsik, *Byz,* vol. 2, p. 257.
133. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 35.
134. Pithekas is located southeast of Nicaea, between Nicaea and Melangeia (Malagina).
135. Philomilion is modern Akşehir. See W. M. Ramsay, *The Historical Geography of Asia Minor* (London, 1890), 199.
136. *Ibid.,* 55.
137. *Ibid.,* 43.
138. For these events see Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 38–53.
139. The nuptials of Bertha of Sulzbach, the sister-in-law of the German emperor Conrad III, renamed Irene according to Byzantine custom, were celebrated between 3 and 6 January 1146. See also Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 36–37.

140. The negotiations for this marriage were made by Manuel I's father, John II, between 1140 and 1142. Once Manuel became emperor, however, the choice seemed unworthy of his imperial rank, but both pressure from Conrad III and the interests of state, i.e., an alliance with the Germans, prevailed over matters of the heart. See Chalandon, *JCMC,* 169–172, 209–212, 259–262.

141. This was Theodora Komnenē, the daughter of Manuel's brother Andronikos and therefore Manuel's niece.

142. *Ton demosion eisphoron phrontistēs kai logistēs megistos.*

143. *Meledonos mesevon kai ton oikeion hypodrestera diatagmaton.*

144. King Akrisios of Argos had been told by the oracle of Delphi that his daughter Danaë would bear a son who would one day kill him. To forestall his fate he had Danaë confined in a house built of bronze and sunken in the ground with only the roof open to the sky.

145. *Syax* and *labrax.*

146. *Halmaia* was used for preserving and pickling food.

147. *Schidax lachanou* (?).

148. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 141.

149. See *Iliad* 2.89.

150. *Iliad* 2.486.

151. See Luke 18.30.

152. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 58 sqq.

153. Penthesilea was the brave, beautiful, and young queen of the Amazons killed by Achilles in the Trojan War. That it was Eleanor of Aquitaine, wife of the king of France, Louis VII, and niece of Raymond of Antioch, that Niketas was referring to as Penthesilea, see Runciman, *HC,* vol. 2, p. 262, n. 1. Runciman, however, does not cite his source. See also Sir Hamilton A. R. Gibb, "Zengi and the Fall of Edessa," in *HC,* vol. 1, p. 469. For Eleanor of Aquitaine's role in the Second Crusade see: C. H. Walker, *Eleanor of Aquitaine* (Chapel Hill, 1950); A. Kelly, *Eleanor of Aquitaine and the Four Kings* (Cambridge, 1950).

154. The cause of the Second Crusade was the fall of Edessa to Zengi ʿImād-ad-Dīn (1128–46), the Turkish ruler of Mosul and Aleppo, on 24–26 December 1144; the final capture and sack of the city took place under Zengi's son and successor, Nūr-ad-Dīn on 3 November 1146.

155. Aesopus, *Fabulae* (Hausrath) 199.

156. Zenobios 1.93.

157. See *Odyssey* 4.580.

158. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 62.

159. Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae Sophistorum* 4.48.

160. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 61.

161. See Hussey, *CLBE,* 114–115, who comments on Michael Italikos's rhetorical abilities as seen especially in his letters: *Letters,* ed. J. A. Cramer, Anecdota graeca e codicibus manuscriptis bibliothecarum Oxoniensium, vol. 3 (Oxford, 1836), 158–203.

162. See *Odyssey* 4.365 sqq.

163. For the treatment of the Byzantine merchants by the Germans, see Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 61.

164. Ennyo was the goddess of war and Phylopis the din of battle.

165. See *Iliad* 4.442 sq.

166. See Psalm 17.35.

167. This was Frederick I Barbarossa, the future Hauhenstaufen emperor of Germany (1152; crowned in 1155; and reigned until his death in 1190).

168. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 61.

169. Actually parasangs.

170. Choirobacchoi was near modern Bahşayiş in Thrace; see Kinnamos, *DJMC,* p. 242, n. 55.

171. Melas is the modern Karasu River. The Greek word *melas* means "black."

172. See Genesis 7.11.

173. From the *Iliad* 2.1, Choniatēs uses the term "lords of chariots."

174. See Leviticus 26.36.

175. *Iliad* 20.2.

176. See Psalm 92.3.

177. See Psalm 12.4.

178. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 62–63.

179. Ta Pikridiou, modern Hasköy, was located opposite the Church of the Mother of God of Blachernai on the other side of the Golden Horn. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* p. 64 and p. 242, n. 57.

180. Kinnamos, *DJMC,* p. 60 and p. 240, n. 49. Steven Runciman estimates that Conrad set out with nearly twenty thousand German troops (*HC,* vol. 2, p. 259). Later he says that possibly some 9,566 German troops and pilgrims crossed the Bosporos, without explaining, however, what happened to the other ten thousand (Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 267).

181. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 68–69.
182. The Bathys River is the modern Muttalip Dere, or Sarisu. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 68.
183. See Psalm 7.16; Proverbs 26.27.
184. See Diogenianos, 6.54: *mē kinein kakon eu keimenon.*
185. Niketas has confused what happened to the French under Louis VII with the Germans under Conrad.
186. I.e., Louis VII.
187. I.e., lords of chariots.
188. See 1 Thessalonians 2.6.
189. See Acts 12.4.
190. See Philippians 3.18.
191. See Psalm 57.11.
192. See Esaias 6.9; Matthew 13.13. sq.
193. See John 14.2.
194. See Acts 7.51.
195. See Romans 5.8.
196. See Isocrates 6.45; Procopius, *de Bello Persico* 1.24.37.
197. See Song of Solomon 3.7 sq.
198. See Galatians 4.21 sq.
199. See Esaias 8.14; Romans 9.32.
200. Theocritus 5.38.
201. Joshua 3.7 sqq.
202. *Iliad* 20.227.
203. See Plutarch, *Marius* 21. Choniatēs confuses the Cimbri with the Ambrones.
204. From Korypho comes the modern name of Corfu for the island.
205. Roger II Guiscard, the first king of Sicily (1130–54).
206. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 74–76.
207. Monemvasia was an important fortress town commanding a harbor in the southern Peloponnesos.
208. The goddess of freedom was Aphrodite, whose chief center of worship was the city of Paphos on the island of Cyprus.
209. See Eustathios, *Commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem* 6.287; Strabo 8.6.20.
210. Adrasteia is inescapable Nemesis, or divine retribution.
211. A Kadmean victory, like a Pyrrhic victory, is ruinous to the victor.
212. Dirce was the queen of Thebes and wife of Lykos; because she had treated the princess Antiope with great cruelty the latter's two sons killed Dirce by tying her hair to a bull and throwing her into a spring which took her name.
213. Niketas uses the name Emporion.
214. Akrokorinth was the citadel of Corinth, perched some 575 meters above the city.
215. Niketas is in error here. Homer speaks of the Chimaera, and Anteia's lusting after Bellerophon and the hero's sad end, but he does not mention the far-famed spring of Corinth called Pirene. See Pausanias 2.3.2–3.
216. The *sebastos* Nikephoros Chalouphēs later commanded an army in Hungary, was sent as an envoy to Venice, served as governor of Dalmatia, and was captured by the Hungarians in 1166. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 171–174, 186, 197, 199.
217. St. Theodore Stratelatēs (commander or general of the army) was martyred in Herakleia under Emperor Licinius (308–24), and his feast day was celebrated on 8 February. His relics were kept in Constantinople.
218. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 76.
219. See *Iliad* 2.2–4.
220. *Iliad* 9.325.
221. Plutarch, *Themistokles* 3.
222. See *Iliad* 3.221 sq.
223. The Byzantines called Greek fire *liquid fire* or *sea fire.* See J. R. Partington, *A History of Greek Fire and Gunpowder* (Cambridge, England, 1960); J. Haldon and M. Byrne, "A Possible Solution to the Problem of Greek Fire," *BZ* 70 (1977): 91–99.
224. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 76.
225. Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 78–79.
226. See *NH,* 9.
227. Mount Haimos (Haemus) is the Balkan mountain range.
228. See *Iliad* 2.631; 4.330, where Odysseus is the captain of the Kephallenians who hold Ithaka. See also Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 76–80.
229. See Lucianus, *Hermotimus* 4; *Rhetorum praeceptor* 7. Aornis (Birdless) was so high that no birds could reach its heights.
230. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 80.
231. Kosmas II Attikos (April 1146; deposed 26 February 1147).

232. A proverb wherein *Momos* is personified.
233. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, pp. 56–58 and p. 241, n. 45; see also Hussey, *CLBE*, 99, 143. The monk Niphon had been condemned twice for preaching Bogomil doctrines, in 1143 and 1144. The Bogomils taught that the creator or demiurge was Satanás, Christ's elder brother, the evil principle (Yahweh) of the Old Testament.
234. See Psalm 34.11.
235. See Numbers 16.28–35.
236. Bertha-Irene of Sulzbach, whom Manuel wed in January 1146, gave birth to two daughters. Maria was betrothed to Béla-Alexios of Hungary (later Béla III), but when Manuel's second wife, Maria of Antioch, gave birth to a son, Alexios II, the engagement was dissolved. A second daughter died at the age of four. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, pp. 163, 214 and p. 257, n. 35; see also Hussey, "The Later Macedonians," 231, 234.
237. See *Iliad* 2.631.
238. See *Odyssey* 12.133.
239. *Odyssey* 2.308.
240. Moravcsik, *Byz*, vol 2, pp. 256–57.
241. See *Iliad* 5.586.
242. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 80.
243. See *Iliad* 20.250.
244. See Matthew 27.24.
245. See *Odyssey* 4.845.
246. See Song of Solomon 1.5–6.
247. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 80.
248. See *Iliad* 1.81–82.
249. *Iliad* 4.122–123.
250. *Iliad* 3.222.
251. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 81.
252. Psalm 5.7.
253. Avlona was a port city on the coast of Epirus.
254. See Wisdom of Solomon 9.14. Niketas errs in citing David as author.
255. See Psalm 32.11; Esaias 55.8 sqq.
256. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 82–83.
257. The grand župan Pervoslav Uroš II (c. 1131–55; 1155–60). For these events see Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 82–90.
258. See Psalm 120.1.
259. See *Odyssey* 6.130–134.
260. Choniatēs is in error as to the year of these events which took place in 1155. For the career of Michael Palaiologos see Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 60, 68, 106–11, 117.
261. Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 109–114.
262. Kinnamos *DJMC*, 114–117.
263. John Kantakouzenos was married to Maria Komnenē, the daughter of Manuel I's brother, the *sebastokrator* Andronikos; their son was Manuel Kantakouzenos. John was killed at the battle of Myriokephalon in 1176. See Nicol, *BFK*, 4.
264. Bakchinos, or Bagin, was not the grand župan of Serbia who was Pervoslav Uroš II, but probably the commander of the Hungarian forces. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, pp. 88–89 and p. 244, n. 26. See also Moravcsik, *Byz*, vol. 2, p. 85.
265. For these events see Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 83–90.
266. Géza II was successfully attacking Vladimirko, prince of Galicia (1130–52), who was the ally of the Byzantines. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, p. 92 and p. 245, n. 27.
267. Niketas uses the name Paion here to identify the Hungarians who occupied ancient Pannonia. The Paiones were originally a people of Macedonia, as cited by Homer, *Iliad* 2.848; late writers referred to them as Pannonians and their country as Pannonia.
268. Actually these events followed c. 1155. This Kalamanos may have been Boris (d. 1154), who was the son of Kálmán (1095–1116), the king of Hungary, and the father of Constantine Kalamanos. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, pp. 93–94 and p. 245, n. 30.
269. *Iliad* 10.509.
270. See Ammianus Marcellinus 31.2.1–12.
271. See Herodotus 1.194.
272. Actually Michael Palaiologos died at the end of 1155 or the beginning of 1156. John Doukas took command, and then Alexios Komnenos, the son of Anna Komnenē, the daughter of Alexios I, and Nikephoros Bryennios, was sent with reinforcements in April 1156. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 126, 106–107.
273. Polemis identifies John Doukas as the son of the *megas drungarios* Andronikos Kamateros (*Doukai*, 127–130). There is still some doubt, however, as to which of Manuel's relatives he was. See P Karlin-Hayter, "99: Jean Doukas," *B* 42 (1972): 259–265.
274. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 94–96, 122–124.

275. Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 124–130.
276. Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 130.
277. Constantine Angelos was the grandfather of the future emperors Isaakios II and Alexios III. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 83, 95–96.
278. Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 95–96.
279. Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 130–132. Alexios was the son of John Axuch.
280. For Maios of Bari, grand emir and commander of the fleet for William I of Sicily, see Chalandon, *JCMC*, 366–380.
281. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 132–134.
282. *Iliad* 9.594.
283. Herodotus 6.119.
284. Abydos, the modern Çanakkale, is on the Asiatic side of the Hellespont; over against Abydos, on the European side of the Hellespont, was Sestos, which is now abandoned.
285. Modern Sofia, in Bulgaria.
286. Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 96.
287. Pelagonia, "the former Herakleia of the Mysians," is modern Bitola. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 99.
288. Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 99–103.
289. Kinnamos, *DJMC*, p. 241, n. 51.
290. Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 104.
291. Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 104–105.
292. Adana is a town northeast of Tarsus in Cilicia.
293. Thoros, or Ṭoros II, was prince of Cilician Armenia (1145–69).
294. Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 136–138, 142.
295. Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 100.
296. During Conrad III's stay in Constantinople during the Second Crusade, Theodora married Henry II Jasomirgott (1148); in 1156 Henry became Duke of Austria.
297. Evdokia's husband was Michael Gabras. See Chalandon, *JCMC*, p. 219, n. 4; pp. 480–481. See also Bryer, "Gabrades," 180.
298. John Komnenos, the son of Manuel's brother Andronikos and Manuel's favorite, was elevated to the high rank of *sebastokrator* between 1170 and 1176; earlier, he served as the governor of Cyprus. For John's career see Chalandon, *JCMC*, 217–218; Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 47, 99, 102–103, 137, 179. His daughter Maria married Amalric I, King of Jerusalem (1163–74) at Tyre on 29 August 1167. See Marshall W. Baldwin, "The Latin States under Baldwin III and Amalric I, 1143–1174," in *HC*, vol. 1, p. 554. Maria's second husband was Balian II of Ibelin (c. 1176–93; d. 1217). See Sidney Painter, "The Third Crusade: Richard the Lionhearted and Philip Augustus," in *HC*, vol 2, p. 66.
299. See Esaias 59.5.
300. See *Iliad* 15.362–64.
301. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 101–103.
302. Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 99–100.
303. See Psalm 119.2.
304. *Iliad* 4.43.
305. Reginald of Chatillon, prince of Antioch (1153–1160), called Geraldos by Niketas, was Constance of Antioch's second husband. See Baldwin, "Latin States," 539–540.
306. *Iliad* 13.339.
307. *Iliad* 5.586.
308. Enyo, the Latin Bellona, was the goddess of war and companion of Ares.
309. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 143–145.
310. See Psalm 140.3.
311. See Ecclesiastes 10.11.
312. See Esaias 29.13; Matthew 15.10.
313. Theodore Styppeiotēs' official title was *epi tou kanikleiou*, i.e., keeper of the inkstand, the imperial secretary. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 141.
314. This was Béla-Alexios, son of Géza II (1141–61), and later Béla III, king of Hungary (1172–96). See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 163–164.
315. See Chalandon, *JCMC*, 223.
316. See Romans 11.33.
317. See *Odyssey* 9.316.
318. *Iliad* 9.313.
319. Nikephoros II Phokas (963–69).
320. Hosea 11.10.
321. Raymond of Poitiers, called Petevinos by Choniatēs, prince of Antioch (1136–49), was Constance of Antioch's first husband.
322. *Iliad* 6.449.
323. Actually Manuel I was first betrothed to Melisend, sister of Raymond III, count of

Tripoli, but he purposely broke off the engagement after a year to negotiate a more favorable marriage with Maria of Antioch, daughter of Raymond of Poitiers and Constance of Antioch. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 158–160; see also Baldwin, "Latin Kingdom," 546–547.

324. Kilij Arslan II (1155–92).

325. Yahgi-Basan, second son of Gümüshtigin Ghāzī ibn Danishmend, and emir of Sebasteia (Sivas) (1140/42–1164).

326. For Dhū'l-Nūn see Cahen, *PT*, 96–103.

327. See Psalm 43.15 and Deuteronomy 32.6.

328. See Psalm 12.2.

329. See Psalm 93.1.

330. See Galatians 4.29.

331. See Amos 9.12 and Philippians 2.9.

332. See Genesis 4.10.

333. Psalm 34.2.

334. Matthew 12.18.

335. Psalm 78.12.

336. Malachi 1.11.

337. For Kilij Arslan's reception in Constantinople see Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 156–158; see also Chalandon, *JCMC*, 462–466.

338. It was Patriarch Loukas Chrysobergēs (1157–70) who protested. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 157.

339. For the famous quadriga of Lysippos and their emplacement at the northern façade of the Hippodrome, see Guilland, *ETCB*, vol. 1, pp. 464 sq., 477; *ETCB*, vol. 2, p. 44.

340. Therikles was a famous Corinthian potter.

341. For the terms of this agreement see Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 158.

342. He was the son of the former governor of Trebizond, Constantine Gabras, who rebelled against John II and seized Trebizond in 1126.

343. Proverbs 26.22.

344. Kilij Arslan II deprived Dhū'l-Nūn of all of his possessions in 1168, and he forced his brother Shāhānshāh into exile in 1169. In 1174 Dhū'l-Nūn and Shāhānshāh were in Constantinople. Afrīdūn was the emir of Melitenē, modern Malatya, which fell in 1177. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 218, 221; Cahen, *PT*, 102–103; Vryonis, *DMH*, 122.

345. *Iliad* 22.93–94.

346. The reference here is to the nomadic Turkmens. See Vryonis, *DMH*, 187–189.

347. Laodikeia, or Ladik, is modern Denizli in the Maeander valley.

348. This may have been the *sebastos*, or *pansebastos*, Goudelios Tzikandelēs. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 50, 62, 65, 104; Chalandon, *JCMC*, p. 648 and p. 649, n. 4.

349. See Psalm 104.18.

350. Géza II (1141–61) had two brothers: Lazló II (1161–62) whom Niketas calls Vladislav, and István IV (1162). Istvan IV married Maria, the daughter of the *sebastokrator* Isaakios Komnenos, who was the son of Emperor John II. Géza II also had two sons: István III (1161–72) and Béla III (1173–96). The latter was married twice: to Anne of Chatillon and Margaret Capet, daughter of King Louis VII of France. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, appendix 1, opposite p. 224. Brand, however, cites 1161–62 for Lazlo's reign.

351. See *Odyssey* 9.82–97. For these events see Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 154–155.

352. Actually the stringed instrument called a *barbiton*.

353. Alexios Kontostephanos was the son of Manuel's sister Anna and the grand duke Stephanos Kontostephanos, who was slai in Corfu. See *NH*, 79; Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 161; Chalandon, *JCMC*, p. 216 and n. 7

354. Although Brand cites the years of Lazlo's reign as 1161–62, van Dieten gives the dates as 31 May 1162 to January 1163.

355. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 160–161, 163, 164–165, 167–172, 174–175. For a discussion of these complicated events see Urbansky, *BDF*, 89–111.

356. Wisdom of Solomon 9.14.

357. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 180; Chalandon, *JCMC*, 483.

358. Galitza was allegedly at the mouth of the Morava. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, p. 244, n. 15.

359. Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 175–177.

360. Herodotus 2.121.

361. The Boukoleon was that part of the littoral of the Propontis, or Sea of Marmara, situated to the south of the great palace outside the maritime wall. It ws so named from the magnificent sculpture of a lion in a death struggle with a bull. From this sculpture both the harbor and the great palace were known as Boukoleon. See Guilland, *ETCB*, vol. 1, pp. 249–250.

362. Nikephoros II Phokas was assassinated on the night of 10–11 December 969.

363. See 1 Kings 21.10–14.

364. Andronikos's palace was located in the southern part of the quarter of Eleutherios whose port eventually took the name Ta Vlanga. See Guilland, *ETCB,* vol. 2, p. 94.
365. Anchialos is modern Pomorie on the west coast of the Black Sea.
366. See *NH,* 84.
367. The Vlachs, or Wallachians, were the ancestors of the Rumanians. At this time they were found in the Danube area, as well as in Macedonia and Thessaly, known as Great Vlachia or Wallachia. See Ostrogorsky, *HBS,* p. 403 and 404, n. 1.
368. Psalm 7.3.
369. See Proverbs 6.5.
370. See *NH,* 128.
371. See Bryer, "Gabrades," 180; Chalandon, *JCMC,* 480–481.
372. See *NH,* 104.
373. Dionysios was the *comes palatinus* of Hungary.
374. For these events see Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 193–195; Chalandon, *JCMC,* 487–490; Urbansky, *BDF,* 104–107.
375. See Psalm 139.4.
376. *Iliad* 4.350.
377. See Psalm 139.4.
378. This was the emperor's cousin, the future emperor Andronikos I.
379. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 196–197.
380. Basil Tripsychos was the *primmekerios* of the Vardariotēs, i.e., the commander of a Turkish division from the valley of the Vardar whose responsibility was to surround the emperor and keep the crowds back. See Chalandon, *JCMC,* p. 225 and n. 6, p. 648 and n. 16.
381. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 181–185; Chalandon, *JCMC,* 485.
382. Desa, grand župan of Serbia, reigned briefly before 1155 and then from 1161 to sometime after 1165 with two interruptions. See Grumel, *Ch,* 389–390; Kinnamos, *DJMC,* p. 251, n. 5.
383. Eustathios, *Commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem* 374.44. A proverb referring to a shifty person.
384. Euripides, *Hippolytos* 612; see translation of E. P. Coleridge in *The Complete Greek Drama,* ed. Whitney J. Oates and Eugene O'Neill, Jr. (New York, 1938), vol. 1, p. 779.
385. See *NH,* 112, 128.
386. See Romans 11.23–24.
387. Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 188.
388. *Iliad* 11.37.
389. *Iliad* 5.31.
390. See *Odyssey* 4.726–727.
391. See *Iliad* 5.59 sqq.
392. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 188.
393. Lucian, *Dialogi Deorum* 13.
394. See Psalm 44.11.
395. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 250.
396. Constantine Kalamanos was the son of Boris (d. 1154), the son of Kálmán (Coloman), the king of Hungary (1095–1116). He served as the Byzantine *dux* of Cilicia (1163–64; c. 1173), and was taken prisoner at the battle of Harin in August 1164 by Nūr-ad-Dīn Mahmūd, son of Zengi and *atabeg* of Aleppo and Damascus (1146–74); his ransom was 150 silk garments. During his second tenure as *dux* of Cilicia in 1173, he was taken captive by Mleh, the prince of Cilician Armenia (1170–1174/75). See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 164, 214; Chalandon, *JCMC,* p. 526, n. 2, pp. 531–533. Niketas, however, speaks of Kalamanos's capture as taking place at the end of 1166 or beginning of 1167. He seems to have confused this with the battle of Harin with the Turks in 1164.
397. Diogenianus 3.83.
398. Baldwin III, king of Jerusalem, reigned with Melisend, his mother, from 1143 to 1152 and alone from 1152 to 1163. Theodora married Baldwin in 1158. See Chalandon, *JCMC,* p. 205, n. 3; Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 188. Baldwin's father Fulk, king of Jerusalem (1131–43), had formerly been the count of Anjou. Niketas often refers to Frenchmen and Normans as Italians.
399. *Iliad* 3.35.
400. *Iliad* 5.83.
401. Romans 2.5; Revelations 6.17.
402. See Sophocles, *Ajax* 811.
403. See Acts 1.12. A sabbath day's journey was equivalent to about 2,000 cubits, or approximately one mile.
404. Saltuq ibn Alī was ruler of Erzurum (shortly after 1123 to May 1168). See Cahen, *PT,* 106–107.

405. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 188–189.
406. These are the personifications of Death, the dark passageway leading from earth down to Hades and the nether abyss of infinite darkness.
407. See Kinnamos, who blames Alexios Axuch for conspiring against Manuel, *DJMC,* 199–202; Chalandon, *JCMC,* 219–220. Kinnamos places Mount Papykion on the Strymon or Struma River.
408. The reference here is to the winged sandals of Hermes given to Perseus and the cap of invisibility which enabled the hero to slay Gorgon Medusa.
409. Alexios was born in 1106, crowned co-emperor in 1122 and died in 1142. He was married to Dobrodjeja, a Russian who gave him a daughter. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* p. 236, nn. 25, 27.
410. See *Odyssey* 16.215–220.
411. *Iliad* 9.563; see Loeb edition, vol. 1, trans. A. T. Murray (Cambridge, Mass., 1954), p. 423, n. 3. The kingfisher bird whose plaintive note seemed to be the expression of desolate sadness.
412. He partook, that is, of fare not cooked at the flame.
413. Sophocles, *Electra* 479.
414. Euripides, *Electra* 771.
415. Revelations 1.8, 21.6, 22.13.
416. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 212, 215, who records that Aaron was the *akolouthos,* i.e., the commander of the Varangian Guard. *The Testament of Solomon* was a pseudoepigraphic work written in Greek. As a syncretistic blend of Jewish, Christian, oriental, and Hellenistic motifs, it emanated perhaps from Egypt between 100 and 300 A.D. The narrator of the Testament is Solomon. During the construction of the Temple, the demon Ornias bedevils the overseer. In answer to Solomon's prayer, the Archangel Michael appeared and provided the king with a ring with which he could summon and subdue male and female demons. With this power Solomon compelled the demons to assist in building the Temple. For editions of *The Testament of Solomon* see PG 122, 1315–1358, and the edited texts by C. C. McCown (Leipzig, 1922).
417. See Psalm 56.5.
418. Called a Persian apple by Niketas.
419. See Sophocles, *Ajax* 85.
420. *Iliad* 2.308.
421. Sodium carbonate was mixed with oil and used as soap.
422. In Book 27 of Niketas's *Dogmatikē Panoplia* (*NH,* 149), the demons are described as bald, tiny, and wild-eyed, and remind us of the modern Greek folk belief in *kallikantzaroi.*
423. See *NH,* 514–517.
424. Atramyttion is modern Edremit, and Pergamon is modern Bergama.
425. Psalm 106.35.
426. Niketas uses Ausones, the name of the original inhabitants of central and southern Italy, to designate the Roman subjects of the empire.
427. Plutarch, *Theseus* 8, 10.
428. *Iliad* 11.67 sq.
429. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 199.
430. Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 195.
431. See *NH,* 132, 133.
432. *Iliad* 13.131, 16.215.
433. *Iliad* 13.339.
434. For these events see Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 197, 202–205; Chalandon, *JCMC,* 488–490; Urbansky, *BDF,* 105–107
435. The Eastern Gate was also known as the Imperial Gate, the Gate of St. Barbara, or the Gate of St. Demetrios and is the modern Topkapi; it replaced the Golden Gate in the celebration of a victorious triumph by John II in 1126 and by Manuel in 1168. See Guilland, *ETCB,* vol. 2, pp. 135–136.
436. *Iliad* 5.838.
437. *Iliad,* 2.412.
438. Stefan Nemanja was the grand župan of Serbia (c. 1168–96). He abdicated and died on Mount Athos in 1200 as the monk Symeon.
439. Dekataroi is Cattaro, or Kotor, on the Dalmation coast between Ragusa and Budua. See Chalandon, *JCMC,* 395–396.
440. *Iliad* 16.776; *Odyssey* 24.40.
441. Proverbs 1.14. Niketas probably means booty.
442. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 208.
443. Psalm 88.26.
444. See Apollodoros, *Bibliotheca* 2.5.2–6.
445. See Psalm 71.8.

446. Amalric I, king of Jerusalem (1163–74), was the son of Fulk and brother of Baldwin III, whom he succeeded. In 1167 he married Maria Komnenē, the great-granddaughter of John II.
447. Damietta is the modern port of Dimyāt.
448. Melivoton was a port on the Hellespont.
449. This was Saladin (an-Nāsir Salāh-ad-Dīn Yūsuf ibn-Aiyūb), governor of Egypt (1169–74) and sultan of Egypt and Syria (1174–93).
450. *Iliad* 19.302; see Loeb edition, vol 2, p. 358, n. 1.
451. See *Iliad* 2.542.
452. Perhaps Tinnis. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* p. 257, n. 24. Tounion and Ti is were located in the Nile delta.
453. See Matthew 2.13–15.
454. See *Iliad* 2.298.
455. See *Odyssey* 4.220–234; Herodotus 2.113–116, where Thon is the warden of the mouth of the Nile and his wife is Polydamna.
456. See Esaias 29.13; Matthew 15.8.
457. See *Iliad* 1.61.
458. *Iliad* 7.219 sq.
459. *Iliad* 16.70.
460. See Psalm 7.17.
461. See *Iliad* 1.316.
462. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 208–209; Chalandon, *JCMC,* 536–545; Baldwin, "Latin States," 556–558. The failure of the combined Franco-Byzantine expedition of 1169 was a fateful one for the history of the Levant, for it was the last chance to prevent the union of Syria and Egypt under Saladin. Van Dieten gives the date as 13 December 1169.
463. Did Andronikos choose to go by land because of the dangers of the sea?
464. Niketas writes "the Eileithyiai," i.e., the daughters of Hera and goddesses of childbirth.
465. The Purple Bedchamber was reserved for the delivery of imperial children, whence they were called *porphyrogenitoi.*
466. Although van Dieten (*NH,* 169) questions the certainty of the year 1169 as the year of Alexios II's birth and thinks it may have been 1168, see Peter Wirth, who supports the date of 14 September 1169 ("Wann wurde Kaiser Alexios II. Komnenos geboren?" *BZ* 49 [1956]:65–67).
467. This would be the eighth day after birth, i.e., 22 September 1169. See Luke 1.59, 2.21.
468. In Bekker's edition we read, "he invited the officials of highest rank to a sumptuous banquet by sending them budding spring sprigs" (CSHB [1835], 220).
469. Luke 2.52.
470. The Basilica of the Theotokos in Blachernai, located to the north of the imperial palace, was originally built by Pulcheria and Marcian (450–57); it housed the famous *omophorion,* the sacred veil of the Mother of God, among other relics. See *Patria Constantinoupoleos III,* in *SOC,* 241, 264; Janin, *GE,* 169–179.
471. The empress's half-sister was Anne, the daughter of Reginald of Chattilon and Constance of Antioch.
472. Brand gives the date of István III's death as 1172 (Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 214), while Chalandon cites March 1173 as the date of his demise (*JCMC,* 491).
473. Van Dieten cites 18 January 1173 as the date of Béla III's accession to the throne of Hungary (*NH,* 170); Brand gives the year as 1172 (Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 225).
474. Wiliam II of Sicily (7 May 1166–16 November 1189).
475. Manuel was hoping to marry Maria to Henry VI, the son of Frederick I Barbarossa, while dealing simultaneously with William II, but both negotiations fell through. See Hussey, "The Later Macedonians," 231–232, 234, 238.
476. *Odyssey* 4.770.
477. Sophocles, *Electra* 135.
478. Maria married Renier of Montferrat. Chalandon gives the date as February 1180 (*JCMC,* 600); J. M. Hussey prefers the year 1179 (see Hussey in Donald M. Nicol, "The Fourth Crusade and the Greek and Latin Empires, 1204–61," in *CMH,* vol. 4, pt. 1, p. 277). Van Dieten agrees with Chalandon (*NH,* 171).
479. For these events see Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 209–214; Chalandon, *JCMC,* 582, 584–591.
480. These were the Varangian Guard, now largely constituted of Anglo-Saxons who had abandoned England after the Norman conquest following the Battle of Hastings in 1066. See A. A. Vasiliev, "The Opening Stages of the Anglo-Saxon Immigration to Byzantium in the Eleventh Century," *Annales de l' Institut Kondakov (Seminarium Kondakovianum)* 9 (1937): 39–70; Richarcd M. Dawkins, "The Later History of the Varangian Guard: Some Notes," *Journal of Roman Studies* 37 (1947): 39–46 (see review by V Laurent in *REB* 6 [1948]: 114); Sigfús Blöndal, *The Varangians of Byzantium,* trans. and rev. Benedikt S. Benedikz (Cambridge, England, 1978), 141–147, 150–152, 187–188.

481. The town on the strait which separates Euboia from Boiotia and is well known for its flux and reflux. It was known later as Negropontē, and its modern name is Chalkis.
482. Although Niketas dates these events to spring of 1172, the Venetians pulled in to Chios before winter 1171.
483. These were the Slavs of Dalmatia called *Sthlavenoi* by Niketas.
484. Like Hector in pursuit of Achilles' horses. See *Iliad* 17.75.
485. Argo, the Swift, the ship in which Jason sailed to Colchis in search of the Golden Fleece.
486. *Odyssey* 1.238, 4.490.
487. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 218–220.
488. Dorylaion, on the Tembris River, is the modern Eskişehir.
489. See above, n. 418.
490. Souvleon or Soublaion is modern Choma Siblia.
491. For these events see Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 220–223.
492. See Psalm 109.1.
493. Chonai, Niketas's native city, modern Honas, prospered from the traffic passing through from Ikonion to the Maeander River valley; fish abounded in the river and lakes, and the valley provided liquorice, cardamum, myrtle, figs, grapes, and pomegranates. Chonai was also the center of great trade fairs held at the *panegyris* or festival of the Archangel Michael, whose church boasted of magnificent mosaics, attracting pilgrims from long distances. See Vryonis, *DMH,* p. 20 and nn. 111, 112.
494. Lampē in Phrygia was northeast of Chonai. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* p. 258, n. 7.
495. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 223–224. Kinnamos's history ends here.
496. Xenophon, *Anabasis* 1.2.8. For an English translation see *The Persian Expedition,* trans. Rex Warner (Harmondsworth, 1949; reprint ed., Harmondsworth, 1979), 60.
497. Myriokephalon was situated between Sozopolis and Philomelion, west of Ikonion.
498. Tzivritzē is modern Turrije Boghaz. See Chalandon, *JCMC,* 509.
499. For Constantine Makrodoukas (Tall-Doukas), see Polemis, *Doukai,* p. 192 and nn. 2, 3; Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 201.
500. See Exodus 15.1.21.
501. Andronikos Vatatzēs was the son of Manuel's sister Evdokia and Theodore Vatatzēs. See Chalandon, *JCMC,* p. 219 and n. 6.
502. Psalm 139.8.
503. Exodus 10.21.
504. *Iliad* 22.495.
505. See Psalm 37.15.
506. Niketas may be citing a proverb of unknown derivation.
507. See 2 Kings 16.5–10.
508. See Luke 23.30.
509. Psalm 83.7.
510. Psalm 43.23.
511. Esaias 1.9.
512. Deuteronomy 32.39.
513. Psalm 124.3.
514. Psalm 43.24.
515. See 2 Kings 17.1 sqq.
516. See Esaias 10.14.
517. For the Turkish envoy Gabras see Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 224; Bryer, "Gabrades," 180.
518. The Nisaean horses, referred to by Herodotus as sacred horses, were so called because they came from the Nisaean plain in Media or northwest Iran, Herodotus 7.40; see also Strabo 11.527; Polybius 30.25.6. The Nisaean horse was used by the Parthian cavalry in Sasanid times; heavy-bodied with small head and feet, they were bred to carry men in heavy armor, the *cataphracti,* and were called bloodsweaters. See Bernard Goldman and A. M. G. Little, "The Beginnings of Sasanian Painting and Dura-Europos," *Iranica Antiqua* 15 (1980): p. 289 and n. 10.
519. See Luke 10.31.
520. See *Odyssey* 9.65. For the significance of the Battle of Myriokephalon see Vryonis, *DMH,* 125–126; Chalandon, *JCMC,* 509–515.
521. Niketas describes here the Byzantine belief in the function of saints as ministers and messengers of Christ and the Mother of God.
522. For a translation of Manuel's letter to Henry II Plantagenet describing these events, see A. A. Vasiliev, "Manuel Comnenus and Henry Plantagenet," *BZ* 29 (1929–30): 237–240. The letter was preserved in *The Annals of Roger de Hoveden,* trans. H. T. Riley (London, 1853), vol. 1, pp. 419–423.
523. See Exodus 15.16.

524. Herodotus 6.86; see Herodotus, *The Persian Wars*, trans. George Rawlinson (New York, 1947), 468.
525. The *atabeg*, a military chief in the sultan's entourage, was entrusted with the education and care of his son and was ultimately married to the pupil's mother. See Cahen, *PT*, 37.
526. Tralles is north of the Maeander, and Phrygian Antioch south of the Maeander.
527. See Psalm 82.3.
528. John was the brother of Andronikos Vatatzēs. See above, n. 501.
529. Constantine Doukas is thought to be the same as Constantine Makrodoukas; he was married to the daughter of Isaakios, Manuel's elder brother. See above, n. 499.
530. Kinnamos mentions the *sebastos* Constantine Aspietēs and the commander Tatikios Aspietēs (*DJMC*, 203–204).
531. See Ramsay, *Historical Geography*, 134.
532. For Turkmen settlements in these territories, see Vryonis, *DMH*, p. 281, n. 791.
533. Andronikos was the son of Constatine Angelos and the father of the future emperors Isaakios II and Alexios III. His brother was John Angelos.
534. See Nicol, *BFK*, 4–5.
535. Both Charax and Graos Gala were northeast of Chonai. Graos Gala translates as "scum of boiled milk."
536. Claudiopolis, modern Eski-Hissar, was a metropolitanate in northern Bithynia. See Chalandon, *JCMC*, 515.
537. See Wisdom of Seirach 13.2.
538. This was Pope Alexander III (1159–81); see Chalandon, *JCMC*, 566.
539. See Baruch 4.3; Esaias 42.8.
540. See Proverbs 22.28.
541. Niketas is in error here. By July 1166 Frederick was in sole control of Rome and had Paschal III solemnly enthroned in St. Peter's while Pope Alexander III fled to Benevento. In August plague decimated Frederick's troops, who were forced to retreat north. But in 1167 Frederick's forces still occupied the Leonine section of Rome. See Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 172–173, 197; for a thorough discussion of these events see Chalandon, *JCMC*, 559–572.
542. See Chalandon, *JCMC*, 599.
543. See *NH*, 171.
544. See Chalandon, *JCMC*, 597.
545. Chalandon, *JCMC*, 597; Kinnamos, *DJMC*, 215–216.
546. See *Iliad* 1.156 sq.
547. See Deuteronomy 6.14.
548. See Proverbs 17.24.
549. See *NH*, 199.
550. See Matthew 25.18.
551. See Matthew 25.21.
552. Damalis was opposite Constantinople on the Asiatic coast, near Skutari (Üsküda), ancient Chrysopolis. Here was located the Tower of Leander. See Janin, *EM*, 26; Chalandon, *JCMC*, 233.
553. See Chalandon, *JCMC*, 232.
554. See Mathews, *EEC*, 77–88; Mathews, *BCI*, 102–103. The author makes no mention of Manuel's restoration efforts. Both Hagia Sophia and Hagia Eirenē (Holy Wisdom and Holy Peace) were named for attributes of Christ and were patriarchal churches. See also Janin, *GE*, 103–106; W. S. George, *The Church of St. Eirenē at Constantinople* (London, 1913).
555. Luke 10.41.
556. This was Novel 19 of the year 924. See H. Grégoire, "The Amorians and Macedonians 842–1025," in *CMH*, vol. 4, pt. 1, pp. 154–155; P. Charanis, "The Monastic Properties and the State in the Byzantine Empire," *DOP* 4 (1948): 55 sqq.
557. See *Odyssey* 9.84 sqq., 12.158 sqq.
558. See Matthew 23.27.
559. The *paroikoi* (coloni) were the peasant tenants of monasteries and church lands and of other charitable institutions. They were compelled to pay the *kapnikon*, or hearth tax, which was now restored.
560. Expression used by Epimenides in criticism of the Cretans and cited by St. Paul i Titus 1.12.
561. For the meaning of *mixovarvaros* see Doukas, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks: An Annotated Translation of "Historia Turco-Byzantina" 1341–1462*, trans. Harry J. Magoulias (Detroit, 1975), p. 272, n. 51.
562. See Psalm 12.2.
563. See Psalm 77.50.
564. See Psalm 32.14.
565. Exodus 3.7.

566. See Kinnamos, who praises Manuel's grasp of theological and philosophical subtleties (*DJMC*, 217).
567. Actually this was a phrase taken from the Resurrection prayer of the Divine Liturgy which is recited during the singing of the Cherubimic hymn. For a discussion of this doctrine see Niketas Choniatēs' *Dogmatikē Panoplia,* Book 14, PG 140, 137–202; Chalandon, *JCMC,* 640–643; Hussey, *CLBE,* 99–100.
568. See 2 Timothy 2.15.
569. The point at issue was whether Christ's sacrifice on the cross was offered to all three Persons of the Holy Trinity (the Orthodox position) or only to God the Father and God the Son. The latter position was condemned at two synods which took place on 26 January 1156 and 12–13 May 1157. Actually, it was only Soterichos Pantevgenos who was deposed while others were censured. The Synodikon of 1157 also anathematizes those who viewed the Eucharist as only a memorial service and not as the actual sacrifice of Christ on the cross. See Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 135–136; Hussey, *CLBE,* 99–100; Chalandon, *JCMC,* 640–643; Beck, *Kirche und Theologische Literatur,* 623–624.
570. See Niketas Choniatēs, *Dogmatikē Panoplia,* Book 25, PG 140, 201–281; see also Chalandon, *JCMC,* 646–652. There were five positions taken as to the meaning of Christ's words, "My Father is greater than I" (John 14.28). (1) God the Father is the principal cause of the Son's generation. (2) The relative inferiority of the Son relates to his being the Son of Man, the Word made flesh. (3) In the act of *kenosis* (Philippians 2.7) the Word voluntarily abased himself. This seems to have been Niketas's position. (4) Christ was simply distinguishing between his human and divine natures and affirming the inferiority of the former in regard to the Father. This was Manuel's position. (5) Christ is simply referring to his role as mediator for humanity.
571. John 14.28.
572. See John 14.30.
573. See Philippians 2.7. For these events see Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 189–192.
574. For a discussion of this controversy see Kinnamos, *DJMC,* 189–192; Niketas Choniatēs, *Dogmatikē Panoplia,* Book 25, PG 140, 201–281; Chalandon, *JCMC,* 564, 644–651; Hussey, *CLBE,* 101. The controversy was initiated by Demetrios of Lampē about 1160.
575. The synod was held in 1166. See Jean Gouillard, ed. and trans., "Le Synodikon de l'Orthodoxie," *Travaux et mémoires,* Centre de recherche d'histoire et civilisation byzantines, vol, 2 (Paris, 1967), pp. 75–77.
576. Genesis 3.24.
577. Exodus 31.18.
578. The inscribed tablets have been recovered. See Cyril Mango, "The Conciliar Edict of 1166," *DOP* 17 (1963): 315–330. The date given is April, indiction 14, 6674.
579. *Odyssey* 4.242.
580. At issue was the mistranslation of the Arabic word *samad,* meaning "eternal" but also "not hollow" or "solid," as *holosphyros* into Greek, a word meaning "compact," or "solid." If God were a solid, argued the theologians, then the Holy Trinity would be denied and God would be reduced to pure matter and divested of his omnipotence. See Vryonis, *DMH,* 431, 442.
581. See Psalm 145.6.
582. *Odyssey* 10.329.
583. *Iliad* 2.346.
584. See 1 Corinthians 2.13, 2.4.
585. 1 Corinthians 1.27
586. For Theodore Matzoukēs see Chalandon, *JCMC,* p. 662 and n. 1.
587. See Hegesippus (Ps.=Demosthenes), *De Halonneso* 7.45.
588. The *mandyas* is a long sleeveless outer vestment, fastened at the shoulder by a brooch or clasp, worn by bishops and abbots.
589. See Vryonis, *DMH,* 431–433, 442.
590. 1 Kings 24.7.
591. See Matthew 16.4.
592. Joshua 14.6; Judith 13.8.
593. See Genesis 27.29, 40
594. Actually both Alexios I (1081–1118) and Manuel I (1143–80) reigned for 37 years.
595. See Acts 1.7.
596. See Ecclesiastes 4.12.
597. See Ephesians 6.14, 17; 1 Thessalonians 5.8.
598. See *Oracula Leonis Sapientis,* PG 107, 1132B.1. The last syllable in Manuel's name, *ēl,* equals the number 38.
599. The Church of the Virgin at the Pharos at the Great Palace was the repository of precious relics, including the holy lance and the crown of thorns. See Brand, *BCW,* p. 261 and p. 381, n. 66.

600. Alexios II, the son of Manuel I and his second wife, Maria-Xenē of Antioch, was born on 10 September 1169 and was made co-emperor on 4 March 1171. See Chalandon, *JCMC,* 212; Brand, *BCW,* 14.
601. See Eustathios, *CT,* 48.22–23.
602. Sophocles, *Ajax* 555.558.
603. See Eustathios, *CT,* 18.13–18. For these events see Brand, *BCW,* 34–38, 208.
604. See Eustathios, *CT,* 18.25–28.
605. He was the son of Manuel I's brother, Andronikos. For his career see Brand, *BCW,* 32–34; 73–74.
606. See Eustathios, *CT,* 18.28–19.6
607. Oinaion is modern Ünye. See Vryonis, *DMH,* 16: Oenoe (?) "a shipbuilding center and naval base."
608. Andronikos is described as follows: "Andronikos Komnenos, burst in [upon the empire] with the barbarians of neighboring territories; he was a man whose hair had turned silver grey from time, who was deceitful by nature, treacherous, and more changeable than the chameleon. As Emperor Manuel's cousin, he feared lest he be subdued and subjected to mistreatment such as he had suffered so often in the past through lengthy incarcerations, and no less was he himself distrusted by the emperor because of his lust for power and insubordination. Ever a fugitive and vagabond, he roamed over the earth, on the one hand, desiring passionately to rule, and, on the other hand, deeming it contemptible to be ruled." See Niketas Choniatēs, *Dogmatikē Panoplia,* Book 27 (*NH,* 225).
609. See *NH,* 142 and above, n. 404.
610. Actually, Andronikos was the son of Isaakios, John II's brother; Theodora was the daughter of Isaakios, John II's son.
611. Ixion, king of the Lapiths of Thessaly, tried to seduce Hera, and in punishment Zeus tied him to a perpetually rotating wheel in Hades, surrounded by snakes. Another legend states that Ixion embraced an image of Hera made from a cloud by Zeus, and thus be became father of the centaurs.
612. *Iliad* 16.776.
613. It was a portent, in other words.
614. Eustathios, *CT,* 28.7–10.
615. Eustathios, *CT,* 30.10–13.
616. *Iliad* 9.238.
617. *Iliad* 22.93–95.
618 Aelianus, *Varia Historia* 4.14.
619. Eustathios, *CT,* 26.23 sqq.
620. Eustathios, *CT,* 20.4–19.
621. Bathys Ryax was located in Thrace, where there was a cult center of St. Theodore, or in the province of Sebasteia in the Armeniakon theme. See Janin, *EM,* 141.
622. The feast of St. Theodore Tiro (The Recruit) is celebrated on the first Saturday of the Great Lent. Boiled wheat germ called *kollyva* is brought to church to commemorate the dead and affirm the doctrine of the Resurrection.
623. Eustathios, *CT,* 20.22–24.15.
624. See Matthew 13.7, 24 sqq; Luke 8.7.
625. See *Iliad* 2.36.
626. See Matthew 21.13.
627. Proverbs 14.2.
628. See *Iliad* 14.16.
629. The word *ektypon* is used.
630. See Michael Maclagan, *The City of Constantinople* (New York, 1968), 23. The Milion, the point from which all roads were measured, was situated northeast of the Hippodrome and the Great Palace. It was a cupola sustained by four arches, and at the summit Saints Constantine and Helena displayed the cross.
631. Eustathios, *CT,* 26.19–21.
632. Next to the emperor the eparch, or prefect, of the City was the most important official in Constantinople. He was responsible for the maintenance of law and order, adequate provisions for the inhabitants, trade and industry; in effect, for the capital's whole economic life. See Ostrogorsky, *HBS,* 36. In addition, the eparch was in charge of the courts of justice. Pantechnēs, in particular, presided over the *sekreton ton oikeiakon,* a court of appeal dealing with domestic law cases, i.e., marital disputes, wills, and guardianship. There were four imperial courts of justice in Constantinople in the twelfth century. The eparch presided over the imperial supreme court of appeal in the absence of the emperor. See Ensslin, "The Government and Administration of the Byzantine Empire," in *CMH,* vol. 4, pt. 2, pp. 24, 29. See also Eustathios, *CT,* 20.25–29.
633. The Augusteum, the central square on the north side of which Hagia Sophia was located, was originally called the Gusteum, or Fish Market. It took the name Augusteum

from the fact that Constantine had raised a column there with a statue of his mother, the *augusta* (St.) Helena. Eventually, four other columns were set up in the piazza. The one of Constantine the Great was surrounded at the base by his three sons, Licinius, his brother-in-law, and Julian the Apostate. Eudoxia, Arkadios's empress, and Emperor Leo I were represented on two other columns, and, finally, there was the equestrian statue of Justinian. See *Patria Constantinoupoleos II,* in *SOC,* 158, 65, 37, 159; Maclagan, *The City,* 65. For the equestrian statue of Theodosios-Justinian, see Anthony Cutler, "The *De Signis,*" 314.

634. The Church of St. Alexios was located west of the Augusteum and north of the Milion.

635. Actually, the date was 2 May of the 14th indiction, 1181. Saturday fell on 8 May 1182 in the 15th indiction.

636. West of the Milion, overlooking Mesē Street, Phokas (602–10) began the construction of the church of St. Phokas; near the church he set up two bronze horses, whence the area was known as the Diipeion. He also set up two columns with mosaic representations of Constantine and his mother Helena. Heraclius covered the church with a roof and renamed it in honor of St. John the Theologian. See *Patria Constantinoupoleos II,* in *SOC,* 168–169.

637. See *Iliad* 16.777 sqq.

638. See Psalm 73.6.

639. The building called Thomaïtēs, a dependency of the patriarchate, and housing its precious library, was originally built by either Patriarch Thomas I (607–10) or Thomas II (667–99). In 791 it was destroyed by fire and rebuilt by Theophilos (829–42). Many synods were held here. The façade of the building overlooking the Augusteum had a long gallery, the Makron, forming an overhanging balcony. See Guilland, *ETCB,* vol 2, p. 14.

640. For a description of the tactics involved in this conflict see Guilland, *ETCB,* vol. 1, p. 396.

641. Evidently, the *protekdikeion,* the high court of judicature, so to speak, sat here. The *protekdikos* heard cases applying to the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts, such as the right of sanctuary and appeals on the part of the peasantry for protection, and dealt with offences of the clergy. See Emil Herman, "The Secular Church," in *CMH,* vol. 4, pt. 2, p. 115.

642. See Phillippians 3.18.

643. 1 Corinthians 4.9.

644. For these events see Eustathios, *CT,* 26.12–17.

645. See Polemis, *Doukai,* 127–130.

646. *Iliad* 7.282.

647. See Flavius Josephus, *Bellum Judaicum* 6.24 sqq.

648. See Psalm 145.6.

649. Terebinthos, or Antherobinthos, the modern Tavşan Ada (Rabbit Island), is a tiny island a little more than a kilometer to the east of Prinkipos. See Janin, *EM,* 61–63.

650. The Church of Christ Pantepoptēs (Christ the All-Seeing) was erected by Anna Dalassena, Alexios I's mother, before 1087; she later retired to apartments in the monastery. See Mathews, *BCI,* 59–70; Janin, *GE,* 513–515.

651. See Wisdom of Solomon 16.5.

652. See Eustathios, *CT,* 24.11–28.23–25.

653. Niketas uses the term *archithytēs,* i.e., the chief priest in charge of the sacrifices.

654. See *NH,* 230.

655. See Eustathios, *CT,* 28.30–30.8.

656. *Odyssey* 19.163.

657. *Iliad* 9.14; 16.3.

658. Eustathios, *CT,* 30.19–21.

659. Psalm 17.12.

660. Pitch was used to cleanse the patina off bronze statuary. The *protosebastos,* in other words, was appealing to those who had been ignored or shunted aside by Manuel.

661. The same as the grand *hetaireiarch.* See *NH,* 240, and above, n. 645.

662. John Komnenos Vatatzēs was the son of Manuel I's sister Evdokia and Theodore Vatatzēs. See Brand, *BCW,* 39.

663. See Psalm 57.5–6.

664. Tarsia is southeast of Nikomedia on the Sangarios River.

665. This village near Nikomedia is not the same as the Charax situated between Lampē and Graos Gala.

666. Kionion is Diplokionion (Double Columns), modern Beşiktaş, a quay situated on the Bosporos. See Guilland, *ETCB,* vol. 2, p. 86.

667. See Malachias 3.1; Matthew 11.10; Mark 1.1 This is a pun on Angelos's name, for the Greek word for messenger is *angelos.*

668. See Exodus 13.17.

669. Eustathios, *CT,* 30.28–32.1.

670. George Xiphilinos later became patriarch (George II, 10 September 1191–7 July 1198).

671. See Eustathios, *CT*, 18.19–21.
672. Psalm 132.3.
673. See Zenobios 1.21.
674. In Ethiopia. See Herodotus 3.18.
675. See Eustathios, *CT*, 32.5–22.
676. Matthew 7.15.
677. Aesopus, *Fabulae* (Hausrath) 62.
678. By Germans Niketas means the English Varangian Guard. See *NH*, 417.
679. There were three patriarchs named Michael who could have been responsible for the construction of this building: Michael I Keroularios (1043–58); Michael II Kourkouas (Oxeitēs) (1143–46); Michael III Anchialos (1170–78).
680. For these events see Brand, *BCW*, pp. 40–41, pp. 325–326, n. 24.
681. See Psalm 7.3.
682. *Odyssey* 19.211.
683. See Psalm 143.1.
684. *Iliad* 17.588.
685. Prinkipos, modern Büyük Ada, is the largest of the islands of the Prince's Archipelago, sometimes called the Archipelago of Pappás because of the many monks who inhabited these rather isolated islands. The island received its name from the fact that Justin II built a palace there, and is situated some 20 kilometers south of the capital. See Janin, *EM*, 68–70.
686. Protē, Modern Kinali Ada, is so called because it is the first island one meets coming to Constantinople. Both Prinkipos and Protē face the Bithynian coast. See Janin, *EM*, 70–72.
687. For these events see Eustathios, *CT*, 32.33–34; Brand, *BCW*, pp. 41–43, pp. 325–326, nn. 26, 27, 29.
688. This would be the Palace of the Kathisma, where was located the imperial loge overlooking the Hippodrome. See Guilland, *ETCB*, vol. 1, pp. 462–463.
689. *Iliad* 18.26.
690. Job 42.5.
691. See Psalm 47.9.
692. Eustathios, *CT*, 18.22–25.
693. Eustathios, *CT*, 38.33.
694. Eustathios, *CT*, 38.18–31.
695. Psalm 114.7–8.
696. Xenē was the name taken by Maria of Antioch when Manuel I received the monastic habit on his deathbed.
697. Niketas, I believe, cannot be referring to the Mangana Palace in the district of the Inner Philopation behind the sea walls just to the south of the churches of St. George and the Holy Savior, but instead to the Outer Philopation outside the northern land walls. First of all, Andronikos was provided a pavilion for his needs and was surrounded by pitched tents, and I can see no reason why tents would be required within the capital; secondly, he desired to *enter* the capital to visit Manuel's tomb. I can find, however, no reference in the studies of the City's topography to the imperial buildings of Manganēs.
698. See Matthew 23.27.
699. See *Odyssey* 18.1 sqq.
700. See John 11.34.
701. See John 11.36.
702. See 1 Corinthians 15.52.
703. See *Iliad* 3.23.
704. See Psalm 120.8.
705. Io was a young princess with whom Zeus had an affair. To deceive the suspecting Hera, Zeus turned Io into a heifer, but Hera appointed the hundred-eyed Argos to watch over her. Argos was killed by Hermes at Zeus' request, and its eyes were set in the tail of the peacock, Hera's favorite bird. See Lucian, *Dialogi Deorum* 3.1.
706. See Jeremias 2.23.
707. See Ecclesiastes 11.2.
708. See Eustathios, *CT*, 40.23–27.
709. See Mark 13.12.
710. Constantine Angelos was the brother of the future emperors Isaakios II and Alexios III. His sister Irene was married to John Kantakouzenos.
711. Esaias 1.5.
712. According to Empedocles the forces that combine and separate the elements are love and hate, attraction and repulsion.
713. See Psalm 80.17.
714. See Luke 15.23.
715. See *Iliad* 9.203.
716. See Herodotus 8.118.

717. *Iliad* 24.724.
718. See Zacharias 4.14.
719. The *protostrator* and later *kaisar* Alexios was the son of Theodora Komnenē, the daughter of Manuel's brother Andronikos and subsequently Manuel's mistress. Andronikos's mistress Theodora was the daughter of Manuel I's brother Isaakios. In effect, Alexios and Irene were the children of Manuel's nieces, who were first cousins; the offspring of first cousins were forbidden by the church to marry. See, however, Brand, *BCW*, p. 322, n. 9.
720. See *Odyssey* 5.291 sq.
721. See Matthew 27.24.
722. See Eustathios, *CT*, 48.6–11.
723. See Proverbs 14.10, 30.
724. See Eustathios, *CT*, 36.19–20.
725. Psalm 101.11.
726. See Eustathios, *CT*, 36.7 sqq.
727. See Eustathios, *CT*, 40.1–7.
728. The judges of the *velum* constituted the chief judiciary of the empire.
729. See *Odyssey* 9.288 sqq.
730. See Psalm 131.4.
731. See Psalm 79.14.
732. For Basil Kamateros Doukas, the son of Andronikos and brother of Euphrosynē, the future empress and wife of Alexios III Angelos, see Polemis, *Doukai*, 130.
733. Eustathios, *CT*, 40.17–27.
734. The Church of St. Diomedēs of Jerusalem was originally built by Constantine I in the southwest corner of the capital, below the Golden Gate. Basil I (868–86), in gratitude to the oracle he received there that he would become emperor, built a larger church, which he embellished and endowed with estates. See *Patria Constantinoupoleos III*, in *SOC*, 225, 246–247; Janin, *EM*, 100–102. For these events see Eustathios, *CT*, 40.11–12.
735. Sophocles, *Ajax* 815.
736. See Psalm 9.35.
737. See Psalm 143.8.
738. See *Iliad* 1.517.
739. See Eustathios, *CT*, 40.13–14.
740. See *NH*, 260.
741. *Odyssey* 16.23, 17.41.
742. For Theodore Kantakouzenos see Nicol, *BFK*, 7.
743. Theodore Angelos was the brother of the future emperors Isaakios II and Alexios III.
744. I.e., because he had been orphaned. See *Iliad* 22.490.
745. Eustathios, *CT*, 42.28–44.17.
746. See *Iliad* 2.87.
747. This was Constantine Patrenos.
748. This was Michael Haploucheir. See Eustathios, *CT*, 44.18–20.
749. See *Odyssey* 4.19; *Iliad* 18.572.
750. See *Iliad* 4.43.
751. Eustathios, *CT*, 50.24–29.
752. See *Iliad* 3.109; *Odyssey*, 24.452.
753. Eustathios, *CT*, 36.12–17.
754. The Church of Christ Savior in Chalkē stood at the very end of Mesē Street and southwest of the Thomaïtēs, between the Pittakia and the Baths of Zeuxippos. First built by Romanos I Lekapenos (920–44), it was enlarged and embellished with much gold and silver by John I Tzimiskēs (969–76), whose tomb was located here. The church boasted of several precious relics such as the holy icon of Berytus and the holy sandals of Christ. See *Patria Constantinoupoleos III*, in *SOC*, 282–283.
755. See *Iliad* 2.204.
756. See Zenobios 2.38.
757. See Luke 24.18.
758. Wisdom of Solomon 2.12, 14.
759. Eustathios, *CT*, 52.15–18; Niketas Choniatēs, *Dogmatikē Panoplia*, Book 27 (*NH*, 274).
760. Katabatē means a descending or steep part of the City, but I am unable to identify its exact location.
761. See Aristophanes, *Clouds* 398; John 11.39.
762. See Matthew 16.19.
763. Psalm 100.6.
764. Sophocles, *Ajax* 8.
765. Hyelokastellion, or Glass Castle, was located in Thrace.
766. See Psalm 68.29; Revelations 3.5.

767. Eustathios, *CT,* 22.5–9.
768. See Psalm 72.8.
769. See *Iliad* 4.231, 15.279.
770. *Iliad* 23.598.
771. Kypsella is modern Ipsala in Thrace.
772. See Deuteronomy 32.22.
773. Van Dieten has replaced Bekker's use of Arbela, which I prefer, with *arbyla* of unknown meaning. Arbela was the site of Alexander the Great's victory over the Persians in 331 B.C.
774. Semiramis, wife of Ninus, was the legendary founder of Babylon.
775. Esaias 59.5.
776. See *Appollonios Rhodios* 2.176 sqq.
777. Priapos was the god of procreation, personified as an erect phallus.
778. See Psalm 58.15.
779. See Hosea 13.8.
780. See *Iliad* 20.300 sqq.
781. Kaineus, a Lapith, had been born a girl and named Kainis; raped by Poseidon, she changed into a male, taking the name Kaineus. See Apollodoros, *Epitome* 22.
782. See Herodotus 5.51.
783. See Plutarch, *Lysander* 7.
784. After Prusa was taken by storm; see below.
785. See *Odyssey* 18.74.
786. See Eustathios, *CT,* 54.33–56.3.
787. See Psalm 56.5.
788. See Psalm 2.2.
789. See Psalm 56.5.
790. A play on the name Lachanas, meaning greengrocer.
791. Again a play on the words *asynetos* and *synesios.*
792. See Matthew 21.5.
793. See *Iliad* 11.173–176.
794. Deuteronomy 28.26.
795. It was usually in the winter months that the emperors had the leisure time to observe the games.
796. For Isaakios Doukas Domnenos see Brand, *BCW,* p. 55, p. 330, n. 63.
797. These were the Knights Templar.
798. *Iliad* 3.175.
799. See Jeremias 12.1–2.
800. I.e., a man whose name began with the letter I.
801. See *Iliad* 2.480.
802. I.e., Satan; see John 8.44.
803. Hagiochristophoritēs means "the Holy-Christbearer," while Antichristophoritēs means "the Anti-Christbearer."
804. See Eustathios, *CT,* 44.21 sqq.
805. Jews lived along the shore of the Stenon, and their cemetery was located nearby. See Guilland, *ETCB,* vol. 2, p. 146, n. 196.
806. See Mark, 15.44.
807. See Matthew 21.41.
808. Actually, he was the grandson of Manuel's brother Andronikos, the son of the *protovestiarios* John. See Brand, *BCW,* 54.
809. See Esaias 14.29.
810. Eustathios, *CT,* 56.15.
811. For these events see Eustathios, *CT,* 58.3–60.7.
812. Eustathios, *CT,* 56.11–58.2.
813. Eustathios, *CT,* 66.29–64.16.
814. Eustathios, *CT,* 66.19–23; 94.7–8.
815. Eustathios, *CT,* 104.1–2.
816. Eustathios, *CT,* 8.29 sqq., 68.18 sqq.
817. See *Iliad* 1.567; Eustathios, *CT,* 70.13–18.
818. See Jonah 2.1.
819. Eustathios, *CT,* 66.15–16, 84.8–86.12.
820. Eustathios, *CT,* 82.6–12.
821. Eustathios, *CT,* 98.17–27.
822. Eustathios, *CT,* 74.21 sqq.
823. Eustathios, *CT,* 112.25 sqq.
824. Eustathios, *CT,* 120.26 sqq.
825. Eustathios, *CT,* 8.8–10, 106.16–20, 116.33–118.1.

826. Eustathios, *CT*, 1114.12 sqq.
827. Eustathios, *CT*, 116.16–33.
828. See Job 3.21.
829. Psalm 74.9; Esaias 51.17.
830. *Odyssey* 1.155.
831. Job 41.15.
832. Revelations 12.9.
833. Psalm 54.22.
834. See Hebrews 4.12.
835. See Luke 16.26.
836. See Luke 10.19.
837. See John 4.38.
838. See Luke 16.19.
839. *Odyssey* 12.99, 245.
840. See Psalm 7.3.
841. Eustathios, *CT*, 132.19–134.6.
842. The underground cavern at Sparta into which state prisoners or their corpses were thrown. See Thucydides 1.134.4; Pausanias 4.18.4–7.
843. Eustathios, *CT*, 122.11 sqq.
844. See Proverbs 7.25, 4.25–27.
845. See Luke 15.30.
846. See Esaias 10.14.
847. Eustathios, *CT*, 130.34–132.16.
848. Psalm 126.2.
849. Eustathios, *CT*, 110.34–112.4.
850. Eustathios, *CT*, 116.6–9.
851. Hebrews, 12.23.
852. See I Corinthians 6.20.
853. See Psalm 49.14.
854. See Psalm 136.4.
855. Eustathios, *CT*, 126.20–26, 134.20–22.
856. Niketas is obviously referring here to Eustathios's description of the fall of Thessaloniki.
857. See Psalm 112.5–6.
858. Psalm 13.2.
859. Psalm 13.2–3.
860. Psalm 2.4–5.
861. See Exodus 3.7
862. See Psalm 142.4.
863. See Psalm 50.19.
864. See Matthew 24.22.
865. See Jeremias, chaps. 50–51.
866. See Baruch 4.10, 14.26.
867. See 2 Thessalonians 1.10; Psalm 88.8; Sirach 38.6.
868. Psalm 30.22.
869. Hebrews 11.25.
870. See John 10.12.
871. Eustathios, *CT*, 66.28–68.10.
872. See Deuteronomy 32.39.
873. See Romans 11.33.
874. See Psalm 48.19.
875. Eustathios, *CT*, 110.16–17
876. See Zenobios 1.7; Diogenianos 1.8.
877. See Mark 6.20.
878. See Matthew 23.37.
879. See Exodus 15.23–25.
880. See Matthew 23.24.
881. See Micah 4.3.
882. See Esaias 11.6, 65.25.
883. See *Iliad* 14.348.
884. See Romans 1.22.
885. See Esaias 6.9; Matthew 13.13.
886. Psalm 51.6.
887. Psalm 56.5
888. Ephesians 6.6.
889. See Psalm 8.15.
890. See *Odyssey* 2.20, 9.369.

891. See Daniel 3.19.
892. See Aelianus, *De Natura Animalium* 6.18.
893. See *Iliad* 1.817.
894. See Genesis 8.21.
895. See *Odyssey* 18.85–87
896. Apostolios 17.87.
897. See Herodotus 4.103; Euripides, *Iphigenia in Tauris* 53.776, 1021.
898. Psalm 141.8.
899. Jonah 2.5.
900. *Odyssey* 1.242.
901. See Psalm 68.29; Revelations 3.5.
902. The Komnenian emperors introduced an inflation of court titles betraying the disintegration of the middle Byzantine administrative system. Old titles were either discarded or became meaningless, while new dignities were invented to take their place. By combining titles and attributes an endless variety of court nomenclature was possible. The title *panhypersebastos* is a good example of this process. The carefully observed hierarchy of rank was now a thing of the past. See Ostrogorsky, *HBS*, 367–368.
903. *Odyssey* 6.280.
904. See Matthew 12.36.
905. See Luke 6.38.
906. See Proverbs 26.27.
907. See Exodus 15.4.
908. See Matthew 24.15.
909. See Proverbs 14.12.
910. Serrai (Serres) is northeast of Thessaloniki and west of Philippi, while Mosynopolis is between Philippi and Rhaidestos on the way to Constantinople.
911. Eustathios, *CT*, 64.15–66.4.
912. Eustathios, *CT*, 72.1–51.
913. Eustathios, *CT*, 82.17–18.
914. Eustathios, *CT*, 72.10–20.
915. Apostolios 16.19.
916. Lucian, *Verae Historiae* 1.7.
917. See *Iliad* 16.70.
918. Eustathios, *CT*, 86.1–35.
919. See *NH, 317.*
920. See *Iliad* 6.179–183, where the Chimaera is described as being "in the fore part a lion, in the hinder a serpent, and in the midst a goat."
921. See Micah 7.17.
922. See *Iliad* 2.36.
923. A character of Old Comedy meaning blockhead.
924. Eustathios, *CT*, 58.30–60.7, 64.6–12.
925. Eustathios, *CT*, 72.6–7.
926. See *Iliad* 6.339.
927. See Psalm 7.17.
928. See Athenaeus 529 sq.
929. Chrysippos was the disciple of Zeno, the founder of Stoicism, and successor of Cleanthes as head of the Stoa.
930. See Aelian, *De Natura Animalium* 6.28; Athenaeus 316bc.
931. See Athenaeus 556 sq.
932. Called a skink in Bekker's edition (p. 17), a kind of lizard used for medicinal purposes in Africa and in the East.
933. See Artemidoros Daldianus, *Oneirokritika* 2.12; Lucillus, *Anthologia graeca* 11.278.
934. See Matthew 6.22.
935. See *Iliad* 10.26.
936. See *Iliad* 10.496.
937. See Luke 17.34.
938. See Luke 12.53; Matthew 10.21.
939. See Luke 12.52; Matthew 10.25.
940. See Genesis 19.24 sq.
941. See Genesis 19.26.
942. See Matthew 5.13.
943. Eustathios, *CT*, 50.9.
944. See Micah 4.4.
945. Matthew 22.21.
946. Matthew 25.15 sqq.
947. Matthew 5.40.

948. Matthew 6.19–20.
949. See 1 Thessalonians 4.16.
950. See Ezekiel 37.7.
951. See Psalm 106.35.
952. See Psalm 52.5.
953. See Romans 13.4.
954. See Esaias 10.1.
955. See Psalm 23.4.
956. See Genesis 9.13–16.
957. See *Iliad* 9.313.
958. See Matthew 8.26.
959. See *Odyssey* 10.19.
960. See Psalm 76.11.
961. See Esaias 58.4.
962. See *NH*, 274.
963. John 14.28. See Niketas Choniatēs, *Dogmatikē Panoplia*, Book 27 (*NH*, 331).
964. The Feast of the Forty Martyrs of Sebastē, martyred under Licinius, was celebrated on 9 March. This particular church was located south of the Mesē, and its northern gates looked out on the main thoroughfare. See Guilland, *ETCB*, vol. 2, p. 38. The original building replaced the old praetorium and was begun by Tiberius II (578–82) and completed by Maurice (582–602). See *Patria Constantinoupoleos III*, in *SOC*, 234.
965. See Theophanēs, *Chronographia*, ed. C. de Boor (Leipzig, 1883), 285.4 sqq.
966. *Iliad* 5.746.
967. Brand, *BCW*, p. 329, n. 51, favors interpreting the huge curved sickle as a sword, but this interpretation seems to do violence to Niketas's description. Did Andronikos wish to portray himself as the protector of the working classes, and, especially, of the farmers against the avaricious magnates? See references below to Andronikos as scythe-bearer and as one falling upon a stalk and mowing it down (*NH*, 351, 353).
968. For the description of this monument, see *NH*, 648.
969. This was the auroch or urus, an extinct bovine animal.
970. See Psalm 43.7, 32.17, 19.8.
971. See 1 Kings, Chaps. 27 and 25.
972. See Acts 9.15.
973. See Psalm 7.15.
974. See Psalm 73.3.
975. See *Iliad* 21.12–14.
976. See Romans 7.19, 23.
977. The *protoasekretis* was George Skylitzēs; the official in charge of petitions was Constantine Patrenos; and the *protonotarios* of the *dromos* was Michael Haploucheir.
978. Acts 9.5, 26.14.
979. John 8.44.
980. Genesis 4.10
981. Ezekiel 33.11.
982. Romans 13.4.
983. See *Odyssey* 19.163.
984. Psalm 43.23.
985. See Esaias 27.1.
986. See John 10.16.
987. See 1 Kings 28.3–15.
988. See *NH*, 274, 293, 314, 336.
989. See *NH*, 147, 149.
990. The Monastery of Theotokos Peribleptos (the Mother of God who oversees) was located in the southwestern corner of the capital.
991. Actually 6693 = 1 September–31 August 1185.
992. See *Iliad* 6.507 sq., 15.263 sq.
993. See Sophocles, *Electra* 25.
994. Niketas uses the word *hemikerkos*.
995. See *Iliad* 17.272.
996. See *Odyssey* 9.288 sqq.
997. There were four divisions of the day and four of the night called watches. The fourth watch of the daytime would end at sunset; the divisions of the day were as follows: 6–9 A.M., 9–12 A.M., 12–3 P.M., and 3–6 P.M.
998. See *Odyssey* 19.547.
999. See *NH*, 343.
1000. For the Tower of Kentenarion, which was directly east of the covered Hippodrome and south of the Karea Gate, see Guilland, *ETCB*, vol. 1, pp. 521–522.

1001. See *NH*, 273.
1002. See Plutarch, *Demetrios* 16; Athenaeus 577c–101e.
1003. Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 1.13; see PG 20, 120B.13 sqq.; Procopius, *de Bello Persico* 2.12, 18 sq.
1004. See Leviticus 26.17.
1005. See *Odyssey* 12.47–48, 173 sqq.
1006. See *Odyssey* 10.305.
1007. The Tower of Anemas was adjoined to the imperial palace of Blachernai and took its name from Michael Anemas, the chief conspirator in a plot to assassinate Alexios I Komnenos. See Anna Komnenē, *Alexiade*, ed. Leib, 12.72. 75.
1008. See Niketas Choniatēs, *Dogmatikē Panoplia*, Book 27 (*NH*, 349).
1009. See Paton, *Greek Anthology*, vol. 4, epigram 398 (Nicarchus), p. 261.
1010. See *Iliad* 2.469–471.
1011. See Esaias 42.3.
1012. *Iliad* 22.370.
1013. See *Iliad* 1.466.
1014. Niketas uses the term *phlepsi*, meaning veins.
1015. See *Oracula Leonis Sapientis*, PG 107, 1132B.9.
1016. See Psalm 72.19, 20.
1017. See Exodus 32.20.
1018. The Monastery of Ephoros may have been situated between the Baths of Zeuxippos and the Hippodrome, but its exact location is unknown. See Guilland, *ETCB*, vol. 1, p. 390; see also Brand, *BCW*, p. 334, n. 108.
1019. See *Iliad* 1.517.
1020. Eustathios, *CT*, 14.31–16.15.
1021. See Matthew 26.52; Revelations 13.10.
1022. See *NH*, 225, 229.
1023. *Oracula Leonis Sapientis*, PG 107, 1113B.7–14.
1024. See Matthew 6.6 and 17.
1025. See Esaias 10.14.
1026. See Psalm 68.21.
1027. See Eustathios, *CT*, 413.6–24.
1028. Eustathios, *CT*, 52.5–8.
1029. See Psalm 32.16 sq. 19.8.
1030. See Proverbs 3.34.
1031. See Genesis 11.7
1032. See Hesiod, *Fragmenta* 75; Strabo 8.6.16.
1033. 2 Maccabees 3.17.
1034. See Esaias 29.7 sq., 60.16.
1035. Genesis 32.2.
1036. See Matthew 17.20.
1037. See *Iliad* 15.690–692.
1038. Modern Demetiza, or Demechissar. See Ferdinand Chalandon, *Histoire de la domination normande en Italie et en Sicile* (Paris, 1907; reprint ed., New York, 1960), vol. 2, p. 413.
1039. Eustathios, *CT*, 126.26 sqq.; Count Richard of Acerra later met his death at the hands of Emperor Henry VI, against whom he had revolted; Count Tancred of Lecce, the admiral of the fleet, was William's successor on the Sicilian throne. See Brand, *BCW*, p. 162, p. 354, n. 12.
1040. Niketas's information here is from some unknown source.
1041. See Genesis 4.9.
1042. Eustathios, *CT*, 132.17–25.
1043. Eustathios, *CT*, 114.5–11.
1044. See Wisdom of Solomon 12.18; Psalm 102.19.
1045. See Wisdom of Solomn 12.22.
1046. See Wisdom of Solomon 19.18.
1047. See Wisdom of Solomon 19.10, 12.8.
1048. See Wisdom of Solomon 17.10.
1049. See *Iliad* 1.156.
1050. See Hosea 6.6; Matthew 9.13.
1051. See Psalm 79.6.
1052. See Esaias 19.14.
1053. The Astakenos Gulf leads from the Sea of Marmara to Nikomedia.
1054. Kalonymos is modern Amraliadasi and is situated north of the mouth of the Rhyndakos River. See Janin, *EM*, 157.
1055. Eustathios, *CT*, 148.34–36.
1056. See *Iliad* 15.279.

1057. See Hesiod, *Opera et dies* 442; Esaias 58.7.
1058. 1 Kings 24.7.
1059. Should the word used by Niketas be *marilē* instead of *maryllē*?
1060. *Iliad* 11.364.
1061. *Iliad* 3.71.
1062. See Psalm 11.5
1063. Acts 26.25.
1064. Epistle of St. James 1.17.
1065. See Psalm 7.5.
1066. See Psalm 117.12.
1067. Actually, Ecclesiates 5.4.
1068. Kelbianos, or Kelbian, is associated with Pergamon, Smyrna and Philadelphia. See Cahen in *PT*, 88; Vryonis places it in the region of the Cayster River (*DMH*, 147).
1069. The name of Isaakios's first wife is unknown. She gave him two daughters, one of whom became a nun; the second, Irene, was married first to Roger, duke of Apulia and son of Tancred, the king of Sicily, with whom Roger was associated from July or August 1192 until the youth's premature death on 24 December 1193; Irene's second marriage was to Philip of Swabia, the brother of Henry VI of Germany, on 25 May 1197. The third child was a son, the future Alexios IV (1203–4). See Brand, *BCW*, 190.
1070. Margaret of Hungary, renamed Maria in Constantinople, gave birth to a daughter and to a son, Manuel. See Brand, *BCW*, pp. 79–80, p. 335, n. 13.
1071. *Iliad* 19.302.
1072. For these events see Brand, *BCW*, pp. 89 sqq., p. 337, n. 36. John Angelos Doukas was the son of Constantine Angelos and Theodora Komnenē. See Polemis, *Doukai*, 87–88 (40).
1073. John Kontostephanos was the son of either Andronikos or Stephanos; Andronikos was the son of Stephanos and Manuel's sister Anna.
1074. Iliad 22.60; *Odyssey* 15.246.
1075. Alexios Komnenos was the nephew of Theodora Komnenē and a second cousin of Isaakios II.
1076. *Iliad* 9.443.
1077. See *NH*, 369.
1078. For the establishment of the Second Bulgarian Empire see Robert Lee Wolff, "The 'Second Bulgarian Empire': Its Origin and History to 1204," *Speculum* 24 (1949): 167–206; M. Dinić, "The Balkans, 1018–1499," in *CMH*, vol. 4, pp. 523–526. The reigns of the three brothers were as follows: Asen I (1186–96); Peter (1196–97); Kalojan (Ioannitsa) (1197–1207).
1079. Psalm 17.12.
1080. See van Dieten, *Erläuterungen*, 73.
1081. See Matthew 8.32.
1082. The *Typikon* was the monastic foundation charter.
1083. Sosthenion, modern Istinye, is on the European side of the Bosporos where was located a Monastery of St. Theophylaktos of the Pegadion (Well). See Janin, *EM*, p. 440, n. 116.
1084. The Pythian oracle of Delphi.
1085. See Matthew 12.44 sqq.
1086. *Iliad* 5.746.
1087. See John 10.1.
1088. The Gate of Charsios, or Charisios, was located to the south of the Imperial Gate of Blachernai.
1089. *Iliad* 13.342.
1090. *Iliad* 2.536.
1091. *Odyssey* 9.104.
1092. See above, n. 223.
1093. The Monastery of Theotokos ton Hodegon was located directly east of Hagia Sophia near the sea wall; in the 5th century Pulcheria founded a sanctuary here to house the famous icon of the *Hodegetria* (i.e., she who guides or leads the way). See Mathews, *BCI*, 201; Janin, *EM*, 70–76, 199–207, 527–529.
1094. Conrad, the brother of Boniface, Marquis of Montferrat, was married to Isaakios's sister Theodora in the spring of 1187. See Brand, *BCW*, p. 80, p. 335, n. 15.
1095. See van Dieten, *Erläuterungen*, 74 sqq.
1096. See *Iliad* 16.235.
1097. See Athenaeus 89d.
1098. See 2 Corinthians 6.7.
1099. See van Dieten, Erläuterungen, 77.
1100. See Esaias 29.13; Matthew 15.8.

1101. See Hebrews 4.12.
1102. See *Iliad* 13.131, 16.215.
1103. See *Iliad* 13.505, 16.615.
1104. Was he put to death by Isaakios because he wrote opprobrious verses against the emperor?
1105. See Hesoid, *Scutum* 222.
1106. See Zenobios 1.4.
1107. See *Iliad* 1.81.
1108. Deuteronomy 28.7.
1109. Jeremias 9.1.
1110. See Brand, *BCW*, p. 83, p. 336, nn. 21, 22.
1111. See *Iliad* 16.583, 17.755, 2.459 sqq.
1112. See Psalm 57.5 sq.
1113. See Lucian, *Prometheus es in verbis* 7.
1114. *Tapyron*? See Athenaeus 442b; Aelian, *Varia Historia* 3.13 sq.
1115. Aelian, *Varia Historia* 3.14.
1116. Niketas has erred; Conrad had left Constantinople two months earlier, abandoning his Byzantine wife. Without the benefit of a divorce he later married Isabelle, daughter of Amaury and Maria Komnenē, the heiress to the Kingdom of Jerusalem, and until his premature death in 1192 he was titular king of Jerusalem. See Brand, *BCW*, p. 84, p. 336, n. 4.
1117. Blue buskins were the mark of the *kaisar*'s rank; Brand contends that Conrad was not accorded the blue buskins (*BCW*, 84).
1118. Saladin besieged Jerusalem in September 1187 and occupied the holy city on 2 October 1187. See Marshall W. Baldwin, "The Decline and Fall of Jerusalem, 1174–1189," in *HC*, vol. 1, pp. 616–617
1119. Niketas has erred here. Joppa and Acre are not the same town. Acre was known as Akkā to the Arabs, Ptolemaïs in antiquity, and Saint John to the crusaders.
1120. The Assassins, led by Sinān, the Old Man of the Mountain, were fanatic adherents of a religious sect dedicated to establishing a new Fatimid empire over all Islam. Both Richard the Lionhearted and Saladin have been accused of instigating the murder of Conrad. The murderers disguised themselves as monks and gained the confidence of the marquis, whom they slew at an opportune moment on 28 April 1192. See Bernard Lewis, "The Ismāʿīlites and the Assassins," in *HC*, vol. 1, pp. 122–126.
1121. A parasang measured thirty stades. See Herodotus 2.6.
1122. See *Iliad* 5.3
1123. See Jeremias 27.11; Psalm 78.9.
1124. See Sophocles, *Ajax* 17.
1125. Beroē is Macedonian Verroia.
1126. See Brand, *BCW*, p. 91, p. 338, n. 39.
1127. Lovitsos is modern Lovets on the Osum, a tributary of the Danube. See Brand, *BCW*, 92.
1128. Ghiyath al-Din I Kaykhusraw (1192–96, 1204–11), the son of a Byzantine mother, was associated with his father's rule in 1189, three years before Kilij Arslan's death i August 1192. See Cahen, *PT*, 114; Brand, *BCW*, 86.
1129. Originally erected by Constantine I the Great over the site of St. Mokios's martyrdom to house his remains, it was rebuilt by Justinian in the sixth century. The emperor had an apartment within connected to his loge in the gallery, where he breakfasted with the patriarch after the liturgy. The building was situated near the cistern of the same name in the southwestern section of the capital. See *Patria Constantinoupoleos II*, in *SOC*, 209; Mathews, *ECC*, 132.
1130. For John Doukas Kamateros, the son of Andronikos Doukas Kamateros, see Polemis, *Doukai*, 127–130.
1131. Andronikos Kantakouzenos was the *dux* and *anagrapheus* (recorder, or registrar) of the theme of Mylasa and Melanoudion in Anatolia in 1175. See Nicol, *BFK*, 8.
1132. The embassy was comprised of Bishop Hermann of Münster, Count Heinrich of Dietz, Count Ruppert of Nassau, Count Walrab, and the imperial chamberlain Markward von Neuenburg. For an excellent unraveling of the complicated events pertaining to Frederick Barbarossa's relations with the Byzantines see Brand, *BCW*, 176–188.
1133. See John 4.9.
1134. The monophysite Armenians fasted on Saturdays, as did the Latins, and did not pour heated water, symbolizing the ardor of faith, into the chalice after the consecration of the elements.
1135. Luke 14.32; 19.42.
1136. Dositheos of Jerusalem sat as patriarch for nine days in February 1189, and then returned c. June 1189 and served as patriarch until 10 September 1191. For the complicated

problems of dating the patriarchates of Dositheos, Niketas II Mountanēs, and Leonti Brand, *BCW*, p. 342, n. 63.

1137. The Xylokerkos Gate was the first gate north of the Golden Gate; it was so called because it led to a wooden circus outside the city. See Alexander Van Millingen, *Byzantine Constantinople; The Walls of the City and Adjoining Historical Sites* (London, 1912), 89–94.

1138. The Monastery of St. John of Stoudion was founded by the patrician Stoudios in the reign of Leo I (457–74), and was situated in the southwestern section of Constantinople, northeast of the Golden Gate. See *Patria Constantinoupoleos III*, in *SOC*, 247.

1139. The *sakellarios* supervised monasteries and was responsible for discipline and related matters. See Emil Herman, "The Secular Church," in *CMH*, vol. 4, pt. 2, 115.

1140. Theodore Balsamon, the great canonist and author of *Exegesis Canonum*, served consecutively as a deacon of Hagia Sophia, *nomophylax*, and *chartophylax;* he was elected patriarch of Antioch sometime between 1185 and 1191 at the age of eighty. He never left Constantinople, however, and died before 1195. See Beck, *Kirche und Theologische Literatur*, 657.

1141. Aesopus, *Fabulae* (Hausrath) 136.

1142. George II Xiphilinos was patriarch from 10 September 1191 to July 1198. For these events see Brand, *BCW*, 103–104, pp. 342–343, n. 64.

1143. One of these was Niketas Choniatēs.

1144. See Song of Songs 2.11–13.

1145. Qutb al-Din Malikshah of Siwas expelled his father from Ikonion in 1189, but Kilij Arslan II recovered his capital in 1191 or early 1192. See Brand, *BCW*, 85–86; Cahen, *PT*, 111–115.

1146. See Matthew 21.41.

1147. See *Iliad* 11.527.

1148. See *Iliad* 5.746.

1149. Jeremias 12.4.

1150. See *Iliad* 5.299.

1151. This is Cilician or Lesser Armenia.

1152. See Acts 5.41, 9.16, 21.13.

1153. *Odyssey* 4.393.

1154. See Esaias 30.20.

1155. See Acts 20.22.

1156. Philippians 3.20 and 18.

1157. For these events see Edgar N. Johnson, "The Crusades of Frederick Barbarossa and Henry VI," in *HC*, vol. 2, pp. 109–116.

1158. Niketas calls the English Germans and the Germans *Alamani.*

1159. See Sidney Painter, "The Third Crusade," in *HC*, vol. 2, p. 81.

1160. See Acts 1.7.

1161. See Psalm 40.10.

1162. These were Turkmens. See Vryonis, *DMH*, 129.

1163. See Psalm 73.6.

1164. At Thebes the Sown-men sprang up from the dragon's teeth sown by Cadmus. See Nonnus, *Dionysiaca* 4.421 sqq.

1165. See Psalm 108.29.

1166. *Iliad* 5.83.

1167. See Matthew 10.29 sq.; Luke 12.6 sq., 21.18.

1168. See Exodus 14.27 sqq., 15.4.

1169. Judith, who decapitated Holofernes (13.8).

1170. Could this be a reference to a story told of the monophysite emperor Anastasios I (491–518) by Theodosios Melitenos? See *Chronographia,* ed. Tafel (Munich, 1859), 84. Theodosios records that several days after the death of Anastasios, the voice of the emperor, who evidently had been buried alive, was heard crying out from within his tomb, "Have mercy and open up." The *mnemoralioi*, members of the tomb-builders' guild, hearing the plea, answered back, "Another reigns." "It makes no difference to me," called out the entombed Anastasios, "take me to a monastery." The *mnemoralioi*, however, refused to release him, and when Anastasios's tomb was opened sometime later, it was discovered that he had eaten his own arms as well as his imperial buskins.

1171. See Herodotus 3.84.

1172. This was the Latin *trabea*, a white robe with scarlet stripes and purple seam worn by kings. See Dionysius Halicarnassensis, *Antiquitates Romanae* 10.24.1–2.

1173. Psalm 77.71.

1174. See *Iliad* 3.210, 227.

1175. See Eustathios, *CT*, 52.5–9.

1176. See *NH*, 309.

1177. This was the Vandal king Gelimer. See Procopius, *De Bello Vandalico* 2.6. 30–33.

1178. See *Iliad* 2.88.
1179. See Luke 9.62.
1180. See *NH*, 143.
1181. See Jeremias 38.29; Ezekiel 18.2.
1182. A proverb to characterize a weak-minded and unstable individual. See Pollux 6.121.
1183. See *Iliad* 7.321 sq.
1184. See *NH*, 424.
1185. Matthew 23.32.
1186. See van Dieten, *Erläuterungen*, pp. 62 sqq., p. 76, n. 96.
1187. See Psalm 17.34.
1188. See Psalm 93.17
1189. This defile has been identified as Sredna Gora. See Brand, *BCW*, p. 93, p. 339, n. 42.
1190. See Psalm 139.8.
1191. See Aelian, *Varia Historia* 14.30.
1192. See Esaias 55.8–13.
1193. See Zacharias 7.11.
1194. See Deuteronomy 32.6.
1195. See Deuteronomy 6.14.
1196. Psalm 43.23.
1197. See Psalm 78.6.
1198. See Esaias 60.16.
1199. See Esaias 60.13.
1200. See Esaias 29.7, 60.16.
1201. Numbers 24.8.
1202. See Aelian, *Varia Historia* 13.43.
1203. Stoumbion was southwest of Sofia, on the upper Strymon. See Brand, *BCW*, 93.
1204. Psalm 117.12.
1205. See van Dieten, *Erläuterungen*, 83 sqq.
1206. See above, n. 431.
1207. See Jeremias 25.9.
1208. For Constantine Angelos Doukas, see Brand, *BCW*, p. 95, p. 340, n. 46.
1209. See *Iliad* 5.96.
1210. See Psalm 88.49.
1211. See Genesis 49.10; Micah 5.11.
1212. For Theodore Kastamonitēs, brother of Isaakios's mother, Euphrosynē Kastamonitissa, see Brand, *BCW*, 78, 98.
1213. See *Iliad* 19.301 sq.
1214. See Aelian, *De Natura Animalium* 2.13.
1215. See Proclus, *Platonis Timaeum Commentarii* 288e.
1216. Aesopus, *Fabulae* (Hausrath) 267.
1217. A reference to the lost play of Pherecrates, *Myrmekanthropoi*. See Athenaeus 229a.
1218. See *Iliad* 18.104.
1219. See Matthew 7.13 sq.
1220. See Matthew 25.10–12, 7.7 sq.
1221. See *NH*, 561.
1222. See *Suda* 1271.
1223. See *Iliad* 2.613.
1224. See Psalm 143.12.
1225. 2 Kings 6.14.
1226. See Psalm 18.6.
1227. See *Odyssey* 3.1.
1228. This is a pun on the Greek words for *salt* and *others*, which are homonyms, *halas-allas*.
1229. See Herodotus 2.73.
1230. The Great Palace and the palace at Blachernai.
1231. See Jeremias 22.5.
1232. The Church of Nea (New) was built by Basil I (867–86) as part of the Great Palace complex.
1233. See Esaias 13.22, 14.23, 34.11.
1234. I.e., the Evangelistaries.
1235. 1 Corinthians 2.8.
1236. Galatians 3.13.
1237. See Socrates, *Historia ecclesiastica* 1.17.8; Sozomen, *Historia ecclesiastica* 2.1.9; Theodoret, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 1.17.5.
1238. Hebrews 12.2.
1239. See 1 Corinthians 1.23.
1240. See Luke 22.35.

1241. See Psalm 41.5.
1242. See Brand, *BCW*, p. 104, p. 343, n. 68.
1243. See Psalm 88.37.
1244. See Job 29.18, 14.8.
1245. See Psalm 91.13.
1246. See Luke 10.42.
1247. See Ecclesiastes 11.2; Hebrews 4.
1248. See Esaias 40.13.
1249. Arkadiopolis, situated midway between Adrianople and Constantinople, is modern Lüleburgaz.
1250. The fortress of Vidin was situated between Belgrade and Nikopolis on the Danube River.
1251. See Jeremias 21.10.
1252. See Esaias 50.7
1253. See Psalm 124.3.
1254. The touchstone from Herakleia in Lydia. See Plato, *Gorgias* 486d.
1255. Rhaidestos, or Rodosto, modern Tekirdagh, is a port in Thrace on the Sea of Marmara, between Herakleia and Panidos.
1256. Easter, the Feast Day of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, is the mystical *pascha*, the eighth day of the new creation.
1257. Choniatēs is referring to the oracle of Ammon at Siwah and to the shrine of Amphiaraos at Oropos in Greece.
1258. *Gynaia Graïka*.
1259. Acts 16.16.
1260. George Palaiologos may have been the grandson of the general George Palaiologos who played a prominent role in Dyrrachion against the Normans during the reign of Alexios I Komnenos. See Polemis, *Doukai*, 74.
1261. The Byzantine family of Petraliphas was of Norman origin, dating from the First Crusade. Peter of Alipha served Alexios I Komnenos and settled in Didymoteichon. It is likely that the four Petraliphai brothers, mentioned by Choniatēs above were his sons (*NH*, 83, 84). See Polemis, *Doukai*, 165–166.
1262. The Raoul family was also of Norman origin, dating to 1080; the name survives today as Rhallis. Constantine Raoul, Doukas's father, probably married a Doukaina Angelina. See Polemis, *Doukai*, 172–173.
1263. It is uncertain whether Kantakouzenos's first name was Michael or Manuel. See Nicol, *BFK*, 8–9.
1264. See John 12.27
1265. 2 Corinthians 2.4.
1266. See *Iliad* 20.73.
1267. The Monastery of Vera was located between the small port of Makrē and Kypsella in southern Thrace. See Brand, *BCW*, 112–113.
1268. See *Odyssey* 11.300–304.
1269. For a balanced assessment of Issakios and his reign see Brand, *BCW*, 113–116.
1270. See Psalm 48.8, but the meaning is altered.
1271. See Matthew 21.21.
1272. See Ezekiel 27.4.
1273. See *Odyssey* 11.315–316.
1274. See Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 351C sqq.
1275. For the designation of the galleries in Byzantine church buildings as Catechoumenei see Mathews, *ECC*, 128–130.
1276. See Job 21.18.
1277. Titus 1.12.
1278. See *NH*, 483.
1279. Niketas calls him Masʿūd [520]; see Cahen, *PT*, 111, 113–117; Brand, *BCW*, 135.
1280. For the name of Ionopolitēs see K. Amantos, "Paratereseis tines eis tin mesaionikin geographian" [Some observations on medieval geography], *Epeteris Hetaireias Byzantinon Spoudon* 1 (1924): 51–53. See also Brand, *BCW*, 133–135.
1281. See Matthew 27.24.
1282. This is Gangra or Çankiri, located northeast of Ankara and west of Amaseia. See Brand, *BCW*, p. 136, p. 350, n. 33.
1283. See *NH*, 290 sqq.
1284. Aristophanes, *Plutus* 65; Matthew 21.41.
1285. See Psalm 57.5.
1286. See Judges 2.15; 4 Kings 21.9.
1287. See Brand, *BCW*, p. 124, p. 348, n. 15.
1288. See Herodotus 1.8.2.

1289. See Micah 5.7 sq.
1290. See Psalm 108.16.
1291. See Matthew 26.52.
1292. John, as he is called by Choniatēs, and commonly known as Ioannitsa or Kalojan, had been a hostage in 1188 in Constantinople, from which he escaped. See *NH*, 399. He reigned over the Vlach-Bulgar state, the Second Bulgarian Empire, from 1197 to 1207.
1293. See Psalm 13.3.
1294. See *Iliad* 1.54 sqq.
1295. Psalm 5.7
1296. Alexios III's daughter Anna was the widow of the *sebastokrator* Isaakios Komnenos; their daughter Theodora was married to Ivanko and later to Dobromir Chrysos.
1297. See *Odyssey* 9.34–36.
1298. See Brand, *BCW*, 136–137; for the suggestion that Dadibra may be Devrek and for evidence of the increased Turkification of these parts by Choniatēs' translation of Baba Dagh into Mount Babas see p. 350, n. 34.
1299. Henry VI, Hohenstaufen emperor of Germany, came to the throne in 1190, was crowned in 1191, and reigned until 1197.
1300. See *NH*, 416.
1301. The envoys were Imperial Chancellor Conrad, the bishop of Würzburg and archbishop-elect of Hildesheim, and Imperial Marshal Heinrich von Kalden. For these events see Brand, *BCW*, 190–192.
1302. Revelations 19.16.
1303. Deuteronomy 32.22.
1304. Literally, "having the lights of their body extinguished." See Matthew 6.22.
1305. See *Odyssey* 3.57. Homer uses the term to mean death by stoning, while Choniatēs uses *coat* and *garment* to mean the sepulcher or grave.
1306. See Psalm 105.2.
1307. Of unknown origin.
1308. See *NH*, 479.
1309. See Psalm 19.8.
1310. See Daniel 3.19.
1311. Choniatēs is in error here; Roger was made co-king with his father, Tancred of Lecce, but he died before his father. See Brand, *BCW*, 190–191.
1312. The *megas dux* Michael Stryphnos was married to Theodora, the daughter of Andronikos Doukas Kamateros and the sister of Alexios III's empress, Euphrosynē Doukaina Kamaterou. See Polemis, *Doukai*, pp. 126–127, n. 12; Brand, *BCW*, 142.
1313. See Brand, *BCW*, pp. 213–214, p. 371, n. 10.
1314. See *NH*, 459 sqq.
1315. Thule was believed by Ptolemy and others to be an island north of Britain, in the most northerly region of the habitable world.
1316. See *NH*, 443.
1317. Literally, "the horn of Amaltheia," which was always full of whatever food or drink anyone wanted.
1318. See Job 5.25.
1319. See Procopius, *De Bello Persico* 1.4.14.
1320. The reference is to a character satirized by Anacreon (21.2), the "scoundrel" Artemon who was "carried about" in a litter.
1321. I.e., one engaged in many things and desiring everything.
1322. For Basil Kamateros Doukas, Empress Euphrosynē's brother, the logothete of the *dromos* in 1182, blinded by Andronikos and banished to Russia, see Polemis, *Doukai*, 130–131.
1323. Romans 9.32 sq.; 1 Peter 2.8.
1324. Dio Chrysostomos 1.1.
1325. See *Iliad* 1.517.
1326. For these events see Brand, *BCW*, 144–145.
1327. Whereas van Dieten gives the date as February or July 1197, Brand prefers the summer of 1196. (*BCW*, 126).
1328. Strummitsa is modern Strumica.
1329. See Brand, *BCW*, 126–127.
1330. See Deuteronomy 32.22.
1331. See Janin, *EM*, 379.
1332. Telephos was the son of Herakles and king of Mysia. He attempted to prevent the landing of the Greek expedition on the coast of Asia Minor. Dionysos made him trip over a vine and he was wounded by Achilles. As Telephos was indispensable to the cause of the Greeks, Achilles healed the wound with the rust on the spear, and Telephos directed the Greeks to Troy. Euripides wrote a play on this theme titled *Telephos*.

1333. See Euripides, *Medea* 271 sqq.
1334. See Brand, *BCW*, 144–146.
1335. See Matthew 6.24.
1336. See Psalm 106.26.
1337. See Matthew 14.35.
1338. See Exodus 19.6; Genesis 14.18; Psalm 109.4; 1 Peter 2.4.
1339. An unknown passage of Hippocrates of Kos.
1340. See Aesopus, *Fabulae* (Hausrath) 267.
1341. Choniatēs has altered Psalm 9.31.
1342. See Aristophanes, *Clouds* 144.147.
1343. See *Suda* 494.
1344. See Job 40.25.
1345. See Job 4.11.
1346. See *Iliad* 2.448, 15.229, 21.400.
1347. See Brand, *BCW*, pp. 145–146, p. 352. n. 64.
1348. See Brand, *BCW*, pp. 146–147, p. 352, n. 65.
1349. Al-ʿAzīz ʿUthman, son of Saladin, was Aiyūbid governor of Egypt (1186–93), sultan of Egypt (1193–98), and ruler of Damascus (1196–98); his death took place on 29 November 1198.
1350. See Aristophanes, *Frogs* 859.
1351. Karia may be the modern Geise; Tantalos is possibly on the Dandal-su; and Antiocheia was the key fortress of the middle Maeander. See Brand, *BCW*, 137; for Antiocheia see Vryonis, *DMH*, pp. 29, 129–130.
1352. 1 Corinthians 13.1.
1353. See Psalm 11.2.
1354. See Matthew 24.12.
1355. See Luke 6.38; Psalm 7.5.
1356. I.e., along the Bathys River near the town of Dorylaion (Eskişehir). See Brand, *BCW*, 137.
1357. See *NH*, 471.
1358. See Jeremias 3.3.
1359. See Brand, *BCW*, 127–128.
1360. Prosakos, or Prosek, is modern Gradek.
1361. Van Dieten gives the date as summer 1199; See Brand, *BCW*, p. 128, p. 348, n. 23.
1362. See Genesis 2.8.
1363. Rhegion was a town on the Sea of Marmara with civic buildings. See A. Grabar, "Byzantine Architecture and Art," in *CMH*, vol. 4, pt. 2, p. 310.
1364. *Amallais* (?).
1365. See 1 Corinthians 10.5.
1366. See Brand, *BCW*, 128–129.
1367. Van Dieten gives the date as 1199. See Brand, *BCW*, 129.
1368. Van Dieten gives the date as early February 1200. *Ibid.*, 130.
1369. The *mapparius* signaled the start of the races by dropping a *mappa* or napki
1370. See *NH*, 469 sqq.
1371. See Mark 6.20
1372. This was probably the *parakoimomenos* George Oinaiotēs. See Brand, *BCW*, 130.
1373. See Proverbs 30.19.
1374. This is Kričim, southwest of Philippopolis.
1375. See Acts 3.25.
1376. See Brand, *BCW*, pp. 130–131, p. 348, n. 24.
1377. Patriarch John X Kamateros (5 August 1198–April/May 1206).
1378. See Cyril of Alexandria, PG 74, 725CD, 660C.2–4.
1379. See Pseudo-Chryososstomus, PG 59, 686.15 sqq.
1380. See Eutychius patriarcha, PG 86, 2393C–D.9.
1381. I.e., of the bread and wine in the chalice.
1382. I.e., the elements of bread and wine.
1383. *To teloumenon.*
1384. I have ended the quote here instead of after "the resurrection of the body" as found in the text for the sake of the sense of the passage.
1385. See *Odyssey* 10.495.
1386. See John 20.19.
1387. *Ton kyriakon anthropon.*
1388. *To metalambanomenon.*
1389. See Brand, *BCW*, pp.141–142, pp. 350–351, n. 43.
1390. *Bibliophorous.*
1391. Stenimachos, or Stanimaka, is modern Asenovgrad, south of Philippopolis.

1392. See Brand, *BCW*, p. 131, pp. 348–349, n. 25.
1393. See *Odyssey* 2.94 sqq. See also Brand, *BCW*, p. 122, p. 347, n. 13.
1394. Choniatēs has erred; it was the work of Lysippos. For a fuller description of this masterpiece see *NH*, 649, 650.
1395. See *Iliad* 8.362 sq., 19.132 sq.
1396. Lucian, *Dialogi Deorum* 13.2.
1397. For the interpretation of the enigmatic phrase *politikē to dikaion* cited by Choniatēs see: L. Oeconomos, "Remarques sur trois passages de trois historiens grecs du moyen age," *B* 20 (1950): 179–180.
1398. A *kyrbasia.*
1399. Aminsos, or Amisos, is the Pontic city Samsum; Dokeia was a Paphlagonian city west of Amisos on the Halys River.
1400. Masʿūd I (1116–55).
1401. Levon, or Leon II, of Cilician or Lesser Armenia (1187–1219); first king (1198/99–1219).
1402. See Brand, *BCW*, pp. 137–138, p. 350, n. 37.
1403. This was Metropolitan Antony of Novgorod. See Brand, *BCW*, p. 132, p. 349, n. 27.
1404. Roman, the son of Mstislav II of Kiev, was the prince of Volynia and Galicia. See Brand, *BCW*, 132.
1405. See Matthew 17.20.
1406. See *Odyssey* 4.393.
1407. Literally, a cummin-splitter.
1408. See *Odyssey* 8.120 sq.
1409. See Genesis 2.9.
1410. See Genesis 3.6.
1411. See Luke 15.4 sqq.
1412. See Brand, *BCW*, p. 121, p. 347, n. 11.
1413. See Matthew 25.21.
1414. This is a play on Lagos's name, which means hare (*lagos*).
1415. I.e., the mosque.
1416. See Brand, *BCW*, pp. 121–122, p. 347, n. 12.
1417. For these events see Brand, who prefers the date 1201, in *BCW*, pp. 122–124, pp. 347–348, n. 14. The rebel John Komnenos was the son of Maria, the daughter of Alexios Komnenos, John II's eldest son, and of Alexios Axuch, whose grandfather was a Turk in the service of John II.
1418. See *Iliad* 1.4 sqq.
1419. See *Odyssey* 4.242.
1420. Kerasous, or Giresun, is between Oinaion and Trebizond.
1421. The Phasis River is in the Caucasus.
1422. See Brand, *BCW*, pp. 138–139, p. 350, n. 38.
1423. For Michael Doukas (Komnenos Angelos), the creator of the separatist state of Epirus, which he ruled from 1205–c. 1215, when he was assassinated, see Polemis, *Doukai*, 91–92.
1424. For Pythia, south of Chalcedon, the modern Yalova, embellished with public baths since the time of Justinian, see Vryonis, *DMH*, p. 13.
1425. So called because of the ancient city of Astakos.
1426. See Matthew 24.36; Acts 1.7.
1427. Actually, Stefan Nemanja, Grand Župan of Serbia (1168–25 March 1195?) retired first to the Serbian monastery of Chilandari on Mount Athos, where he took the monastic name of Symeon and died 13 February 1200. Ostrogorsky favors 1196 as the year of Stefan Nemanja's abdication (*HBS*, p. 409, n. 1). His son, Stefan I Nemanja, the First-Crowned, was Grand Župan from 1195 to 1202, 1202 (1203)–1217; he was crowned in 1217 and died 24 September 1227 See Grumel, *Ch*, 391.
1428. See Proverbs 5.15, 9.17. The meaning is that he indulged in clandestine affairs.
1429. See Brand, *BCW*, p. 120, p. 346, n. 9.
1430. See Brand, *BCW*, 132.
1431. The Vale of Tempē is the valley between Mount Olympus and Ossa, through which the Peneios River flows into the Aegean.
1432. See Brand, *BCW*, pp. 132–135, p. 349, nn. 28, 29, 30, 31, 32.
1433. A play on the family name of the Angeloi.
1434. Damokraneia was in Thrace.
1435. See Psalm 76.20.
1436. Disembarking at the Adriatic port of Ancona, Alexios proceeded to Hagenau, in Germany, where he met with Boniface, marquis of Monteferrat, and his brother-in-law, Philip of Swabia. For the outcome of these discussions see Queller, *FC*, 32–35. See Brand, who discusses the alliance between Pope Innocent III and Emperor Alexios III, in *BCW*, 228–231.

1437. See *NH,* 437, 459, 483, 493.
1438. For the commercial rivalry between Venice, Pisa, and Genoa for Byzantine markets, see Brand, *BCW,* 207–221.
1439. Enrico Dandolo was doge of Venice from 21 June 1192 to 14 June 1205. Dandolo was already in his eighties when he became doge.
1440. For an opposing view of Enrico Dandolo see Queller, *FC,* 9–10, 74.
1441. Count Louis of Blois was King Louis VII's grandson.
1442. For details of the Treaty of Venice, 1201, between the crusader chiefs and Venice, committing the latter to the massive undertaking of building a fleet to transport 33,500 men and horses plus another 50 warships to be supplied by Venice at her own cost, see Queller, *FC,* 9–18. For the actual number of ships, which seems to have been over 200, about half of which were horse transports, one quarter transports, and the remaining quarter galleys, see Queller, *FC,* 58. The round ships were huge cargo ships converted to give protection to the galleys. Some 200 feet long and 30 to 40 feet wide, they were usually two-masters but some might have three masts. The largest could carry a thousand passengers. The Venetian round ship which Choniatēs refers to as *Kosmos* (*Mundus*) was called the *Eagle* and surnamed *The Entire World.* See Queller, *FC,* 59. For a description of the ingenious horse transports, introduced by the Byzantines to the Latins, see Queller, *FC,* 59–60. These were round ships with a door cut in the vessel's side so that the horse could be walked in; the horse was then suspended by leather straps in a separate stall with its feet barely touching the floor so as to avoid the effects of pitching and rolling.
1443. Pope Innocent III (1179–80; 1198–July 1216).
1444. Philip was duke of Swabia and Alsace (1196–1208) and king of Germany (1197–1208).
1445. The young Alexios reached Zara on 25 April 1203, after the fleet had set sail for Corfu, where he caught up with the crusaders in late May. The agreement was struck before he reached Zara. See Queller for a detailed description of these events, *FC,* 70–82.
1446. For the events leading to and following the conquest and sack of Zara see Queller, *FC,* 50–66.
1447. See Genesis 2.8.
1448. See Aesopus, *Fabulae* (Hausrath) 219.
1449. See Queller, *FC,* 82–83.
1450. See Luke 21.34.
1451. See *Suda* 1271.
1452. The two sections of the Latin fleet were reunited at Abydos about the middle of June. On 23 June the fleet reached the Monastery of St. Stephanos on the Sea of Marmara some seven miles west of Constantinople. On 24 June the crusaders camped at Chalcedon. On 26 June they reached Skutari, and the first skirmish took place on 1 July. For the dating of these events see Queller, *FC,* 90–92; Brand, *BCW,* 234–235. Van Dieten favors 5 and 6 June for the Latins' disembarkation and attack against the Tower of Galata, to which was attached the boom or chain blocking entry into the Golden Horn (*NH,* 542).
1453. Damatrys is modern Samandra and is located southeast of Skutari on the Sea of Marmara.
1454. Choniatēs' listing of Latin vessels as long ships, dromons and round warships allows us to identify these as follows: the dromons are the Western horse transports which at this time are long and low resembling the galley; the long ships are the galleys, and the round warships are the converted cargo ships.
1455. See Brand, *BCW,* 237–238; Queller, *FC,* 96–98. A portion of the chain, described as thick as a man's arm, was sent as a trophy to the Christian port of Acre.
1456. See 1 Corinthians 2.9.
1457. Kosmidion, the location of the Monastery of Saints Kosmas and Damian, was situated outside the land walls, northwest of Blachernai and just above the fortified bridge.
1458. For these events see Brand, *BFW,* 238; Queller, *FC,* 99–100.
1459. A land gate directly west of the palace of Blachernai.
1460. In the district of Petria facing the Golden Horn were located the Gate of Petria and the Monastery of Christ Evergetēs.
1461. For these events see Brand, *BCW,* 239–240; Queller, *FC,* 102–104. Deuteron was a district on the north and south by Mesē Street and the Lykos River.
1462. Develton was a fortified town a few miles south of Anchialos on the Gulf of Burgas facing across the Black Sea.
1463. For a detailed description of the events see Queller, *FC,* 104–108.
1464. See Baruch 3.1.
1465. See Herodotus 5.92, where the breaking off and throwing away of the ear of corn overtopping the rest is interpreted to mean the destruction of all the leading citizens.
1466. *Iliad* 2.834.
1467. Source unknown.

1468. See *NH*, 539.
1469. The Latin envoys were Matthew of Montmorency, Geoffrey of Villehardouin, and two Venetians. For these events see Brand, *BCW*, 241–242; Queller, *FC*, 108–111.
1470. Villehardouin gives the number of refugees as 15,000 (*Chronicle*, 51–52). For these events see Brand, *BCW*, 246–247; Queller, *FC*, 118.
1471. On the basis of the *Devastatio*, Brand dates the fire to 22 August (*BCW*, 88–90). For a description of one of the most calamitous fires in history see Queller, *FC*, 119–121; Brand, *BCW*, 247–248.
1472. The mosque located in the quarter reserved to Muslim merchants was west of the Droungarios Gate, Perama, and the Venetian quarter.
1473. The Synods was probably thus named because the patriarchal synodal chambers or the ecclesiastical court chambers were located there. The Synods may possibly be the same building as the Thomaïtēs. See Guilland, *ETCB*, vol. 2, pp. 14–15.
1474. The Philadelphion was located north of Mesē Street and west of the Forum of the Bull, which was also known as the Forum of Theodosios; it is now known as Şehzadé. See Guilland, *ETCB*, vol. 1, p. 493, n. 76.
1475. The harbors of Sophia and Eleutherios were located southwest of the Hippodrome and south of the Forum of the Ox respectively; Bukanon was a tower west of the port of Sophia.
1476. See Psalm 71.8.
1477. See *Iliad* 3.421.
1478. See 4 Maccabees 7.11. This is a play on the name of Angelos.
1479. Alexios IV was also joined by Henry of Flanders and Hugh of St. Pol. See Brand, *BCW*, p. 244, p. 378, n. 26; Queller, *FC*, 117–118.
1480. It was called a *kapoutzin*.
1481. See Brand, *BCW*, 242–243; Queller, *FC*, 124–125.
1482. This masterpiece was attributed to Pheidias. See Queller, *FC*, 130.
1483. *Iliad* 3.337. For the fate and identity of the Athena Promachos, see R. J. H. Jenkins, "The Bronze Athena at Byzantium," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 67 (1947): 31–33; "Further Evidence regarding the Bronze Athena at Byzantium," *Annual of the British School at Athens* 46 (1951): 71–74.
1484. See Proverbs 30.33.
1485. See Matthew 7.6.
1486. See *Iliad* 8.527.
1487. See Brand, *BCW*, 248; Queller, *FC*, 127.
1488. See Esaias 29.13; Matthew 15.8.
1489. See Plato, *Phaedrus* 240c.
1490. Although Brand says that the site of Trypetos Lithos is unknown, Queller identifies the location as being near the Blachernai palace. See Brand, *BCW*, 249; Queller, *FC*, p. 129, p. 208, n. 44.
1491. Esaias 3.6.
1492. See Brand, *BCW*, 250; Queller, *FC*, 130.
1493. For these events see Brand, *BCW*, 250–251; Queller, *FC*, 131–132. For the career of Alexios V Doukas Mourtzouphlos see Polemis, *Doukai*, 145–147.
1494. Psalm 26.5.
1495. See Psalm 11.3; Choniatēs has altered the text.
1496. Psalm 34.20.
1497. Psalm 17.12.
1498. Kannavos was likely decapitated and Alexios Mourtzouphlos was proclaimed emperor 5 February 1204. See Brand, *BCW*, p. 251, p. 379, n. 42; Queller, *FC*, pp. 132–133, pp. 209–210, n. 73.
1499. See Proverbs 9.18.
1500. Meton was the Athenian astronomer, geometrician, and calendar reformer of the fifth century B.C. who originated the Metonic Cycle of 19 years. The saying "To put off for as long as the cycle of Meton" was meant to ridicule those guilty of long delays or postponements. See *Corpus Paroemiographorum Graecorum*, ed. E. L. Leutsch and F. G. Schneidewin (Gottingen, 1839; reprint ed., Hildesheim, 1958), vol. 1, p. 433: *Metonos eniautos*.
1501. See Demosthenes 4.45
1502. See Matthew 25.26.
1503. See Queller, *FC*, 134–136; Brand, *BCW*, 253. Actually, the Latin foray for food was led by Baldwin's brother, Henry of Flanders. Queller names the priest holding the icon of the Virgin as patriarch Samson; the patriarch of Constantinople at this time, however, was John X Kamateros. It was Peter of Bracieux who struck the priest on the nasal of his helmet and seized the precious palladium.
1504. The Telchines were spiteful sorcerers with webbed fingers and feet; they were the

first to work metals and had the power to bring rain. Spiteful persons and backbiters were called Telchines. See John Tzetzēs, *Historiarum variarum chiliades* 7.119 sqq.

1505. See Queller, *FC*, pp. 133–134, p. 210, n. 77; Brand, *BCW*, p. 252, p. 380, n. 46. The five thousand pounds of gold represented 90,000 marks of silver or approximately half the sum still owed the crusaders according to the agreement made by Alexios IV.

1506. See Xenophon, *Republica Lacedaemoniorum* 2.2.

1507. See Psalm 31.9.

1508. See Esaias 28.7, 24.2, 23.33.

1509. See *Iliad* 5.93, 96. This was Peter of Amiens, who led a party of ten knights and sixty sergeants. See Queller, *FC*, 145.

1510. See *Odyssey* 11.312.

1511. See *Iliad* 16.70.

1512. See Deuteronomy 32.30.

1513. See *Iliad* 15.229–230.

1514. See Matthew 27.24.

1515. See *Iliad* 1.114.

1516. See Polemis, *Doukai*, 195, 91. Constantine Doukas was probably the son of John Angelos Doukas, the uncle of Isaakios II and Alexios III. See Brand, *BCW*, 258.

1517. Constantine Laskaris was the brother of the future emperor of Nicaea, Theodore I Laskaris. Some historians have argued that it was actually Theodore who succeeded Alexios V. See Queller, *FC*, p. 147, pp. 216–217, n. 84; Brand, *BCW*, 258; Runciman, *HC*, vol. 3, p. 122.

1518. See *Iliad* 9.378.

1519. For these events see Queller, *FC*, 140–148; Brand, *BCW*, 254–264.

1520. See *Odyssey* 9.14.

1521. See John 19.1–4, 23–24, 34.

1522. See 1 Timothy 5.11.

1523. The synthronon designates the lofty thrones of the bishop and the clergy behind the holy altar in the sanctuary.

1524. See Esaias 1.5.

1525. See Matthew 24.29; Mark 13.24 sq.; Luke 21.25; Revelations 6.12.

1526. See Matthew 24.15.

1527. This is written with sarcasm in intent, as is shown by the use of the term *Graikoi*, the Latin term of derision for the Byzantines.

1528. See Matthew 13.45 and 7.6.

1529. See Jeremias 5.8.

1530. The reference here is to the recovery of Jerusalem by the Muslims in 1187.

1531. See Esaias 51.17.

1532. See Wisdom of Solomon 10.6; Genesis 19.24 sq.

1533. See Lamentations 2.13.

1534. See Luke 22.31.

1535. See *Odyssey* 11.539.

1536. See *Odyssey* 5.217.

1537. See *Odyssey* 18.27

1538. See Deuteronomy 32.21; Romans 10.19.

1539. See Psalm 80.17.

1540. See Lamentations 2.13.

1541. See Jeremias 15.5; Luke 14.32; Psalm 121.6

1542. See Esaias 51.17

1543. See Esaias 52.1–2.

1544. See Esaias 52.2.

1545. See Esaias 54.2.

1546. See Esaias 54.4.

1547. See Lamentations 2.15.

1548. See Lamentations 1.1.

1549. See Esaias 54.7–8.

1550. See Psalm 93.19.

1551. See Zacharias 2.10; Jeremias 25.16.

1552. See Matthew 23.37; Luke 13.34.

1553. See Job 5.18.

1554. See Jeremias 14.20–21; the verse is altered by Choniatēs.

1555. See Jeremias 10.24–25.

1556. See Esaias 64.7.

1557. See Lamentations 5.1–2.

1558. See Lamentations 5.21.

1559. See Psalm 136.4.

1560. See "Hippokratous genos kai bios kata Soranon [The family and life of Hippokrates according to Soranos]," in *Vitae scriptorum graecorum minorum*, ed. Westermann, 453.94 sqq.
1561. See Strabo 14.1.22.
1562. See *Odyssey* 1.242.
1563. See Psalm 56.2.
1564. See Psalm 89.13.
1565. See Psalm 9.19, 73.19.
1566. See Psalm 76.10.
1567. Psalm 76.8.
1568. See Deuteronomy 32.39.
1569. See Deuteronomy 32.24.
1570. See Psalm 57.7, 73.13–14; Genesis 3.15.
1571. See Psalm 67.31.
1572. See Psalm 19.8.
1573. See Psalm 32.17.
1574. See Psalm 146.10.
1575. See Psalm 59.5.
1576. See Psalm 22.5.
1577. See Esaias 13.5; Psalm 64.6.
1578. See Esaias 13.5.
1579. See Romans 11.23–24.
1580. See Esaias 26.16.
1581. 4 Kings 25.8 sqq.
1582. See Daniel 5.1 sqq.
1583. See Proverbs 18.17.
1584. Psalm 105.4–5.
1585. Plutarch, *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*, trans. John Dryden; Arthur Hugh Clough (Chicago, 1952), 76.
1586. Kodros was a legendary king of Athens.
1587. See 2 Timothy 4.3.
1588. See Plutarch, *Crassus* 7 sqq.
1589. See *NH*, 579.
1590. See 1 Corinthians 3.19.
1591. See Psalm 82.17.
1592. See Psalm 9.2.
1593. Deuteronomy 32.40–41; Psalm 108.13.
1594. Genesis 15.14.
1595. See *Iliad* 16.459.
1596. See Sophocles, *Electra* 479.
1597. The district of the Sphorakion was located to the northeast of the Forum of Constantine.
1598. His name was Dominicus, and he was a wine merchant. See van Dieten [588], 13–14 LO.
1599. See Matthew 24.19–20.
1600. See Luke 18.13.
1601. See Matthew 7.12.
1602. See Brand, *BCW*, 266–268.
1603. See Psalm 109.5.
1604. See Esaias 2.10.
1605. See Psalm 67.5.
1606. Psalm 30.22.
1607. Psalm 47.3.
1608. Psalm 45.5.
1609. Joel 2.3, 4.19.
1610. Psalm 83.7.
1611. See Esaias 60.16.
1612. See Genesis 3.7 and 21.
1613. Psalm 49.15.
1614. See Exodus 18.13.
1615. Matthew 19.28; Wisdom of Solomon 9.10.
1616. See Ezekiel 10.8–14.
1617. See Psalm 18.2.
1618. Ecclesiastes 8.7, 10.14.
1619. Psalm 71.12.
1620. Psalm 125.6.

1621. Esaias 35.4, 61.10.
1622. 1 Peter 5.4.
1623. See Matthew 10.10; Mark 6.8; Luke 9.3, 10.4.
1624. See John 12.12 sqq.
1625. James 1.17.
1626. See Psalm 146.9.
1627. See Matthew 6.28 and 26; Luke 12.27 and 24.
1628. Zacharias 11.5.
1629. I.e., as are women of ill-repute.
1630. Colossians 1.16.
1631. See Queller, *FC*, 150; Nicol, "The Fourth Crusade," 287–288; Ostrogorsky, *HBS*, 422–423.
1632. I.e., in the manner of Archimedes.
1633. Potsherds or oyster shells were painted black and white and thrown heads or tails.
1634. Margaret-Maria of Hungary and Isaakios II Angelos had two children, a daughter and Manuel.
1635. This was Geoffrey of Villehardouin, the marshal of Champagne and historian of the Fourth Crusade.
1636. See Zenobios 2.93, 2.79.
1637. These were Armenians residing in Asia Minor around the site of ancient Troy.
1638. Poimanenon in Asia Minor was located west of Lake Aphnitis and east of the Granikos River. Theodore I Laskaris, future emperor of Nicaea (1204–22; officially crowned between 30 March and 5 April 1208), had fled Constantinople with his wife Anna, Alexios III's daughter, and their three daughters, together with his brother Constantine. See Nicol, "The Fourth Crusade," 291.
1639. Thessaly and Greece were subjugated by the Latins between October 1204 and April 1205.
1640. Leon Sgouros succeeded his father in Nauplion in 1198. For his subsequent career see Brand, *BCW*, 152–154, 244–245.
1641. Akrocorinth is the citadel of Corinth, located on a steep and rocky height outside the city.
1642. See Matthew 23.32.
1643. *Iliad* 2.287.
1644. See Esaias 29.13; Matthew 15.8.
1645. See Matthew 5.44.
1646. See 1 Corinthians 4.15.
1647. See Psalm 57.5.
1648. See 4 Kings 1.9–14; Luke 9.54.
1649. See Exodus 23.28.
1650. See John 16.24.
1651. See Esaias 46.13.
1652. See Mark 3.17.
1653. See Luke 9.54 sq.
1654. *Iliad* 4.406.
1655. Oeta is a mountai in Thessaly.
1656. Psalm 70.18.
1657. He was taken captive by Thierri of Loos. See Villehardouin, *Chronicle*, 80–81.
1658. See *NH*, 604–605.
1659. See *Iliad* 1.157.
1660. See *Iliad* 1.252.
1661. See Pausanias 5.7.2, 7.23.2, 8.54.3.
1662. See *Iliad* 5.831, 839.
1663. See *Iliad* 6.339.
1664. See Psalm 32.10.
1665. See Psalm 67.31.
1666. Genesis 3.24.
1667. See above, n. 12. The mistress of Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos (1042–55), the niece of his second wife of the powerful Skleros family, was buried at the monastery church of St. George of Mangana c. 1044. At his death in 1055 Constantine IX was interred beside her. See Michael Psellos, *The Chronographia: Fourteen Byzantine Rulers*, trans. E. R. A. Sewter (Harmondsworth, 1966; reprint ed., Harmondsworth, 1966), p. 189, n. 1.
1668. See *Habakkuk* 3.13.
1669. See Queller, *FC*, 151–152.
1670. See *Iliad* 10.375.
1671. Daonion was a town near Selymbria.

1672. The date was actually 14 April 1205, since Easter fell on 10 April, and the battle took place on Thursday of Easter week. See Villehardouin, *Chronicle,* 93–94.
1673. See Psalm 8.3.
1674. See Psalm 7.3.
1675. See Villehardouin, *Chronicle,* 103–104.
1676. He impaled the *chartophylax* of the cathedral of St. Demetrios, among others.
1677. In the spring of 1211 Alexios III was taken captive by Theodore I Laskaris and confined to a monastery in Nicaea for the rest of his days. See Nicol, "The Fourth Crusade," 296.
1678. See *Iliad* 16.260.
1679. Actually, Marino Zeno was elected *podestá* of the Venetian community in Constantinople. The successor of Dandolo as doge of Venice was Pietro Ziani (5 August 1205–March 1129).
1680. Pierre de Bracheux, or Peter of Bracieux, survived and was carried away by a litter. See Villehardouin, *Chronicle,* 104.
1681. The Latin patriarch of Constantinople, Thomas Morosini, was elected during the second half of 1204, received papal confirmation on 21 January 1205, was consecrated patriarch on 27 March 1205, and reigned until June or July 1211.
1682. See Queller, *FC,* 6: "Conon was a member of an illustrious family of Artois, a famed troubadour, and a veteran of the Third Crusade."
1683. I.e., the waters of death; Acheron was one of the five rivers of Hades.
1684. Psalm 54.24.
1685. See Acts 7.54.
1686. See Romans 1.28.
1687. See Judges 9.14.
1688. These were Manuel Mavrozomēs, Theodore Laskaris, and David Komnenos. See Nicol, "The Fourth Crusade," 291.
1689. See Cahen, *PT,* 115.
1690. See Zenobios 6.21. Hylas was Herakles' armor-bearer who was drawn under the water at Lemnos by a water nymph who wished to embrace him because of his beauty; he was never seen again, and Herakles plunged into the forest, shouting his name everywhere in desperation but receiving no answer.
1691. Psalm 5.7.
1692. Genesis 34.26; Sirach 28.18.
1693. See Villehardouin, *Chronicle,* 105–106.
1694. See *Iliad* 2.87–89.
1695. See *Iliad* 5.499.
1696. This was the constable Thierri of Tenremonde, who was slain. See Villehardoui *Chronicle,* 107–108.
1697. See Villehardouin, *Chronicle,* 110.
1698. See Villehardouin, *Chronicle,* 110.
1699. See Psalm 82.15.
1700. Vizya was defended by Anseau of Cayeux with 120 knights, Selymbria by Macaire of Sainte-Menehould with 50 knights. See Villehardouin, *Chronicle,* 111.
1701. See Villehardouin, *Chronicle,* 113–115.
1702. See *Odyssey* 18.202.
1703. See 1 Corinthians 2.9.
1704. See Genesis 1.11.
1705. See 2 Corinthians 9.7.
1706. See Joel 2.3, 4.19.
1707. See Euripides, *Hecuba* 655.
1708. See Proverbs 3.34.
1709. See Psalm 78.6.
1710. Exodus 10.21.
1711. See Villehardouin, *Chronicle,* 122–123, 125–126.
1712. See Villehardouin, *Chronicle,* 131–133. The arrow struck Boniface in the thick of the arm beneath the shoulder; his head was cut off and sent to Ioannitsa. Villehardouin ends his history by praising the marquis as "one of the best barons and most liberal, and one of the best knights in the world!"
1713. See Matthew 24.22; Mark 13.20.
1714. See *Odyssey* 1.58.
1715. The kingdom of Thessaloniki passed to Demetrios, the infant son of Boniface and Margaret-Maria. See Nicol, "The Fourth Crusade," 298, 306.
1716. Van Dieten has inserted this paragraph from the manuscript family L and O.
1717. See *Iliad* 22.482.

1718. These were under the command of William Champlitte, the grandson of Hugh I of Champagne, and Geoffrey of Villehardouin, the nephew of the chronicler of the Fourth Crusade. See Kenneth M. Setton, "The Latins in Greece and the Aegean from the Fourth Crusade to the end of the Middle Ages," in *CMH,* vol. 4, pt. 1, pp. 390–391. See also William Miller, *Essays on the Latin Orient,* (Cambridge, England, 1921; reprint ed., New York, 1964), 33–90.
1719. See *NH,* 606.
1720. *Odyssey* 4.1.
1721. Halmyros was a port on the gulf of Volos in Thessaly.
1722. David and Alexios Komnenos styled themselves as the Grand Komnenoi. Alexios reigned over the empire of Trebizond from April 1204 to February 1222.
1723. Attaleia was taken by Kaykhusraw in 1207. See F. Taeschner, "The Turks and the Byzantine Empire to the End of the Thirteenth Century," in *CMH,* vol. 4, pt. 1, p. 746.
1724. Rhodes had been held since 1204 by Leon Gabalas, who cooperated with the Venetians to maintain his independence. See Nicol, "The Fourth Crusade," 311.
1725. Choniatēs uses the word *nepsis,* which means sobriety.
1726. See Exodus 15.9.
1727. The title to Crete had been purchased by Dandolo from Boniface early in 1205. See Nicol, "The Fourth Crusade," 289.
1728. Actually, David became Emperor Henry's vassal. See Nicol, "The Fourth Crusade," 295.
1729. See Herodotus 8.6.2.
1730. See *NH,* 569, 601.
1731. See Villehardouin, *Chronicle,* 120.
1732. See Villehardouin, *Chronicle,* 112–116.
1733. Deuteronomy 32.28.
1734. Deuteronomy 32.5.
1735. Esaias 1.4.
1736. "By the ax of Tennes," i.e., summary justice.
1737. See Joshua 10.12.
1738. For these statues see below [649].
1739. See Matthew 5.40.
1740. See Mark 6.11.
1741. *Iliad* 13.279–283; see Loeb edition, vol. 2, p. 222.
1742. See *Iliad* 6.201–203.
1743. Jeremias 9.1.
1744. See 4 Kings 4.42–44.
1745. See Matthew 14.13–21; Mark 6.35.
1746. See Psalm 74.9.
1747. See Villehardouin, *Chronicle,* 117–120.
1748. See Romans 11.33.
1749. See *NH,* 623.
1750. The mausoleum was called Heroon because the emperors buried therein are likened to heroes. Justinian's tomb was at the east end. See Nikolaos Mesaritēs, *Description of the Church of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople,* ed. Glanville Downey, with English translation, Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, n.s., vol. 47, pt. 6 (Philadelphia, 1957), 892–893.
1751. The word used by Choniatēs, *katapetasma,* originally meant "veil" or "curtain" but later took on the added meaning of "ciborium" or "baldachino." See Mesaritēs, *Description,* p. 891 and n. 17.
1752. For the problem of the coins minted by the crusaders, see Cutler, "The *De Signis,*" 116.
1753. *Ibid.,* 113.
1754. See Joshua 10.12–13.
1755. See *Iliad* 6.507; 15.264.
1756. For this equestrian statue standing in the Forum of the Bull or Theodosios see Culter, "The *De Signis,*" 118. See *NH,* 643, where the rider holds a globe in the palm of his left hand.
1757. See *NH,* 643, where this statue is described as being "pierced through with a nail," most likely indicating thereby that it was buried in a rite of black magic.
1758. *Iliad* 16.778.
1759. In describing the colossal statue of Herakles Trishesperos (*NH,* 519, 520), Choniatēs says that the lion skin was spread over a basket. Choniatēs appears to identify the basket with that which was used for his crib rather than that used by the hero to clean out the Augean stables. See Cutler, "The *De Signis,*" 116–117. In 209 B.C. the Herakles was brought to Rome from Tarentum, whence it was taken to Constantinople in A.D. 325. See

M. Bieber, *The Sculpture of the Hellenistic Age* (New York, 1961), 35. The statue, however, was not destroyed by the crusaders; it was seen by the French traveler Pierre Gilles before the middle of the sixteenth century. See Pierre Gilles, *De topographia Constantinopoleos et de illius antiquitatibus* (Lyons, 1561), 89–91.

1760. Choniatēs is in error here; the statue was the work of Lysippos. Cutler cites Pliny's passing reference to the work and that Lysippos had a passion for the gigantic; Pliny, *Historia Naturalis* 34.40.

1761. See Plutarch, *Antony* chap. 65.

1762. See *Odyssey* 12.80 sqq., 260 sqq.

1763. See Hesychios Milesios 25 FGrH 390 (IIIB.270.14–17); George Cedrenos, *Compendium historiarum*, ed. I. Bekker, CSHB (Bonn, 1838), vol. 1, p. 346; John Tzetzēs, *Historiarum variarum chiliades* 2.928 sqq.

1764. See *Odyssey* 4.220 sqq.

1765. See Cutler, "The *De Signis*," 118.

1766. *Iliad* 1.114.

1767. *Iliad* 3.156–158; see Loeb ed., vol. 1, p. 129.

1768. See Dio Chrysostom 63.4.

1769. An Egyptian cobra.

1770. *Iliad* 4.350.

1771. See Psalm 67.31.

1772. See Psalm 90.13; Luke 10.19.