

Back went the messenger, again mounted the rampart, again swept the plain with his eyes. Nothing, —ah! what was that, on the horizon, at the very extremity of the landscape, that small, faint cloud, which he had not seen before? He watched it; it seemed to grow larger and nearer. In haste he returned to the bishop with the hopeful news.

"I have seen a distant mist, like a far-off eloud of dust," he said. "It is moving. It comes nearer."

"It is the aid of God!" burst from the lips of the bishop, his heart suddenly elate with joy. And from the expectant multitude, through whose ranks ran like wildfire the inspiring tidings, burst the same glad cry, "It is the aid of God!"

Crowds ran in all haste to the ramparts; hundreds of eyes were fixed on the far-off, mist-like object; every moment it grew larger and more distinct; flashes, as of steel, color, as of standards, were gradually perceived; at last a favorable wind blew aside the dust, and to their joyful eyes, under this gray canopy, appeared the waving folds of banners, and under them, in serried array, the squadrons of the Roman and Gothic troops, pressing forward in all haste to the relief of the beleaguered city.

Well might the citizens cry, "It is the aid of God!" The army of Ætius had come not a day, not an hour, too soon. The walls had given way before the thundering blows of the battering-rams. A breach had been made through which the Huns were swarming. Only for the desire of Attila to save the city, it might have been already in flames. As it was, the savage foes were breaking into the houses in search of