The Origin and Deeds of the Goths (Mierow translation)

Jordanes (fl. AD 551)

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Contents

Preface 1

Chapter I. Geographical Introduction 2

Chapter II. Britain 4

Chapter III. Scandza 6

Chapter IV. The United Goths 8

Chapter V 9

Chapter VI 12

Chapter VII 13

Chapter VIII 15

Chapter IX 16

Chapter X 17

Chapter XI 19

Chapter XII 21

Chapter XIII 22

Chapter XIV 23

Chapter XV 24

Chapter XVI 26

Chapter XVII 28

Chapter XVIII 30

Chapter XIX. The Goths in the Time of Gallus, Volusianus and Aemilianus 31

Chapter XX 32

Chapter XXI. The Times of Diocletian 33

Chapter XXII 34

Chapter XXIII 35

Chapter XXIV 36

Chapter XXV. The Divided Goths: Visigoths 38

Chapter XXVI 39

Chapter XXVII 41

Chapter XXVIII 42

Chapter XXIX 43

Chapter XXX 44

Chapter XXXI 46

Chapter XXXII 47

Chapter XXXIII 48

Chapter XXXIV 50

Chapter XXXV 51

Chapter XXXVI 52

Chapter XXXVII 54

Chapter XXXVIII 55

Chapter XXXIX 56

Chapter XL 57

Chapter XLI 59

Chapter XLII 61

Chapter XLIII 63

Chapter XLIV 64

Chapter XLV **66**

Chapter XLVI **68**

Chapter XLVII **69**

Chapter XLVIII. The Divided Goths: Ostrogoths **70**

Chapter XLIX **72**

Chapter L **74**

Chapter LI **76**

Chapter LII **77**

Chapter LIII **78**

Chapter LIV **80**

Chapter LV **81**

Chapter LVI **82**

Chapter LVII **84**

Chapter LVIII **86**

Chapter LIX **88**

Chapter LX **89**

Conclusion **91**

Preface

Though it had been my wish to glide in my little boat by the shore of a peaceful coast and, as a certain writer says, to gather little fishes from the pools of the ancients, you, brother Castalius, bid me set my sails toward the deep. You urge me to leave the little work I have in hand, that is, the abbreviation of the Chronicles, and to condense in my own style in this small book the twelve volumes of the Senator on the origin and deeds of the Getae from olden time to the present day, descending through the generations of the kings. Truly a hard command, and imposed by one who seems unwilling to realize the burden of the task. Nor do you note this, that my utterance is too slight to fill so magnificent a trumpet of speech as his. But above every burden is the fact that I have no access to his books that I may follow his thought. Still—and let me lie not—I have in times past read the books a second time by his steward's loan for a three days' reading. The words I recall not, but the sense and the deeds related I think I retain entire. To this I have added fitting matters from some Greek and Latin histories. I have also put in an introduction and a conclusion, and have inserted many things of my own authorship. Wherefore reproach me not, but receive and read with gladness what you have asked me to write. If aught be insufficiently spoken and you remember it, do you as a neighbor to our race add to it, praying for me, dearest brother. The Lord be with you. Amen.

Chapter I. Geographical Introduction

Our ancestors, as Orosius relates, were of the opinion that the circle of the whole world was surrounded by the girdle of Ocean on three sides. Its three parts they called Asia, Europe and Africa. Concerning this threefold division of the earth's extent there are almost innumerable writers, who not only explain the situations of cities and places, but also measure out the number of miles and paces to give more clearness. Moreover they locate the islands interspersed amid the waves, both the greater and also the lesser islands, called Cyclades or Sporades, as situated in the vast flood of the Great Sea. But the impassable farther bounds of Ocean not only has no one attempted to describe, but no man has been allowed to reach; for by reason of obstructing seaweed and the failing of the winds it is plainly inaccessible and is unknown to any save to Him who made it. But the nearer border of this sea, which we call the circle of the world, surrounds its coasts like a wreath. This has become clearly known to men of inquiring mind, even to such as desired to write about it. For not only is the coast itself inhabited, but certain islands off in the sea are habitable. Thus there are to the East in the Indian Ocean, Hippodes, Iamnesia, Solis Perusta (which though not habitable, is yet of great length and breadth), besides Taprobane, a fair island wherein there are towns or estates and ten strongly fortified cities.

But there is yet another, the lovely Silefantina, and Theros also. These, though not clearly described by any writer, are nevertheless well filled with inhabitants. This same Ocean has in its western region certain islands known to almost everyone by reason of the great number of those that journey to and fro. And there are two not far from the neighborhood of the Strait of Gades, one the Blessed Isle and another called the Fortunate. Although some reckon as islands of Ocean the twin promontories of Galicia and Lusitania, where are still to be seen the Temple of Hercules on one and Scipio's Monument on the other, yet since they are joined to the extremity of the Galician country, they belong rather to the great land of Europe than to the islands of Ocean. However, it has other islands deeper within its own tides, which are called the Baleares; and yet another, Mevania, besides the Orcades, thirty-three in number, though not all inhabited. And at the farthest bound of its western expanse it has another island named Thule, of which the Mantuan bard makes mention:

”And Farthest Thule shall serve thee.” The same mighty sea has also in its arctic region, that is in the north, a great island named Scandza, from which my tale (by God’s grace) shall take its beginning. For the race whose origin you ask to know burst forth like a swarm of bees from the midst of this island and came into the land of Europe. But how or in what wise we shall explain hereafter, if it be the Lord’s will.

Chapter II. Britain

But now let me speak briefly as I can concerning the island of Britain, which is situated in the bosom of Ocean between Spain, Gaul and Germany. Although Livy tells us that no one in former days sailed around it, because of its great size, yet many writers have held various opinions of it. It was long unapproached by Roman arms, until Julius Caesar disclosed it by battles fought for mere glory. In the busy age which followed it became accessible to many through trade and by other means. Thus it revealed more clearly its position, which I shall here explain as I have found it in Greek and Latin authors. Most of them say it is like a triangle pointing between the north and west. Its widest angle faces the mouths of the Rhine. Then the island shrinks in breadth and recedes until it ends in two other angles. Its long doubled side faces Gaul and Germany. Its greatest breadth is said to be over two thousand three hundred and ten stadia, and its length not more than seven thousand one hundred and thirty-two stadia. In some parts it is moorland, in others there are wooded plains, and sometimes it rises into mountain peaks. The island is surrounded by a sluggish sea, which neither gives readily to the stroke of the oar nor runs high under the blasts of the wind. I suppose this is because other lands are so far removed from it as to cause no disturbance of the sea, which indeed is of greater width here than anywhere else. Moreover Strabo, a famous writer of the Greeks, relates that the island exhales such mists from its soil, soaked by the frequent inroads of Ocean, that the sun is covered throughout the whole of their disagreeable sort of day that passes as fair, and so is hidden from sight.

Cornelius also, the author of the Annals, says that in the farthest part of Britain the night gets brighter and is very short. He also says that the island abounds in metals, is well supplied with grass and is more productive in all those things which feed beasts rather than men. Moreover many large rivers flow through it, and the tides are borne back into them, rolling along precious stones and pearls. The Silures have swarthy features and are usually born with curly black hair, but the inhabitants of Caledonia have reddish hair and large loose-jointed bodies. They are like the Gauls or the Spaniards, according as they are opposite either nation. Hence some have supposed that from these lands the island received its inhabitants, alluring them by its nearness. All the people and their kings are alike wild. Yet Dio, a most celebrated writer of annals, assures us of the fact that they have all been combined under the name of Caledonians and Maeatae. They live in wattled huts, a shelter used in common with their flocks, and often the woods are their home. They paint

their bodies with iron-red, whether by way of adornment or perhaps for some other reason. They often wage war with one another, either because they desire power or to increase their possessions. They fight not only on horseback or on foot, but even with scythed two-horse chariots, which they commonly call essedae. Let it suffice to have said thus much on the shape of the island of Britain.

Chapter III. Scandza

Let us now return to the site of the island of Scandza, which we left above. Claudius Ptolemaeus, an excellent describer of the world, has made mention of it in the second book of his work, saying: "There is a great island situated in the surge of the northern Ocean, Scandza by name, in the shape of a juniper leaf with bulging sides that taper down to a point at a long end." Pomponius Mela also makes mention of it as situated in the Codan Gulf of the sea, with Ocean lapping its shores. This island lies in front of the river Vistula, which rises in the Sarmatian mountains and flows through its triple mouth into the northern Ocean in sight of Scandza, separating Germany and Scythia. The island has in its eastern part a vast lake in the bosom of the earth, whence the Vagus river springs from the bowels of the earth and flows surging into the Ocean. And on the west it is surrounded by an immense sea. On the north it is bounded by the same vast unnavigable Ocean, from which by means of a sort of projecting arm of land a bay is cut off and forms the German Sea. Here also there are said to be many small islands scattered round about. If wolves cross over to these islands when the sea is frozen by reason of the great cold, they are said to lose their sight. Thus the land is not only inhospitable to men but cruel even to wild beasts.

Now in the island of Scandza, whereof I speak, there dwell many and divers nations, though Ptolemaeus mentions the names of but seven of them. There the honey-making swarms of bees are nowhere to be found on account of the exceeding great cold. In the northern part of the island the race of the Adogit live, who are said to have continual light in midsummer for forty days and nights, and who likewise have no clear light in the winter season for the same number of days and nights. By reason of this alternation of sorrow and joy they are like no other race in their sufferings and blessings. And why? Because during the longer days they see the sun returning to the east along the rim of the horizon, but on the shorter days it is not thus seen. The sun shows itself differently because it is passing through the southern signs, and whereas to us the sun seem to rise from below, it seems to go around them along the edge of the earth. There also are other peoples. There are the Screrefennae, who do not seek grain for food but live on the flesh of wild beasts and birds' eggs; for there are such multitudes of young game in the swamps as to provide for the natural increase of their kind and to afford satisfaction to the needs of the people. But still another race dwells there, the Suehans, who, like the Thuringians, have splendid horses.

Here also are those who send through innumerable other tribes the sappherine skins to trade for Roman use. They are a people famed for the dark beauty of their furs and, though living in poverty, are most richly clothed. Then comes a throng of various nations, Theustes, Vagoth, Bergio, Hallin, Liothida. All their habitations are in one level and fertile region. Wherefore they are disturbed there by the attacks of other tribes. Behind these are the Ahelmil, Finnaithae, Fervir and Gauthigoth, a race of men bold and quick to fight. Then come the Mixi, Evagre, and Otingis. All these live like wild animals in rocks hewn out like castles. And there are beyond these the Ostrogoths, Raumarici, Aeragnaricii, and the most gentle Finns, milder than all the inhabitants of Scandza. Like them are the Vinovilith also. The Suetidi are of this stock and excel the rest in stature. However, the Dani, who trace their origin to the same stock, drove from their homes the Heruli, who lay claim to preëminence among all the nations of Scandza for their tallness. Furthermore there are in the same neighborhood the Grannii, Augandzi, Eunixi, Taetel, Rugi, Arochi and Ranii, over whom Roduulf was king not many years ago. But he despised his own kingdom and fled to the embrace of Theodoric, king of the Goths, finding there what he desired. All these nations surpassed the Germans in size and spirit, and fought with the cruelty of wild beasts.

Chapter IV. The United Goths

Now from this island of Scandza, as from a hive of races or a womb of nations, the Goths are said to have come forth long ago under their king, Berig by name. As soon as they disembarked from their ships and set foot on the land, they straightway gave their name to the place. And even to-day it is said to be called Gothiscandza. Soon they moved from here to the abodes of the Ulmerugi, who then dwelt on the shores of Ocean, where they pitched camp, joined battle with them and drove them from their homes. Then they subdued their neighbors, the Vandals, and thus added to their victories. But when the number of the people increased greatly and Filimer, son of Gadaric, reigned as king—about the fifth since Berig—he decided that the army of the Goths with their families should move from that region. In search of suitable homes and pleasant places they came to the land of Scythia, called Oium in that tongue. Here they were delighted with the great richness of the country, and it is said that when half the army had been brought over, the bridge whereby they had crossed the river fell in utter ruin, nor could anyone thereafter pass to or fro. For the place is said to be surrounded by quaking bogs and an encircling abyss, so that by this double obstacle nature has made it inaccessible. And even to-day one may hear in that neighborhood the lowing of cattle and may find traces of men, if we are to believe the stories of travellers, although we must grant that they hear these things from afar.

This part of the Goths, which is said to have crossed the river and entered with Filimer into the country of Oium, came into possession of the desired land, and there they soon came upon the race of the Spali, joined battle with them and won the victory. Thence the victors hastened to the farthest part of Scythia, which is near the sea of Pontus; for so the story is generally told in their early songs, in almost historic fashion. Ablabius also, a famous chronicler of the Gothic race, confirms this in his most trustworthy account. Some of the ancient writers also agree with the tale. Among these we may mention Josephus, a most reliable relator of annals, who everywhere follows the rule of truth and unravels from the beginning the origin of causes;—but why he has omitted the beginnings of the race of the Goths, of which I have spoken, I do not know. He barely mentions Magog of that stock, and says they were Scythians by race and were called so by name.

Before we enter on our history, we must describe the boundaries of this land, as it lies.

Chapter V

Now Scythia borders on the land of Germany as far as the source of the river Ister and the expanse of the Morsian Swamp. It reaches even to the rivers Tyra, Danaster and Vagosola, and the great Danaper, extending to the Taurus range—not the mountains in Asia but our own, that is, the Scythian Taurus—all the way to Lake Maeotis. Beyond Lake Maeotis it spreads on the other side of the straits of Bosphorus to the Caucasus Mountains and the river Araxes. Then it bends back to the left behind the Caspian Sea, which comes from the north-eastern ocean in the most distant parts of Asia, and so is formed like a mushroom, at first narrow and then broad and round in shape. It extends as far as the Huns, Albani and Seres. This land, I say,—namely, Scythia, stretching far and spreading wide,—has on the east the Seres, a race that dwelt at the very beginning of their history on the shore of the Caspian Sea. On the west are the Germans and the river Vistula; on the arctic side, namely the north, it is surrounded by Ocean; on the south by Persis, Albania, Hiberia, Pontus and the farthest channel of the Ister, which is called the Danube all the way from mouth to source. But in that region where Scythia touches the Pontic coast it is dotted with towns of no mean fame:—Borysthenis, Olbia, Callipolis, Cherson, Theodosia, Careon, Myrmicion and Trapezus. These towns the wild Scythian tribes allowed the Greeks to build to afford them means of trade. In the midst of Scythia is the place that separates Asia and Europe, I mean the Rhipaeian mountains, from which the mighty Tanais flows. This river enters Maeotis, a marsh having a circuit of one hundred and forty-four miles and never subsiding to a depth of less than eight fathoms.

In the land of Scythia to the westward dwells, first of all, the race of the Gepidae, surrounded by great and famous rivers. For the Tisia flows through it on the north and northwest, and on the southwest is the great Danube. On the east it is cut by the Flutausis, a swiftly eddying stream that sweeps whirling into the Ister's waters. Within these rivers lies Dacia, encircled by the lofty Alps as by a crown. Near their left ridge, which inclines toward the north, and beginning at the source of the Vistula, the populous race of the Venethi dwell, occupying a great expanse of land. Though their names are now dispersed amid various clans and places, yet they are chiefly called Sclaveni and Antes. The abode of the Sclaveni extends from the city of Noviodunum and the lake called Mursianus to the Danaster, and northward as far as the Vistula. They have swamps and forests for their cities. The Antes, who are the bravest of these peoples dwelling in the curve of the sea of Pontus, spread from

the Danaster to the Danaper, rivers that are many days' journey apart. But on the shore of Ocean, where the floods of the river Vistula empty from three mouths, the Vidivarii dwell, a people gathered out of various tribes. Beyond them the Aesti, a subject race, likewise hold the shore of Ocean. To the south dwell the Acatziri, a very brave tribe ignorant of agriculture, who subsist on their flocks and by hunting.

Farther away and above the Sea of Pontus are the abodes of the Bulgares, well known from the wrongs done to them by reason of our oppression. From this region the Huns, like a fruitful root of bravest races, sprouted into two hordes of people. Some of these are called Altziagiri, others Sabiri; and they have different dwelling places. The Altziagiri are near Cherson, where the avaricious traders bring in the goods of Asia. In summer they range the plains, their broad domains, wherever the pasturage for their cattle invites them, and betake themselves in winter beyond the Sea of Pontus. Now the Hunuguri are known to us from the fact that they trade in marten skins. But they have been cowed by their bolder neighbors.

We read that on their first migration the Goths dwelt in the land of Scythia near Lake Maeotis. On the second migration they went to Moesia, Thrace and Dacia, and after their third they dwelt again in Scythia, above the Sea of Pontus. Nor do we find anywhere in their written records legends which tell of their subjection to slavery in Britain or in some other island, or of their redemption by a certain man at the cost of a single horse. Of course if anyone in our city says that the Goths had an origin different from that I have related, let him object. For myself, I prefer to believe what I have read, rather than put trust in old wives' tales. To return, then, to my subject. The aforesaid race of which I speak is known to have had Filimer as king while they remained in their first home in Scythia near Maeotis. In their second home, that is in the countries of Dacia, Thrace and Moesia, Zalmoxes reigned, whom many writers of annals mention as a man of remarkable learning in philosophy. Yet even before this they had a learned man Zeuta, and after him Dicineus; and the third was Zalmoxes of whom I have made mention above. Nor did they lack teachers of wisdom. Wherefore the Goths have ever been wiser than other barbarians and were nearly like the Greeks, as Dio relates, who wrote their history and annals with a Greek pen. He says that those of noble birth among them, from whom their kings and priests were appointed, were called first Tarabostesei and then Pilleati. Moreover so highly were the Getae praised that Mars, whom the fables of poets call the god of war, was reputed to have been born among them. Hence Virgil says:

"Father Gradivus rules the Getic fields." Now Mars has always been worshipped by the Goths with cruel rites, and captives were slain as his victims. They thought that he who is the lord of war ought to be appeased by the shedding of human blood. To him they devoted the first share of the spoil, and in his honor arms stripped from the foe were suspended from trees. And they had more than all other races a deep spirit of religion, since the worship of this god seemed to be really bestowed upon their ancestor. In their third dwelling place, which was above the Sea of Pontus, they had now become more civilized and, as I have said before, were

more learned. Then the people were divided under ruling families. The Visigoths served the family of the Balthi and the Ostrogoths served the renowned Amali. They were the first race of men to string the bow with cords, as Lucan, who is more of a historian than a poet, affirms:

"They string Armenian bows with Getic cords."

In earliest times they sang of the deeds of their ancestors in strains of song accompanied by the cithara; chanting of Eterpamara, Hanala, Fritigern, Vidigoia and others whose fame among them is great; such heroes as admiring antiquity scarce proclaims its own to be. Then, as the story goes, Vesosis waged a war disastrous to himself against the Scythians, whom ancient tradition asserts to have been the husbands of the Amazons. Concerning these female warriors Orosius speaks in convincing language. Thus we can clearly prove that Vesosis then fought with the Goths, since we know surely that he waged war with the husbands of the Amazons. They dwelt at that time along a bend of Lake Maeotis, from the river Borysthenes, which the natives call the Danaper, to the stream of the Tanais. By the Tanais I mean the river which flows down from the Rhipaeian mountains and rushes with so swift a current that when the neighboring streams or Lake Maeotis and the Bosphorus are frozen fast, it is the only river that is kept warm by the rugged mountains and is never solidified by the Scythian cold. It is also famous as the boundary of Asia and Europe. For the other Tanais is the one which rises in the mountains of the Chrinni and flows into the Caspian Sea. The Danaper begins in a great marsh and issues from it as from its mother. It is sweet and fit to drink as far as half-way down its course.

It also produces fish of a fine flavor and without bones, having only cartilage as the framework of their bodies. But as it approaches the Pontus it receives a little spring called Exampaeus, so very bitter that although the river is navigable for the length of a forty days' voyage, it is so altered by the water of this scanty stream as to become tainted and unlike itself, and flows thus tainted into the sea between the Greek towns of Callipidae and Hypanis. At its mouth there is an island named Achilles. Between these two rivers is a vast land filled with forests and treacherous swamps.

Chapter VI

This was the region where the Goths dwelt when Vesosis, king of the Egyptians, made war upon them. Their king at that time was Tanausis. In a battle at the river Phasis (whence come the birds called pheasants, which are found in abundance at the banquets of the great all over the world) Tanausis, king of the Goths, met Vesosis, king of the Egyptians, and there inflicted a severe defeat upon him, pursuing him even to Egypt. Had he not been restrained by the waters of the impassable Nile and the fortifications which Vesosis had long ago ordered to be made against the raids of the Ethiopians, he would have slain him in his own land. But finding he had no power to injure him there, he returned and conquered almost all Asia and made it subject and tributary to Sornus, king of the Medes, who was then his dear friend. At that time some of his victorious army, seeing that the subdued provinces were rich and fruitful, deserted their companies and of their own accord remained in various parts of Asia.

From their name or race Pompeius Trogus says the stock of the Parthians had its origin. Hence even to-day in the Scythian tongue they are called Parthi, that is, Deserters. And in consequence of their descent they are archers—almost alone among all the nations of Asia—and are very valiant warriors. Now in regard to the name, though I have said they were called Parthi because they were deserters, some have traced the derivation of the word otherwise, saying that they were called Parthi because they fled from their kinsmen. Now when this Tanausis, king of the Goths, was dead, his people worshipped him as one of their gods.

Chapter VII

After his death, while the army under his successors was engaged in an expedition in other parts, a neighboring tribe attempted to carry off women of the Goths as booty. But they made a brave resistance, as they had been taught to do by their husbands, and routed in disgrace the enemy who had come upon them. When they had won this victory, they were inspired with greater daring. Mutually encouraging each other, they took up arms and chose two of the bolder, Lampeto and Marpesia, to act as their leaders. While they were in command, they cast lots both for the defense of their own country and the devastation of other lands. So Lampeto remained to guard their native land and Marpesia took a company of women and led this novel army into Asia. After conquering various tribes in war and making others their allies by treaties, she came to the Caucasus. There she remained for some time and gave the place the name Rock of Marpesia, of which also Virgil makes mention:

"Like to hard flint or the Marpesian Cliff." It was here Alexander the Great afterwards built gates and named them the Caspian Gates, which now the tribe of the Lazi guard as a Roman fortification. Here, then, the Amazons remained for some time and were much strengthened. Then they departed and crossed the river Halys, which flows near the city of Gangra, and with equal success subdued Armenia, Syria, Cilicia, Galatia, Pisidia and all the places of Asia. Then they turned to Ionia and Aeolia, and made provinces of them after their surrender. Here they ruled for some time and even founded cities and camps bearing their name. At Ephesus also they built a very costly and beautiful temple for Diana, because of her delight in archery and the chase—arts to which they were themselves devoted. Then these Scythian-born women, who had by such a chance gained control over the kingdoms of Asia, held them for almost a hundred years, and at last came back to their own kinsfolk in the Marpesian rocks I have mentioned above, namely the Caucasus mountains.

Inasmuch as I have twice mentioned this mountain-range, I think it not out of place to describe its extent and situation, for, as is well known, it encompasses a great part of the earth with its continuous chain. Beginning at the Indian Ocean, where it faces the south it is warm, giving off vapor in the sun; where it lies open to the north it is exposed to chill winds and frost. Then bending back into Syria with a curving turn, it not only sends forth many other streams, but pours from its plenteous breasts into the Vasianensian region the

Euphrates and the Tigris, navigable rivers famed for their unfailing springs. These rivers surround the land of the Syrians and cause it to be called Mesopotamia, as it truly is. Their waters empty into the bosom of the Red Sea. Then turning back to the north, the range I have spoken of passes with great bends through the Scythian lands. There it sends forth very famous rivers into the Caspian Sea—the Araxes, the Cyrus and the Cambyses. It goes on in continuous range even to the Rhipaeian mountains. Thence it descends from the north toward the Pontic Sea, furnishing a boundary to the Scythian tribes by its ridge, and even touches the waters of the Ister with its clustered hills. Being cut by this river, it divides, and in Scythia is named Taurus also. Such then is the great range, almost the mightiest of mountain chains, rearing aloft its summits and by its natural conformation supplying men with impregnable strongholds.

Here and there it divides where the ridge breaks apart and leaves a deep gap, thus forming now the Caspian Gates, and again the Armenian or the Cilician, or of whatever name the place may be. Yet they are barely passable for a wagon, for both sides are sharp and steep as well as very high. The range has different names among various peoples. The Indian calls it Imaus and in another part Paropamisus. The Parthian calls it first Choatras and afterward Niphates; the Syrian and Armenian call it Taurus; the Scythian names it Caucasus and Rhipaeus, and at its end calls it Taurus. Many other tribes have given names to the range. Now that we have devoted a few words to describing its extent, let us return to the subject of the Amazons.

Chapter VIII

Fearing their race would fail, they sought marriage with neighboring tribes. They appointed a day for meeting once in every year, so that when they should return to the same place on that day in the following year each mother might give over to the father whatever male child she had borne, but should herself keep and train for warfare whatever children of the female sex were born. Or else, as some maintain, they exposed the males, destroying the life of the ill-fated child with a hate like that of a stepmother. Among them childbearing was detested, though everywhere else it is desired. The terror of their cruelty was increased by common rumor; for what hope, pray, would there be for a captive, when it was considered wrong to spare even a son? Hercules, they say, fought against them and overcame Menalippe, yet more by guile than by valor. Theseus, moreover, took Hippolyte captive, and of her he begat Hippolytus. And in later times the Amazons had a queen named Penthesilea, famed in the tales of the Trojan war. These women are said to have kept their power even to the time of Aleander the Great.

Chapter IX

But say not ”Why does a story which deals with the men of the Goths have so much to say of their women? Hear, then, the tale of the famous and glorious valor of the men. Now Dio, the historian and diligent investigator of ancient times, who gave to his work the title ”Getica” (and the Getae we have proved in a previous passage to be Goths, on the testimony of Orosius Paulus)—this Dio, I say, makes mention of a later king of theirs named Telefus. Let no one say that this name is quite foreign to the Gothic tongue, and let no one who is ignorant cavil at the fact that the tribes of men make use of many names, even as the Romans borrow from the Macedonians, the Greeks from the Romans, the Sarmatians from the Germans, and the Goths frequently from the Huns. This Telefus, then, a son of Hercules by Auge, and the husband of a sister of Priam, was of towering stature and terrible strength. He matched his father’s valor by virtues of his own and also recalled the traits of Hercules by his likeness in appearance. Our ancestors called his kingdom Moesia. This province has on the east the mouths of the Danube, on the south Macedonia, on the west Histria and on the north the Danube. Now this king we have mentioned carried on wars with the Greeks, and in their course he slew in battle Thesander, the leader of Greece.

But while he was making a hostile attack upon Ajax and was pursuing Ulysses, his horse became entangled in some vines and fell. He himself was thrown and wounded in the thigh by a javelin of Achilles, so that for a long time he could not be healed. Yet, despite his wound, he drove the Greeks from his land. Now when Telefus died, his son Eurypylus succeeded to the throne, being a son of the sister of Priam, king of the Phrygians. For love of Cassandra he sought to take part in the Trojan war, that he might come to the help of her parents and his own father-in-law; but soon after his arrival he was killed.

Chapter X

Then Cyrus, king of the Persians, after a long interval of almost exactly six hundred and thirty years (as Pompeius Trogus relates), waged an unsuccessful war against Tomyris, Queen of the Getae. Elated by his victories in Asia, he strove to conquer the Getae, whose queen, as I have said, was Tomyris. Though she could have stopped the approach of Cyrus at the river Araxes, yet she permitted him to cross, preferring to overcome him in battle rather than to thwart him by advantage of position. And so she did. As Cyrus approached, fortune at first so favored the Parthians that they slew the son of Tomyris and most of the army. But when the battle was renewed, the Getae and their queen defeated, conquered and overwhelmed the Parthians and took rich plunder from them. There for the first time the race of the Goths saw silken tents. After achieving this victory and winning so much booty from her enemies, Queen Tomyris crossed over into that part of Moesia which is now called Lesser Scythia—a name borrowed from great Scythia,—and built on the Moesian shore of Pontus the city of Tomi, named after herself.

Afterwards Darius, king of the Persians, the son of Hystaspes, demanded in marriage the daughter of Antyrus, king of the Goths, asking for her hand and at the same time making threats in case they did not fulfil his wish. The Goths spurned this alliance and brought his embassy to naught. Inflamed with anger because his offer had been rejected, he led an army of seven hundred thousand armed men against them and sought to avenge his wounded feelings by inflicting a public injury. Crossing on boats covered with boards and joined like a bridge almost the whole way from Chalcedon to Byzantium, he started for Thrace and Moesia. Later he built a bridge over the Danube in like manner, but he was wearied by two brief months of effort and lost eight thousand armed men among the Tapae. Then, fearing the bridge over the Danube would be seized by his foes, he marched back to Thrace in swift retreat, believing the land of Moesia would not be safe for even a short sojourn there.

After his death, his son Xerxes planned to avenge his father's wrongs and so proceeded to undertake a war against the Goths with seven hundred thousand of his own men and three hundred thousand armed auxiliaries, twelve hundred ships of war and three thousand transports. But he did not venture to try them in battle, being overawed by their unyielding animosity. So he returned with his force just as he had come, and without righting a single

battle. Then Philip, the father of Alexander the Great, made alliance with the Goths and took to wife Medopa, the daughter of King Gudila, so that he might render the kingdom of Macedon more secure by the help of this marriage. It was at this time, as the historian Dio relates, that Philip, suffering from need of money, determined to lead out his forces and sack Odessus, a city of Moesia, which was then subject to the Goths by reason of the neighboring city of Tomi. Thereupon those priests of the Goths that are called the Holy Men suddenly opened the gates of Odessus and came forth to meet them. They bore harps and were clad in snowy robes, and chanted in suppliant strains to the gods of their fathers that they might be propitious and repel the Macedonians. When the Macedonians saw them coming with such confidence to meet them, they were astonished and, so to speak, the armed were terrified by the unarmed. Straight-way they broke the line they had formed for battle and not only refrained from destroying the city, but even gave back those whom they had captured outside by right of war. Then they made a truce and returned to their own country.

After a long time Sitalces, a famous leader of the Goths, remembering this treacherous attempt, gathered a hundred and fifty thousand men and made war upon the Athenians, fighting against Perdiccas, King of Macedon. This Perdiccas had been left by Alexander as his successor to rule Athens by hereditary right, when he drank his destruction at Babylon through the treachery of an attendant. The Goths engaged in a great battle with him and proved themselves to be the stronger. Thus in return for the wrong which the Macedonians had long before committed in Moesia, the Goths overran Greece and laid waste the whole of Macedonia.

Chapter XI

Then when Buruista was king of the Goths, Dicineus came to Gothia at the time when Sulla ruled the Romans. Buruista received Dicineus and gave him almost royal power. It was by his advice the Goths ravaged the lands of the Germans, which the Franks now possess. Then came Caesar, the first of all the Romans to assume imperial power and to subdue almost the whole world, who conquered all kingdoms and even seized islands lying beyond our world, reposing in the bosom of Ocean. He made tributary to the Romans those that knew not the Roman name even by hearsay, and yet was unable to prevail against the Goths, despite his frequent attempts. Soon Gaius Tiberius reigned as third emperor of the Romans, and yet the Goths continued in their kingdom unharmed. Their safety, their advantage, their one hope lay in this, that whatever their counsellor Dicineus advised should by all means be done; and they judged it expedient that they should labor for its accomplishment. And when he saw that their minds were obedient to him in all things and that they had natural ability, he taught them almost the whole of philosophy, for he was a skilled master of this subject. Thus by teaching them ethics he restrained their barbarous customs; by imparting a knowledge of physics he made them live naturally under laws of their own, which they possess in written form to this day and call belagines. He taught them logic and made them skilled in reasoning beyond all other races;

he showed them practical knowledge and so persuaded them to abound in good works. By demonstrating theoretical knowledge he urged them to contemplate the twelve signs and the courses of the planets passing through them, and the whole of astronomy. He told them how the disc of the moon gains increase or suffers loss, and showed them how much the fiery globe of the sun exceeds in size our earthly planet. He explained the names of the three hundred and forty-six stars and told through what signs in the arching vault of the heavens they glide swiftly from their rising to their setting. Think, I pray you, what pleasure it was for these brave men, when for a little space they had leisure from warfare, to be instructed in the teachings of philosophy! You might have seen one scanning the position of the heavens and another investigating the nature of plants and bushes. Here stood one who studied the waxing and waning of the moon, while still another regarded the labors of the sun and observed how those bodies which were hastening to go toward the east are whirled around and borne back to the west by the rotation of the heavens. When they had learned the reason, they were at rest. These and various other matters Dicineus taught the

Goths in his wisdom and gained marvellous repute among them, so that he ruled not only the common men but their kings.

He chose from among them those that were at that time of noblest birth and superior wisdom and taught them theology, bidding them worship certain divinities and holy places. He gave the name of Pilleati to the priests he ordained, I suppose because they offered sacrifice having their heads covered with tiaras, which we otherwise call pillei. But he bade them call the rest of their race Capillati. This name the Goths accepted and prized highly and they retain it to this day in their songs.

After the death of Dicineus, they held Comosicus in almost equal honor, because he was not inferior in knowledge. By reason of his wisdom he was accounted their priest and king, and he judged the people with the greatest uprightness.

Chapter XII

When he too had departed from human affairs, Coryllus ascended the throne as king of the Goths and for forty years ruled his people in Dacia. I mean ancient Dacia, which the race of the Gepidae now possess. This country lies across the Danube within sight of Moesia, and is surrounded by a crown of mountains. It has only two ways of access, one by way of the Boutae and the other by the Tapae. This Gothia, which our ancestors called Dacia and now, as I have said, is called Gepidia, was then bounded on the east by the Roxolani, on the west by the Iazyges, on the north by the Sarmatians and Basternae and on the south by the river Danube. The Iazyges are separated from the Roxolani by the Aluta river only. And since mention has been made of the Danube, I think it not out of place to make brief notice of so excellent a stream. Rising in the fields of the Alamanni, it receives sixty streams which flow into it here and there in the twelve hundred miles from its source to its mouths in the Pontus, resembling a spine inwoven with ribs like a basket. It is indeed a most vast river. In the language of the Bessi it is called the Hister, and it has profound waters in its channel to a depth of quite two hundred feet. This stream surpasses in size all other rivers, except the Nile. Let this much suffice for the Danube. But let us now with the Lord's help return to the subject from which we have digressed.

Chapter XIII

Now after a long time, in the reign of the Emperor Domitian, the Goths, through fear of his avarrice, broke the truce they had long observed under other emperors. They laid waste the bank of the Danube, so long held by the Roman Empire, and slew the soldiers and their generals. Oppius Sabinus was then in command of that province, succeeding Agrippa, while Dorpaneus held command over the Goths. Thereupon the Goths made war and conquered the Romans, cut off the head of Oppius Sabinus, and invaded and boldly plundered many castles and cities belonging to the Emperor. In this plight of his countrymen Domitian hastened with all his might to Illyricum, bringing with him the troops of almost the entire empire. He sent Fuscus before him as his general with picked soldiers. Then joining boats together like a bridge, he made his soldiers cross the river Danube above the army of Dorpaneus. But the Goths were on the alert. They took up arms and presently overwhelmed the Romans in the first encounter. They slew Fuscus, the commander, and plundered the soldiers' camp of its treasure. And because of the great victory they had won in this region, they thereafter called their leaders, by whose good fortune they seemed to have conquered, not mere men, but demigods, that is Ansis. Their genealogy I shall run through briefly, telling the lineage of each and the beginning and the end of this line. And do thou, O reader, hear me without repining; for I speak truly.

Chapter XIV

Now the first of these heroes, as they themselves relate in their legends, was Gapt, who begat Hulmul. And Hulmul begat Augis; and Augis begat him who was called Amal, from whom the name of the Amali comes. This Amal begat Hisarnis. Hisarnis moreover begat Ostrogotha, and Ostrogotha begat Hunuil, and Hunuil likewise begat Athal. Athal begat Achiulf and Oduulf. Now Achiulf begat Ansila and Ediulf, Vultuulf and Hermanaric. And Vultuulf begat Valaravans and Valaravans begat Vinitharius. Vinitharius moreover begat Vandalarius; Vandalarius begat Thiudimer and Valamir and Vidimer; and Thiudimer begat Theodoric. Theodoric begat Amalasuentha; Amalasuentha bore Athalaric and Mathesuentha to her husband Eutharic, whose race was thus joined to hers in kinship. For the aforesaid Hermanaric, the son of Achiulf, begat Hunimund, and Hunimund begat Thorismud. Now Thorismud begat Beremud, Beremud begat Veteric, and Veteric likewise begat Eutharic, who married Amalasuentha and begat Athalaric and Mathesuentha. Athalaric died in the years of his childhood, and Mathesuentha married Vitiges, to whom she bore no child. Both of them were taken together by Belisarius to Constantinople. When Vitiges passed from human affairs, Germanus the patrician, a cousin of the Emperor Justinian, took Mathesuentha in marriage and made her a Patrician Ordinary. And of her he begat a son, also called Germanus. But upon the death of Germanus, she determined to remain a widow. Now how and in what wise the kingdom of the Amali was overthrown we shall keep to tell in its proper place, if the Lord help us.

But let us now return to the point whence we made our digression and tell how the stock of this people of whom I speak reached the end of its course. Now Ablabius the historian relates that in Scythia, where we have said that they were dwelling above an arm of the Pontic Sea, part of them who held the eastern region and whose king was Ostrogotha, were called Ostrogoths, that is, eastern Goths, either from his name or from the place. But the rest were called Visigoths, that is, the Goths of the western country.

Chapter XV

As already said, they crossed the Danube and dwelt a little while in Moesia and Thrace. From the remnant of these came Maximinus, the Emperor succeeding Alexander the son of Mama. For Symmachus relates it thus in the fifth book of his history, saying that upon the death of Caesar Alexander, Maximinus was made Emperor by the army; a man born in Thrace of most humble parentage, his father being a Goth named Micca, and his mother a woman of the Alani called Ababa. He reigned three years and lost alike his empire and his life while making war on the Christians. Now after his first years spent in rustic life, he had come from his flocks to military service in the reign of the Emperor Severus and at the time when he was celebrating his son's birthday. It happened that the Emperor was giving military games. When Maximinus saw this, although he was a semi-barbarian youth, he besought the Emperor in his native tongue to give him permission to wrestle with the trained soldiers for the prizes offered. Severus marvelling much at his great size—for his stature, it is said, was more than eight feet,—bade him contend in wrestling with the camp followers, in order that no injury might befall his soldiers at the hands of this wild fellow. Thereupon Maximinus threw sixteen attendants with so great ease that he conquered them one by one without taking any rest by pausing between the bouts.

So then, when he had won the prizes, it was ordered that he should be sent into the army and should take his first campaign with the cavalry. On the third day after this, when the Emperor went out to the field, he saw him coursing about in barbarian fashion and bade a tribune restrain him and teach him Roman discipline. But when he understood it was the Emperor who was speaking about him, he came forward and began to run ahead of him as he rode. Then the Emperor spurred on his horse to a slow trot and wheeled in many a circle hither and thither with various turns, until he was weary. And then he said to him "Are you willing to wrestle now after your running, my little Thracian? "As much as you like, O Emperor," he answered. So Severus leaped from his horse and ordered the freshest soldiers to wrestle with him. But he threw to the ground seven very powerful youths, even as before, taking no breathing space between the bouts. So he alone was given prizes of silver and a golden necklace by Caesar. Then he was bidden to serve in the body guard of the Emperor. After this he was an officer under Antoninus Caracalla, often increasing his fame by his deeds, and rose to many military grades and finally to the centurionship as the reward of his active service.

Yet afterwards, when Macrinus became Emperor, he refused military service for almost three years, and though he held the office of tribune, he never came into the presence of Macrinus, thinking his rule shameful because he had won it by committing a crime. Then he returned to Eliogabalus, believing him to be the son of Antoninus, and entered upon his tribuneship. After his reign, he fought with marvellous success against the Parthians, under Alexander the son of Mama. When he was slain in an uprising of the soldiers at Mogontiacum, Maximinus himself was made Emperor by a vote of the army, without a decree of the senate. But he marred all his good deeds by persecuting the Christians in accordance with an evil vow and, being slain by Pupienus at Aquileia, left the kingdom to Philip. These matters we have borrowed from the history of Symmachus for this our little book, in order to show that the race of which we speak attained to the very highest station in the Roman Empire. But our subject requires us to return in due order to the point whence we digressed.

Chapter XVI

Now the Gothic race gained great fame in the region where they were then dwelling, that is in the Scythian land on the shore of Pontus, holding undisputed sway over great stretches of country, many arms of the sea and many river courses. By their strong right arm the Vandals were often laid low, the Marcomanni held their footing by paying tribute and the princes of the Quadi were reduced to slavery. Now when the aforesaid Philip—who, with his son Philip, was the only Christian emperor before Constantine—ruled over the Romans, in the second year of his reign Rome completed its one thousandth year. He withheld from the Goths the tribute due them; whereupon they were naturally enraged and instead of friends became his foes. For though they dwelt apart under their own kings, yet they had been allied to the Roman state and received annual gifts. And what more? Ostrogotha and his men soon crossed the Danube and ravaged Moesia and Thrace. Philip sent the senator Decius against him. And since he could do nothing against the Getae, he released his own soldiers from military service and sent them back to private life, as though it had been by their neglect that the Goths had crossed the Danube. When, as he supposed, he had thus taken vengeance on his soldiers, he returned to Philip. But when the soldiers found themselves expelled from the army after so many hardships, in their anger they had recourse to the protection of Ostrogotha, king of the Goths.

He received them, was aroused by their words and presently led out three hundred thousand armed men, having as allies for this war some of the Taifali and Astringi and also three thousand of the Carpi, a race of men very ready to make war and frequently hostile to the Romans. But in later times when Diocletian and Maximian were Emperors, the Caesar Galerius Maximianus conquered them and made them tributary to the Roman Empire. Besides these tribes, Ostrogotha had Goths and Peucini from the island of Peucë, which lies in the mouths of the Danube where they empty into the Sea of Pontus. He placed in command Argaithus and Guntheric, the noblest leaders of his race. They speedily crossed the Danube, devastated Moesia a second time and approached Marcianople, the famed metropolis of that land. Yet after a long siege they departed, upon receiving money from the inhabitants.

Now since we have mentioned Marcianople, we may briefly relate a few matters in connection with its founding. They say that the Emperor Trajan built this city for the following reason. While his sister's daughter Marcia was bathing in the stream called Potamus—a

river of great clearness and purity that rises in the midst of the city—she wished to draw some water from it and by chance dropped into its depths the golden pitcher she was carrying. Yet though very heavy from its weight of metal, it emerged from the waves a long time afterwards. It surely is not a usual thing for an empty vessel to sink; much less that, when once swallowed up, it should be cast up by the waves and float again. Trajan marvelled at hearing this and believed there was some divinity in the stream. So he built a city and called it Marcianople after the name of his sister.

Chapter XVII

From this city, then, as we were saying, the Getae returned after a long siege to their own land, enriched by the ransom they had received. Now the race of the Gepidae was moved with envy when they saw them laden with booty and so suddenly victorious everywhere, and made war on their kinsmen. Should you ask how the Getae and Gepidae are kinsmen, I can tell you in a few words. You surely remember that in the beginning I said the Goths went forth from the bosom of the island of Scandza with Berig, their king, sailing in only three ships toward the hither shore of Ocean, namely to Gothiscandza. One of these three ships proved to be slower than the others, as is usually the case, and thus is said to have given the tribe their name, for in their language gepanta means slow. Hence it came to pass that gradually and by corruption the name Gepidae was coined for them by way of reproach. For undoubtedly they too trace their origin from the stock of the Goths, but because, as I have said, gepanta means something slow and stolid, the word Gepidae arose as a gratuitous name of reproach. I do not believe this is very far wrong, for they are slow of thought and too sluggish for quick movement of their bodies.

These Gepidae were then smitten by envy while they dwelt in the province of Spesis on an island surrounded by the shallow waters of the Vistula. This island they called, in the speech of their fathers, Gepedoios; but it is now inhabited by the race of the Vividarii, since the Gepidae themselves have moved to better lands. The Vividarii are gathered from various races into this one asylum, if I may call it so, and thus they form a nation. So then, as we were saying, Fastida, king of the Gepidae, stirred up his quiet people to enlarge their boundaries by war. He overwhelmed the Burgundians, almost annihilating them, and conquered a number of other races also. He unjustly provoked the Goths, being the first to break the bonds of kinship by unseemly strife. He was greatly puffed up with vain glory, but in seeking to acquire new lands for his growing nation, he only reduced the numbers of his own countrymen. For he sent ambassadors to Ostrogotha, to whose rule Ostrogoths and Visigoths alike, that is, the two peoples of the same tribe, were still subject. Complaining that he was hemmed in by rugged mountains and dense forests, he demanded one of two things,—that Ostrogotha should either prepare for war or give up part of his lands to them.

Then Ostrogotha, king of the Goths, who was a man of firm mind, answered the ambassadors that he did indeed dread such a war and that it would be a grievous and infamous

thing to join battle with their kin,—but he would not give up his lands. And why say more? The Gepidae hastened to take arms and Ostrogotha likewise moved his forces against them, lest he should seem a coward. They met at the town of Galtis, near which the river Auha flows and there both sides fought with great valor; indeed the similarity of their arms and of their manner of fighting turned them against their own men. But the better cause and their natural alertness aided the Goths. Finally night put an end to the battle as a part of the Gepidae were giving way. Then Fastida, king of the Gepidae, left the field of slaughter and hastened to his own land, as much humiliated with shame and disgrace as formerly he had been elated with pride. The Goths returned victorious, content with the retreat of the Gepidae, and dwelt in peace and happiness in their own land so long as Ostrogotha was their leader.

Chapter XVIII

After his death, Cniva divided the army into two parts and sent some to waste Moesia, knowing that it was undefended through the neglect of the emperors. He himself with seventy thousand men hastened to Euscia, that is, Novae. When driven from this place by the general Gallus, he approached Nicopolis, a very famous town situated near the Iatrus river. This city Trajan built when he conquered the Sarmatians and named it the City of Victory. When the Emperor Decius drew near, Cniva at last withdrew to the regions of Haemus, which were not far distant. Thence he hastened to Philippopolis, with his forces in good array. When the Emperor Decius learned of his departure, he was eager to bring relief to his own city and, crossing Mount Haemus, came to Beroa. While he was resting his horses and his weary army in that place, all at once Cniva and his Goths fell upon him like a thunderbolt. He cut the Roman army to pieces and drove the Emperor, with a few who had succeeded in escaping, across the Alps again to Euscia in Moesia, where Gallus was then stationed with a large force of soldiers as guardian of the frontier. Collecting an army from this region as well as from Oescus, he prepared for the conflict of the coming war. But Cniva took Philippopolis after a long siege and then, laden with spoil, allied himself to Priscus, the commander in the city, to fight against Decius.

In the battle that followed they quickly pierced the son of Decius with an arrow and cruelly slew him. The father saw this, and although he is said to have exclaimed, to cheer the hearts of his soldiers: ”Let no one mourn; the death of one soldier is not a great loss to the republic”, he was yet unable to endure it, because of his love for his son. So he rode against the foe, demanding either death or vengeance, and when he came to Abrittus, a city of Moesia, he was himself cut off by the Goths and slain, thus making an end of his dominion and of his life. This place is to-day called the Altar of Decius, because he there offered strange sacrifices to idols before the battle.

Chapter XIX. The Goths in the Time of Gallus, Volusianus and Aemilianus

Then upon the death of Decius, Gallus and Volusianus succeeded to the Roman Empire. At this time a destructive plague, almost like death itself, such as we suffered nine years ago, blighted the face of the whole earth and especially devastated Alexandria and all the land of Egypt. The historian Dionysius gives a mournful account of it and Cyprian, our own bishop and venerable martyr in Christ, also describes it in his book entitled ”On Mortality”. At this time the Goths frequently ravaged Moesia, through the neglect of the Emperors. When a certain Aemilianus saw that they were free to do this, and that they could not be dislodged by anyone without great cost to the republic, he thought that he too might be able to achieve fame and fortune. So he seized the rule in Moesia and, taking all the soldiers he could gather, began to plunder cities and people. In the next few months, while an armed host was being gathered against him, he wrought no small harm to the state. Yet he died almost at the beginning of his evil attempt, thus losing at once his life and the power he coveted. Now though Gallus and Volusianus, the Emperors we have mentioned, departed this life after remaining in power for barely two years, yet during this space of two years which they spent on earth they reigned amid universal peace and favor. Only one thing was laid to their charge, namely the great plague. But this was an accusation made by ignorant slanderers, whose custom it is to wound the lives of others with their malicious bite. Soon after they came to power they made a treaty with the race of the Goths. When both rulers were dead, it was no long time before Gallienus usurped the throne.

Chapter XX

While he was given over to luxurious living of every sort, Respa, Veduc and Thuruar, leaders of the Goths, took ship and sailed across the strait of the Hellespont to Asia. There they laid waste many populous cities and set fire to the renowned temple of Diana at Ephesus, which, as we said before, the Amazons built. Being driven from the neighborhood of Bithynia, they destroyed Chalcedon, which Cornelius Avitus afterwards restored to some extent. Yet even to-day, though it is happily situated near the royal city, it still shows some traces of its ruin as a witness to posterity. After their success, the Goths recrossed the strait of the Hellespont, laden with booty and spoil, and returned along the same route by which they had entered the lands of Asia, sacking Troy and Ilium on the way. These cities, which had scarce recovered a little from the famous war with Agamemnon, were thus destroyed anew by the hostile sword. After the Goths had thus devastated Asia, Thrace next felt their ferocity. For they went thither and presently attacked Anchiali, a city at the foot of Haemus and not far from the sea. Sardanapalus, king of the Parthians, had built this city long ago between an inlet of the sea and the base of Haemus. There they are said to have stayed for many days, enjoying the baths of the hot springs which are situated about twelve miles from the city of Anchiali. There they gush from the depths of their fiery source, and among the innumerable hot springs of the world they are esteemed as specially famous and efficacious for their healing virtues.

Chapter XXI. The Times of Diocletian

After these events, the Goths had already returned home when they were summoned at the request of the Emperor Maximian to aid the Romans against the Parthians. They fought for him faithfully, serving as auxiliaries. But after Caesar Maximian by their aid had routed Narseus, king of the Persians, the grandson of Sapor the Great, taking as spoil all his possessions, together with his wives and his sons, and when Diocletian had conquered Achilles in Alexandria and Maximianus Herculius had broken the Quinquegentiani in Africa, thus winning peace for the empire, they began rather to neglect the Goths. Now it had long been a hard matter for the Roman army to fight against any nations whatsoever without them. This is evident from the way in which the Goths were so frequently called upon. Thus they were summoned by Constantine to bear arms against his kinsman Licinius. Later, when he was vanquished and shut up Thessalonica and deprived of his power, they slew him with the sword of Constantine the victor. In like manner it was the aid of the Goths that enabled him to build the famous city that is named after him, the rival of Rome, inasmuch as they entered into a truce with the Emperor and furnished him forty thousand men to aid him against various peoples. This body of men, namely, the Allies, and the service they rendered in war are still spoken of in the land to this day. Now at that time they prospered under the rule of their kings Ariaric and Aoric. Upon their death Geberich appeared as successor to the throne, a man renowned for his valor and noble birth.

Chapter XXII

For he was the son of Hilderith, who was the son of Ovida, who was the son of Nidada; and by his illustrious deeds he equalled the glory of his race. Soon he sought to enlarge his country's narrow bounds at the expense of the race of the Vandals and Visimar, their king. This Visimar was of the stock of the Asdingi, which is eminent among them and indicates a most warlike descent, as Dexippus the historian relates. He states furthermore that by reason of the great extent of their country they could scarcely come from Ocean to our frontier in a year's time. At that time they dwelt in the land where the Gepidae now live, near the rivers Marisia, Miliare, Gilpil and the Grisia, which exceeds in size all previously mentioned. They then had on the east the Goths, on the west the Marcomanni, on the north the Hermunduli and on the south the Hister, which is also called the Danube. At the time when the Vandals were dwelling in this region, war was begun against them by Geberich, king of the Goths, on the shore of the river Marisia which I have mentioned. Here the battle raged for a little while on equal terms. But soon Visimar himself, the king of the Vandals, was overthrown, together with the greater part of his people. When Geberich, the famous leader of the Goths, had conquered and spoiled Vandals, he returned to his own place whence he had come. Then the remnant of the Vandals who had escaped, collecting a band of their unwarlike folk, left their ill-fated country and asked the Emperor Constantine for Pannonia. Here they made their home for about sixty years and obeyed the commands of the emperors like subjects. A long time afterward they were summoned thence by Stilicho, Master of the Soldiery, Ex-Consul and Patrician, and took possession of Gaul. Here they plundered their neighbors and had no settled place of abode.

Chapter XXIII

Soon Geberich, king of the Goths, departed from human affairs and Hermanaric, noblest of the Amali, succeeded to the throne. He subdued many warlike peoples of the north and made them obey his laws, and some of our ancestors have justly compared him to Alexander the Great. Among the tribes he conquered were the Golthescytha, Thiudos, Inaunxis, Vasinabroncae, Merens, Mordens, Imniscaris, Rogas, Tadzans, Athaul, Navego, Bubegenae and Coldae. But though famous for his conquest of so many races, he gave himself no rest until he had slain some in battle and then reduced to his sway the remainder of the tribe of the Heruli, whose chief was Alaric. Now the aforesaid race, as the historian Ablabius tells us, dwelt near Lake Maeotis in swampy places which the Greeks call hel[=e]; hence they were named Heluri. They were a people swift of foot, and on that account were the more swollen with pride, for there was at that time no race that did not choose from them its light-armed troops for battle. But though their quickness often saved them from others who made war upon them, yet they were overthrown by the slowness and steadiness of the Goths; and the lot of fortune brought it to pass that they, as well as the other tribes, had to serve Hermanaric, king of the Getae. After the slaughter of the Heruli, Hermanaric also took arms against the Venethi. This people, though despised in war, was strong in numbers and tried to resist him.

But a multitude of cowards is of no avail, particularly when God permits an armed multitude to attack them. These people, as we started to say at the beginning of our account or catalogue of nations, though off-shoots from one stock, have now three names, that is, Venethi, Antes and Sclaveni. Though they now rage in war far and wide, in punishment for our sins, yet at that time they were all obedient to Hermanaric's commands. This ruler also subdued by his wisdom and might the race of the Aesti, who dwell on the farthest shore of the German Ocean, and ruled all the nations of Scythia and Germany by his own prowess alone.

Chapter XXIV

But after a short space of time, as Orosius relates, the race of the Huns, fiercer than ferocity itself, flamed forth against the Goths. We learn from old traditions that their origin was as follows: Filimer, king of the Goths, son of Gadaric the Great, who was the fifth in succession to hold the rule of the Getae after their departure from the island of Scandza,—and who, as we have said, entered the land of Scythia with his tribe,—found among his people certain witches, whom he called in his native tongue Haliurunnae. Suspecting these women, he expelled them from the midst of his race and compelled them to wander in solitary exile afar from his army. There the unclean spirits, who beheld them as they wandered through the wilderness, bestowed their embraces upon them and begat this savage race, which dwelt at first in the swamps,—a stunted, foul and puny tribe, scarcely human, and having no language save one which bore slight resemblance to human speech. Such was the descent of the Huns who came to the country of the Goths.

This cruel tribe, as Priscus the historian relates, settled on the farther bank of the Maeotic swamp. They were fond of hunting and had no skill in any other art. After they had grown to a nation, they disturbed the peace of neighboring races by theft and rapine. At one time, while hunters of their tribe were as usual seeking for game on the farthest edge of Maeotis, they saw a doe unexpectedly appear to their sight and enter the swamp, acting as guide of the way; now advancing and again standing still. The hunters followed and crossed on foot the Maeotic swamp, which they had supposed was impassable as the sea. Presently the unknown land of Scythia disclosed itself and the doe disappeared. Now in my opinion the evil spirits, from whom the Huns are descended, did this from envy of the Scythians. And the Huns, who had been wholly ignorant that there was another world beyond Maeotis, were now filled with admiration for the Scythian land. As they were quick of mind, they believed that this path, utterly unknown to any age of the past, had been divinely revealed to them. They returned to their tribe, told them what had happened, praised Scythia and persuaded the people to hasten thither along the way they had found by the guidance of the doe. As many as they captured, when they thus entered Scythia for the first time, they sacrificed to Victory. The remainder they conquered and made subject to themselves.

Like a whirlwind of nations they swept across the great swamp and at once fell upon the Alpidzuri, Alcildzuri, Itimari, Tuncarsi and Boisci, who bordered on that part of Scythia.

The Alani also, who were their equals in battle, but unlike them in civilization, manners and appearance, they exhausted by their incessant attacks and subdued. For by the terror of their features they inspired great fear in those whom perhaps they did not really surpass in war. They made their foes flee in horror because their swarthy aspect was fearful, and they had, if I may call it so, a sort of shapeless lump, not a head, with pin-holes rather than eyes. Their hardihood is evident in their wild appearance, and they are beings who are cruel to their children on the very day they are born. For they cut the cheeks of the males with a sword, so that before they receive the nourishment of milk they must learn to endure wounds. Hence they grow old beardless and their young men are without comeliness, because a face furrowed by the sword spoils by its scars the natural beauty of a beard. They are short in stature, quick in bodily movement, alert horsemen, broad shouldered, ready in the use of bow and arrow, and have firm-set necks which are ever erect in pride. Though they live in the form of men, they have the cruelty of wild beasts.

When the Getae beheld this active race that had invaded many nations, they took fright and consulted with their king how they might escape from such a foe. Now although Hermanaric, king of the Goths, was the conqueror of many tribes, as we have said above, yet while he was deliberating on this invasion of the Huns, the treacherous tribe of the Rosomoni, who at that time were among those who owed him their homage, took this chance to catch him unawares. For when the king had given orders that a certain woman of the tribe I have mentioned, Sunilda by name, should be bound to wild horses and torn apart by driving them at full speed in opposite directions (for he was roused to fury by her husband's treachery to him), her brothers Sarus and Immius came to avenge their sister's death and plunged a sword into Hermanaric's side. Enfeebled by this blow, he dragged out a miserable existence in bodily weakness. Balamber, king of the Huns, took advantage of his ill health to move an army into the country of the Ostrogoths, from whom the Visigoths had already separated because of some dispute. Meanwhile Hermanaric, who was unable to endure either the pain of his wound or the inroads of the Huns, died full of days at the great age of one hundred and ten years. The fact of his death enabled the Huns to prevail over those Goths who, as we have said, dwelt in the East and were called Ostrogoths.

Chapter XXV. The Divided Goths: Visigoths

The Visigoths, who were their other allies and inhabitants of the western country, were terrified as their kinsmen had been, and knew not how to plan for safety against the race of the Huns. After long deliberation by common consent they finally sent ambassadors into Romania to the Emperor Valens, brother of Valentinian, the elder Emperor, to say that if he would give them part of Thrace or Moesia to keep, they would submit themselves to his laws and commands. That he might have greater confidence in them, they promised to become Christians, if he would give them teachers who spoke their language. When Valens learned this, he gladly and promptly granted what he had himself intended to ask. He received the Getae into the region of Moesia and placed them there as a wall of defense for his kingdom against other tribes. And since at that time the Emperor Valens, who was infected with the Arian perfidy, had closed all the churches of our party, he sent as preachers to them those who favored his sect. They came and straightway filled a rude and ignorant people with the poison of their heresy. Thus the Emperor Valens made the Visigoths Arians rather than Christians. Moreover from the love they bore them, they preached the gospel both to the Ostrogoths and to their kinsmen the Gepidae, teaching them to reverence this heresy, and they invited all people of their speech everywhere to attach themselves to this sect. They themselves as we have said, crossed the Danube and settled Dacia Ripensis, Moesia and Thrace by permission of the Emperor.

Chapter XXVI

Soon famine and want came upon them, as often happens to a people not yet well settled in a country. Their princes and the leaders who ruled them in place of kings, that is Fritigern, Alatheus and Safrac, began to lament the plight of their army and begged Lupicinus and Maximus, the Roman commanders, to open a market. But to what will not the "cursed lust for gold" compel men to assent? The generals, swayed by avarice, sold them at a high price not only the flesh of sheep and oxen, but even the carcasses of dogs and unclean animals, so that a slave would be bartered for a loaf of bread or ten pounds of meat. When their goods and chattels failed, the greedy trader demanded their sons in return for the necessities of life. And the parents consented even to this, in order to provide for the safety of their children, arguing that it was better to lose liberty than life; and indeed it is better that one be sold, if he will be mercifully fed, than that he should be kept free only to die.

Now it came to pass in that troublous time that Lupicinus, the Roman general, invited Fritigern, a chieftain of the Goths, to a feast and, as the event revealed, devised a plot against him. But Fritigern, thinking evil came to the feast with a few followers. While he was dining in the praetorium he heard the dying cries of his ill-fated men, for, by order of the general, the soldiers were slaying his companions who were shut up in another part of the house. The loud cries of the dying fell upon ears already suspicious, and Fritigern at once perceived the treacherous trick. He drew his sword and with great courage dashed quickly from the banqueting-hall, rescued his men from their threatening doom and incited them to slay the Romans. Thus these valiant men gained the chance they had longed for—to be free to die in battle rather than to perish of hunger—and immediately took arms to kill the generals Lupicinus and Maximus. Thus that day put an end to the famine of the Goths and the safety of the Romans, for the Goths no longer as strangers and pilgrims, but as citizens and lords, began to rule the inhabitants and to hold in their own right all the northern country as far as the Danube.

When the Emperor Valens heard of this at Antioch, he made ready an army at once and set out for the country of Thrace. Here a grievous battle took place and the Goths prevailed. The Emperor himself was wounded and fled to a farm near Hadrianople. The Goths, not knowing that an emperor lay hidden in so poor a hut, set fire to it (as is customary in dealing with a cruel foe), and thus he was cremated in royal splendor. Plainly it was a

direct judgment of God that he should be burned with fire by the very men whom he had perfidiously led astray when they sought the true faith, turning them aside from the flame of love into the fire of hell. From this time the Visigoths, in consequence of their glorious victory, possessed Thrace and Dacia Ripensis as if it were their native land.

Chapter XXVII

Now in the place of Valens, his uncle, the Emperor Gratian established Theodosius the Spaniard in the Eastern Empire. Military discipline was soon restored to a high level, and the Goth, perceiving that the cowardice and sloth of former princes was ended, became afraid. For the Emperor was famed alike for his acuteness and discretion. By stern commands and by generosity and kindness he encouraged a demoralized army to deeds of daring. But when the soldiers, who had obtained a better leader by the change, gained new confidence, they sought to attack the Goths and drive them from the borders of Thrace. But as the Emperor Theodosius fell so sick at this time that his life was almost despaired of, the Goths were again inspired with courage. Dividing the Gothic army, Fritigern set out to plunder Thessaly, Epirus and Achaia, while Alatheus and Safrac with the rest of the troops made for Pannonia. Now the Emperor Gratian had at this time retreated from Rome to Gaul because of the invasions of the Vandals. When he learned that the Goths were acting with greater boldness because Theodosius was in despair of his life, he quickly gathered an army and came against them. Yet he put no trust in arms, but sought to conquer them by kindness and gifts. So he entered on a truce with them and made peace, giving them provisions.

Chapter XXVIII

When the Emperor Theodosius afterwards recovered and learned that the Emperor Gratian had made a compact between the Goths and the Romans, as he had himself desired, he took it very graciously and gave his assent. He gave gifts to King Athanaric, who had succeeded Fritigern, made an alliance with him and in the most gracious manner invited him to visit him in Constantinople. Athanaric very gladly consented and as he entered the royal city exclaimed in wonder ”Lo, now I see what I have often heard of with unbelieving ears,” meaning the great and famous city. Turning his eyes hither and thither, he marvelled as he beheld the situation of the city, the coming and going of the ships, the splendid walls, and the people of divers nations gathered like a flood of waters streaming from different regions into one basin. So too, when he saw the army in array, he said ”Truly the Emperor is a god on earth, and whoso raises a hand against him is guilty of his own blood. In the midst of his admiration and the enjoyment of even greater honors at the hand of the emperor, he departed this life after the space of a few months. The emperor had such affection for him that he honored Athanaric even more when he was dead than during his life-time, for he not only gave him a worthy burial, but himself walked before the bier at the funeral.

Now when Athanaric was dead, his whole army continued in the service of the Emperor Theodosius and submitted to the Roman rule, forming as it were one body with the imperial soldiery. The former service of the Allies under the Emperor Constantine was now renewed and they were again called Allies. And since the Emperor knew that they were faithful to him and his friends, he took from their number more than twenty thousand warriors to serve against the tyrant Eugenius who had slain Gratian and seized Gaul. After winning the victory over this usurper, he wreaked his vengeance upon him.

Chapter XXIX

But after Theodosius, the lover of peace and of the Gothic race, had passed from human cares, his sons began to ruin both empires by their luxurious living and to deprive their Allies, that is to say the Goths, of the customary gifts. The contempt of the Goths for the Romans soon increased, and for fear their valor would be destroyed by long peace, they appointed Alaric king over them. He was of a famous stock, and his nobility was second only to that of the Amali, for he came from the family of the Balthi, who because of their daring valor had long ago received among their race the name Baltha, that is, The Bold. Now when this Alaric was made king, he took counsel with his men and persuaded them to seek a kingdom by their own exertions rather than serve others in idleness. In the consulship of Stilicho and Aurelian he raised an army and entered Italy, which seemed to be bare of defenders, and came through Pannonia and Sirmium along the right side. Without meeting any resistance, he reached the bridge of the river Candidianus at the third milestone from the royal city of Ravenna.

This city lies amid the streams of the Po between swamps and the sea, and is accessible only on one side. Its ancient inhabitants, as our ancestors relate, were called Ainetoi, that is, "Laudable". Situated in a corner of the Roman Empire above the Ionian Sea, it is hemmed in like an island by a flood of rushing waters. On the east it has the sea, and one who sails straight to it from the region of Corcyra and those parts of Hellas sweeps with his oars along the right hand coast, first touching Epirus, then Dalmatia, Liburnia and Histria and at last the Venetian Isles. But on the west it has swamps through which a sort of door has been left by a very narrow entrance. To the north is an arm of the Po, called the Fossa Asconis. On the south likewise is the Po itself, which they call the King of the rivers of Italy; and it has also the name Eridanus. This river was turned aside by the Emperor Augustus into a very broad canal which flows through the midst of the city with a seventh part of its stream, affording a pleasant harbor at its mouth. Men believed in ancient times, as Dio relates, that it would hold a fleet of two hundred and fifty vessels in its safe anchorage. Fabius says that this, which was once a harbor, now displays itself like a spacious garden full of trees; but from them hang not sails but apples. The city itself boasts of three names and is happily placed in its threefold location. I mean to say the first is called Ravenna and the most distant part Classis; while midway between the city and the sea is Caesarea, full of luxury. The sand of the beach is fine and suited for riding.

Chapter XXX

But as I was saying, when the army of the Visigoths had come into the neighborhood of this city, they sent an embassy to the Emperor Honorius, who dwelt within. They said that if he would permit the Goths to settle peaceably in Italy, they would so live with the Roman people that men might believe them both to be of one race; but if not, whoever prevailed in war should drive out the other, and the victor should henceforth rule unmolested. But the Emperor Honorius feared to make either promise. So he took counsel with his Senate and considered how he might drive them from the Italian borders. He finally decided that Alaric and his race, if they were able to do so, should be allowed to seize for their own home the provinces farthest away, namely, Gaul and Spain. For at this time he had almost lost them, and moreover they had been devastated by the invasion of Gaiseric, king of the Vandals. The grant was confirmed by an imperial rescript, and the Goths, consenting to the arrangement, set out for the country given them.

When they had gone away without doing any harm in Italy, Stilicho, the Patrician and father-in-law of the Emperor Honorius,—for the Emperor had married both his daughters, Maria and Thermantia, in succession, but God called both from this world in their virgin purity—this Stilicho, I say, treacherously hurried to Pollentia, a city in the Cottian Alps. There he fell upon the unsuspecting Goths in battle, to the ruin of all Italy and his own disgrace. When the Goths suddenly beheld him, at first they were terrified. Soon regaining their courage and arousing each other by brave shouting, as is their custom, they turned to flight the entire army of Stilicho and almost exterminated it. Then forsaking the journey they had undertaken, the Goths with hearts full of rage returned again to Liguria whence they had set out. When they had plundered and spoiled it, they also laid waste Aemilia, and then hastened toward the city of Rome along the Flaminian Way, which runs between Picenum and Tuscia, taking as booty whatever they found on either hand. When they finally entered Rome, by Alaric's express command they merely sacked it and did not set the city on fire, as wild peoples usually do, nor did they permit serious damage to be done to the holy places. Thence they departed to bring like ruin upon Campania and Lucania, and then came to Bruttii. Here they remained a long time and planned to go to Sicily and thence to the countries of Africa.

Now the land of the Bruttii is at the extreme southern bound of Italy, and a corner of it marks the beginning of the Apennine mountains. It stretches out like a tongue into the Adriatic Sea and separates it from the Tyrrhenian waters. It chanced to receive its name in ancient times from a Queen Bruttia. To this place came Alaric, king of Visigoths, with the wealth of all Italy which he had taken as spoil, and from there, as we have said, he intended to cross over by way of Sicily to the quiet land of Africa. But since man is not free to do anything he wishes without the will of God, that dread strait sunk several of his ships and threw all into confusion. Alaric was cast down by his reverse and, while deliberating what he should do, was suddenly overtaken by an untimely death and departed from human cares. His people mourned for him with the utmost affection. Then turning from its course the river Busentus near the city of Consentia—for this stream flows with its wholesome waters from the foot of a mountain near that city—they led a band of captives into the midst of its bed to dig out a place for his grave. In the depths of this pit they buried Alaric, together with many treasures, and then turned the waters back into their channel. And that none might ever know the place, they put to death all the diggers. They bestowed the kingdom of the Visigoths on Athavulf his kinsman, a man of imposing beauty and great spirit; for though not tall of stature, he was distinguished for beauty of face and form.

Chapter XXXI

When Athavulf became king, he returned again to Rome, and whatever had escaped the first sack his Goths stripped bare like locusts, not merely despoiling Italy of its private wealth, but even of its public resources. The Emperor Honorius was powerless to resist even when his sister Placidia, the daughter of the Emperor Theodosius by his second wife, was led away captive from the city. But Athavulf was attracted by her nobility, beauty and chaste purity, and so he took her to wife in lawful marriage at Forum Julii, a city of Aemilia. When the barbarians learned of this alliance, they were the more effectually terrified, since the Empire and the Goths now seemed to be made one. Then Athavulf set out for Gaul, leaving Honorius Augustus stripped of his wealth, to be sure, yet pleased at heart because he was now a sort of kinsman of his. Upon his arrival the neighboring tribes who had long made cruel raids into Gaul,—Franks and Burgundians alike,—were terrified and began to keep within their own borders. Now the Vandals and the Alani, as we have said before, had been dwelling in both Pannonias by permission of the Roman Emperors. Yet fearing they would not be safe even here if the Goths should return, they crossed over into Gaul.

But no long time after they had taken possession of Gaul they fled thence and shut themselves up in Spain, for they still remembered from the tales of their forefathers what ruin Geberich, king of the Goths, had long ago brought on their race, and how by his valor he had driven them from their native land. And thus it happened that Gaul lay open to Athavulf when he came. Now when the Goth had established his kingdom in Gaul, he began to grieve for the plight of the Spaniards and planned to save them from the attacks of the Vandals. So Athavulf left at Barcelona his treasures and the men who were unfit for war, and entered the interior of Spain with a few faithful followers. Here he fought frequently with the Vandals and, in the third year after he had subdued Gaul and Spain, fell pierced through the groin by the sword of Euervulf, a man whose short stature he had been wont to mock. After his death Segeric was appointed king, but he too was slain by the treachery of his own men and lost both his kingdom and his life even more quickly than Athavulf.

Chapter XXXII

Then Valia, the fourth from Alaric, was made king, and he was an exceeding stern and prudent man. The Emperor Honorius sent an army against him under Constantius, who was famed for his achievements in war and distinguished in many battles, for he feared that Valia would break the treaty long ago made with Athavulf and that, after driving out the neighboring tribes, he would again plot evil against the Empire. Moreover Honorius was eager to free his sister Placidia from the disgrace of servitude, and made an agreement with Constantius that if by peace or war or any means soever he could bring her back to the kingdom, he should have her in marriage. Pleased with this promise, Constantius set out for Spain with an armed force and in almost royal splendor. Valia, king of the Goths, met him at a pass in the Pyrenees with as great a force. Here-upon embassies were sent by both sides and it was decided to make peace on the following terms, namely that Valia should give up Placidia, the Emperor's sister, and should not refuse to aid the Roman Empire when occasion demanded.

Now at that time a certain Constantine usurped imperial power in Gaul and appointed as Caesar his son Constans, who was formerly a monk. But when he had held for a short time the Empire he had seized, he was himself slain at Arelate and his son at Vienne. Jovinus and Sebastian succeeded them with equal presumption and thought they might seize the imperial power; but they perished by a like fate. Now in the twelfth year of Valia's reign the Huns were driven out of Pannonia by the Romans and Goths, almost fifty years after they had taken possession of it. Then Valia found that the Vandals had come forth with bold audacity from the interior of Galicia, whither Athavulf had long ago driven them, and were devastating and plundering everywhere in his own territories, namely in the land of Spain. So he made no delay but moved his army against them at once, at about the time when Hierius and Ardabures had become consuls.

Chapter XXXIII

But Gaiseric, king of the Vandals, had already been invited into Africa by Boniface, who had fallen into a dispute with the Emperor Valentinian and was able to obtain revenge only by injuring the empire. So he invited them urgently and brought them across the narrow strait known as the Strait of Gades, scarcely seven miles wide, which divides Africa from Spain and unites the mouth of the Tyrrhenian Sea with the waters of Ocean. Gaiseric, still famous in the City for the disaster of the Romans, was a man of moderate height and lame in consequence of a fall from his horse. He was a man of deep thought and few words, holding luxury in disdain, furious in his anger, greedy for gain, shrewd in winning over the barbarians and skilled in sowing the seeds of dissension to arouse enmity. Such was he who, as we have said, came at the solicitous invitation of Boniface to the country of Africa. There he reigned for a long time, receiving authority, as they say, from God Himself. Before his death he summoned the band of his sons and ordained that there should be no strife among them because of desire for the kingdom, but that each should reign in his own rank and order as he survived the others; that is, the next younger should succeed his elder brother, and he in turn should be followed by his junior. By giving heed to this command they ruled their kingdom in happiness for the space of many years and were not disgraced by civil war, as is usual among other nations; one after the other receiving the kingdom and ruling the people in peace.

Now this is their order of succession: first, Gaiseric who was father and lord, next, Huneric, the third Gunthamund, the fourth Thrasamund, and the fifth Ilderich. He was driven from the throne and slain by Gelimer, who destroyed his race by disregarding his ancestor's advice and setting up a tyranny. But what he had done did not remain unpunished, for soon the vengeance of the Emperor Justinian was manifested against him. With his whole family and that wealth over which he gloated like a robber, he was taken to Constantinople by that most renowned warrior Belisarius, Master of the Soldiery of the East, Ex-Consul Ordinary and Patrician. Here he afforded a great spectacle to the people in the Circus. His repentance, when he beheld himself cast down from his royal state, came too late. He died as a mere subject and in retirement, though he had formerly been unwilling to submit to private life. Thus after a century Africa, which in the division of the earth's surface is regarded as the third part of the world, was delivered from the yoke of the Vandals and brought back to the liberty of the Roman Empire. The country which the hand of the heathen had long ago

cut off from the body of the Roman Empire, by reason of the cowardice of emperors and the treachery of generals, was now restored by a wise prince and a faithful leader and to-day is happily flourishing. And though, even after this, it had to deplore the misery of civil war and the treachery of the Moors, yet the triumph of the Emperor Justinian, vouchsafed him by God. brought to a peaceful conclusion what he had begun. But why need we speak of what the subject does not require? Let us return to our theme.

Now Valia, king of the Goths, and his army fought so fiercely against the Vandals that he would have pursued them even into Africa, had not such a misfortune recalled him as befell Alaric when he was setting out for Africa. So when he had won great fame in Spain, he returned after a bloodless victory to Tolosa, turning over to the Roman Empire, as he had promised, a number of provinces which he had rid of his foes. A long time after this he was seized by sickness and departed this life. Just at that time Beremud, the son of Thorismud, whom we have mentioned above in the genealogy of the family of the Amali, departed with his son Veteric from the Ostrogoths, who still submitted to the oppression of the Huns in the land of Scythia, and came to the kingdom of the Visigoths. Well aware of his valor and noble birth, he believed that the kingdom would be the more readily bestowed upon him by his kinsmen, inasmuch as he was known to be the heir of many kings. And who would hesitate to choose one of the Amali, if there were an empty throne? But he was not himself eager to make known who he was, and so upon the death of Valia the Visigoths made Theodorid his successor. Beremud came to him and, with the strength of mind for which he was noted, concealed his noble birth by prudent silence, for he knew that those of royal lineage are always distrusted by kings. So he suffered himself to remain unknown, that he might not bring the established order into confusion. King Theodorid received him and his son with special honor and made him partner in his counsels and a companion at his board; not for his noble birth, which he knew not, but for his brave spirit and strong mind, which Beremud could not conceal.

Chapter XXXIV

And what more? Valia (to repeat what we have said) had but little success against the Gauls, but when he died the more fortunate and prosperous Theodorid succeeded to the throne. He was a man of the greatest moderation and notable for vigor of mind and body. In consulship of Theodosius and Festus the Romans broke the truce and took up arms against him in Gaul, with the Huns as their auxiliaries. For a band of the Gallic Allies, led by Count Gaina, had aroused the Romans by throwing Constantinople into a panic. Now at that time the Patrician Aëtius was in command of the army. He was of the bravest Moesian stock, born of his father Gaudentius in the city of Durostorum. He was a man fitted to endure the toils of war, born expressly to serve the Roman state; and by inflicting crushing defeats he had compelled the proud Suavi and barbarous Franks to submit to Roman sway. So then, with the Huns as allies under their leader Litorius, the Roman army moved in array against the Goths. When the battle lines of both sides had been standing for a long time opposite each other, both being brave and neither side the weaker, they struck a truce and returned to their ancient alliance. And after the treaty had been confirmed by both and an honest peace was established, they both withdrew.

During this peace Attila was lord over all the Huns and almost the sole earthly ruler of all the tribes of Scythia; a man marvellous for his glorious fame among all nations. The historian Priscus, who was sent to him on an embassy by the younger Theodosius, says this among other things: ”Crossing mighty rivers—namely, the Tisia and Tibisia and Dricca—we came to the place where long ago Vidigoia, bravest of the Goths, perished by the guile of the Sarmatians. At no great distance from that place we arrived at the village where King Attila was dwelling,—a village, I say, like a great city in which we found wooden walls made of smooth-shining boards, whose joints so counterfeited solidity that the union of the boards could scarcely be distinguished by close scrutiny. There you might see dining halls of large extent and porticoes planned with great beauty, while the courtyard was bounded by so vast a circuit that its very size showed it was the royal palace.” This was the abode of Attila, the king of all the barbarian world; and he preferred this as a dwelling to the cities he captured.

Chapter XXXV

Now this Attila was the son of Mundiuch, and his brothers were Octar and Ruas who are said to have ruled before Attila, though not over quite so many tribes as he. After their death he succeeded to the throne of the Huns, together with his brother Bleda. In order that he might first be equal to the expedition he was preparing, he sought to increase his strength by murder. Thus he proceeded from the destruction of his own kindred to the menace of all others. But though he increased his power by this shameful means, yet by the balance of justice he received the hideous consequences of his own cruelty. Now when his brother Bleda, who ruled over a great part of the Huns, had been slain by his treachery, Attila united all the people under his own rule. Gathering also a host of the other tribes which he then held under his sway, he sought to subdue the foremost nations of the world—the Romans and the Visigoths. His army is said to have numbered five hundred thousand men. He was a man born into the world to shake the nations, the scourge of all lands, who in some way terrified all mankind by the dreadful rumors noised abroad concerning him. He was haughty in his walk, rolling his eyes hither and thither, so that the power of his proud spirit appeared in the movement of his body.

He was indeed a lover of war, yet restrained in action, mighty in counsel, gracious to suppliants and lenient to those who were once received into his protection. He was short of stature with a broad chest and a large head; his eyes were small, his beard thin and sprinkled with gray; and he had a flat nose and a swarthy complexion, showing the evidences of his origin. And though his temper was such that he always had great self-confidence, yet his assurance was increased by finding the sword of Mars, always esteemed sacred among the kings of the Scythians. The historian Priscus says it was discovered under the following circumstances: "When a certain shepherd beheld one heifer of his flock limping and could find no cause for this wound, he anxiously followed the trail of blood and at length came to a sword it had unwittingly trampled while nibbling the grass. He dug it up and took it straight to Attila. He rejoiced at this gift and, being ambitious, thought he had been appointed ruler of the whole world, and that through the sword of Mars supremacy in all wars was assured to him."

Chapter XXXVI

Now when Gaiseric, king of the Vandals, whom we mentioned shortly before, learned that his mind was bent on the devastation of the world, he incited Attila by many gifts to make war on the Visigoths, for he was afraid that Theodorid, king of the Visigoths, would avenge the injury done to his daughter. She had been joined in wedlock with Huneric, the son of Gaiseric, and at first was happy in this union. But afterwards he was cruel even to his own children, and because of the mere suspicion that she was attempting to poison him, he cut off her nose and mutilated her ears. He sent her back to her father in Gaul thus despoiled of her natural charms. So the wretched girl presented a pitiable aspect ever after, and the cruelty which would stir even strangers still more surely incited her father to vengeance. Attila, therefore, in his efforts to bring about the wars long ago instigated by the bribe of Gaiseric, sent ambassadors into Italy to the Emperor Valentinian to sow strife between the Goths and the Romans, thinking to shatter by civil discord those whom he could not crush in battle. He declared that he was in no way violating his friendly relations with the Empire, but that he had a quarrel with Theodorid, king of the Visigoths. As he wished to be kindly received, he had filled the rest of the letter with the visual flattering salutations, striving to win credence for his falsehood. In like manner he despatched a message to Theodorid, king of the Visigoths, urging him to break his alliance with the Romans and reminding him of the battles to which they had recently provoked him. Beneath his great ferocity he was a subtle man, and fought with craft before he made war.

Then the Emperor Valentinian sent an embassy to the Visigoths and their king Theodorid, with this message: ”Bravest of nations, it is the part of prudence for us to unite against the lord of the earth who wishes to enslave the whole world; who requires no just cause for battle, but supposes whatever he does is right. He measures his ambition by his might. License satisfies his pride. Despising law and right, he shows himself an enemy to Nature herself. And thus he, who clearly is the common foe of each, deserves the hatred of all. Pray remember—what you surely cannot forget—that the Huns do not overthrow nations by means of war, where there is an equal chance, but assail them by treachery, which is a greater cause for anxiety. To say nothing about ourselves, can you suffer such insolence to go unpunished? Since you are mighty in arms, give heed to your own danger and join hands with us in common. Bear aid also to the Empire, of which you hold a part. If you would learn how needful such an alliance is for us, look into the plans of the foe.”

By these and like arguments the ambassadors of Valentinian prevailed upon King Theodorid. He answered them, saying ”Romans, you have attained your desire; you have made Attila our foe also. We will pursue him wherever he summons us, and though he is puffed up by his victories over divers races, yet the Goths know how to fight this haughty foe. I call no war dangerous save one whose cause is weak; for he fears no ill on whom Majesty has smiled.” The nobles shouted assent to the reply and the multitude gladly followed. All were fierce for battle and longed to meet the Huns, their foe. And so a countless host was led forth by Theodorid, king of the Visigoths, who sent home four of his sons, namely Friderich and Eurich, Retemer and Himnerith, taking with him only the two elder sons, Thorismud and Theodorid, as partners of his toil. O brave array, sure defense and sweet comradeship! having as its solace the peril of those whose one joy is the endurance of the same dangers.

On the side of the Romans stood the Patrician Aëtius, on whom at that time the whole Empire of the West depended; a man of such wisdom that he had assembled warriors from everywhere to meet them on equal terms. Now these were his auxiliaries: Franks, Sarmatians, Armoricians, Liticians, Burgundians, Saxons, Riparians Olibriones (once Roman soldiers and now the flower of the allied forces), and some other Celtic or German tribes. And so they met in the Catalaunian Plains, which are also called Mauriacian, extending in length one hundred leuva, as the Gauls express it, and seventy in width. Now a Gallic leuva measures a distance of fifteen hundred paces. That portion of the earth accordingly became the threshing-floor of countless races. The two hosts bravely joined battle. Nothing was done under cover, but they contended in open fight. What just cause can be found for the encounter of so many nations, or what hatred inspired them all to take arms against each other? It is proof that the human race lives for its kings, for it is at the mad impulse of one mind a slaughter of nations takes place, and at the whim of a haughty ruler that which nature has taken ages to produce perishes in a moment.

Chapter XXXVII

But before we set forth the order of the battle itself, it seems needful to relate what had already happened in the course of the campaign, for it was not only a famous struggle but one that was complicated and confused. Well then, Sangiban, king of the Alani, smitten with fear of what might come to pass, had promised to surrender to Attila, and to give into his keeping Aureliani, a city of Gaul wherein he then dwelt. When Theodorid and Aëtius learned of this, they cast up great earthworks around that city before Attila's arrival and kept watch over the suspected Sangiban, placing him with his tribe in the midst of their auxiliaries. Then Attila, king of the Huns, was taken aback by this event and lost confidence in his own troops, so that he feared to begin the conflict. While he was meditating on flight—a greater calamity than death itself—he decided to inquire into the future through soothsayers. So, as was their custom, they examined the entrails of cattle and certain streaks in bones that had been scraped, and foretold disaster to the Huns. Yet as a slight consolation they prophesied that the chief commander of the foe they were to meet should fall and mar by his death the rest of the victory and the triumph. Now Attila deemed the death of Aëtius a thing to be desired even at the cost of his own life, for Aëtius stood in the way of his plans. So although he was disturbed by this prophecy, yet inasmuch as he was a man who sought counsel of omens in all warfare, he began the battle with anxious heart at about the ninth hour of the day, in order that the impending darkness might come to his aid if the outcome should be disastrous.

Chapter XXXVIII

The armies met, as we have said, in the Catalaunian Plains. The battle field was a plain rising by a sharp slope to a ridge, which both armies sought to gain; for advantage of position is a great help. The Huns with their forces seized the right side, the Romans, the Visigoths and their allies the left, and then began a struggle for the yet untaken crest. Now Theodorid with the Visigoths held the right wing and Aëtius with the Romans the left. They placed in the centre Sangiban (who, as said before, was in command of the Alani), thus contriving with military caution to surround by a host of faithful troops the man in whose loyalty they had little confidence. For one who has difficulties placed in the way of his flight readily submits to the necessity of fighting. On the other side, however, the battle line of the Huns was so arranged that Attila and his bravest followers were stationed in the centre. In arranging them thus the king had chiefly his own safety in view, since by his position in the very midst of his race he would be kept out of the way of threatening danger. The innumerable peoples of divers tribes, which he had subjected to his sway, formed the wings. Amid them was conspicuous the army of the Ostrogoths under the leadership of the brothers Valamir, Thiudimer and Vidimer, nobler even than the king they served, for the might of the family of the Amali rendered them glorious.

The renowned king of the Gepidae, Ardaric, was there also with a countless host, and because of his great loyalty to Attila, he shared his plans. For Attila, comparing them in his wisdom, prized him and Valamir, king of the Ostrogoths, above all the other chieftains. Valamir was a good keeper of secrets, bland of speech and skilled in wiles, and Ardaric, as we have said, was famed for his loyalty and wisdom. Attila might well feel sure that they would fight against the Visigoths, their kinsmen. Now the rest of the crowd of kings (if we may call them so) and the leaders of various nations hung upon Attila's nod like slaves, and when he gave a sign even by a glance, without a murmur each stood forth in fear and trembling, or at all events did as he was bid. Attila alone was king of all kings over all and concerned for all.

So then the struggle began for the advantage of position we have mentioned. Attila sent his men to take the summit of the mountain, but was outstripped by Thorismud and Aëtius, who in their effort to gain the top of the hill reached higher ground and through this advantage of position easily routed the Huns as they came up.

Chapter XXXIX

Now when Attila saw his army was thrown into confusion by this event, he thought it best to encourage them by an extemporaneous address on this wise: ”Here you stand, after conquering mighty nations and subduing the world. I therefore think it foolish for me to goad you with words, as though you were men who had not been proved in action. Let a new leader or an untried army resort to that. It is not right for me to say anything common, nor ought you to listen. For what is war but your usual custom? Or what is sweeter for a brave man than to seek revenge with his own hand? It is a right of nature to glut the soul with vengeance. Let us then attack the foe eagerly; for they are ever the bolder who make the attack. Despise this union of discordant races! To defend oneself by alliance is proof of cowardice. See, even before our attack they are smitten with terror. They seek the heights, they seize the hills and, repenting too late, clamor for protection against battle in the open fields. You know how slight a matter the Roman attack is. While they are still gathering in order and forming in one line with locked shields, they are checked, I will not say by the first wound, but even by the dust of battle. Then on to the fray with stout hearts, as is your wont. Despise their battle line. Attack the Alani, smite the Visigoths!

Seek swift victory in that spot where the battle rages. For when the sinews are cut the limbs soon relax, nor can a body stand when you have taken away the bones. Let your courage rise and your own fury burst forth! Now show your cunning, Huns, now your deeds of arms! Let the wounded exact in return the death of his foe; let the unwounded revel in slaughter of the enemy. No spear shall harm those who are sure to live; and those who are sure to die Fate overtakes even in peace. And finally, why should fortune have made the Huns victorious over so many nations, unless it were to prepare them for the joy of this conflict. Who was it revealed to our sires the path through the Maeotian swamp, for so many ages closed secret? Who, moreover, made armed men yield to you, when you were as yet unarmed? Even a mass of federated nations could not endure the sight of the Huns. I am not deceived in the issue;—here is the field so many victories have promised us. I shall hurl the first spear at the foe. If any can stand at rest while Attila fights, he is a dead man. Inflamed by these words, they all dashed into battle.

Chapter XL

And although the situation was itself fearful, yet the presence of their king dispelled anxiety and hesitation. Hand to hand they clashed in battle, and the fight grew fierce, confused, monstrous, unrelenting—a fight whose like no ancient time has ever recorded. There such deeds were done that a brave man who missed this marvellous spectacle could not hope to see anything so wonderful all his life long. For, if we may believe our elders, a brook flowing between low banks through the plain was greatly increased by blood from the wounds of the slain. It was not flooded by showers, as brooks usually rise, but was swollen by a strange stream and turned into a torrent by the increase of blood. Those whose wounds drove them to slake their parching thirst drank water mingled with gore. In their wretched plight they were forced to drink what they thought was the blood they had poured from their own wounds.

Here King Theodorid, while riding by to encourage his army, was thrown from his horse and trampled under foot by his own men, thus ending his days at a ripe old age. But others say he was slain by the spear of Andag of the host of the Ostrogoths, who were then under the sway of Attila. This was what the soothsayers had told to Attila in prophecy, though he understood it of Aëtius. Then the Visigoths, separating from the Alani, fell upon the horde of the Huns and nearly slew Attila. But he prudently took flight and straightway shut himself and his companions within the barriers of the camp, which he had fortified with wagons. A frail defence indeed; yet there they sought refuge for their lives, whom but a little while before no walls of earth could withstand. But Thorismud, the son of King Theodorid, who with Aëtius had seized the hill and repulsed the enemy from the higher ground, came unwittingly to the wagons of the enemy in the darkness of night, thinking he had reached his own lines. As he was fighting bravely, someone wounded him in the head and dragged him from his horse. Then he was rescued by the watchful care of his followers and withdrew from the fierce conflict. Aëtius also became separated from his men in the confusion of night and wandered about in the midst of the enemy. Fearing disaster had happened, he went about in search of the Goths. At last he reached the camp of his allies and passed the remainder of the night in the protection of their shields.

At dawn on the following day, when the Romans saw the fields were piled high with bodies and that the Huns did not venture forth, they thought the victory was theirs, but knew that

Attila would not flee from the battle unless overwhelmed by a great disaster. Yet he did nothing cowardly, like one that is overcome, but with clash of arms sounded the trumpets and threatened an attack. He was like a lion pierced by hunting spears, who paces to and fro before the mouth of his den and dares not spring, but ceases not to terrify the neighborhood by his roaring. Even so this warlike king at bay terrified his conquerors. Therefore the Goths and Romans assembled and considered what to do with the vanquished Attila. They determined to wear him out by a siege, because he had no supply of provisions and was hindered from approaching by a shower of arrows from the bowmen placed within the confines of the Roman camp. But it was said that the king remained supremely brave even in this extremity and had heaped up a funeral pyre of horse trappings, so that if the enemy should attack him, he was determined to cast himself into the flames, that none might have the joy of wounding him and that the lord of so many races might not fall into the hands of his foes.

Chapter XLI

Now during these delays in the siege, the Visigoths sought their king and the king's sons their father, wondering at his absence when success had been attained. When, after a long search, they found him where the dead lay thickest, as happens with brave men, they honored him with songs and bore him away in the sight of the enemy. You might have seen bands of Goths shouting with dissonant cries and paying the honors of death while the battle still raged. Tears were shed, but such as they were accustomed to devote to brave men. It was death indeed, but the Huns are witness that it was a glorious one. It was a death whereby one might well suppose the pride of the enemy would be lowered, when they beheld the body of so great a king borne forth with fitting honors. And so the Goths, still continuing the rites due to Theodorid, bore forth the royal majesty with sounding arms, and valiant Thorismud, as befitted a son, honored the glorious spirit of his dear father by following his remains.

When this was done, Thorismud was eager to take vengeance for his father's death on the remaining Huns, being moved to this both by the pain of bereavement and the impulse of that valor for which he was noted. Yet he consulted with the Patrician Aëtius (for he was an older man and of more mature wisdom) with regard to what he ought to do next. But Aëtius feared that if the Huns were totally destroyed by the Goths, the Roman Empire would be overwhelmed, and urgently advised him to return to his own dominions to take up the rule which his father had left. Otherwise his brothers might seize their father's possessions and obtain the power over the Visigoths. In this case Thorismud would have to fight fiercely and, what is worse, disastrously with his own countrymen. Thorismud accepted the advice without perceiving its double meaning, but followed it with an eye toward his own advantage. So he left the Huns and returned to Gaul. Thus while human frailty rushes into suspicion, it often loses an opportunity of doing great things.

In this most famous war of the bravest tribes, one hundred and sixty five thousand are said to have been slain on both sides, leaving out of account fifteen thousand of the Gepidae and Franks, who met each other the night before the general engagement and fell by wounds mutually received, the Franks fighting for the Romans and the Gepidae for the Huns. Now when Attila learned of the retreat of the Goths, he thought it a ruse of the enemy,—for so men are wont to believe when the unexpected happens—and remained for some time in

his camp. But when a long silence followed the absence of the foe, the spirit of the mighty king was aroused to the thought of victory and the anticipation of pleasure, and his mind turned to the old oracles of his destiny. Thorismud, however, after the death of his father on the Catalaunian Plains where he had fought, advanced in royal state and entered Tolosa. Here although the throng of his brothers and brave companions were still rejoicing over the victory he yet began to rule so mildly that no one strove with him for the succession to the kingdom.

Chapter XLII

But Attila took occasion from the withdrawal of the Visigoths, observing what he had often desired that his enemies were divided. At length feeling secure, he moved forward his array to attack the Romans. As his first move he besieged the city of Aquileia, the metropolis of Venetia, which is situated on a point or tongue of land by the Adriatic Sea. On the eastern side its walls are washed by the river Natissa, flowing from Mount Piccis. The siege was long and fierce, but of no avail, since the bravest soldiers of the Romans withstood him from within. At last his army was discontented and eager to withdraw. Attila chanced to be walking around the walls, considering whether to break camp or delay longer, and noticed that the white birds, namely, the storks, who build their nests in the gables of houses, were bearing their young from the city and, contrary to their custom, were carrying them out into the country. Being a shrewd observer of events, he understood this and said to his soldiers: "You see the birds foresee the future. They are leaving the city sure to perish and are forsaking strongholds doomed to fall by reason of imminent peril. Do not think this a meaningless or uncertain sign; fear, arising from the things they foresee, has changed their custom. Why say more? He inflamed the hearts of his soldiers to attack Aquileia again.

Constructing battering rams and bringing to bear all manner of engines of war, they quickly forced their way into the city, laid it waste, divided the spoil and so cruelly devastated it as scarcely to leave a trace to be seen. Then growing bolder and still thirsting for Roman blood, the Huns raged madly through the remaining cities of the Veneti. They also laid waste Mediolanum, the metropolis of Liguria, once an imperial city, and gave over Ticinum to a like fate. Then they destroyed the neighboring country in their frenzy and demolished almost the whole of Italy.

Attila's mind had been bent on going to Rome. But his followers, as the historian Priscus relates, took him away, not out of regard for the city to which they were hostile, but because they remembered the case of Alaric, the former king of the Visigoths. They distrusted the good fortune of their own king, inasmuch as Alaric did not live long after the sack of Rome, but straightway departed this life. Therefore while Attila's spirit was wavering in doubt between going and not going, and he still lingered to ponder the matter, an embassy came to him from Rome to seek peace. Pope Leo himself came to meet him in the Ambuleian district of the Veneti at the well-travelled ford of the river Mincius. Then Attila quickly put aside his

usual fury, turned back on the way he had advanced from beyond the Danube and departed with the promise of peace. But above all he declared and avowed with threats that he would bring worse things upon Italy, unless they sent him Honoria, the sister of the Emperor Valentinian and daughter of Augusta Placidia, with her due share of the royal wealth. For it was said that Honoria, although bound to chastity for the honor of the imperial court and kept in constraint by command of her brother, had secretly despatched a eunuch to summon Attila that she might have his protection against he brother's power;—a shameful thing, indeed, to get license for her passion at the cost of the public weal.

Chapter XLIII

So Attila returned to his own country, seeming to regret the peace and to be vexed at the cessation of war. For he sent ambassadors to Marcian, Emperor of the East, threatening to devastate the provinces, because that which had been promised him by Theodosius, a former emperor, was in no wise performed, and saying that he would show himself more cruel to his foes than ever. But as he was shrewd and crafty, he threatened in one direction and moved his army in another; for in the midst of these preparations he turned his face toward the Visigoths who had yet to feel his vengeance. But here he had not the same success as against the Romans. Hastening back by a different way than before, he decided to reduce to his sway that part of the Alani which was settled across the river Loire, in order that by attacking them, and thus changing the aspect of the war, he might become a more terrible menace to the Visigoths. Accordingly he started from the provinces of Dacia and Pannonia, where the Huns were then dwelling with various subject peoples, and moved his array against the Alani. But Thorismud, king of the Visigoths, with like quickness of thought perceived Attila's trick. By forced marches he came to the Alani before him, and was well prepared to check the advance of Attila when he came after him.

They joined battle in almost the same way as before at the Catalaunian Plains, and Thorismud dashed his hopes of victory, for he routed him and drove him from the land without a triumph, compelling him to flee to his own country. Thus while Attila, the famous leader and lord of many victories, sought to blot out the fame of his destroyer and in this way to annul what he had suffered at the hands of the Visigoths, he met a second defeat and retreated ingloriously. Now after the bands of the Huns had been repulsed by the Alani, without any hurt to his own men, Thorismud departed for Tolosa. There he established a settled peace for his people and in the third year of his reign fell sick. While letting blood from a vein, he was betrayed to his death by Ascalc, a client, who told his foes that his weapons were out of reach. Yet grasping a foot-stool in the one hand he had free, he became the avenger of his own blood by slaying several of those that were lying in wait for him.

Chapter XLIV

After his death, his brother Theodorid succeeded to the kingdom of the Visigoths and soon found that Riciarius his kinsman, the king of the Suavi, was hostile to him. For Riciarius, presuming on his relationship to Theodorid, believed that he might seize almost the whole of Spain, thinking the disturbed beginning of Theodorid's reign made the time opportune for his trick. The Suavi formerly occupied as their country Galicia and Lusitania, which extend on the right side of Spain along the shore of Ocean. To the east is Austrogonia, to the west, on a promontory, is the sacred Monument of the Roman general Scipio, to the north Ocean, and to the south Lusitania and the Tagus river, which mingles golden grains in its sands and thus carries wealth in its worthless mud. So then Riciarius, king of the Suavi, set forth and strove to seize the whole of Spain. Theodorid, his kinsman, a man of moderation, sent ambassadors to him and told him quietly that he must not only withdraw from the territories that were not his own, but furthermore that he should not presume to make such an attempt, as he was becoming hated for his ambition. But with arrogant spirit he replied: "If you murmur here and find fault with my coming, I shall come to Tolosa where you dwell. Resist me there, if you can. When he heard this, Theodorid was angry and, making a compact with all the other tribes, moved his array against the Suavi.

He had as his close allies Gundiuch and Hilperic, kings of the Burgundians. They came to battle near the river Ulbius, which flows between Asturica and Hiberia, and in the engagement Theodorid with the Visigoths, who fought for the right, came off victorious, overthrowing the entire tribe of the Suavi and almost exterminating them. Their king Riciarius fled from the dread foe and embarked upon a ship. But he was beaten back by another foe, the adverse wind of the Tyrrhenian Sea, and so fell into the hands of the Visigoths. Thus though he changed from sea to land, the wretched man did not avert his death.

When Theodorid had become the victor, he spared the conquered and did not suffer the rage of conflict to continue, but placed over the Suavi whom he had conquered one of his own retainers, named Agrivulf. But Agrivulf soon treacherously changed his mind, through the persuasion of the Suavi, and failed to fulfil his duty. For he was quite puffed up with tyrannical pride, believing he had obtained the province as a reward for the valor by which he and his lord had recently subjugated it. Now he was a man born of the stock of the Varni, far below the nobility of Gothic blood, and so was neither zealous for liberty nor

faithful toward his patron. As soon as Theodorid heard of this, he gathered a force to cast him out from the kingdom he had usurped. They came quickly and conquered him in the first battle, inflicting a punishment befitting his deeds. For he was captured, taken from his friends and beheaded. Thus at last he was made aware of the wrath of the master he thought might be despised because he was kind. Now when the Suavi beheld the death of their leader, they sent priests of their country to Theodorid as suppliants. He received them with the reverence due their office and not only granted the Suavi exemption from punishment, but was moved by compassion and allowed them to choose a ruler of their own race for themselves. The Suavi did so, taking Rimismund as their prince. When this was done and peace was everywhere assured, Theodorid died in the thirteenth year of his reign.

Chapter XLV

His brother Eurich succeeded him with such eager haste that he fell under dark suspicion. Now while these and various other matters were happening among the people of the Visigoths, the Emperor Valentinian was slain by the treachery of Maximus, and Maximus himself, like a tyrant, usurped the rule. Gaiseric, king of the Vandals, heard of this and came from Africa to Italy with ships of war, entered Rome and laid it waste. Maximus fled and was slain by a certain Ursus, a Roman soldier. After him Majorian undertook the government of the Western Empire at the bidding of Marcian, Emperor of the East. But he too ruled but a short time. For when he had moved his forces against the Alani who were harassing Gaul, he was killed at Dertona near the river named Ira. Severus succeeded him and died at Rome in the third year of his reign. When the Emperor Leo, who had succeeded Marcian in the Eastern Empire, learned of this, he chose as emperor his Patrician Anthemius and sent him to Rome. Upon his arrival he sent against the Alani his son-in-law Ricimer, who was an excellent man and almost the only one in Italy at that time fit to command the army. In the very first engagement he conquered and destroyed the host of the Alani, together with their king, Beorg.

Now Eurich, king of the Visigoths, perceived the frequent change of Roman Emperors and strove to hold Gaul by his own right. The Emperor Anthemius heard of it and asked the Brittones for aid. Their King Riotimus came with twelve thousand men into the state of the Bituriges by the way of Ocean, and was received as he disembarked from his ships. Eurich, king of the Visigoths, came against them with an innumerable army, and after a long fight he routed Riotimus, king of the Brittones, before the Romans could join him. So when he had lost a great part of his army, he fled with all the men he could gather together, and came to the Burgundians, a neighboring tribe then allied to the Romans. But Eurich, king of the Visigoths, seized the Gallic city of Arverna; for the Emperor Anthemius was now dead. Engaged in fierce war with his son-in-law Ricimer, he had worn out Rome and was himself finally slain by his son-in-law and yielded the rule to Olybrius.

At that time Aspar, first of the Patricians and a famous man of the Gothic race was wounded by the swords of the eunuchs in his palace at Constantinople and died. With him were slain his sons Ardabures and Patriciolus, the one long a Patrician, and the other styled a Caesar and son-in-law of the Emperor Leo. Now Olybrius died barely eight months after he had

entered upon his reign, and Glycerius was made Caesar at Ravenna, rather by usurpation than by election. Hardly had a year been ended when Nepos, the son of the sister of Marcellinus, once a Patrician, deposed him from his office and ordained him bishop at the Port of Rome.

When Eurich, as we have already said, beheld these great and various changes, he seized the city of Arverna, where the Roman general Ecdicius was at that time in command. He was a senator of most renowned family and the son of Avitus, a recent emperor who had usurped the reign for a few days—for Avitus held the rule for a few days before Olybrius, and then withdrew of his own accord to Placentia, where he was ordained bishop. His son Ecdicius strove for a long time with the Visigoths, but had not the power to prevail. So he left the country and (what was more important) the city of Arverna to the enemy and betook himself to safer regions. When the Emperor Nepos heard of this, he ordered Ecdicius to leave Gaul and come to him, appointing Orestes in his stead as Master of the Soldiery. This Orestes thereupon received the army, set out from Rome against the enemy and came to Ravenna. Here he tarried while he made his son Romulus Augustulus emperor. When Nepos learned of this, he fled to Dalmatia and died there, deprived of his throne, in the very place where Glycerius, who was formerly emperor, held at that time the bishopric of Salona.

Chapter XLVI

Now when Augustulus had been appointed Emperor by his father Orestes in Ravenna, it was not long before Odoacer, king of the Torcilingi, invaded Italy, as leader of the Sciri, the Heruli and allies of various races. He put Orestes to death, drove his son Augustulus from the throne and condemned him to the punishment of exile in the Castle of Lucullus in Campania. Thus the Western Empire of the Roman race, which Octavianus Augustus, the first of the Augusti, began to govern in the seven hundred and ninth year from the founding of the city, perished with this Augustulus in the five hundred and twenty second year from the beginning of the rule of his predecessors and those before them, and from this time onward kings of the Goths held Rome and Italy. Meanwhile Odoacer, king of nations, subdued all Italy and then at the very outset of his reign slew Count Bracila at Ravenna that he might inspire a fear of himself among the Romans. He strengthened his kingdom and held it for almost thirteen years, even until the appearance of Theodoric, of whom we shall speak hereafter.

Chapter XLVII

But first let us return to that order from which we have digressed and tell how Eurich, king of the Visigoths, beheld the tottering of the Roman Empire and reduced Arelate and Massilia to his own sway. Gaiseric, king of the Vandals, enticed him by gifts to do these things, to the end that he himself might forestall the plots which Leo and Zeno had contrived against him. Therefore he stirred the Ostrogoths to lay waste the Eastern Empire and the Visigoths the Western, so that while his foes were battling in both empires, he might himself reign peacefully in Africa. Eurich perceived this with gladness and, as he already held all of Spain and Gaul by his own right, proceeded to subdue the Burgundians also. In the nineteenth year of his reign he was deprived of his life at Arelate, where he then dwelt. He was succeeded by his own son Alaric, the ninth in succession from the famous Alaric the Great to receive the kingdom of the Visigoths. For even as it happened to the line of the Augusti, as we have stated above, so too it appears in the line of the Alarici, that kingdoms often come to an end in kings who bear the same name as those at the beginning. Meanwhile let us leave this subject, and weave together the whole story of the origin of the Goths, as we promised.

Chapter XLVIII. The Divided Goths: Ostrogoths

Since I have followed the stories of my ancestors and retold to the best of my ability the tale of the period when both tribes, Ostrogoths and Visigoths, were united, and then clearly treated of the Visigoths apart from the Ostrogoths, I must now return to those ancient Scythian abodes and set forth in like manner the ancestry and deeds of the Ostrogoths. It appears that at the death of their king, Hermanaric, they were made a separate people by the departure of the Visigoths, and remained in their country subject to the sway of the Huns; yet Vinitharius of the Amali retained the insignia of his rule. He rivalled the valor of his grandfather Vultuulf, although he had not the good fortune of Hermanaric. But disliking to remain under the rule of the Huns, he withdrew a little from them and strove to show his courage by moving his forces against the country of the Antes. When he attacked them, he was beaten in the first encounter. Thereafter he did valiantly and, as a terrible example, crucified their king, named Boz, together with his sons and seventy nobles, and left their bodies hanging there to double the fear of those who had surrendered. When he had ruled with such license for barely a year, Balamber, king of the Huns, would no longer endure it, but sent for Gesimund, son of Hunimund the Great. Now Gesimund, together with a great part of the Goths, remained under the rule of the Huns, being mindful of his oath of fidelity.

Balamber renewed his alliance with him and led his army up against Vinitharius. After a long contest, Vinitharius prevailed in the first and in the second conflict, nor can any say how great a slaughter he made of the army of the Huns. But in the third battle, when they met each other unexpectedly at the river named Erac, Balamber shot an arrow and wounded Vinitharius in the head, so that he died. Then Balamber took to himself in marriage Vadamerca, the grand-daughter of Vinitharius, and finally ruled all the people of the Goths as his peaceful subjects, but in such a way that one ruler of their own number always held the power over the Gothic race, though subject to the Huns.

And later, after the death of Vinitharius, Hunimund ruled them, the son of Hermanaric, a mighty king of yore; a man fierce in war and of famous personal beauty, who afterwards fought successfully against the race of the Suavi. And when he died, his son Thorismud

succeeded him, in the very bloom of youth. In the second year of his rule he moved an army against the Gepidae and won a great victory over them, but is said to have been killed by falling from his horse. When he was dead, the Ostrogoths mourned for him so deeply that for forty years no other king succeeded in his place, and during all this time they had ever on their lips the tale of his memory. Now as time went on, Valamir grew to man's estate. He was the son of Thorismud's cousin Vandalarius. For his son Beremud, as we have said before, at last grew to despise the race of the Ostrogoths because of the overlordship of the Huns, and so had followed the tribe of the Visigoths to the western country, and it was from him Veteric was descended. Veteric also had a son Eutharic, who married Amalasuentha, the daughter of Theodoric, thus uniting again the stock of the Amali which had divided long ago. Eutharic begat Athalaric and Mathesuentha. But since Athalaric died in the years of his boyhood, Mathesuentha was taken to Constantinople by her second husband, namely Germanus, a cousin of the Emperor Justinian, and bore a posthumous son, whom she named Germanus.

But that the order we have taken for our history may run its due course, we must return to the stock of Vandalarius, which put forth three branches. This Vandalarius, the son of a brother of Hermanaric and cousin of the aforesaid Thorismud, vaunted himself among the race of the Amali because he had begotten three sons, Valamir, Thiudimer and Vidimer. Of these Valamir ascended the throne after his parents, though the Huns as yet held the power over the Goths in general as among other nations. It was pleasant to behold the concord of these three brothers; for the admirable Thiudimer served as a soldier for the empire of his brother Valamir, and Valamir bade honors be given him, while Vidimer was eager to serve them both. Thus regarding one another with common affection, not one was wholly deprived of the kingdom which two of them held in mutual peace. Yet, as has often been said, they ruled in such a way that they respected the dominion of Attila, king of the Huns. Indeed they could not have refused to fight against their kinsmen the Visigoths, and they must even have committed parricide at their lord's command. There was no way whereby any Scythian tribe could have been wrested from the power of the Huns, save by the death of Attila,—an event the Romans and all other nations desired. Now his death was as base as his life was marvellous.

Chapter XLIX

Shortly before he died, as the historian Priscus relates, he took in marriage a very beautiful girl named Ildico, after countless other wives, as was the custom of his race. He had given himself up to excessive joy at his wedding, and as he lay on his back, heavy with wine and sleep, a rush of superfluous blood, which would ordinarily have flowed from his nose, streamed in deadly course down his throat and killed him, since it was hindered in the usual passages. Thus did drunkenness put a disgraceful end to a king renowned in war. On the following day, when a great part of the morning was spent, the royal attendants suspected some ill and, after a great uproar, broke in the doors. There they found the death of Attila accomplished by an effusion of blood, without any wound, and the girl with downcast face weeping beneath her veil. Then, as is the custom of that race, they plucked out the hair of their heads and made their faces hideous with deep wounds, that the renowned warrior might be mourned, not by effeminate wailings and tears, but by the blood of men. Moreover a wondrous thing took place in connection with Attila's death. For in a dream some god stood at the side of Marcian, Emperor of the East, while he was disquieted about his fierce foe, and showed him the bow of Attila broken in that same night, as if to intimate that the race of Huns owed much to that weapon. This account the historian Priscus says he accepts upon truthful evidence. For so terrible was Attila thought to be to great empires that the gods announced his death to rulers as a special boon.

We shall not omit to say a few words about the many ways in which his shade was honored by his race. His body was placed in the midst of a plain and lay in state in a silken tent as a sight for men's admiration. The best horsemen of the entire tribe of the Huns rode around in circles, after the manner of circus games, in the place to which he had been brought and told of his deeds in a funeral dirge in the following manner: "The chief of the Huns, King Attila, born of his sire Mundiuch, lord of bravest tribes, sole possessor of the Scythian and German realms—powers unknown before—captured cities and terrified both empires of the Roman world and, appeased by their prayers, took annual tribute to save the rest from plunder. And when he had accomplished all this by the favor of fortune, he fell, not by wound of the foe, nor by treachery of friends, but in the midst of his nation at peace, happy in his joy and without sense of pain. Who can rate this as death, when none believes it calls for vengeance? When they had mourned him with such lamentations, a strava, as they call it, was celebrated over his tomb with great revelling. They gave way in turn to the extremes

of feeling and displayed funereal grief alternating with joy. Then in the secrecy of night they buried his body in the earth.

They bound his coffins, the first with gold, the second with silver and the third with the strength of iron, showing by such means that these three things suited the mightiest of kings; iron because he subdued the nations, gold and silver because he received the honors of both empires. They also added the arms of foemen won in the fight, trappings of rare worth, sparkling with various gems, and ornaments of all sorts whereby princely state is maintained. And that so great riches might be kept from human curiosity, they slew those appointed to the work—a dreadful pay for their labor; and thus sudden death was the lot of those who buried him as well as of him who was buried.

Chapter L

After they had fulfilled these rites, a contest for the highest place arose among Attila's successors,—for the minds of young men are wont to be inflamed by ambition for power,—and in their rash eagerness to rule they all alike destroyed his empire. Thus kingdoms are often weighed down by a superfluity rather than by a lack of successors. For the sons of Attila, who through the license of his lust formed almost a people of themselves, were clamoring that the nations should be divided among them equally and that warlike kings with their peoples should be apportioned to them by lot like a family estate. When Ardaric, king of the Gepidae, learned this, he became enraged because so many nations were being treated like slaves of the basest condition, and was the first to rise against the sons of Attila. Good fortune attended him, and he effaced the disgrace of servitude that rested upon him. For by his revolt he freed not only his own tribe, but all the others who were equally oppressed; since all readily strive for that which is sought for the general advantage. They took up arms against the destruction that menaced all and joined battle with the Huns in Pannonia, near a river called Nedao. There an encounter took place between the various nations Attila had held under his sway. Kingdoms with their peoples were divided, and out of one body were made many members not responding to a common impulse. Being deprived of their head, they madly strove against each other.

They never found their equals ranged against them without harming each other by wounds mutually given. And so the bravest nations tore themselves to pieces. For then, I think, must have occurred a most remarkable spectacle, where one might see the Goths fighting with pikes, the Gepidae raging with the sword, the Rugi breaking off the spears in their own wounds, the Suavi fighting on foot, the Huns with bows, the Alani drawing up a battle-line of heavy-armed and the Heruli of light-armed warriors.

Finally, after many bitter conflicts, victory fell unexpectedly to the Gepidae. For the sword and conspiracy of Ardaric destroyed almost thirty thousand men, Huns as well as those of the other nations who brought them aid. In this battle fell Ellac, the elder son of Attila, whom his father is said to have loved so much more than all the rest that he preferred him to any child or even to all the children of his kingdom. But fortune was not in accord with his father's wish. For after slaying many of the foe, it appears that he met his death so bravely that, if his father had lived, he would have rejoiced at his glorious end. When Ellac

was slain, his remaining brothers were put to flight near the shore of the Sea of Pontus, where we have said the Goths first settled. Thus did the Huns give way, a race to which men thought the whole world must yield. So baneful a thing is division, that they who used to inspire terror when their strength was united, were overthrown separately. The cause of Ardaric, king of the Gepidae, was fortunate for the various nations who were unwillingly subject to the rule of the Huns, for it raised their long downcast spirits to the glad hope of freedom. Many sent ambassadors to the Roman territory, where they were most graciously received by Marcian, who was then emperor, and took the abodes allotted them to dwell in. But the Gepidae by their own might won for themselves the territory of the Huns and ruled as victors over the extent of all Dacia, demanding of the Roman Empire nothing more than peace and an annual gift as a pledge of their friendly alliance. This the Emperor freely granted at the time, and to this day that race receives its customary gifts from the Roman Emperor.

Now when the Goths saw the Gepidae defending for themselves the territory of the Huns and the people of the Huns dwelling again in their ancient abodes, they preferred to ask for lands from the Roman Empire rather than invade the lands of others with danger to themselves. So they received Pannonia, which stretches in a long plain, being bounded on the east by Upper Moesia, on the south by Dalmatia, on the west by Noricum and on the north by the Danube. This land is adorned with many cities, the first of which is Sirmium and the last Vindobona. But the Sauromatae, whom we call Sarmatians, and the Cemandri and certain of the Huns dwelt in Castra Martis, a city given them in the region of Illyricum. Of this race was Blivila, Duke of Pentapolis, and his brother Froila and also Bessa, a Patrician in our time. The Sciri, moreover, and the Sadagarii and certain of the Alani with their leader, Candac by name, received Scythia Minor and Lower Moesia. Paria, the father of my father Alanoviiamuth (that is to say, my grandfather), was secretary to this Candac as long as he lived. To his sister's son Gunthigis, also called Baza, the Master of the Soldiery, who was the son of Andag the son of Andela, who was descended from the stock of the Amali, I also, Jordanes, although an unlearned man before my conversion, was secretary. The Rugi, however, and some other races asked that they might inhabit Bizye and Arcadiopolis. Hernac, the younger son of Attila, with his followers, chose a home in the most distant part of Lesser Scythia. Emnetzur and Ultzindur, kinsmen of his, won Oescus and Utus and Almus in Dacia on the bank of the Danube, and many of the Huns, then swarming everywhere, betook themselves into Romania, and from them the Sacromontisi and the Fossatisii of this day are said to be descended.

Chapter LI

There were other Goths also, called the Lesser, a great people whose priest and primate was Vulfila, who is said to have taught them to write. And to-day they are in Moesia, inhabiting the Nicopolitan region as far as the base of Mount Haemus. They are a numerous people, but poor and unwarlike, rich in nothing save flocks of various kinds and pasture-lands for cattle and forests for wood. Their country is not fruitful in wheat and other sorts of grain. Certain of them do not know that vineyards exist elsewhere, and they buy their wine from neighboring countries. But most of them drink milk.

Chapter LII

Let us now return to the tribe with which we started, namely the Ostrogoths, who were dwelling in Pannonia under their king Valamir and his brothers Thiudimer and Vidimer. Although their territories were separate, yet their plans were one. For Valamir dwelt between the rivers Scarniunga and Aqua Nigra, Thiudimer near Lake Pelso and Vidimer between them both. Now it happened that the sons of Attila, regarding the Goths as deserters from their rule, came against them as though they were seeking fugitive slaves, and attacked Valamir alone, when his brothers knew nothing of it. He sustained their attack, though he had but few supporters, and after harassing them a long time, so utterly overwhelmed them that scarcely any portion of the enemy remained. The remnant turned in flight and sought the parts of Scythia which border on the stream of the river Danaper, which the Huns call in their own tongue the Var. Thereupon he sent a messenger of good tidings to his brother Thiudimer, and on the very day the messenger arrived he found even greater joy in the house of Thiudimer. For on that day his son Theodoric was born, of a concubine Erelieva indeed, and yet a child of good hope.

Now after no great time King Valamir and his brothers Thiudimer and Vidimer sent an embassy to the Emperor Marcian, because the usual gifts which they received like a New Year's present from the Emperor, to preserve the compact of peace, were slow in arriving. And they found that Theodoric, son of Triarius, a man of Gothic blood also, but born of another stock, not of the Amali, was in great favor, together with his followers. He was allied in friendship with the Romans and obtained an annual bounty, while they themselves were merely held in disdain. Thereat they were aroused to frenzy and took up arms. They roved through almost the whole of Illyricum and laid it waste in their search for spoil. Then the Emperor quickly changed his mind and returned to his former state of friendship. He sent an embassy to give them the past gifts, as well as those now due, and furthermore promised to give these gifts in future without any dispute. From the Goths the Romans received as a hostage of peace Theodoric, the young child of Thiudimer, whom we have mentioned above. He had now attained the age of seven years and was entering upon his eighth. While his father hesitated about giving him up, his uncle Valamir besought him to do it, hoping that peace between the Romans and the Goths might thus be assured. Therefore Theodoric was given as a hostage by the Goths and brought to the city of Constantinople to the Emperor Leo and, being a goodly child, deservedly gained the imperial favor.

Chapter LIII

Now after firm peace was established between Goths and Romans, the Goths found that the possessions they had received from the Emperor were not sufficient for them. Furthermore, they were eager to display their wonted valor, and so began to plunder the neighboring races round about them, first attacking the Sadagis who held the interior of Pannonia. When Dintzic, king of the Huns, a son of Attila, learned this, he gathered to him the few who still seemed to have remained under his sway, namely, the Ultzinzures, and Angisciri, the Bittugures and the Bardores. Coming to Bassiana, a city of Pannonia, he beleaguered it and began to plunder its territory. Then the Goths at once abandoned the expedition they had planned against the Sadagis, turned upon the Huns and drove them so ingloriously from their own land that those who remained have been in dread of the arms of the Goths from that time down to the present day.

When the tribe of the Huns was at last subdued by the Goths, Hunimund, chief of the Suavi, who was crossing over to plunder Dalmatia, carried off some cattle of the Goths which were straying over the plains; for Dalmatia was near Suavia and not far distant from the territory of Pannonia, especially that part where the Goths were then staying. So then, as Hunimund was returning with the Suavi to his own country, after he had devastated Dalmatia, Thiudimer the brother of Valamir, king of the Goths, kept watch on their line of march. Not that he grieved so much over the loss of his cattle, but he feared that if the Suavi obtained this plunder with impunity, they would proceed to greater license. So in the dead of night, while they were asleep, he made an unexpected attack upon them, near Lake Pelso. Here he so completely crushed them that he took captive and sent into slavery under the Goths even Hunimund, their king, and all of his army who had escaped the sword. Yet as he was a great lover of mercy, he granted pardon after taking vengeance and became reconciled to the Suavi. He adopted as his son the same man whom he had taken captive, and sent him back with his followers into Suavia. But Hunimund was unmindful of his adopted father's kindness. After some time he brought forth a plot he had contrived and aroused the tribe of the Sciri, who then dwelt above the Danube and abode peaceably with the Goths.

So the Sciri broke off their alliance with them, took up arms, joined themselves to Hunimund and went out to attack the race of the Goths. Thus war came upon the Goths

who were expecting no evil, because they relied upon both of their neighbors as friends. Constrained by necessity they took up arms and avenged themselves and their injuries by recourse to battle. In this battle, as King Valamir rode on his horse before the line to encourage his men, the horse was wounded and fell, overthrowing its rider. Valamir was quickly pierced by his enemies' spears and slain. Thereupon the Goths proceeded to exact vengeance for the death of their king, as well as for the injury done them by the rebels. They fought in such wise that there remained of all the race of the Sciri only a few who bore the name, and they with disgrace. Thus were all destroyed.

Chapter LIV

The kings [of the Suavi], Hunimund and Alaric, fearing the destruction that had come upon the Sciri, next made war upon the Goths, relying upon the aid of the Sarmations, who had come to them as auxiliaries with their kings Beuca and Babai. They summoned the last remnants of the Sciri, with Edica and Hunuulf, their chieftains, thinking they would fight the more desperately to avenge themselves. They had on their side the Gepidae also, as well as no small reinforcements from the race of the Rugi and from others gathered here and there. Thus they brought together a great host at the river Bolia in Pannonia and encamped there. Now when Valamir was dead, the Goths fled to Thiudimer, his brother. Although he had long ruled along with his brothers, yet he took the insignia of his increased authority and summoned his younger brother Vidimer and shared with him the cares of war, resorting to arms under compulsion. A battle was fought and the party of the Goths was found to be so much the stronger that the plain was drenched in the blood of their fallen foes and looked like a crimson sea. Weapons and corpses, piled up like hills, covered the plain for more than ten miles. When the Goths saw this, they rejoiced with joy unspeakable, because by this great slaughter of their foes they had avenged the blood of Valamir their king and the injury done themselves. But those of the innumerable and motley throng of the foe who were able to escape, though they got away, nevertheless came to their own land with difficulty and without glory.

Chapter LV

After a certain time, when the wintry cold was at hand, the river Danube was frozen over as usual. For a river like this freezes so hard that it will support like a solid rock an army of foot-soldiers and wagons and carts and whatsoever vehicles there may be,—nor is there need of skiffs and boats. So when Thiudimer, king of the Goths, saw that it was frozen, he led his army across the Danube and appeared unexpectedly to the Suavi from the rear. Now this country of the Suavi has on the east the Baiovari, on the west the Franks, on the south the Burgundians and on the north the Thuringians. With the Suavi there were present the Alamanni, then their confederates, who also ruled the Alpine heights, whence several streams flow into the Danube, pouring in with a great rushing sound. Into a place thus fortified King Thiudimer led his army in the winter-time and conquered, plundered and almost subdued the race of the Suavi as well as the Alamanni, who were mutually banded together. Thence he returned as victor to his own home in Pannonia and joyfully received his son Theodoric, once given as hostage to Constantinople and now sent back by the Emperor Leo with great gifts. Now Theodoric had reached man's estate, for he was eighteen years of age and his boyhood was ended. So he summoned certain of his father's adherents and took to himself from the people his friends and retainers,—almost six thousand men.

With these he crossed the Danube, without his father's knowledge, and marched against Babai, king of the Sarmatians, who had just won a victory over Camundus, a general of the Romans, and was ruling with insolent pride. Theodoric came upon him and slew him, and taking as booty his slaves and treasure, returned victorious to his father. Next he invaded the city of Singidunum, which the Sarmatians themselves had seized, and did not return it to the Romans, but reduced it to his own sway.

Chapter LVI

Then as the spoil taken from one and another of the neighboring tribes diminished, the Goths began to lack food and clothing, and peace became distasteful to men for whom war had long furnished the necessaries of life. So all the Goths approached their king Thiudimer and, with great outcry, begged him to lead forth his army in whatsoever direction he might wish. He summoned his brother and, after casting lots, bade him go into the country of Italy, where at this time Glycerius ruled as emperor, saying that he himself as the mightier would go to the east against a mightier empire. And so it happened. Thereupon Vidimer entered the land of Italy, but soon paid the last debt of fate and departed from earthly affairs, leaving his son and namesake Vidimer to succeed him. The Emperor Glycerius bestowed gifts upon Vidimer and persuaded him to go from Italy to Gaul, which was then harassed on all sides by various races, saying that their own kinsmen, the Visigoths, there ruled a neighboring kingdom. And what more? Vidimer accepted the gifts and, obeying the command of the Emperor Glycerius, pressed on to Gaul. Joining with his kinsmen the Visigoths, they again formed one body, as they had been long ago. Thus they held Gaul and Spain by their own right and so defended them that no other race won the mastery there.

But Thiudimer, the elder brother, crossed the river Savus with his men, threatening the Sarmatians and their soldiers with war if any should resist him. From fear of this they kept quiet; moreover they were powerless in the face of so great a host. Thiudimer, seeing prosperity everywhere awaiting him, invaded Naissus, the first city of Illyricum. He was joined by his son Theodoric and the Counts Astat and Invilia, and sent them to Ulpiana by way of Castrum Herculis. Upon their arrival the town surrendered, as did Stobi later; and several places of Illyricum, inaccessible to them at first, were thus made easy of approach. For they first plundered and then ruled by right of war Heraclea and Larissa, cities of Thessaly. But Thiudimer the king, perceiving his own good fortune and that of his son, was not content with this alone, but set forth from the city of Naissus, leaving only a few men behind as a guard. He himself advanced to Thessalonica, where Hilarianus the Patrician, appointed by the Emperor, was stationed with his army. When Hilarianus beheld Thessalonica surrounded by an entrenchment and saw that he could not resist attack, he sent an embassy to Thiudimer the king and by the offer of gifts turned him aside from destroying the city. Then the Roman general entered upon a truce with the Goths and of his own accord handed over to them those places they inhabited, namely Cyrrhus, Pella, Europus,

Methone, Pydna, Beroea, and another which is called Dium. So the Goths and their king laid aside their arms, consented to peace and became quiet. Soon after these events, King Thiudimer was seized with a mortal illness in the city of Cyrrhus. He called the Goths to himself, appointed Theodoric his son as heir of his kingdom and presently departed this life.

Chapter LVII

When the Emperor Zeno heard that Theodoric had been appointed king over his own people, he received the news with pleasure and invited him to come and visit him in the city, appointing an escort of honor. Receiving Theodoric with all due respect, he placed him among the princes of his palace. After some time Zeno increased his dignity by adopting him as his son-at-arms and gave him a triumph in the city at his expense. Theodoric was made Consul Ordinary also, which is well known to be the supreme good and highest honor in the world. Nor was this all, for Zeno set up before the royal palace an equestrian statue to the glory of this great man.

Now while Theodoric was in alliance by treaty with the Empire of Zeno and was himself enjoying every comfort in the city, he heard that his tribe, dwelling as we have said in Illyricum, was not altogether satisfied or content. So he chose rather to seek a living by his own exertions, after the manner customary to his race, rather than to enjoy the advantages of the Roman Empire in luxurious ease while his tribe lived in want. After pondering these matters, he said to the Emperor: "Though I lack nothing in serving your Empire, yet if Your Piety deem it worthy, be pleased to hear the desire of my heart. And when as usual he had been granted permission to speak freely, he said: "The western country, long ago governed by the rule of your ancestors and predecessors, and that city which was the head and mistress of the world,—wherefore is it now shaken by the tyranny of the Torcilingi and the Rugi? Send me there with my race. Thus if you but say the word, you may be freed from the burden of expense here, and, if by the Lord's help I shall conquer, the fame of Your Piety shall be glorious there. For it is better that I, your servant and your son, should rule that kingdom, receiving it as a gift from you if I conquer, than that one whom you do not recognize should oppress your Senate with his tyrannical yoke and a part of the republic with slavery.

For if I prevail, I shall retain it as your grant and gift; if I am conquered, Your Piety will lose nothing—nay, as I have said, it will save the expense I now entail. Although the Emperor was grieved that he should go, yet when he heard this he granted what Theodoric asked, for he was unwilling to cause him sorrow. He sent him forth enriched by great gifts and commended to his charge the Senate and the Roman People.

Therefore Theodoric departed from the royal city and returned to his own people. In company with the whole tribe of the Goths, who gave him their unanimous consent, he set out for Hesperia. He went in straight march through Sirmium to the places bordering on Pannonia and, advancing into the territory of Venetia as far as the bridge of the Sontius, encamped there. When he had halted there for some time to rest the bodies of his men and pack-animals, Odoacer sent an armed force against him, which he met on the plains of Verona and destroyed with great slaughter. Then he broke camp and advanced through Italy with greater boldness. Crossing the river Po, he pitched camp near the royal city of Ravenna, about the third milestone from the city in the place called Pineta. When Odoacer saw this, he fortified himself within the city. He frequently harassed the army of the Goths at night, sallying forth stealthily with his men, and this not once or twice, but often; and thus he struggled for almost three whole years. But he labored in vain, for all Italy at last called Theodoric its lord and the Empire obeyed his nod. But Odoacer, with his few adherents and the Romans who were present, suffered daily from war and famine in Ravenna. Since he accomplished nothing, he sent an embassy and begged for mercy. Theodoric first granted it and afterwards deprived him of his life.

It was in the third year after his entrance into Italy, as we have said, that Theodoric, by advice of the Emperor Zeno, laid aside the garb of a private citizen and the dress of his race and assumed a costume with a royal mantle, as he had now become the ruler over both Goths and Romans. He sent an embassy to Lodoin, king of the Franks, and asked for his daughter Audefleda in marriage. Lodoin freely and gladly gave her, and also his sons Celdebert and Heldebert and Thiudebert, believing that by this alliance a league would be formed and that they would be associated with the race of the Goths. But that union was of no avail for peace and harmony, for they fought fiercely with each other again and again for the lands of the Goths; but never did the Goths yield to the Franks while Theodoric lived.

Chapter LVIII

Now before he had a child from Audefleda, Theodoric had children of a concubine, daughters begotten in Moesia, one named Thiudigoto and another Ostrogotho. Soon after he came to Italy, he gave them in marriage to neighboring kings, one to Alaric, king of the Visigoths, and the other to Sigismund, king of the Burgundians. Now Alaric begat Amalaric. While his grandfather Theodoric cared for and protected him—for he had lost both parents in the years of childhood—he found that Eutharic, the son of Veteric, grandchild of Beremud and Thorismud, and a descendant of the race of the Amali, was living in Spain, a young man strong in wisdom and valor and health of body. Theodoric sent for him and gave him his daughter Amalasuentha in marriage. And that he might extend his family as much as possible, he sent his sister Amalafrida (the mother of Theodahad, who was afterwards king) to Africa as wife of Thrasamund, king of the Vandals, and her daughter Amalaberga, who was his own niece, he united with Herminefred, king of the Thuringians.

Now he sent his Count Pitza, chosen from among the chief men of his kingdom, to hold the city of Sirmium. He got possession of it by driving out its king Thrasaric, son of Thraustila, and keeping his mother captive. Thence he came with two thousand infantry and five hundred horsemen to aid Mundo against Sabinian, Master of the Soldiery of Illyricum, who at that time had made ready to fight with Mundo near the city named Margoplanum, which lies between the Danube and Margus rivers, and destroyed the Army of Illyricum. For this Mundo, who traced his descent from the Attilani of old, had put to flight the tribe of the Gepidae and was roaming beyond the Danube in waste places where no man tilled the soil. He had gathered around him many outlaws and ruffians and robbers from all sides and had seized a tower called Herta, situated on the bank of the Danube. There he plundered his neighbors in wild license and made himself king over his vagabonds. Now Pitza came upon him when he was nearly reduced to desperation and was already thinking of surrender. So he rescued him from the hands of Sabinian and made him a grateful subject of his king Theodoric.

Theodoric won an equally great victory over the Franks through his Count Ibba in Gaul, when more than thirty thousand Franks were slain in battle. Moreover, after the death of his son-in-law Alaric, Theodoric appointed Thiudis, his armor-bearer, guardian of his grandson Amalaric in Spain. But Amalaric was ensnared by the plots of the Franks in

early youth and lost at once his kingdom and his life. Then his guardian Thiudis, advancing from the same kingdom, assailed the Franks and delivered the Spaniards from their disgraceful treachery. So long as he lived he kept the Visigoths united. After him Thiudigisclus obtained the kingdom and, ruling but a short time, met his death at the hands of his own followers. He was succeeded by Agil, who holds the kingdom to the present day. Athanagild has rebelled against him and is even now provoking the might of the Roman Empire. So Liberius the Patrician is on the way with an army to oppose him. Now there was not a tribe in the west that did not serve Theodoric while he lived, either in friendship or by conquest.

Chapter LIX

When he had reached old age and knew that he should soon depart this life, he called together the Gothic counts and chieftains of his race and appointed Athalaric as king. He was a boy scarce ten years old, the son of his daughter Amalasuentha, and he had lost his father Eutharic. As though uttering his last will and testament, Theodoric adjured and commanded them to honor their king, to love the Senate and Roman People and to make sure of the peace and good will of the Emperor of the East, as next after God. They kept this command fully so long as Athalaric their king and his mother lived, and ruled in peace for almost eight years. But as the Franks put no confidence in the rule of a child and furthermore held him in contempt, and were also plotting war, he gave back to them those parts of Gaul which his father and grandfather had seized. He possessed all the rest in peace and quiet. Therefore when Athalaric was approaching the age of manhood, he entrusted to the Emperor of the East both his own youth and his mother's widowhood. But in a short time the ill-fated boy was carried off by an untimely death and departed from earthly affairs. His mother feared she might be despised by the Goths on account of the weakness of her sex. So after much thought she decided, for the sake of relationship, to summon her cousin Theodahad from Tuscany, where he led a retired life at home, and thus she established him on the throne. But he was unmindful of their kinship and, after a little time, had her taken from the palace at Ravenna to an island of the Bulsinian lake where he kept her in exile. After spending a very few days there in sorrow, she was strangled in the bath by his hirelings.

Chapter LX

When Justinian, the Emperor of the East, heard this, he was aroused as if he had suffered personal injury in the death of his wards. Now at that time he had won a triumph over the Vandals in Africa, through his most faithful Patrician Belisarius. Without delay he sent his army under this leader against the Goths at the very time when his arms were yet dripping with the blood of the Vandals. This sagacious general believed he could not overcome the Gothic nation, unless he should first seize Sicily, their nursing-mother. Accordingly he did so. As soon as he entered Trinacria, the Goths, who were besieging the town of Syracuse, found that they were not succeeding and surrendered of their own accord to Belisarius, with their leader Sinderith. When the Roman general reached Sicily, Theodahad sought out Evermud, his son-in-law, and sent him with an army to guard the strait which lies between Campania and Sicily and sweeps from a bend of the Tyrrhenian Sea into the vast tide of the Adriatic. When Evermud arrived, he pitched his camp by the town of Rhegium. He soon saw that his side was the weaker. Coming over with a few close and faithful followers to the side of the victor and willingly casting himself at the feet of Belisarius, he decided to serve the rulers of the Roman Empire. When the army of the Goths perceived this, they distrusted Theodahad and clamored for his expulsion from the kingdom and for the appointment as king of their leader Vitiges, who had been his armor bearer. This was done; and presently Vitiges was raised to the office of king on the Barbarian Plains. He entered Rome and sent on to Ravenna the men most faithful to him to demand the death of Theodahad. They came and executed his command. After King Theodahad was slain, a messenger came from the king—for he was already king in the Barbarian Plains—to proclaim Vitiges to the people.

Meanwhile the Roman army crossed the strait and marched toward Campania. They took Naples and pressed on to Rome. Now a few days before they arrived, King Vitiges had set forth from Rome, arrived at Ravenna and married Mathesuentha, the daughter of Amalasuentha and grand-daughter of Theodoric, the former king. While he was celebrating his new marriage and holding court at Ravenna, the imperial army advanced from Rome and attacked the strongholds in both parts of Tuscany. When Vitiges learned of this through messengers, he sent a force under Hunila, a leader of the Goths, to Perusia which was beleaguered by them. While they were endeavoring by a long siege to dislodge Count Magnus, who was holding the place with a small force, the Roman army came upon them, and they themselves were driven away and utterly exterminated. When Vitiges heard the news, he

raged like a lion and assembled all the host of the Goths. He advanced from Ravenna and harassed the walls of Rome with a long siege. But after fourteen months his courage was broken and he raised the siege of the city of Rome and prepared to overwhelm Ariminum. Here he was baffled in like manner and put to flight; and so he retreated to Ravenna. When besieged there, he quickly and willingly surrendered himself to the victorious side, together with his wife Mathesuentha and the royal treasure.

And thus a famous kingdom and most valiant race, which had long held sway, was at last overcome in almost its two thousand and thirtieth year by that conquerer of many nations, the Emperor Justinian, through his most faithful consul Belisarius. He gave Vitiges the title of Patrician and took him to Constantinople, where he dwelt for more than two years, bound by ties of affection to the Emperor, and then departed this life. But his consort Mathesuentha was bestowed by the Emperor upon the Patrician Germanus, his cousin. And of them was born a son (also called Germanus) after the death of his father Germanus. This union of the race of the Anicii with the stock of the Amali gives hopeful promise, under the Lord's favor, to both peoples.

Conclusion

And now we have recited the origin of the Goths, the noble line of the Amali and the deeds of brave men. This glorious race yielded to a more glorious prince and surrendered to a more valiant leader, whose fame shall be silenced by no ages or cycles of years; for the victorious and triumphant Emperor Justinian and his consul Belisarius shall be named and known as Vandalicus, Africanus and Geticus. Thou who readest this, know that I have followed the writings of my ancestors, and have culled a few flowers from their broad meadows to weave a chaplet for him who cares to know these things. Let no one believe that to the advantage of the race of which I have spoken—though indeed I trace my own descent from it—I have added aught besides what I have read or learned by inquiry. Even thus I have not included all that is written or told about them, nor spoken so much to their praise as to the glory of him who conquered them.

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