

obtained access to the emperor, they, in a set speech, laid all their distresses before him, and presented him with a decree of their council in which the whole affair was fully set forth. When the emperor had read it, he neither trusted the report of the master of the offices, framed to defend the misconduct of the count, nor, on the other hand, did he place confidence in these men who made a contrary report; but promised a full investigation into the affair, which however was deferred in the manner in which high authorities are wont to let such matters give place to their more pleasant occupations and amusements.

10. While waiting in suspense and protracted anxiety for some relief from the emperor's camp, the citizens of Tripoli were again attacked by troops of the same barbarians, now elated with additional confidence by their past successes. They ravaged the whole territory of Leptis and also that of Cea, spreading total ruin and desolation everywhere, and, at last, retired loaded with an enormous quantity of spoil, and having slain many of our officers, the most distinguished of whom were Rusticianus, one of the priests, and the ædile, Nicasius.

11. This invasion was prevented from being repelled by the fact, that at the entreaty of the ambassadors, the conduct of the military affairs, which had at first been intrusted to Ruricius, the president, had been subsequently transferred to Count Romanus.

12. So now a new messenger was sent to Gaul with an account of this fresh disaster; and his intelligence roused the emperor to great anger. So Palladius, his secretary, who had also the rank of tribune, was sent at once to liquidate the pay due to the soldiers, who were dispersed over Africa, and to examine into all that had taken place in Tripoli, he being an officer whose report could be trusted.

13. But while all these delays took place from the continual deliberations held on the case, and while the people of Tripoli were still waiting for the answer, the Asturians, now still more insolent after their double success, like birds of prey whose ferocity has been sharpened by the taste of blood, flew once more to attack them; and having slain every one who did not flee from the danger, they carried off all the spoil which they had previously left behind, cutting down all the trees and vines.