

plunder, and dividing such citizens as they had seized into groups to be led into captivity, when this cry of glad relief broke loudly upon the air.

The news that had aroused the citizens quickly reached the ears of Attila. A strong army of enemies was at hand. There was no time to occupy and attempt to defend the city. If his men were assailed by citizens and soldiers in those narrow streets they might be slaughtered without mercy. Prudence dictated a retreat.

Attila was as prudent as he was daring. The sound of trumpets recalled his obedient hordes. Out they swarmed through the openings which had permitted their entrance. Soon the army of the Huns was in full retreat, while the advancing host of Romans and Goths marched proudly into the open gates of the delivered city, with banners proudly floating and trumpets loudly blaring, while every heart within those walls was in a thrill of joy. Orleans had been saved, almost by magic as it seemed, for never had been peril more extreme, need more pressing. An hour more of delay, and Orleans, perhaps the whole province of Gaul, had been lost.

We may briefly conclude the story of this invasion of the Huns. Attila, convinced of the strength and spirit of his enemy, retreated in haste, foreseeing ruin if he should be defeated in the heart of Gaul. He crossed the Seine, and halted not until he had reached the plains of Châlons, whose level surface was well adapted to the evolutions of the skilled horsemen who formed the strength of his hordes.

As he retreated, the Romans and Goths followed,