

Amm. 31,12,1-7

Text Übersetzung:

(J.C. Rolfe)

1 In those same days Valens was troubled for two reasons: first, by the news that the Lentienses had been defeated; secondly, because Sebastianus wrote from time to time exaggerating his exploits. He therefore marched forth from Melanthias, being eager to do some glorious deed to equal his young nephew, whose valiant exploits consumed him with envy. He had under his command a force made up of varying elements, but one neither contemptible, nor unwarlike; for he had joined with them also a large number of veterans, among whom were other officers of high rank and Trajanus, shortly before a commander-in-chief, whom he had recalled to active service. 2 And since it was learned from careful reconnoitring that the enemy were planning with strong guards to block the roads over which the necessary supplies were being brought, he tried competently to frustrate this attempt by quickly sending an infantry troop of bowmen and a squadron of cavalry, in order to secure the advantages of the narrow passes, which were near by. 3 During the next three days, when the barbarians, advancing at a slow pace and through unfrequented places, since they feared a sally, were fifteen miles distant from the city, and were making for the station of Nice, through some mistake or other the emperor was assured by his skirmishers that all that part of the enemy's horde which they had seen consisted of only ten thousand men, and carried away by a kind of rash ardour, he determined to attack them at once. 4 Accordingly, advancing in square formation, he came to the vicinity of a suburb of Hadrianopolis, where he made a strong rampart of stakes, surrounded by a moat, and impatiently waited for Gratian; there he received Richomeres, general of the household troops, sent in advance by Gratian with a letter, in which he said that he himself also would soon be there. 5 Since the contents besought him to wait a while for the partner in his dangers, and not rashly to expose himself alone to serious perils, Valens called a council of various of his higher officers and considered what ought to be done. 6 And while some, influenced by Sebastianus, urged him to give battle at once, the man called Victor, a commander of cavalry, a Sarmatian by birth, but foresighted and careful, with the support of many others recommended that his imperial colleague be awaited, so that, strengthened by the addition of the Gallic army, he might the more easily crush the fiery over-confidence of the barbarians. 7 However, the fatal insistence of the emperor prevailed, supported by the flattering opinion of some of his courtiers, who urged him to make all haste in order that Gratian might not have a share in the victory which (as they represented) was already all but won.