

THE STORY OF THE NATIONS

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The Story of the Nations.

THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE.



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INTERIOR OF ST. SOPHIA.

THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE

BY

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PREFACE.

FIFTY years ago the word "Byzantine" was used as a synonym for all that was corrupt and decadent, and the tale of the East-Roman Empire was dismissed by modern historians as depressing and monotonous. The great Gibbon had branded the successors of Justinian and Heraclius as a series of vicious weaklings, and for several generations no one dared to contradict him.

Two books have served to undeceive the English reader, the monumental work of Finlay, published in 1856, and the more modern volumes of Mr. Bury, which appeared in 1889. Since they have written, the Byzantines no longer need an apologist, and the great work of the East-Roman Empire in holding back the Saracen, and in keeping alive throughout the Dark Ages the lamp of learning, is beginning to be realized.

The writer of this book has endeavoured to tell the story of Byzantium in the spirit of Finlay and Bury, not in that of Gibbon. He wishes to acknowledge his debts both to the veteran of the war of

Greek Independence, and to the young Dublin professor Without their aid his task would have been very heavy—with it the difficulty was removed.

The author does not claim to have grappled with all the chroniclers of the Eastern realm, but thinks that some acquaintance with Ammianus, Procopius, Maurice's "Strategikon," Leo the Deacon, Leo the Wise, Constantine Porphyrogenitus, Anna Comnena and Nicetas, may justify his having undertaken the task he has essayed.

OXFORD,

February, 1892.





CONTENTS.

I.

	PAGE
BYZANTIUM	1-12

Foundation of Byzantium, 3—Early history of the city, 5—
Byzantine luxury, 7—Byzantium destroyed A. D. 196, 8—
Taken by Maximinus, 11.

II.

THE FOUNDATION OF CONSTANTINOPLE (A. D. 328-330)	13-30
--	-------

Constantine the Great, 15—Constantine's Choice, 17—The
Topography of Constantinople, 19—The Senate House, 21—
The Hippodrome, 25—St. Sophia, 27—Constantine's Dedica-
tion Festival, 29.

III.

THE FIGHT WITH THE GOTHs	31-44
------------------------------------	-------

The Goths and the Huns, 35—Valens and the Goths, 37—Out-
break of War, 39—Battle of Adrianople, 41.

IV.

THE DEPARTURE OF THE GERMANs	45-53
--	-------

Stilicho, 47—Alaric the Goth, 49—Gaius slain, 51—Exile of
Chrysostom, 53.

V.

THE REORGANIZATION OF THE EASTERN EMPIRE	PAGE
(A.D. 408-518)	54-64

Fourth of Theodosius II., 55—Exile of Eudocia, 57—Reign of Marcianus, 59—Zeno reorganizes the Army, 61—Rebellion of Theodoric and his departure for Italy, 63.

VI.

JUSTINIAN	65-80
---------------------	-------

Theodora, 67—Justinian's personal character, 69—Justinian's Army, 71—Justinian's foreign policy, 73—The Blues and Greens, 75—The Nika Riot, 77—Theodora's speech, 79.

VII.

JUSTINIAN'S FOREIGN CONQUESTS	81-97
---	-------

Weakness of the Goths in Italy, 83—Conquest of Africa, 85—Theodahat's augury, 87—The Goths besiege Rome, 89—Belisarius takes Ravenna, 91—Baduila reconquers Italy, 93—Death of King Baduila, 95—Justinian's Spanish conquests, 97.

VIII.

THE END OF JUSTINIAN'S REIGN	98-113
--	--------

Fall of Antioch, 99—The Great Plague, 101—Justinian as theologian, 103—Belisarius defeats the Huns, 105—Building of St. Sophia, 107—Procopius on St. Sophia, 109—Justinian's Forts, 111—His legislation, 113.

IX.

THE COMING OF THE SLAVS	114-127
-----------------------------------	---------

The Lombards, 115—Lombard conquests in Italy, 117—Rise of the Papacy, 119—Persian Wars, 121—The Slavs, 123—Their invasion of Moesia, 125—Fall of Maurice, 127.

CONTENTS.

xi

X.

PAGE

THE DARKEST HOUR 128-140

Misfortunes of Phocas, 129—Accession of Heraclius, 131—
The Letter of Chosroës, 133—Victories of Heraclius, 135—
First Siege of Constantinople, 137—Triumph of Heraclius, 139.

XI.

SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS LIFE (A.D. 320-620) 141-157

Decay of the Latin tongue, 143—Christianity and the State,
145—Christianity and Slavery, 147—Evils of Monasticism,
149—Superstitions, 151—Weaknesses of Byzantine Society,
153—Estimate of Byzantine Society, 155-57.

XII.

THE COMING OF THE SARACENS 158-172

Rise of Mahomet, 159—Arab Invasion of Syria, 161—Jerusa-
lem taken, 163—The Sons of Heraclius, 165—The Themes
created, 167—Wars of Constans II., 169—Reign of Con-
stantine IV., 171.

XIII.

THE FIRST ANARCHY 173-183

Justinian II., 176—Usurpation and Fall of Leontius, 177—
Restoration of Justinian II., 179—Anarchy, 711-17 A.D., 181—
Accession of Leo the Isaurian, 183.

XIV.

THE SARACENS TURNED BACK 184-188

Constantinople beleaguered, 185—The Siege raised, 187.

XV.

PAGE

THE ICONOCLASTS (A.D. 720-802) . . . 189-201

Superstitious Vanities, 191—Leo's Crusade against Images, 193—Constantine V. dissolves the Monasteries, 197—Irene blinds her son, 199—Coronation of Charles the Great, 201.

XVI.

THE END OF THE ICONOCLASTS (A.D. 802-886) 202-214

Reign of Nicephorus I., 203—Reign of Leo V., 205—Michael the Amorian, 207—Persecution by Theophilus, 209—The choice of Theophilus, 211—Michael the Drunkard, 213.

XVII.

THE LITERARY EMPERORS AND THEIR TIME (A.D. 886-963) . . . 215-225

Reigns of Leo VI. and Constantine VII., 217—Leo's *Tactica*, 219—Art and Letters, 221—The Commerce of Constantinople, 225.

XVIII.

MILITARY GLORY . . . 226-239

Decay of the Saracen power, 227—Conquests of Nicephorus Phocas, 229—Capture of Antioch, 231—Murder of Nicephorus I., 233—John Zimisces defeats the Russians, 235—Triumph of Zimisces, 237—Death of Zimisces, 239.

XIX.

THE END OF THE MACEDONIAN DYNASTY . 240-248

The Bulgarian Wars, 241—Death of King Samuel, 243—The Empress Zoe and her Marriages, 245-7.

CONTENTS.

xiii

XX.

PAGE

MANZIKERT (A.D. 1057-1081) . . . 249-257

The coming of the Seljouks, 251—Misfortunes of Romanus
Diogenes, 255—Character of Alexius Comnenus, 257. •

XXI.

THE COMNENI AND THE CRUSADES . . . 258-273

Norman War, 259—Battle I. of Durazzo, 261—The Crusades,
263—Conquests of Alexius, 265—Second Norman War, 267—
Reign of John Comnenus 269—Wars of Manuel I., 271—Fall
of Andronicus I., 273. •

XXII.

THE LATIN CONQUEST OF CONSTANTINOPLE • 274-293

Misfortunes of the Angeli, 275—Cyprus and Bulgaria lost,
277—The Fourth Crusade, 279—The Leaders of the Crusade,
281—Rising against the Franks, 285—The two Sieges of Con-
stantinople, 287—The Franks enter Constantinople, 289—
Plunder of the City, 291—The End of Alexius Ducas, 293.

XXIII.

THE LATIN EMPIRE AND THE EMPIRE OF NICAËA (A.D. 1204-1261) . . . 294-306

Baldwin I. slain in Battle, 295—The Smaller Latin States, 297—
Successes of Theodore Lascaris, 299—John Vataztes conquers
Thrace, 301—Usurpation of Michael Paleologus, 303—The
Franks driven from Constantinople, 305.

XXIV.

DECLINE AND DECAY (A.D. 1261-1328) . . 307-320

Weakness of the restored Empire, 309—Commercial Decay,
311—Rise of the Ottoman Turks, 313—Turkish Wars of
Andronicus II., 315—Roger de Flor, 317—Asia Minor lost,
319.

XV.

PAGE

THE ICONOCLASTS (A.D. 720-802) . . . 189-201

Superstitious Vanities, 191—Leo's Crusade against Images, 193—Constantine V. dissolves the Monasteries, 197—Irene blinds her son, 199—Coronation of Charles the Great, 201.

XVI.

THE END OF THE ICONOCLASTS (A.D. 802-886) 202-214

Reign of Nicephorus I., 203—Reign of Leo V., 205—Michael the Amorian, 207—Persecution by Theophilus, 209—The choice of Theophilus, 211—Michael the Drunkard, 213.

XVII.

THE LITERARY EMPERORS AND THEIR TIME (A.D. 886-963) . . . 215-225

Reigns of Leo VI. and Constantine VII., 217—Leo's Tactics, 219—Art and Letters, 221—The Commerce of Constantinople, 225.

XVIII.

MILITARY GLORY . . . 226-239

Decay of the Saracen power, 227—Conquests of Nicephorus Phocas, 229—Capture of Antioch, 231—Murder of Nicephorus I., 233—John Zimisce defeats the Russians, 235—Triumph of Zimisce, 237—Death of Zimisce, 239.

XIX.

THE END OF THE MACEDONIAN DYNASTY . 240-248

The Bulgarian Wars, 241—Death of King Samuel, 243—The Empress Zoe and her Marriages, 245-7.

CONTENTS.

xiii

XX.

PAGE

MANZIKERT (A.D. 1057-1081) . . . 249-257

The coming of the Seljouks, 251—Misfortunes of Romanus Diogenes, 255—Character of Alexius Comnenus, 257.

XXI.

THE COMNENI AND THE CRUSADES . . . 258-273

Norman War, 259—Battle I. of Durazzo, 261—The Crusades, 263—Conquests of Alexius, 265—Second Norman War, 267—Reign of John Comnenus 269—Wars of Manuel I., 271—Fall of Andronicus I., 273.

XXII.

THE LATIN CONQUEST OF CONSTANTINOPLE . 274-293

Misfortunes of the Angeli, 275—Cyprus and Bulgaria lost, 277—The Fourth Crusade, 279—The Leaders of the Crusade, 281—Rising against the Franks, 285—The two Sieges of Constantinople, 287—The Franks enter Constantinople, 289—Plunder of the City, 291—The End of Alexius Ducas, 293.

XXIII.

THE LATIN EMPIRE AND THE EMPIRE OF NICAËA (A.D. 1204-1261) . . . 294-306

Baldwin I. slain in Battle, 295—The Smaller Latin States, 297—Successes of Theodore Lascaris, 299—John Vatatzes conquers Thrace, 301—Usurpation of Michael Paleologus, 303—The Franks driven from Constantinople, 305.

XXIV.

DECLINE AND DECAY (A.D. 1261-1328) . . . 307-320

Weakness of the restored Empire, 309—Commercial Decay, 311—Rise of the Ottoman Turks, 313—Turkish Wars of Andronicus II., 315—Roger de Flor, 317—Asia Minor lost, 319.

XXV.

PAGE

THE TURKS IN EUROPE 321-331

Orkhan the Turk, 323—Revolt of Cantacuzenus, 325—Con-
quests of the Servians, 327—The Turks cross into Europe, 329
—Siege of Philadelphia, 331.

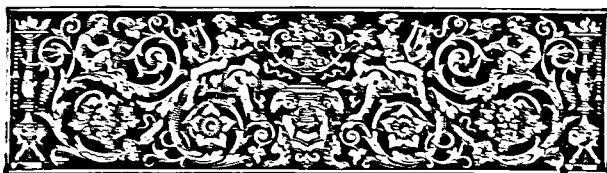
XXVI.

THE END OF A LONG TALE (A.D. 1370-1453) 332-350

Reign of John Paleologus, 333—Turkish Civil Wars, 335—
Murad II. attacks Constantinople, 337—Death of Manuel II.,
339—John VI. at Florence, 341—Mahomet II. attacks Con-
stantinople, 343—Apathy of the Greeks, 345—Last Hours of
Constantine XI., 347—Fall of Constantinople, 349.

INDEX 351





LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE
INTERIOR OF ST. SOPHIA	<i>Frontispiece.</i>
EARLY COIN OF BYZANTIUM	4
LATE COIN OF BYZANTIUM SHOWING CRESCENT AND STAR	4
CONSTANTINE THE GREAT	14
MAP OF THE HEART OF CONSTANTINOPLE	20
THE ATMEIDAN [HIPPODROME] AND ST. SOPHIA	23
BUILDING A PALACE (FROM A BYZANTINE MS.)	26
FIFTEENTH-CENTURY DRAWING OF THE EQUESTRIAN STATUE OF CONSTANTINE	28
GOthic IDOLS (FROM THE COLUMN OF ARCADIUS)	33
GOthic CAPTIVES (FROM THE COLUMN OF ARCADIUS)	43
ANGEL OF VICTORY (FROM A FIFTH-CENTURY DIPTYCH). FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883	58
THE EMPRESS THEODORA AND HER COURT (FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883)	68
THEODORA IMPERATRIX (FROM THE PAINTING BY VAL PRINSEP. THE COPYRIGHT IS IN THE ARTIST'S HANDS)	78

	PAGE
CAVALRY SCOUTS (FROM A BYZANTINE MS.). FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883	86
DETAILS OF ST. SOPHIA	96
COLUMNS IN ST. SOPHIA	108
GALLERIES OF ST. SOPHIA	110
CROSS OF JUSTINUS II. (FROM THE VATICAN). FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883	118
GENERAL VIEW OF ST. SOPHIA (FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR C. BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883)	146
ILLUMINATED INITIALS (FROM BYZANTINE MSS.). FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR C. BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883	152
CHURCH OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES AT THESSALONICA (FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883)	176
BISHOPS, MONKS, KINGS, LAYMEN, AND WOMEN, ADOR- ING THE MADONNA (FROM A BYZANTINE MS.). FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883	191
REPRESENTATION OF THE MADONNA ENTHRONED (FROM A BYZANTINE IVORY). FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883.	195
DETAILS OF ST. SOPHIA	200
BYZANTINE METAL WORK (OUR LORD AND THE TWELVE APOSTLES). FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883.	209
A WARRIOR-SAINT (ST. LEONTIUS) (FROM A BYZANTINE FRESCO). FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883.	223

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

xvii

PAGE

RETURN OF A VICTORIOUS EMPEROR (FROM AN EMBROIDERED ROBE). FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883 . . .	232
ARABESQUE DESIGN FROM A BYZANTINE MS. (FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883)	236
RUSSIAN ARCHITECTURE. FROM BYZANTINE MODEL (CHURCH AT VLADIMIR). FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883 . .	238
OUR LORD BLESSING ROMANUS DIOGENES AND EUDOCIA (FROM AN IVORY AT PARIS). FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883	253
NICEPHORUS BOTANIATES SITTING IN STATE (FROM A CONTEMPORARY MS.). FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883	255
BYZANTINE IVORY-CARVING OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY (FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM). FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883	266
HUNTERS (FROM A BYZANTINE MS.). FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883	270
VIEW OF CONSTANTINOPLE. (FROM THE SIDE OF THE HARBOUR)	283
BYZANTINE RELIQUARY (FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883)	289
FINIAL FROM A BYZANTINE MS. (FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883)	299
FOUNTAIN IN THE COURT OF ST. SOPHIA	302

	PAGE
BYZANTINE CHAPEL AT ANI, THE OLD CAPITAL OF ARMENIA (FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883)	312
ANDRONICUS PALEOLOGUS ADORING OUR LORD (FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883)	316
JOHN CANTACUZENUS SITTING IN STATE (FROM A CON- TEMPORARY MS.). FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883	326
MANUEL PALEOLOGUS AND HIS FAMILY (FROM A CON- TEMPORARY MS.). FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883	335
ARABESQUE DESIGN FROM A BYZANTINE MS. (FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883)	338
DETAILS OF ST. SOPHIA	345
ANGEL OF THE NIGHT (FROM "L'ART BYZANTIN." PAR CHARLES BAYET. PARIS, QUANTIN, 1883)	350

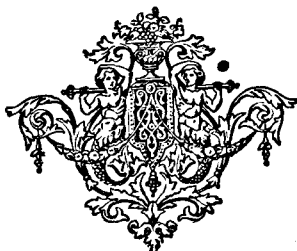




TABLE OF EMPERORS.

Arcadius	395-408	Nicephorus I.	802-811
Theodosius II.....	408-450	Stauracius	811
Marcianus.....	450-457	Michael I., Rhangabe ...	811-813
Leo I.	457-474	Leo V., the Armenian ...	813-820
Zeno	474-491	Michael II., the Amorion	820-829
Anastasius I.	491-518	Theophilus	829-842
Justinus I.....	518-527	Michael III.....	842-867
Justinianus I.	527-565	Basil I., the Macedonian...	867-886
Justinus II.	565-578	Leo VI., the Wise	886-912
Tiberius II., Constantinus	578-582	Constantine VII., Porphy-	
Mauricius	582-602	rogenitus	912-958
Phocas	602-610	[Co-regent Emperors—	
Heraclius	610-641	Alexander.....	912-913
Heraclius Constantinus		Romanus I., Lecape-	
and Heracleonas.....	641-2	nus	919-945]
Constans II.....	642-668	Romanus II.	958-963
Constantine IV.	668-685	Basil II., Bulgaroktonos	963-1025
Justinian II.....	685-695	[Co-regent Emperors—	
* Leontius	695-697	Nicephorus II.,	
Tiberius III., Apsimarus	697-705	Phocas	963-969
Justinian II. (restored) ...	705-711	John I., Zimisces ...	969-976]
Philippicus	711-713	Constantine VIII.	1025-28
Anastasius II., Artemius	713-715	Romanus III., Argyrus...	1028-34
Theodosius III.	715-717	Michael IV., the Paphla-	
Leo III., the Isaurian ...	717-740	gonian	1034-42
Constantine V., Coprony-		Michael V.	1042
mus	740-775	Constantine IX., Mono-	
Leo IV.	775-779	machus	1042-55
Constantine VI.	779-797	Theodora	1055-57
Irene	797-802	Michael VI., Stratioticus	1056-57

Isaac I., Comnenus.....	1057-59	Robert	1219-28
Constantine X., Ducas ...	1059-67	Baldwin II.	1228-61
Michael VII., Ducas	1067-78		
[Co-regent Emperor—		NICAEAN EMPERORS.	
Romanus IV., Dio-		Theodore I., Lascaris.....	1204-22
genes.....		John III., Ducas.....	1222-54
1067-71]		Theodore II., Ducas	1254-59
Nicephorus III., Botani-		John IV., Ducas.....	1259-60
ates	1078-81		
Alexius I., Comnenus...	1081-1118	EMPIRE RESTORED.	
John II., Comnenus	1118-43	Michael VIII., Paleologus	1260-82
Manuel I., Comnenus.....	1143-80	Andronicus II., Paleolo-	
Alexius II., Comnenus...	1180-83	gus.....	1282-1328
Andronicus I., Comnenus	1183-85	Andronicus III., Paleolo-	
Isaac II., Angelus	1185-95	gus.....	1328-41
Alexius III., Angelus...	1195-1203	John V., Paleologus	1341-91
Isaac II. (restored)	1203-4	[Co-regent—	
Alexius V., Ducas	1204	John VI., Cantacu-	
		zenus	
LATIN EMPERORS.		1347-54]	
Baldwin I.	1204-5	Manuel II.	1391-1425
Henry	1205-16	John VII.....	1425-48
Peter.....	1217-19	Constantine XI.	1448-53





INDEX.

A

Abdalmelik, the Caliph, wars of, with Justinian II., 174-6
 Abubekr, the Caliph, wars of, with Heraclius, 160
 Achaia, Frank principality of, 296
 Acroinon, battle of, 188
 Adana, taken by Nicephorus Phocas, 230
 Adrianople, battle of, 40; besieged by the Goths, 41; captured by the Turks, 329
 Africa, conquered by Belisarius, 84-5; overrun by the Saracens, 176
 Aijnadin, battle of, 162
 Alaric the Goth, 47; wars with Stilicho, 48; departs to Italy, 49
 Alaeddin, Sultan of the Seljouks, 322
 Alboin the Lombard invades and conquers Italy, 116
 Aleppo, Emirate of, 227; attacked by Nicephorus Phocas, 231; tributary to the empire, 270
 Alexander, emperor-regent, 217
 Alexandria, stormed by the Arabs, 166
 Alexius I. (Comnenus), usurpation of, 257; wars with the Normans, 259; conquests of in Asia Minor, 265; commercial policy of, 268
 Alexius II. (Comnenus), short reign and murder of, 272

Alexius III. (Angelus), usurpation of, 278; attacked by the Crusaders, 282; flies, 284
 Alexius IV. (Angelus), takes refuge in Germany, 279; persuades the Crusaders, 280; made emperor, 284; murdered, 285
 Alexius V. (Ducas), murders Alexius IV., 285; defends Constantinople, 287; slain, 293
 Alexius Comnenus, emperor of Trebizond, 298
 Alp Arslan, Sultan of the Seljouk Turks, attacks the empire, 252; defeats Romanus IV., 254
 Amalasuntha, Gothic queen, murdered, 82
 Amalphi, commerce of, 225
 Amorium, stormed by the Saracens, 210
 Amour, Turkish Emir, 327
 Amrou conquers Egypt, 166
 Anastasius I., reign of, 61
 Anastasius II., usurpation of, 181
 Anatolic theme, 167
 Andreas murders Constans II., 169
 Andronicus I. (Comnenus), crimes and fall of, 272-3
 Andronicus II. (Paleologus), reign of, 315-20
 Andronicus III. (Paleologus), reign of, 321-2
 Angelus, house of, *see* Isaac II.
 Alexius III. and Theodore of Epirus

- Angora, battle of, 334
 Ani, taken by the Turks, 251
 Anthemius, prime minister of Theodosius II., 54-5
 Anthemius, architect of St. Sophia, 107
 Anne of Savoy, empress-regent, 326
 Antioch, taken by the Persians, 99; taken a second time, 129; stormed by the Saracens, 163; retaken by Nicephorus Phocas, 231; lost to the Turks, 256; besieged by the Crusaders, 265; tributary to the Comneni, 270
 Antioch-on-Maeander, battle of, 299
 Antonia, wife of Belisarius, 74
 Apsimarus, Tiberius, emperor, 177; executed, 179
 Arabs, *see* Saracens
 Arcadius, reign of, 47-54; his dealings with the Goths, 48; quarrels with Chrysostom, 52
 Armenia, conquered by the Byzantines, 243; overrun by the Turks, 251
 Army, reformed by Leo and Zeno, 61; description of, in tenth century, 218
 Artemius Anastasius, reign of, 61
 Art, decay and revival of, 222-4
 Aspar, executed by Leo I., 60
 Athalaric, Gothic king, 81
 Athanarich, Gothic king, 42; visits Constantinople, 44
 Athens, early Byzantines at war with, 6; schools of, closed by Justinian, 150; Frank duchy of, 297; conquered by the "Grand Company," 319
 Attila, king of the Huns, wars of with the empire, 57
 Augustaeum, description of the, 19
 Avars, invasions of, the 122; war of, with Heraclius, 134; besiege Constantinople, 137

 B
 Baanes, rebel in Syria, 163
 Baduila, Gothic king, victories of, 92; takes Rome, 94; slain in battle, 95
 Baldwin I., emperor, his character, 281; crowned, 292; slain by the Bulgarians, 295
 Baldwin II., reign of, 301; his travels, 305; expelled from Constantinople, 306
 Bardas Caesar, 212; murdered by Michael III., 213
 Bari, taken by the Normans, 259
 Basil I., made Caesar, 213; assassinated Michael III., 213; laws of, 214
 Basil II., ascends the throne, 229; assumes the full power, 240; his Bulgarian victories, 241-3; campaigns in Asia, 243; dies, 244
 Bayezid, Turkish Sultan, 334
 Belisarius, Persian victories of, 73; quells the *Nika* riots, 79; conquers Africa, 84; takes Palermo, 88; takes Rome, 89; takes Ravenna, 91; recalled, 92; acts against Persia, 100; defeats the Huns, 104; disgraced, 105
 Beneventum, Lombard duchy of, 117; wars of with Constans II., 169
 Black Sea, Greek trade with, 2
 "Blues and Greens," Circus factions, 22, 75; great riot of, against Justinian, 76-7; armed by Maurice, 127
 Bohepund the Norman, wars of with Alexius I., 267
 Boniface of Montferrat, 281-2; made king of Thessalonica, 292; slain in battle, 296
 Bosporus, the, 1-2
 Bostra, stormed by the Saracens, 162
 Branas, Alexius, rebellion of, 277
 Brienne, house of, at Athens, 308; expelled by the "Grand Company," 319
 Broussa, *see* Prusa
 Bucellarian Theme, 167-8
 Buhawides, Persian dynasty, 226-7
 Bulgarians, invade and settle in

Moesia, 171; defeated by Justinian II., 173; aid Justinian, 179; defeat the Saracens, 187; at war with Constantine V., 196; defeat Constantine VI., 198; slay Nicephorus I., 203; besiege Constantinople, 204; routed by Leo V., 205; defeat Leo VI., 216; conquered by the Russians, 235; conquered by Basil II., 241-3; revolt against Isaac II., 276-7; slay Baldwin I., 295; conquests of, 308; subdued by the Turks, 330
 Burtzes storms Antioch, 231
 Byzantium, founded, 1; early history of, 2-8; under the Romans, 9-12; chosen as Constantine's capital, 17; *see afterwards under Constantinople*

C

- Candia taken by Nicephorus Phocas, 228
 Cantacuzenus, John, usurpation of, 325-8
 Caracalla, grants privileges to Byzantium, 10
 Carthage, taken by Belisarius, 85; taken by the Saracens, 176
 Cassiodorus, his work in literary copying, 149
 Chalcedon, founded, 3; taken by the Persians, 134
 Champlitte, William of, founds principality of Achaia, 296
 Charles the Great crowned emperor, 199
 Cherson, Justinian II. at, 177; sacked, 180
 Chosroës I., king of Persia, wars of, with Justinian, 72-4, 90-100
 Chosroës II., wars with Phocas and Heraclius, 129-135; death of, 138
 Chosroantiocheia, foundation of, 72
 Christianity, influence of, on the empire and society, 145-149
 Chrysostom, *see under* John Chrysostom
 Cilicia, conquered by Nicephorus Phocas, 230; lost to the Turks, 236; reconquered by the Comneni, 270
 Column, of the Hippodrome, 25; of Constantine, 25
 Commerce, centralization of, at Constantinople, 224, 225; decline of, under the Comneni, 267; effects of Fourth Crusade on, 310
 Comnena, Anna, writes her father's life, 264
 Comnenus, *see under* Alexius, John, Andronicus, Manuel, David, Isaac
 Conrad of Montferrat defeats Branas, 277
 Constans II., reign of, 166; wars of with the Saracens, 167; murdered, 169
 Constantine I., besieges Byzantium, 12; master of the world, 14; seeks a capital, 16; founds Constantinople, 18
 Constantine III., defeated by the Saracens, 164; short reign of, 165
 Constantine IV. (Pogonatus), wars of with the Saracens, 170; defeats Moawiah, 171; holds the Council of Constantinople, 172
 Constantine V. (Copronymus), wars of, 196; persecutes the Image-worshippers, 197
 Constantine VI., reign of, 198; blinded by his mother, 198
 Constantine VII. (Porphyrrogenitus), reign of, 216, 217; literary works of, 220, 221
 Constantine VIII., reign of, 245
 Constantine IX. (Monomachus), reign of, 247
 Constantine X. (Ducas), reign of, 250, 251
 Constantine XI. (Paleologus), accession of, 343; attacked by the Turks, 344; last hours of, 347; death of, 348
 Constantinople* founded by Con-

stantine, 18; topography of, 19-29; besieged by the Goths, 41; street fighting in, 51; besieged by Avars and Persians, 136, 137; besieged for the first time by the Saracens, 170; besieged for the second time by the Saracens, 185, 186; besieged by Bulgarians, 205; commercial importance of, 224; riots in, 247; the Crusaders at, 264; taken by the Franks and Venetians, 284; stormed and sacked a second time, 287, 288; devastation of, by the Latins, 291; besieged by John Ducas, 291; recovered by the Greeks, 305; taken by John Paleologus, 329; besieged by Murad II., 337; last siege of, 346; taken by the Turks, 348

Corippus, poem of, 144

Council of Constantinople, under Constantine IV., 172; under Constantine V., 197; under Leo V., 206

Council of Florence, John VI. at, 341

Courtenay, house of at Constantinople, 300, 301

Crete, conquered by the Saracens, 208; recovered by Nicephorus Phocas, 228; taken by the Venetians, 292

Cross, the Holy, captured by the Persians, 132; recovered by Heraclius, 139; removed to Constantinople, 163

Crumn, king of Bulgaria, defeats Nicephorus I., 203; besieges Constantinople, 205

Crusaders, their dealings with Alexius I., 263, 264; enter Syria, 265; of the Fourth Crusade, 279; conquer Constantinople, 288

Ctesiphon, Heraclius at, 138

Cyprus, monks banished to, 197; recovered by Nicephorus Phocas, 230; seized by Isaac Comnenus, 277; taken by Richard I. of England, 278

D

Damascus, taken by the Persians, 131; taken by the Saracens, 163

Dandolo, Henry, doge of Venice, 280, 281; at the storm of Constantinople, 284, 288

Dara taken in the Persian wars, 136

Dastagerd taken by Heraclius, 138

David Comnenus defeated by Theodore I., 299

Delphic tripod, the, 24; mutilated by Mahomet II., 349

Delphic oracle, the, orders foundation of Byzantium, 3

Digenes Akritas, epic of, 222

Diocletian makes Nicomedia his capital, 15

Diogenes, Romanus, reign of, 251; defeated at at Manzikert, 254; slain, 256

Ducas, *see under* Constantine X., Michael VII., John III., Theodore II.

Durazzo, battle of, 260

Dushan, Stephen, king of Servia, conquests of, 327

E

Ecloga, the, Leo III.'s code of laws, 194

Eesa, Sultan, 334-5

Egypt, conquered by the Persians, 134; conquered by the Saracens, 164; separated from the Caliphate, 227

Eikasia, story of, 211

Emesa, taken by the Saracens, 163; taken by Nicephorus Phocas, 231

Epirus, the despotate of, 298, 301, 304, 327

Ertogrul, the Turk, 322

Eudocia (Athenais), wife of Theodosius II., her disgrace, 56

Eudocia, wife of Romanus Diogenes, 251

Eudoxia, Ælia, wife of Arcadius, 52

Eugenius IV., pope, treaty of, with John VI., 341
 Euphrosyne, wife of Michael the Amorian, 207
 Eutropius, minister of Arcadius, 47; protected by Chrysostom, 50
 Euphemius, rebel in Sicily, 208
 Exarchate, of Ravenna, 119; conquered by the Lombards, 196

F

Fatimite dynasty in Egypt, 243
 Ferrara, John VI. at Council of, 341
 Flaccilla, benevolence of, 156
 Florence, Council of, 341
 Franks, threaten Italy, 89; summoned by Witiges, 91; protect the Papacy, 196
 Fritigern, Gothic ruler, 35-7; victory of over Valens, 40
 Fravitta defeats Gainas, 51

G

Gainas, minister of Arcadius, 47; rebellion of, 50; slain, 51
 Gallienus, Byzantium destroyed by, 10
 Gallipoli seized by the Turks, 329
 Ganzaca burnt by Heraclius, 136
 Gelimer, king of the Vandals, 81; defeated and captured, 85
 Genoa, rise of, 263; trade of, with the East, 267; allied to Michael Paleologus, 314; sends aid to Constantine XI., 344
 George the Alan, 318
 George of Pisidia, poems of, 221
 Giustiniani, John, defends Constantinople, 344-8
 Godfrey of Bouillon, 264
 Goths, early history of, 32; cross the Danube, 37; defeat Valens, 39; besiege Constantinople, 41; submit to Theodosius, 42; the Visigoths under Alaric, 48; quit the East, 49; the Ostrogoths under Theodoric at war with Zeno, 62; invade Italy, 64;

kingdom of, attacked by Belisarius, 86; wars of, with Justinian, 88-94; defeated and destroyed, 95

"Grand Company," the, hired by Andronicus II., 317; ravage Thrace, 318; conquer Athens, 319

Greece, invaded by the Goths, 48; overrun by the Slavs, 125; conquered by the Crusaders, 296, 297

Greek fire, invented, 170; used by the Byzantine fleet, 220

Gregory the Great, Pope, 120, 121
 Guiscard, Robert, wars of, with Alexius I., 259-61

H

Haroun-al-Raschid, wars of, with Nicephorus I., 203

Helena, mother of Constantine I., 19

Hellas, theme of, 168; revolts against Leo III., 193

Henry of Flanders, Emperor, 295-6

Henry VI. of Swabia, Emperor of the West, 278

Heracleonas, reign and fall of, 165-6

Heraclius the Elder, rebellion of, 130

Heraclius I., sails against Constantinople, 130; slays Phocas, 130; disasters of the Persian War, 132; his Crusade, 133; victorious campaign of, 135-7; his triumph, 139; attacked by the Saracens, 160; defeated, 163; last years of, 164

Heraclius Constantinus, son of Heraclius I., short reign of, 165

Hierapolis taken by Nicephorus Phocas, 231

Hieromax, battle of the, 162

Hilderic, Vandal king, deposed, 81

Hippodrome, the great, 22

Histiaeus holds Byzantium, 5
 Honorius slays Stilicho, 49
 Hungary, converted to Christianity, 262; invaded by Manuel I., 271; attacks the Ottoman Turks, 342
 Huniades, John, 342
 Huns, under Attila, 57; ravage Syria, 71; threaten Constantinople, 104; defeated by Belisarius, 105

I

Iconium, Sultanate of, *see under* Seljouks
 Iconoclasm, the movement, 188-9; vigorous under the Isaurian emperors, 192-7; in the ninth century, 203-10; ended by Michael III., 212
 Iconodules, 202
 Images, superstitions connected with, 190; removed by Leo III., 192; use of, ceases in the East, 212
 Innocent III., sends out Fourth Crusade, 281; wrath of with the Crusaders, 290
 Irene, the empress, regency of, 197; deposed, 198; blinds her son and seizes the throne, 199
 Isaac I. (Comnenus), his short reign, 250
 Isaac II. (Angelus), rebels, 273; his reign, 276; deposed by his brother, 278; restored, 284; dies, 285
 Isaac Comnenus, of Cyprus, 277-8
 Isaurians, the, enlisted by Leo and Zeno, 61; dynasty of the, 192-9
 Isperich, king of Bulgaria, 172
 Italy, conquered by Belisarius, 88-91; partly conquered by the Lombards, 116; Constans II. in, 169; central parts of, lost, 196; southern parts of, conquered by the Normans, 258

J

Jacobites, in Egypt and Syria, 161
 Janissaries, the, 324

Jerusalem, Eudocia at, 57; taken by Persians, 132; Heraclius at, 139; taken by the Saracens, 163; taken by the Crusaders, 265
 John I. (Zimisces), murders his uncle, 232; successful wars of, 234-7; dies, 239
 John II. (Comnenus), reign and conquests of, 268-9
 John III. (Ducas Vatatzes), 300; conquers Thrace and Macedonia, 301
 John IV. (Ducas), dethroned by Michael Paleologus, 304
 John V. (Paleologus), minority of, 325-8; expels John Cantacuzenus, 329; defeated by the Turks, 330; later years of, 333
 John VI. (Paleologus), reign of, 339; embraces Catholicism, 341
 John (Angelus), Emperor of Thessalonica, 300
 John, King of Bulgaria, 276; conquers Baldwin I., 295
 John the Cappadocian, finance minister, 76
 John Chrysostom, patriarch, 52; exiled, 53
 John Ducas, regent, 255
 John the Faster, patriarch, 120
 John the Oramuarian, patriarch, 209, 212
 John Huniades, general, 342
 John Lydus, author, 143
 Julian, reign of, 32
 Justin I., reign of, 65
 Justin II., reign and wars of, 117
 Justinian I., character of, 65; marries Theodora, 66; first Persian war of, 71-4; Italian and African wars of, 83-93; recalls Belisarius, 91; his buildings, 106-9; his legal work, 112
 Justinian II., misfortunes of, 172; banished, 175; reconquers his throne, 179; slain, 180

K

Kadesia, battle of, 164
 Kaikhosru, Sultan, slain in battle, 299

Karasi, Emirs of, 319
 Karl the Great, crowned emperor, 201
 Kathisma, the, 24
 Khaled, victories of, 162
 Khazars, allied to Heraclius, 137;
 shelter Justinian II., 178
 Kief, Russian capital, 234
 Kobad, wars of, with Justinian, 71

L

Ladislav, king of Bulgaria, 243
 Ladislav, king of Poland and
 Hungary, 342
 Larissa, battle of, 261
 Lascaris, *see under* Theodore I.
 Latin language, used in the Balkan
 Peninsula, 124; decay of the,
 144
 Law, Roman, codified by Justinian,
 112; changes of Leo III., 194;
 of Basil I., 214
 Lazarus the painter, 224
 Lecky, Mr., views of, discussed,
 153
 Lazica, wars of Justinian and
 Chosroës about, 100
 Leo I., reign of, 60
 Leo III., the Isaurian, seizes the
 crown, 182; defends Constanti-
 nople, 184; religious reforms of,
 192; political reforms of, 194
 Leo IV., short reign of, 197
 Leo V. (the Armenian) seizes
 the throne, 204; defeats the
 Bulgarians, 205; murdered, 206
 Leo VI. (the Wise), reign of, 216;
 literary works of, 218
 Leo the Deacon, 237
 Leontius, usurpation and fall of,
 175-7; slain, 179
 Liberius conquers South Spain,
 96-7
 Licinius, wars of with Maximinus
 Daza, 11; dethroned by Con-
 stantine I., 12
 Literature, 221-2
 Lombards, the, leave Pannonia,
 115; conquer North Italy, 117;
 defeated by Constans II., 169;
 subdue the Exarchate, 196

Louis IX., of France, gives money
 to Baldwin II., 305
 Lupicinus, governor of Moesia, 37
 Lydus, John, author, 143

M

Macedonia, overrun by Slavs,
 125; in hands of Boniface of
 Montferrat, 292; conquered by
 Stephen Dushan, 327
 Maeander, battle of the, 299
 Mahomet, the prophet, rise of,
 159
 Mahomet I., Sultan, reunites the
 Ottoman Empire, 336
 Mahomet II. conquers Constanti-
 nople, 343-50
 Maniakes, wars of, 246
 Manuel I. (Comnenus), reign and
 wars of, 271-2
 Manuel II. (Paleologus), reign
 and misfortunes of, 336-9
 Manzikert, battle of, 254
 Marcianus, reign of, 59
 Martina, niece and wife of Hera-
 clius, 165; exiled, 166
 Martyropolis, 121
 Maurice, reign of, 120; Persian
 wars, 121; fall and death of,
 127
 Maximinus Daza takes Byzantium,
 11
 Melek-Adel, Sultan of Egypt,
 279
 Mesembria, taken by Bulgarians,
 204; battle of, 205
 Mesopotamia, conquered by He-
 raelius, 136; invaded by John
 Zimisces, 239
 Michael I. (Rhagabe), short
 reign of, 204
 Michael II. (the Amorion), con-
 spiracy of, 206; ecclesiastical
 policy of, 207; wars of, 208
 Michael III. (the Drunkard),
 minority of, 212; excesses and
 murder of, 213
 Michael IV. (the Paphlagonian),
 reign and wars of, 246
 Michael V., ephemeral power of,
 247

Michael VI. (Stratioticus), short reign of, 248-9
 Michael VII. (Ducas), minority of, 251; disastrous reign of, 256
 Michael VIII. (Paleologus), usurpation of, 303-4; overthrows the Latin Empire, 305; disbands the Asiatic militia, 313; wars of, 304, 314
 Michael IX., son and colleague of Andronicus II., defeated by the "Grand Company," 318
 Michael Angelus, despot of Epirus, 300
 Moawiah, Caliph, attacks Constantinople, 170; his armies defeated, 171
 Moesia, invaded by the Goths, 37; seized by the Bulgarians, 171
 Monks, characteristics of the early, 149; favour image worship, 193; persecuted by Constantine Pronymus, 197
 Monophysites, 75
 Moors, Gelimer flies to the, 85
 Montferrat, *see under* Boniface and Conrad
 Morals, effect of Christianity on, 145-7, general character of Byzantine, 155-6
 Moslemah besieges Constantinople, 185-7
 Motassem, the Caliph, sacks Amorium, 210
 Murad I., conquers Thrace, 329; suzerain of John V., 330; conquers the Serbs, 332
 Murad II., besieges Constantinople, 337; makes peace with Manuel II., 338; wars of, 342
 Murtzuphlus, *see* Alexius V. (Ducas)
 Myriocephalon, battle of, 272

N

Naissus, birthplace of Constantine I., 16; taken by the Bulgarians, 277
 Naples, taken by Belisarius, 88; interference of the Pope with, 120

Narses, the eunuch, conquers Italy from the Goths, 95
 Narses, General, burnt alive by Phocas, 129
 Navy, the Byzantine, 219-20
 Nicaea, taken by the Crusaders, 264; by the Ottomans, 323
 Nicephorus I. dethrones Irene, 199; disastrous wars of, 203
 Nicephorus II., Phocas, takes Candia, 228; emperor, 229; wars of, 231; murdered by Zimisce, 232
 Nicholas V., pope, sends aid to Constantine XI., 344
 Nicomedia, taken by the Ottomans, 323
 Nineveh, battle of, 138
 Normans, conquer Byzantine Italy, 247; invade the empire, 259; second invasion of repelled, 267; third invasion of, 273
 Notaras, John, 342
 Naceria, Goths beaten at, 95

O

Obeidah, Saracen general, 162
 Obsequian theme, the, 168
 Odoacer, conquered by Theodoric, 63, 64
 Omar, the Caliph, visits Jerusalem, 163
 Omeiyades, dynasty of the, 170
 Orkhan, Emir of the Ottomans, reign and successes of, 323-4; Pretender to the Sultanate, 343
 Orosius, history of, 150
 Ostrogoths, under Theodoric in Moesia, 62; conquer Italy, 64; weakness of the kingdom of, 82; attacked by Justinian, 88; wars of with Belisarius and Narses, 89-94; crushed, 95
 Othman, Emir of the Turks, conquests of, 321-23

P

Palace, imperial, at Constantinople, 19

- Paleologus, house of, *see under*
 Michael VI., Andronicus II.
 and III., John V. and VI.,
 Constantine XI.
 Palermo, taken by Belisarius, 88
 Palestine, conquered by the Per-
 sians, 132; overrun by the
 Arabs, 163; subdued by the
 Crusaders, 265
 Pandects, compiled by Justinian,
 112
 Patriarchal palace of Constanti-
 nople, 21
 Patriarchs, *see under* John, Ser-
 gius, &c.
 Paulicians, sect of the persecuted
 by Basil I. 214
 Paulinus, put to death by Theo-
 dosius II., 57
 Patzinak Tartars, the, 237; wars
 of with Alexius I., 262
 Pavia, taken by the Lombards, 116
 Persian Empire destroyed by the
 Arabs, 164
 Persian Wars under Julian, 32;
 under Justinian, 71, 99; under
 Maurice, 121; under Phocas
 and Heraclius, 130-36
 Peter, general under Nicephorus
 Phocas, 231
 Philip of Macedon, attacks Byzan-
 tium, 7
 Philip of Swabia, helps Alexius
 Angelus the younger, 279-8
 Philippicus, usurpation and fall of,
 180-1
 Phocas, emperor, his usurpation,
 127; cruelty of, 129; slain, 130
 Phocas, Bardas, rebels against
 John Zimisces, 233; against
 Basil II., 241
 Phocas, Nicephorus, reign of, 228-
 30; wars of, 231; murdered,
 233
 Photius, patriarch, his learning,
 221
 Plague, the great of A.D. 542, 101
 Popes, rise of the power of, 120;
 estranged from the empire, 196;
 call in the Franks, 199
 Priscus, general of Maurice, 126
 Prusa, taken by the Turks, 323;
 sacked by the Mongols, 334
 Pulcheria, Empress, with her
 brother Theodosius II., 55;
 marries Marcianus, 59
 Pelekanon, battle of, 323
 Polyeuktus, patriarch, 230
- R
- Ravenna, taken by Belisarius, 91;
 exarchate of, 119; occupied by
 the Lombards, 196
 Rhangabe, Michael, short reign
 of, 204
 Rhazates, general, slain by Hera-
 clius, 137
 Richard Coeur de Leon, conquers
 Cyprus, 278
 Robert Guiscard, wars of with
 Alexius I., 259-60; final re-
 pulse of, 261
 Roger de Flor, hired by Androni-
 cus II., 317; conquests of, 318;
 assassinated, 318
 Romanus I. (Lecapenus), long re-
 gency of, 217
 Romanus II., short reign of, 228-9
 Romanus III. (Argyrus), married
 to Zoe, 245; dies, 246
 Romanus IV. (Diogenes), reign of,
 251; defeated by Turks, 254;
 dies, 256
 Rome, taken by Belisarius, 89;
 besieged by the Goths, 90;
 taken by Baduila, 94; Gregory
 the Great at, 120; Constans II.
 at, 169; Charles the Great at,
 199
 Ruric, founds the Russian king-
 dom, 234
 Russians, early invasions of, 216;
 attack Bulgaria, 234; defeated
 by John Zimisces, 237; con-
 verted to Christianity, 239
- S
- Sabatius, father of Justinian, 65
 Samuel, king of Bulgaria, 241;
 wars and death of, 242
 Saoudji, rebels against Murad I.,
 333

- Sapor, king of Persia, 32
 Saracens, the, converted by Mahomet, 159; invade Syria, 160-2; conquer Egypt, 166; conquer Persia, 164; civil wars of the, 166; for later history, *see under* names of the Caliphs
 Sardis, taken by Alexius I., 265
 Scholarian Guards, the, 104
 Seljouk Turks, conquer Persia and Armenia, 250-1; invade the empire, 252; conquer Asia Minor, 254; defeated by the Crusaders, 265; wars of with the Comneni, 265-7-72; with Theodore I., 298
 Sergius, patriarch, 133
 Senate House at Constantinople, 21
 Servians, cross the Danube, 123; conquered by Basil II., 243; rebel against Michael IV., 246; conquered by Manuel I., 271; overrun Macedonia, 327; subdued by the Turks, 330
 Severus, emperor, takes Byzantium, 9
 Shahrbarz, the Persian, takes Jerusalem, 132; defeated by Heraclius, 135
 Sicily, conquered by Belisarius, 88; invaded by Saracens, 208; finally conquered by Saracens, 214; invaded by Maniakes, 246
 Siros, deposes his father Chosroës, 138
 Skleros, Bardas, rebel against Basil II., 241
 Slavery, influence of Christianity on, 147-8
 Slavs, invade the Balkan Peninsula, 123; subject to the Avars, 124-37; ravages of the, 125, 129; made tributary by Constant II., 169; besiege Thessalonica, 171
 Sophia, St., first building of, 27; burnt in 410 A.D., 53; burnt in the *Nika* riots, 77; rebuilding of by Justinian, 107-9; desecrated by the Turks, 349
 Spain, South of, conquered by Justinian's generals, 96-7
 Stauracius, emperor, short reign of, 204
 Statues at Constantinople, 21, 25; destruction of by the Crusaders, 291
 Suleiman, Saracen vizier, besieges Constantinople, 185; dies, 186; Turkish Sultan, reign of, 334-6
 Stephen Lecapenus, usurpation of, 217
 Stephen Dushan, king of Servia, conquers of, 327
 Stephen, pope, calls in the Franks, 196
 Stilicho, wars of with Alaric, 47-8; murdered by Honorius, 49
 Swiatoslaw, king of Russia, conquers Bulgaria, 235; defeated by Zimisce, 237
 Syria, invaded by the Huns, 71; invaded by Kobad, 73; conquered by Shahrbarz, 129-30; invaded and conquered by the Saracens, 162-3; conquests of Nicephorus Phocas in, 229; subdued by the Crusaders, 265
 Sophronius, patriarch of Jerusalem, 163
- T
- Tagina, battle of, 95
 Tarsus, taken by Nicephorus Phocas, 230
 Teia, Gothic king, slain in battle, 95
 Telemachus, martyrdom of, 145
 Terbel, king of Bulgaria, aids Justinian II., 178
 Themes, institution of the provincial system of, 167-8
 Theodahat, Gothic king, murders his wife, 82; war of with Justinian, 87; slain, 88
 Theodora, wife of Justinian, career of, 66-8; in the *Nika* riots, 79; death of, 103
 Theodora, wife of Theophilus, 211; regency of, 212
 Theodora, daughter of Constantine VIII., reign of, 248

- Theodora, daughter of Cantacuzenus, married to Orkhan, 328
- Theodore I. (Lascaris), at the siege of Constantinople, 289; made emperor at Nicaea, 298; wars of, 299
- Theodore II. (Ducas), short reign of, 303
- Theodore, Studita, 221
- Theodoric, son of Triarius, wars of with Zeno, 62-3
- Theodoric, son of Theodemir, rebels against Zeno, 62; conquers Italy, 64; dies, 81
- Theodotus, minister of Justinian II., 174
- Theodosius I., wars of, with the Goths, 42; dies, 44
- Theodosius II., reign of, 54-6; war with Attila, 57
- Theodosius III., usurpation of, 181; abdicates, 183
- Theophano, empress, 229; murders her husband, 233
- Theophilus, emperor, reign and wars of, 208-11; his love of art, 224-5
- Theophilus, patriarch of Alexandria, 52
- Thessalonica, besieged by the Slavs, 171; stormed by the Saracens, 216; Crusading kingdom of, 292; retaken by the Greeks, 296; taken by the Turks, 330; recovered, 336; finally lost, 341
- Theuderic, Frankish king, attacks Witiges, 89
- Thomas, rebel in Asia, 208
- Tiberius II., Constantinus, short reign of, 114; wars of, 117
- Tiberius III., Apsimarus, rebellion of, 177; deposed and slain, 179
- Tiberius, son of Justinian II., slain, 180
- Togrul Beg, Turkish chief, conquers Bagdad, 251
- Totila, *see under* Baduila
- Trebizond, empire of, founded, 298
- Tribonian, minister of Justinian I., 112
- Tricameron, battle of, 85
- Turks, *see under* Seljouks, and names of Ottoman Sultans
- Tuscany, conquered by the Lombards, 116
- Tyana, sacked by Saracens, 182
- U
- Uldes, king of the Huns, 51
- Urosh, king of Servia, 327
- Uscup, capital of Stephen Dushan, 327
- V
- Valens, reign of, 36; slain in battle by the Goths, 41
- Vandals, kingdom of the, in Africa, 82; conquered by Belisarius, 85
- Varangian guards, 239; at Durazzo, 260; at siege of Constantinople, 282, 288
- Verona, Baduila at, 92
- Venice, rise of, 225; commercial treaties of, with Alexius I., 268; wars with Manuel I., 271; aids the Fourth Crusade, 279; engages in war with Alexius III., 282; share of in plunder of Constantinople, 292; at war with Michael VIII., 314
- Vigilius, pope, persecuted by Justinian, 103
- Vikings, the, in Russia, 234
- Visigoths, the, invade Moesia, 35; slay Valens, 41; under Alaric, 48; migrate to Italy, 49
- Vitalian, rebellion of, 61
- W
- Welid, caliph, wars of, with the empire, 182
- Witiges, Gothic king, 88; besieges Rome, 90; submits to Belisarius, 91
- Y
- Yezid, Saracen prince, wars of with the empire, 170

Z

Zachariah, patriarch of Jerusalem,
132
Zapetra, taken by Theophilus, 210
Zara, taken by the Crusaders, 280
Zeno, emperor, reorganizes the
army, 61; wars of with the
Goths, 62; sends Theodoric to
Italy, 64

Zeuxippus, baths of, 19
Zimisces, John, murders Nice-
phorus I., 233; Russian war
of, 235-7; Asiatic conquests
of, 239
Zoe, empress, her marriages and
reign, 245-7

