

33. The most important events in the reign of Con'stantine, after he had restored the outward unity of the empire, were his wars with the Sarmátians and Goths, whom he severely chastised, his domestic difficulties, in which he showed little of the character of a Christian; and the establishment, at Byzan'tium, of the new capital of the Roman empire; afterwards called *Constantinople*, from its founder. The motives which led Con'stantine to the choice of a new capital, on a spot which seemed formed by nature to be the metropolis of a great empire, were those of policy and interest, mingled with feelings of revenge for insults which he had received at Rome, where he was execrated for abandoning the religion of his forefathers.

34. The removal of the seat of government was followed by an entire change in the forms of civil and military administration. The military despotism of the former emperors now gave place to the despotism of a court, surrounded by all the forms and ceremonies, the pride, pomp, and circumstances, of Eastern greatness: all magistrates were accurately divided into new classes, and a uniform system of taxation was established, although the amount of tribute was imposed by the absolute authority of the monarch. Finally Con'stantine, as he approached the end of his life, went back to the system of Diocletian, and divided the empire among his three sons Con'stantine, Constan'tius, and Con'stans, and his two nephews, Dalmátius and Hannibaliánus. After a reign of thirty-one years Con'stantine the First died at Nicomédia, at the age of sixty-three years. (A. D. 337.)

35. The division of sovereign power among so many rulers involved the empire in frequent insurrections and civil wars, until, sixteen years from the death of Con'stantine, Constan'tius, or Constan'tius II., after having seen all his rivals overcome, and several usurpers vanquished, was left in the sole possession of the empire. During his reign of twenty-four years he was engaged in frequent wars with the Franks, Saxons,<sup>1</sup> Aleman'ni, and Sarmátians, while the Persians continued to harass the Eastern

1. The *Saxons* were a people of Germany, whose original seats appear to have been on the neck of the Cimbric peninsula, (now Denmark,) between the Elbe and the Baltic, and embracing the present Sleswick and Holstein. (Map No. XVII.) The early Saxons were a nation of fishermen and pirates; and it appears that after they had extended their depredations to the coasts of Britain and eastern and southern Gaul, numerous auxiliaries from the shores of the Baltic joined them, and, gradually coalescing with them into a national body, accepted the name and the laws of the Saxons. In the early part of the fifth century, the Saxons were converted to Christianity by the Roman missionaries; and half a century later they had obtained a permanent establishment in Britain.

provinces. While Constan'tius was sustaining a doubtful war in the East, his cousin Júlian, whom he had appointed to the command of the Western provinces, with the title of Cæsar, was proclaimed emperor by his victorious legions in Gaul. Preparations for civil war were made on both sides; but the Roman world was saved from the calamities of the struggle by the sudden death of Constan'tius. (A. D. 361.)

36. Júlian, commonly called the Apostate, on account of his relapsing from Christianity into paganism, possessed many amiable and shining qualities, and his application to business was intense. He reformed numerous abuses of his predecessor, but, in the great object of his ambition, the restoration of ancient paganism, although he had issued an edict of universal toleration, he showed a marked hostility to the Christians, subjecting them to many disabilities and humiliations, and allowing their enemies to treat them with excessive rigor.

37. Trained in the most celebrated schools of Grecian philosophy at Athens, Júlian was an able writer and an artful sophist, and, employing the weapons of argument and ridicule against the Christians, he strenuously labored to degrade Christianity, and bring contempt upon its followers. In this effort he was partially successful; but ere long the sophisms of the "apostate emperor" were ably refuted by St. Cyril and others, and the result of the controversy was highly favorable to the increase and spread of the new religion.

38. Not relying upon the weapons of argument and ridicule alone, Júlian aimed what he thought would be a deadly blow to Christianity, by ordering the temple of Jerusalem to be rebuilt, hoping thus to falsify the language of prophecy and the truth of Revelation. But although the Jews were invited from all the provinces of the empire to assemble once more on the holy mountain of their fathers, and every effort was made to secure the success of the undertaking, both by the emperor and the Jews themselves, the work did not prosper, and was finally abandoned in despair.

39. Most writers, both Christians and pagans, declare that the work was frustrated in consequence of balls of fire that burst from the earth and alarmed the workmen who were employed in digging the foundations. Whether these phenomena, so gravey and abundantly attested, were supernatural or otherwise, does not affect the authenticity of the prophecy that pronounced desolation upon Jerusalem. The most powerful monarch of the earth, stimulated by



pride, passion, and interest, and aided by a zealous people, attempted to erect a building in one of his cities, but found all his efforts vain, because "the finger of God was there."<sup>a</sup>

40. During the same year in which Júlían attempted the rebuilding of the temple, he set out with a large army for the conquest of Persia. The Persian monarch made overtures of peace through his ambassadors; but Júlían dismissed them with the declaration that he intended speedily to visit the court of Persia. He marched with great rapidity into the heart of the country, overcoming all obstacles, but being led astray in the desert by treacherous guides, his army was reduced to great distress by want of provisions, and he was forced to commence a retreat. At length Júlían himself, in a skirmish which proved favorable to the Romans, was mortally wounded by a Persian javelin. He died the same night, spending his last moments, like Socrates, in philosophical discourse with his friends. (A. D. 363.)

41. In the death of Júlían, the race of the great Con'stantine was extinct; and the empire was left without a master and without an heir. In this situation of affairs, Jóvian, who had held XXV. some important offices under Con'stantine, was proclaimed emperor by the army, which was still surrounded by the Persian hosts. The first care of Jóvian was to conclude a dishonorable peace, by which five provinces beyond the Tigris, the whole of Mesopatámia, and several fortified cities in other districts, were surrendered to the Persians. On his arrival at An'tioch, Jóvian revoked the edicts of his predecessor against the Christians. Soon after, while on his way to Constantinople, he was found dead in his bed, having been accidentally suffocated, as was supposed, by the fumes of burning charcoal. (Feb. A. D. 364.)

42. After an interval of ten days, Valentin'ian, the commander of the body guard at the time of Jóvian's death, was elected emperor. One month later he associated with himself, as a colleague in the empire, his brother Vá lens upon whom he conferred the government of the Eastern

XXVI. VAL-  
ENTIN'IAN  
AND  
VA'LENS.

<sup>a</sup>. The probable explanation of the remarkable incidents attending the attempt of Júlían to rebuild the temple, is, that the numerous subterranean excavations, reservoirs, &c., beneath and around the ruins of the temple, which had been neglected during a period of three hundred years, had become filled with inflammable air, which, taking fire from the torches of the workmen, repelled, by terrific explosions, those who attempted to explore the ruins. From a similar cause terrible accidents sometimes occur in deeply-excavated mines.—See *Milman's Notes on Gibbon*. Gibbon, vol. ii. p. 447.

provinces, from the lower Danube to the confines of Persia; while he reserved for himself the extensive territory reaching from the extremity of Greece to the wall of Scotland, and from the latter to the foot of Mount Atlas. This was the final division of the Roman world into the Eastern and Western Empire. The capital of the former was established at Constantinople, and of the latter at Milan. The city of Rome had long been falling into neglect and insignificance.

43. Soon after the period at which we have now arrived, the inroads of the barbarian tribes upon the northern and eastern frontiers of the empire became more vexatious and formidable than ever. The Picts and Scots' ravaged Britain; the Saxons began their piracies in the Northern seas; the German tribes of the Aleman'ni harassed Gaul; and the Goths crossed the Danube into Thrace; but during the twelve years of Valentin'ian's reign, his firmness and vigilance repulsed the barbarians at every point, while his genius directed and sustained the feeble counsels of his brother Vá lens.

44. About the time of the death of Valentin'ian, (A. D. 375) Vá lens was informed that the power of the Goths, long the enemies of Rome, had been subverted by the Huns, a fierce and warlike race of savages, till then unknown, who coming from the East, and crossing the Don and the sea of Azof, had driven before them the European nations that dwelt north of the Danube. The Vis'igoths first solicited from the Roman government protection against their ruthless invaders; and a vast multitude of these barbarians, whose numbers amounted to near a million of persons, of both sexes, and all ages, were permitted to settle on the waste lands of Thrace.

45. In the meantime the Os'trogoths, pressed forward by the unrelenting Huns, appeared on the banks of the Danube, and solicited the same indulgence that had been shown to their countrymen; and when their request was denied they crossed the stream with arms in their hands, and established a hostile camp on the territories of the empire. The two divisions of the Gothic nation now united their forces under their able general Frit'igern, and raising the standard

1. The Picts were a Caledonian race, famed for their marauding expeditions into the country south of them. The Scots were also a Caledonian race, who are believed to have come, originally, from Spain into Ireland, whence they passed over into Scotland. The genuine descendants of the ancient Scotch are believed to be the Gaels, or Highlanders, who speak the Erse or Gaelic language, which differs but little from the Irish.



of war devastated Thrace, Mac'edon, and Thes'saly, and carried their ravages to the very gates of Constantinople. In a decisive battle fought near Adrianóple' the Romans were defeated, and Vá lens himself was slain. (A. D. 378.)

46. Gratian, the son of Valentin'ian, and his successor in the Western empire, was already on his march to the aid of Vá lens, when he heard the tidings of the defeat and death of his unfortunate colleague. Too weak to avenge his fate, and conscious of his inability to sustain alone the sinking weight of the empire, he chose as his associate Theodósius, afterwards called the Great, assigned to him the government of the East, and then returned to his own provinces. Theodósius, by his prudence, rather than his valor, delivered his provinces from the scourge of barbarian warfare. The Goths, after the death of their great leader Frit'igern, were distracted by a multiplicity of counsels; and while some of them, falling back into their forests, carried their conquests to the unknown regions of the North, others were allowed to settle in Thrace, Phrygia, and Lydia, where, in the bosom of despotism, they cherished their native freedom, manners, and language, and lent to the Roman arms assistance at once precarious and dangerous.

47. Five years after the accession of Theodósius, Grátian perished in an attempt to quell a revolt of Max'imus, governor of Britain, who had been joined by the legions of Gaul Valentin'ian II., who succeeded Grátian, was driven from Italy by the usurper, and forced to take refuge in the court of Theodósius; but the latter, marching into Italy, defeated and slew Max'imus, and restored the royal exile to his throne. (A. D. 388.) The murder of Valentin'ian by the Gaul Abrogas'tes, and the revolt which he excited, (A. D. 392,) again called for the interference of Theodósius in the affairs of the West. His arms soon triumphed over all opposition; and the whole empire again came, for the last time, into the hands of one individual. (A. D. 394.) Theodósius died

four months after his victory, having previously bestowed upon his youngest son, Honórius, the throne of Milan, and upon the eldest, Arcádius, that of Constantinople.

1. *Adrianóple*, one of the most important cities of Thrace, stood on the left bank of the river Hebrus, now the *Maritza*, in one of the richest and finest plains of the world, one hundred and thirty-four miles north-west from Constantinople. It was founded by and named after the emperor Adrian, although in early times a small Thracian village existed there, called *Uskadama*. It is now the second city in the Turkish empire, containing a population of not less than one hundred thousand souls. (*Map No. VII.*)

48. The civil wars that followed the accession of the new emperor were soon interrupted by the more important events of new barbarian invasions. Scarcely had Theodósius expired, when the Gothic nation, guided by the bold and artful genius of Al'aric, who had learned his lessons of war in the school of Frit'igern, was again in arms. After nearly all Greece had been ravaged by the invader, Stil'icho, the able general of Honórius, came to its assistance; but Al'aric evaded him by passing into Epirus, and soon after, crossing the Júlian Alps,<sup>1</sup> advanced toward Milan. (A. D. 403.)

49. Honórius fled from his capital, but was overtaken by the speed of the Gothic cavalry, and obliged to shut himself up in the little fortified town of As'ta,<sup>2</sup> where he was soon surrounded and besieged by the enemy. Stil'icho hastened to the relief of his sovereign, and suddenly falling upon the Goths in their camp at Pollen'tia,<sup>3</sup> routed them with great slaughter, released many thousand prisoners, retook the magnificent spoils of Corinth, Athens, Argos, and Sparta; and made captive the wife of Al'aric. The Gothic chief, undaunted by this sudden reverse, hastily collected his shattered army, and breaking through the unguarded passes of the Apennines, spread desolation nearly to the walls of Rome. The city was saved by the diligence of Stil'icho; but the withdrawal of the barbarians from Italy was purchased by a large ransom.

50. The recent danger to which Honórius had been exposed at Milan, induced the unwarlike emperor to seek a more secure retreat in the fortress of Raven'na,<sup>4</sup> which, from this time to the middle of

1. Augustus divided the Alpine chain, which extends from the Gulf of Genoa to the Adriatic, in a crescent form, into seven portions; of which the Júlian range, terminating in Illyricum, is the most eastern.

2. *As'ta* (now *Asti*) was on the north side of the river Tanárus, (now *Tanaro*) in Ligúria, twenty-eight miles south-east from Turin.

3. "The vestiges of *Pollen'tia* are twenty-five miles to the south-east of Turin." (*Gibbon*, ii. 221.) "The modern village of *Pollenza* stands near the site of the ancient city."—*Cramer's Italy*, . 23.

4. *Raven'na* was situated on the coast of the Adriatic, a short distance below the mouths of the Po. Although originally founded on the sea-shore, in the midst of marshes, in the days of Strabo the marshes had greatly increased, seaward, owing to the accumulation of mud brought down by the Po and other rivers. In the latter times of the republic it was the great naval station of the Romans on the Adriatic. Augustus constructed a new harbor three miles from the old town, but in no very long time this was filled up also, and, "as early as the fifth or sixth century of the Christian era, the port of Augustus was converted into pleasant gardens; and a lonely grove of pines covered the ground where the Roman fleet once rode at anchor." (*Gibbon*, ii. 224.) But this very circumstance, though it lessened the naval importance, increased the strength of the place, and the shallowness of the water was a barrier against large ships of the enemy. The only means of access inland was by a long and narrow causeway



the eighth century, was considered as the seat of government and the capital of Italy. The fears of Honorius were not without foundation; for scarcely had Al'aric departed, when another deluge of barbarians, consisting of Vandals,<sup>1</sup> Suévi,<sup>2</sup> Burgun'dians,<sup>3</sup> Goths, and Aláni, and numbering not less than two hundred thousand fighting men, under the command of Radagáisus, poured down upon Italy.

51. The Roman troops were now called in from the provinces for the defence of Italy, whose safety was again intrusted to the counsels and the sword of Stil'icho. The barbarians passed, without resistance, the Alps, the Po, and the Apennines, and were allowed by the wary Stil'icho to lay siege to Florence,<sup>4</sup> when, securing all the passes, he in turn blockaded the besiegers, who, gradually wasted by famine, were finally compelled to surrender at discretion. (A. D. 406.) The triumph of the Roman arms was disgraced by the execution of Radagáisus; and one-third of the vast host that had accompanied him into Italy were sold as slaves.

several miles in extent, over an otherwise impassable morass; and this avenue might be easily guarded or destroyed on the approach of a hostile army. Being otherwise fortified, it was a place of great strength and safety; and during the last years of the Western empire was the capital of Italy, and successively the residence of Honorius, Valentinian, Odoacer, Theodorick, and the succeeding Gothic monarchs. It is now a place of about sixteen thousand inhabitants, and is chiefly deserving of notice for its numerous architectural remains. (*Map No. VIII.*)

1. *Van'dals*, see p. 219.

2. The *Suèvi* were a people of eastern Germany who finally settled in and gave their name to the modern *Suabia*.

3. The *Burgun'dians*—dwellers in *burgs* or towns—a name given to them by the more nomade tribes of Germany, were a numerous and warlike people of the Gothic or *Van'dal* race, who can be traced back to the banks of the Elbe. Driven southward by the *Gep'ida*, they pressed upon the *Aleman'ni*, with whom they were in almost continual war. They were granted by Honorius, the Roman emperor, the territory extending from the Lake of Geneva to the junction of the Rhine with the Moselle, as a reward for having sent him the head of the usurper Jovinus. A part of Switzerland and a large portion of eastern France belonged to their new kingdom, which, as early as the year 470, was known by the name of Burgundy. Their seat of government was sometimes at Lyons, and sometimes at Geneva. Continually endeavoring to extend their limits, they were at last completely subdued, in a war with the Franks, by the son of Clovis, after Clovis himself had taken Lyons. Their name was for a long time retained by the powerful dukedom, afterwards province of Burgundy, now divided into several departments.

4. *Florence*, (anciently *Florentia*), is a city of central Italy on the river Arno, (anciently *Arnus*), one hundred and eighty-seven miles north-west from Rome. It owes its first distinction to *Sylla*, who planted in it a Roman colony. In the reign of *Tiberius* it was one of the principal cities of Italy. In 541 it was almost wholly destroyed by *Totila*, king of the Goths, but was restored by *Charlemagne*, after which it was, for a long time, the chief city of one of the most famous of the Italian republics. It is now the capital of the grand-duchy of *Tuscany*, which comprises the northern part of ancient *Etruria*. With a population of one hundred thousand, it bears the aspect of a city filled with nobles and their domestics—a city of bridges, churches, and palaces. It has produced more celebrated men than any other city of Italy, or perhaps of Europe among whom may be specified *Dante*, *Petrarch*, *Boccaccio*, *Lorenzo de Medici*, *Galileo*, *Michael Angelo*, *Macc'hivelli*,—the Popes *Leo X* and *XI*, and *Clement VII*, *VIII*, and *XII*.

52. Two years after the great victory of Stil'icho, that minister, whose genius might have delayed the fall of the empire, was treacherously murdered by the orders of the jealous and unworthy Honorius. The monarch had soon reason to repent of his guilty rashness. Adopting the counsels of his new ministers, he ordered a massacre of the families of the barbarians throughout Italy. Thirty thousand Gothic soldiers in the Roman pay immediately revolted, and invited Al'aric to avenge the slaughter of his countrymen.

53. Again Al'aric entered Italy, and without attempting the hopeless siege of *Raven'na* marched direct to Rome, which, during a period of more than six hundred years, had not been violated by the presence of a foreign enemy. After the siege had been protracted until the rigors of famine had been experienced in all their horror, and thousands were dying daily in their houses or in the streets for want of sustenance, the Romans sought to purchase the withdrawal of their invaders. The terms of Al'aric were, at first, *all* the gold and silver in the city, *all* the rich and precious movables, and *all* the slaves of barbarian origin. When the ministers of the senate asked, in a modest and suppliant tone, "If such, O King, are your demands, what do you intend to leave us?" "YOUR LIVES," replied the haughty conqueror.

54. The stern demands of Al'aric were, however, somewhat relaxed, and Rome was allowed to purchase a temporary safety by paying an enormous ransom of gold and silver and merchandize. Al'aric retired to winter quarters in *Tuscany*,<sup>1</sup> but as Honorius and his ministers, enjoying the security of the marshes and fortifications of *Raven'na*, refused to ratify the treaty that had been concluded by the Romans, the Goth turned again upon Rome, and, cutting off the supplies, compelled the city to surrender. (A. D. 409.) He then conferred the sovereignty of the empire upon *At'talus*, prefect of the city, but soon deposed him and attempted to renew his negotiations with Honorius. The latter refused to treat, when the king of the Goths, no longer dissembling his appetite for plunder and revenge, appeared a third time before the walls of Rome; treason opened the gates to him, and the city of *Romulus* was abandoned to the licentious fury of the tribes of Germany and *Scythia*.

1. *Tuscany*, after the fall of the Western empire, successively belonged to the Goths and Lombards. *Charlemagne* added it to his dominions, but under his successors it became independent. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries it was divided among the famous republics of *Florence*, *Pisa*, and *Sienna*: in 1531 these were reunited into a duchy which, in 1737, fell into the hands of the house of Austria. In 1801 *Napoleon* erected it into the kingdom of *Etruria*: in 1808 it was incorporated with the French empire; and in 1814 it reverted to Austria.



55. The piety of the Goths spared the churches and religious houses, for Al'aric himself, and many of his countrymen, professed the name of Christians; but Rome was pillaged of her wealth, and a terrible slaughter was made of her citizens. Still Al'aric was unwilling that Rome should be totally ruined; and at the end of six days he abandoned the city, and took the road to southern Italy. As he was preparing to invade Sicily, with the ulterior design of subjugating Africa, his conquests were terminated by a premature death. (A. D. 410.) His body was interred in the bed of a small rivulet,<sup>a</sup> and the captives who prepared his grave were murdered, that the Romans might never learn the place of his sepulture.

56. After the death of Al'aric, the Goths gradually withdrew from Italy, and, a few years later, that branch of the nation called Vis'igoths established its supremacy in Spain and the east of Gaul. Toward the middle of the same century, the Britons, finally abandoned by the Romans, and unable to resist the barbarous inroads of the Picts and Scots, applied for assistance to the Angles' and Saxons, warlike tribes from the coasts of the Baltic. The latter, after driving back the Picts and Scots, turned their arms against the Britons, and after a long struggle finally established themselves in the island.

57. During these events in the north and west, the Van'dals, a Gothic tribe which had aided in the reduction of Spain, and whose name, with a slight change, has been given to the fertile province of Andalusia,<sup>2</sup> passed the straits of Gibraltar under the guidance of their chief Gen'eric, and, in the course of ten years, completed, in the capture of Carthage, the conquest of the Roman provinces of northern Africa. (A. D. 439.) Honorius was already dead, and had been succeeded by Valentin'ian III., a youth only six years of age. In the meantime At'tila, justly called the "scourge of God" for the chastisement of the human race, had become the leader of the Hunnish<sup>3</sup> nordes. He rapidly extended his dominion over all the tribes of Germany and Scythia, made war upon Persia, defeated Theodosius,

1. *Angles*. From them the English have derived their name.

2. *Andalusia*, so called from the *Van'dals*, comprised the four Moorish kingdoms of Seville, Cordova, Jaen, and Granada. It is the most southern division of Spain. Trajan and the Senecas were natives of this province. (Map No. XIII.)

3. The *Huns*, when first known, in the century before the Christian era, dwelt on the western borders of the Caspian sea. The power of the Huns fell with At'tila, and the nation was soon after dispersed. The present *Hungarians* are descended from the Huns, intermingled with Turkish, Slavonic, and German races.

a. The *Busentinus*, a small stream that washes the walls of Consentia, now *Cosenza*.

the emperor of the East, in three bloody battles, and after ravaging Thrace, Macedonia, and Greece, pursued his desolating march westward into Gaul, but was defeated by the Romans and their Gothic allies in the bloody battle of Châlons.<sup>1</sup> (A. D. 451.) The next year the Huns poured like a torrent upon Italy, and spread their ravages over all Lombardy. This visitation was the origin of the Venetian republic,<sup>2</sup> which was founded by the fugitives who fled at the terror of the name of At'tila.

58. The death of the Hunnic chief soon after this inroad, the civil wars among his followers, and the final extinction of the empire of the Huns, might have afforded the Romans an opportunity of escaping from the ruin which impended over them, if they had not been lost to all feelings of national honor. But they had admitted numerous bands of barbarians in their midst as confederates and allies; and these, courted by one faction, and opposed by another, became, ere long, the actual rulers of the country. The provinces were pillaged, the throne was shaken, and often overturned by seditions; and two years after the death of At'tila, Rome itself was taken and pillaged by a horde of Van'dals from Africa,<sup>xxxiv. THE VAN'DALS.</sup> conducted by the famous Gen'eric, who had been invited across the Mediterranean to avenge the insults which a Roman princess<sup>a</sup> had received from her own husband. (A. D. 455.)

1. *Châlons* (shah-long) is a city of France, on the river Marne, a branch of the Seine, ninety-five miles east from Paris, and twenty-seven miles south-east from Rheims. It is situated in the middle of extensive meadows, which were formerly known as the Catalaunian fields, (*Gibbon*, iii. 340.) In the battle of Châlons the nations from the Caspian sea to the Atlantic fought together; and the number of the barbarians slain has been variously estimated at from one hundred and sixty-two thousand to three hundred thousand. (Map No. XIII.)

2. The origin of *Venice* dates from the invasion of Italy by the Huns, A. D. 452. The city is built on a cluster of numerous small islands in a shallow but extensive lagoon, in the north-western part of the Adriatic, north of the Po and the Adige, about four miles from the main land. It is divided into two principal portions by a wide canal, crossed by the principal bridge in the city, the celebrated *Rialto*. Venice is traversed by narrow lanes instead of streets, seldom more than five or six feet in width; but the grand thoroughfares are the canals; and gondolas, or canal boats, are the universal substitute for carriages.

Venice gradually became a wealthy and powerful independent commercial city, maintaining its freedom against Charlemagne and his successors, and yielding a merely nominal allegiance to the Greek emperors of Constantinople. Towards the middle of the fifteenth century the republic was mistress of several populous provinces in Lombardy,—of Crete and Cyprus—of the greater part of southern Greece, and most of the isles of the Ægean sea; and it continued to engross the principal trade in Eastern products, till the discovery of a route to India by the Cape of Good-Hope turned this traffic into a new channel. From this period Venice rapidly declined. Stripped of independence and wealth, she now enjoys only a precarious existence, and is slowly sinking into the waves from which she arose. (Map No. VIII.)

a. Eudox'ia, the widow of Valentin'ian III., had been compelled to marry Maximus, the murderer, and successor in the empire, of her late husband, and it was she who invited the Van'dal chief to avenge her wrongs.



59. After the withdrawal of the Van' dals, which occurred the year of the death of Valentin' ian III., Av' itus, a Gaul, was installed Emperor by the influence of the gentle and humane Theod'oric, king of the Vis'igoths; but he was soon deposed by Ric'imer, the Gothic commander of the barbarian allies of the Romans. (A. D. 456.) The wise and beneficent Majorian was then advanced to the throne by Ric'imer; but his virtues were not appreciated by his subjects; and a sedition of the troops compelled him to lay down the sceptre after a reign of four years. (A. D. 431.)

60. Ric'imer then advanced one of his own creatures, Sévérus, to the nominal sovereignty; but he retained all the powers of state in his own hands. Annually the Van' dals from Africa, having now the control of the Mediterranean, sent out from Carthage, their seat of empire, piratical vessels or fleets, which spread desolation and terror over the Italian coasts, and entered at will nearly every port in the Roman dominions. At length application for assistance was made to Leo, then sovereign of the Eastern empire, and a large armament was sent from Constantinople to Carthage. But the aged Gen'eric eluded the immediate danger by a truce with his enemies, and, in the obscurity of night, destroyed by fire almost the entire fleet of the unsuspecting Romans.

61. Amid the frequent revolutionary changes that were occurring in the sovereignty of the Western empire,<sup>a</sup> Roman freedom and dignity were lost in the influence of the confederate barbarians, who formed both the defence and the terror of Italy. As the power of the Romans themselves declined, their barbarian allies augmented their demands and increased their insolence, until they finally insisted, with arms in their hands, that a third part of the lands of Italy should be divided among them. Under their leader Odoacer, a chief of the barbarian tribe of the Her'uli,<sup>1</sup> they overcame the little re-

1. Of all the barbarians who threw themselves on the ruins of the Roman empire, it is most difficult to trace the origin of the Her'uli. Their names, the only remains of their language, are Gothic; and it is believed that they came originally from Scandinavia. They were a fierce people, who disdained the use of armor: their bravery was like madness: in war they showed no pity for age, nor respect for sex or condition. Among themselves there was the same ferocity: the sick and the aged were put to death at their own request, during a solemn festival; and the widow hung herself upon the tree which shadowed her husband's tomb. The Her'uli, though brave and formidable, were few in number, claiming to be mostly of royal blood; and they seem not so much a nation, as a confederacy of princes and nobles, bound by an oath to live and die together with their arms in their hands. (*Gibbon*, iii. 8; and Note, 495-6.)

a. The remaining sovereigns of the Western empire, down to the time of its subversion were Anthémius, Olyb'rius, Glycéus, Népos, and Augus'tulus.

assistance that was offered them; and the conqueror, abolishing the imperial titles of Cæsar and Augustus, proclaimed himself king of Italy. (A. D. 476.) The Western empire of the Romans was subverted: Roman glory had passed away: Roman liberty existed only in the remembrance of the past: the rude warriors of Germany and Scythia possessed the city of Romulus; and a barbarian occupied the palace of the Cæsars.

XXXVII. SUB-  
VERSION OF  
THE WEST-  
ERN EMPIRE.